



photos by Rosalie O'Connor

**BALLET**  
ARIZONA  
IB ANDERSEN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

*Student Matinee Study Guide*  
**CINDERELLA**

photos by Rosalie O'Connor

## Story

### Act I

Cinderella's father, a widower, takes a second wife, a dominating woman with two daughters. The stepmother despises Cinderella's goodness which highlights her own daughters' weaknesses; because of this, the stepmother makes Cinderella a servant in her own home. The father wishes to be kind but is afraid of his bad tempered stepdaughters who scold him for comforting Cinderella.

The stepsisters are up to their usual bickering with each other and taunting Cinderella when suddenly, the door opens and an old woman enters, begging. The stepsisters try to send the woman away but Cinderella offers the old woman some bread, which she accepts and then departs.

There is to be a ball at the palace for all the maidens of the kingdom. A jeweler, a hairdresser, a dancing master, and dressmakers arrive to prepare the stepsisters for the ball. Cinderella is forbidden to attend.

The old woman re-appears and reveals herself as Cinderella's fairy godmother. She calls on the Fairies of the Four Seasons and their attendants to transform Cinderella's rags into a beautiful gown, and to transform a pumpkin into a luxurious coach. As Cinderella prepares for the ball, the fairy godmother warns Cinderella that all is lost if she does not leave the ball before the clock strikes twelve.

### Act II

At the palace, the prince enters and greets the ball guests. The ball is interrupted by the arrival of Cinderella in her coach, and the prince immediately falls in love with her. While the prince and Cinderella are dancing together, the clock strikes midnight. Cinderella rushes from the palace; the prince tries to stop her but is unsuccessful and instead finds one of her slippers which she has lost in her haste.

### Act III

Cinderella has returned home, remembering the ball as if it were a beautiful dream. She finds the remaining glass slipper in her pocket proving she was not dreaming after all. She quickly hides it as the stepsisters, playing with the oranges from the ball, return to the house. Word arrives of the prince's search for the owner of the glass slipper. The prince enters, and the stepsisters try vainly to squeeze their feet in the tiny slipper; as Cinderella helps, the matching slipper falls from her pocket. The prince recognizes Cinderella and is overjoyed, and with permission from Cinderella's father, the prince asks Cinderella to marry him. Cinderella and the prince receive the blessings of fairies, and follow those blessings into a kingdom of happiness.

## The Music of Sergei Prokofiev

**Dates:** Born April 1891 in Sontsovka, Ukraine and died March 1953 in Moscow

**Nationality:** Russian

**Style/Period:** Modern 1920-Present

**Famous Works:** *Peter and the Wolf*, *Scythian Suite*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Cinderella*

**Bio:** Prokofiev, whose mother was a pianist, was a child prodigy and expert pianist who composed his first opera when he was twelve years old. He was also something of a spoiled brat, and throughout his life he liked to break rules.

He left Russia in 1917 and lived in the United States and then France. He moved back to Russia in 1936, just as the communists were coming into power and dictating very strict rules for everyone, even for the kind of music composers could write. From this time on, his life as a composer in Russia was very hard. He always remembered his happy childhood, and much of his music is playful and full of humor. One of his best known compositions is *Peter and the Wolf*.

## Take-Aways

- What do you think is the relationship between dance and music?
- A writer has a toolkit full of devices for communicating: words, literary elements, rhyme, figurative language, punctuation, structure, etc. What tools do you think a composer has to communicate through music?
- If the music is described as lively, what do you think is the tempo (speed of the beat or pace of the music)? What pitch (high or low register) might you use for a character as small as a mouse or as big as a giant? How do you think volume (loud or soft) and tempo can contribute to the plot of the story? What instruments would you use to mimic a thunderstorm and why?
- How is the composer's music described? Listen to a selection of the composer's music and discuss your observations in support or against the description.