



# 'CINDERELLA'

The Peninsula Association of Performing Arts presents an Enchanted Edition of this classic fairytale July 10 to Aug. 9 at the Fort Columbia State Park theater

Story by MARILYN GILBAUGH

Marrying somebody with a bunch of money — say, someone like a prince — makes the possibilities of acquiring designer footwear limitless. Step aside, you ugly stepsisters. Jimmy Choo, line up the glass slippers. Here comes Cinderella.

On Washington's Long Beach Peninsula, the aptly named Peninsula Association of Performing Artists present Rogers and Hammerstein's "Cinderella" (Enchanted Edition). Opening Friday, July 10 the show runs for five weekends — at 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday and at 2 p.m. Sunday — preparing to enchant audiences of all ages.

Cast auditions and rehearsals for Cinderella began in early April. The play is directed by the peninsula's renowned and treasured composer, teacher, director and music legend Barbara Poulshock. Her end goal is creating an atmosphere where cast, crew and audiences step back in time and enjoy the magic and the fantasy.

Both the location and the theater in which PAPA performs benefit Poulshock's aim. The performance and the setting provide a perfect opening scene. A former military entertainment center (circa 1930), the theater is located on the grounds of Washington's 593-acre Fort Columbia State Park. A narrow road climbs, twists and turns its way up, up, up, rising steeply through a forest of majestically towering trees. Add a sweeping view of the mighty Columbia, and voila! Welcome to a magic kingdom.

The long hours put in by cast and crew, the big efforts and the minutia lead to the tale unfolding around a certain overworked scullery maid, who against all odds, captures the heart of a prince and, in doing so, the hearts of the audience. In the lead role, it's Cinderella à deux. Two young women alternate the role of the mistreated miss in every other show. When playing not the lead, they join the ensemble. Cinderella One is Hope Bellinger, who has been in several PAPA productions and studied voice with Poulshock. Cinderella too (as in also) is Carly Keone, in her fifth season with the company.

The troupe has rehearsed, memorized, blocked, staged, and designed sets, costumes and wigs. They have sung and then sung again. They have danced alone, in pairs, as an ensemble — and in the case of the court jester, played by Jacob Jackson, on his hands.

"Keep your heads level when you're dipping," coached show choreographer Cindy Flood as Cinderella and the Prince rehearsed locking eyes and arms, whirling and dipping in a palace ball scene at a recent rehearsal.

"It's hard to breathe, sing, dance and breathe again all at the same time," said Grace Scarborough. In her role as Grace, she plays one of the two mean stepsisters. Along with her equally

vicious sister, Joy, played by Zoe Powers, the pair is urged on by their conniving mother, known simply as The Stepmother, played by Cindy Flood, to make Cinderella's life miserable. The stepsisters' juxtaposed character names (Grace? Joy?!) provide a clue to the hilarious fast-paced banter delivered throughout the show.

The sounds of a 22-piece orchestra fill the theater with the enchanting musical score, thanks to the magical sounds emanating from Sinfonia, a sophisticated orchestra computer/keyboard system. To operate the equipment, a skilled musician must be able to follow the score, the computer screen and a keyboard all at the same time.

Ron Thompson, experienced with the Sinfonia system, appeared at opening auditions. He was in charge of and performed the music for several past PAPA productions.

But more magic was in the air. This year, he landed the role of the dashing heart throb, the Prince. He shared his Sinfonia knowledge with fellow musician Michael Johnson, who took over and is now in charge of the music, the keyboard and the computer.

"Our Sinfonia program, our sound system and sound board



Cinderella, played by Hope Bellinger, finds her Prince Charming, played by Ron Thompson, in the Peninsula Association of Performing Artists' production of "Cinderella" (Enchanted Edition).

are top of the line. It's as good as you would find in a high-end professional theater," said Thomson, multi-tasking during a recent rehearsal as the tech crew worked out the kinks in lighting, music and microphones.

The nimble actors keep things lively on the stage, off the stage and weaving their way through the audience and back again. "Both actors and crew have a great sense of community. Everyone helps everyone else look their best, and they have fun doing it," said Flood, hurrying onto the stage to assist 4-year-old Mia Powers in her debut role as a cat.

**'Both actors and crew have a great sense of community. Everyone helps everyone else look their best, and they have fun doing it.'**

It's got legs — as in history, gams, and gumption

The theme of Cinderella is classic folktale. In her book "Cinderella Tales from Around the World," Heidi Anne Heiner cites similarly themed stories of Cinderella. Accounts conservatively range from 345 to over 1,500 versions from all over the map: Western Europe, China, Egypt, Russia and Vietnam. The earliest myth based on a Cinderella theme is noted by Greek historian Strabo in the first century BC.

Moving ahead several centuries: In 1697, French poet and Mother Goose fairy tales author Charles Perrault created



Cinderella, played by Hope Bellinger, dances with Prince Christopher, played by Ron Thompson.



Bickering after the ball, Cinderella's stepsister Grace, played by Grace Scarborough, pulls the other stepstister Joy's hair, played by Zoey Powers.

today's familiar Cinderella storyline. The basics center on a super kind, astoundingly beautiful, miserable but game lonely orphan girl, Cinderella. This in-house servant is mercilessly mistreated by her heartless, conniving and jealous stepmother and two stepsisters. With the help of a fairy godmother, against the odds, Cinderella and a glass slipper capture the heart of a perfect prince. Together Cinderella, her prince and the slipper find each other and make a life of perfectly magical, and in this case, musical happiness. Bet you're familiar with the "happily ever" after line.

The first version of Rogers and Hammerstein's "Cinderella" was written for television and, starring Julie Andrews, aired in March 1957. The stage version performed in London in 1958 and came to the United States in 1961. A second television version was recorded in 1965, and a third television version, starring Brandy Norwood, was broadcast to 60 million viewers in 1997.

Based on the success of the 1997 teleplay, the Rodgers and Hammerstein Organization came out with "Cinderella" (Enchanted Edition). Three songs were added, three acts were shortened to two, and dialogue was updated. Two of the songs came from previous Rodgers and Hammerstein collaborations. "Loneliness of Evening" was composed for the 1949 production of "South Pacific" but didn't make the cut. Same story for "There's Music In You" for the 1953 film "Main Street to Broadway." The third song, "The Sweetest Sounds," was by Richard Rodgers. He wrote it in 1962 for the film "No Strings." It seems it pays to hold on to your old works, especially if your name is Rodgers or Hammerstein.

Inside the opening page of PAPA's "Cinderella" playbill, it reads, "If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales. When I examine my life and my methods of thought, I come to the conclusion that the gift of fantasy has meant more to me than any talent for abstract, positive thinking." The source of this advice? Albert Einstein.

**'Cinderella'**  
 July 10 to Aug. 9  
 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday  
 2 p.m. Sunday  
 Doors open at 6:30 p.m.  
 Fort Columbia Theater  
 Fort Columbia State Park, Washington  
 papatheater.com/Cinderella-tickets  
 Tickets also available at Okie's Thriftway Market in Ocean Park by cash or check  
 info@papatheater.org  
 \$17.50 adults, \$7.25 children under 12  
 A Discovery pass is not required to park for the show



Cinderella's stepsisters Grace, left, played by Grace Scarborough, and Joy, played by Zoey Powers, complain after the ball.