

TY Trip to the Cinderella Opera Dress Rehearsal

Report by Finna Donoghue

On Tuesday the 25th of October, Transition Year students took a trip down to the National Opera House to see the dress rehearsal for Alma Deutscher's opera Cinderella.

Alma Deutscher was only eight when she started to write Cinderella in 2013 and she completed this opera when she was 11 years old. I think it is safe to say that this girl is a prodigy.

In this opera, Deutscher takes her own spin on a classic fairytale and revolves the plot more around music.

The opera starts off with Cinderella writing melodies on her manuscript along to the overture. This goes on for quite a bit and then she finally starts singing about how she is unable to write any good melodies. She finds a storybook on her bed and is transported into a magical and musical world as she jumps onto a bigger, more luxurious bed. That is how the story of the opera begins.

The story is set in a small town. Cinderella, her stepmother and her two ugly stepsisters Griselda and Zibaldona live in the Opera house (formerly owned by Cinderella's late father) at the end of the town.

Her stepsisters are two talentless divas, and they will not allow Cinderella to perform as they are jealous of her talents as a composer. One day when Cinderella is collecting kindling for

the fire she comes across an old woman in need of help and she does her best to look after the lady. For her kindness the old woman gives Cinderella a book. In the book Cinderella discovers a poem which she is inspired by and sets it to music.

Meanwhile, the King is looking for a wife for his son, the prince. In hopes of finding a true love match, the prince suggests a masquerade ball and singing competition to find a compatible suitor. Cinderella's stepsisters get overly excited about the ball, they steal Cinderella's beautiful melody, and they do their best to stop Cinderella from attending this special ball.

Poor Cinderella is heartbroken but luckily her fairy godmother comes to the rescue and gives her a gorgeous gown for the ball on one condition - she must be home by midnight.

When she gets to the ball, Cinderella is unrecognizable to her stepmother and stepsisters. She dances around happily until she hears her stepsister, Griselda, sing her melody. Horrified and upset, Cinderella runs out into the garden only to be followed by a handsome stranger, the prince in disguise. She sings her melody and poem to him and to her great surprise it turns out he wrote it. Suddenly, the clock strikes midnight and Cinderella must flee. She leaves the prince without knowing who she is and unintentionally gives him only her melody to track her by.

At the end of the opera, the prince searches for his mystery woman by getting every woman in town to finish his melody in the hope that the one who sings it correctly will be his wife. He

eventually finds Cinderella and they all live happily ever after. The opera ends with Cinderella jumping back into her old bed as if it was all a dream.

I really enjoyed Cinderella; it is definitely one of the best operas I have ever seen. The music was beautiful, and I loved the composer's twist on the original story. This opera was quite different to ones I have seen before at the opera festival as it was not all singing. Cinderella also included dialogue where the actors spoke in their natural accents. It was also very comic in some parts and did not drag out too long. My favorite scene was the ball scene, it was so well done as it was very funny with the two stepsisters but also sad and beautiful when Cinderella was singing her interpretation of his poem to him.

The singers in this opera were amazing. The harmonies sounded incredible and the lead soprano's voice was absolutely stunning.

I would recommend this opera to any fans of classical music who would like to listen to some gorgeous music while also having a bit of a laugh. I think this opera will be enjoyable to all music lovers.

We are so grateful we got the chance to go and see this opera as it was an amazing experience. We would like to thank all the teachers who took us on this great day out!



