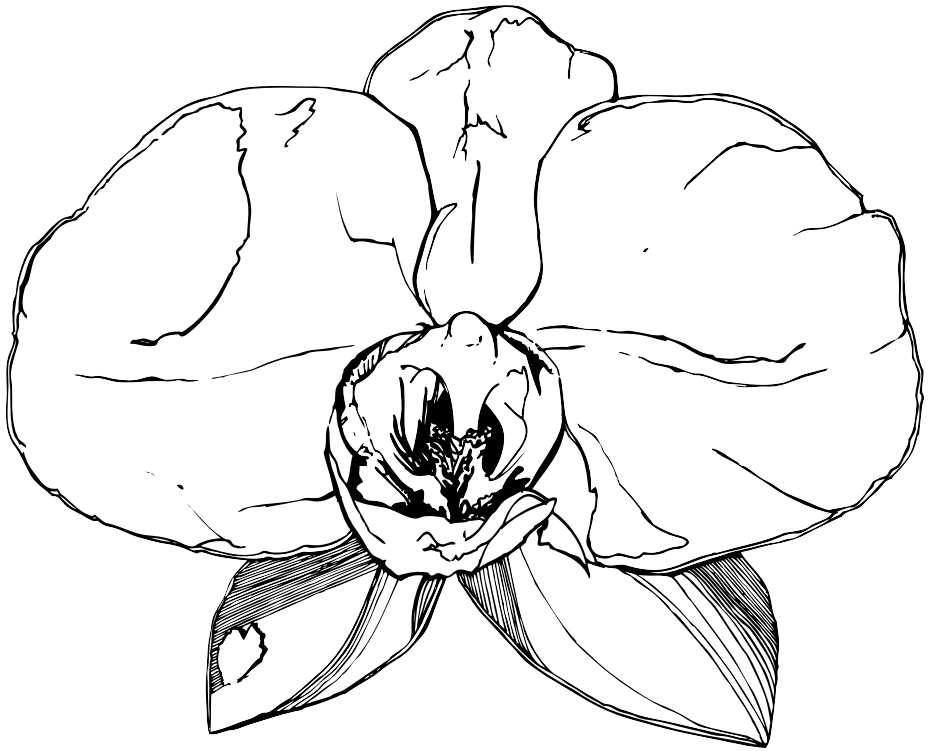


Cinderella

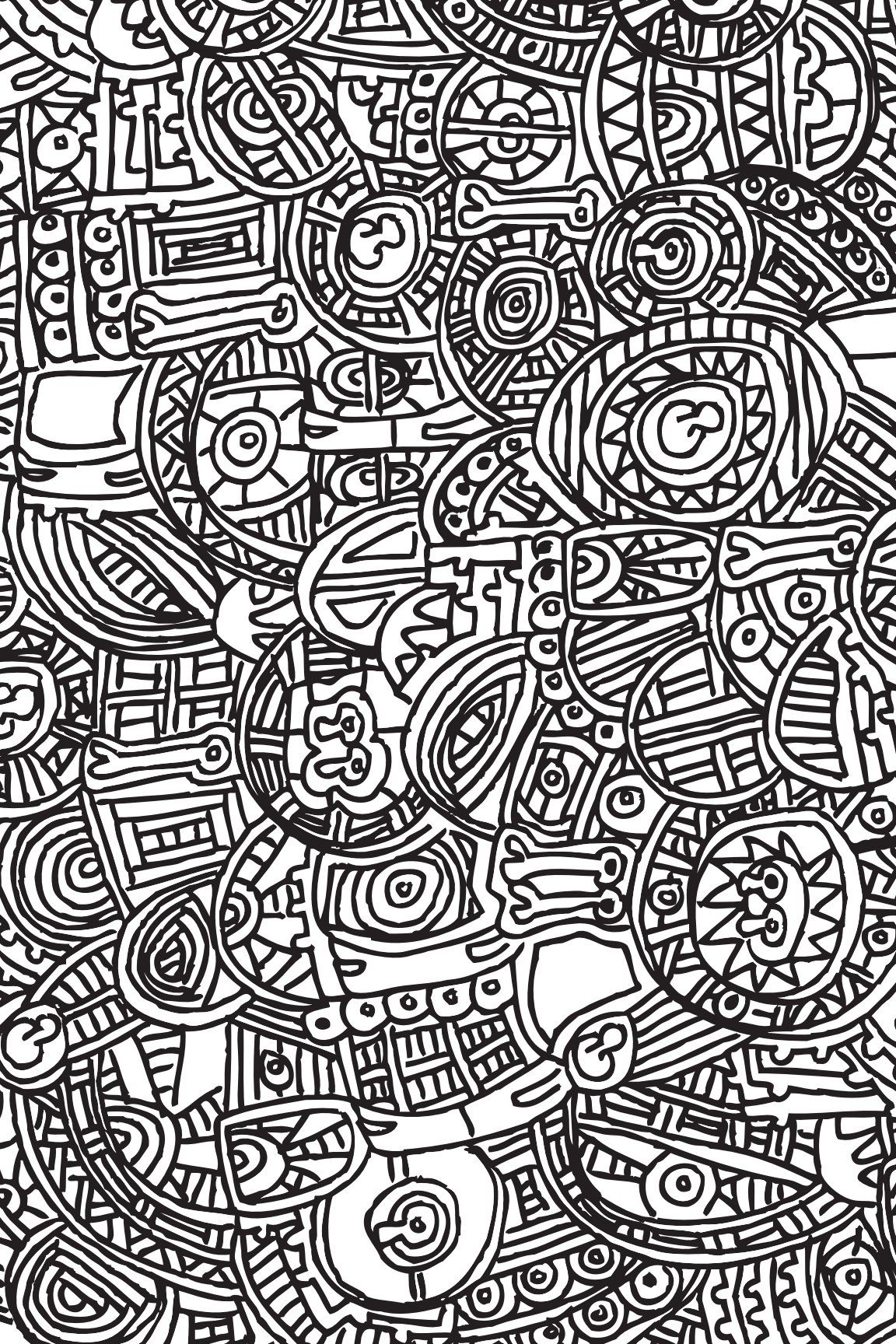
THE LIGHT OF GOD



A PRODUCTION BY YALE UNDERGRADUATES

SPRING 2012

MARIA KALIAMBOU (ED.)



Cinderella

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**CINDERELLA. THE LIGHT OF GOD
A PRODUCTION BY YALE UNDERGRADUATES**

**SPRING 2012
MARIA KALIAMBOU (ED.)**

NEW HAVEN: YALE PRINTING AND PUBLISHING SERVICES

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 Translated by Andrew Michael Sotiriou



Message from the Editor

This production of *Cinderella. The Light of God* is the successful culmination of various endeavors that brought our students in contact with Greek language and culture. Our first experience together was a class trip to Greece in May 2010, where the students encountered among other things the rural life in Nymphaio, a village in Northern Greece. Upon our return, the students delved into the Greek oral literature and folklore material from the village we had visited. These experiences not only taught the students about Greece, they also inspired them to use the knowledge gained and their creativity to produce this play.

Engaged teaching involves not only the transmission of knowledge, but more importantly it mediates experiences. Andrew Sotiriou, the author and director of the play, demonstrates in his production that even the smallest and seemingly least important detail that emerges from the educational process can have a deep impact on a student's development. It is rewarding indeed for the patient teacher to watch as their students grow and mature. Andrew's imagination and creativity gave the opportunity to his fellow students not only to build their own community, but more importantly, to reflect upon themselves. This impressive production is the result of the creative collaboration and dedication of the student actors, painters, designers, singers, and technicians.

I am indebted to Nick Sossidis and the Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale University who generously supported our class trip to Greece two years ago without imagining the extent of its impact on the students and the broader community. Various colleagues and friends have also embraced this production with enthusiasm. Andrew and I are deeply grateful to Arthur Nacht who offered his invaluable experience in both finance and theater management, and carefully followed the steps of the production. Dana Tanner-Kennedy, a first year dramaturgy student at Yale School of Drama, gave her critical insight and helped Andrew to develop the script. Merle



Nacht, faithful to her previous collaboration with my Modern Greek classes, enriched us once again with her artistic suggestions for this book publication.

The realization of this production was made possible through the Council of Masters' Creative and Performing Arts award. Also, I am thankful to the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who in these particularly difficult times for Greece, offered funding for the publication of this book.

The Hellenic Studies Program, generously funded by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Center for Hellenic Studies at Yale, is proud to present this undergraduate collaborative production to the public and the academic community. I hope you will enjoy it!

MARIA KALIAMBOU

SENIOR LECTOR IN MODERN GREEK, HELLENIC STUDIES PROGRAM

NEW HAVEN, APRIL 2012



Director's Note

In the fall of 2010, I came across a 19th century *Cinderella* tale in my Greek Oral Literature class. The tale, which originates in the mountain village of Nymphaio in Northern Greece, resonated with me; I found this particular manifestation of the cinder-girl to be a radical departure from most versions. The issues of faith addressed in the story are simple yet surprisingly involved: a bare, one-dimensional folktale structure is used to convey some very weighty ideas of Christian doctrine, village life, and the Ancient Greek tragic tradition.

Several months after reading the tale, while ruminating on my love for Slavic music, something clicked: *Cinderella* could become a theatrical retelling of the story of Christ, with Cinderella selected as the savior of her disturbed fairytale world. The Slavic Chorus would be the liturgical counterpart venerating the belief in an eighteen-year-old female messiah. The desire for musical collaboration ultimately evolved into the concept of a three-dimensional understanding of the tale: an actor would inhabit each character, an artist would craft Byzantine-style icons to inform that character's spiritual state, and Slavic music would create a meditative space between scenes.

After conceiving this interdisciplinary approach, the next matter to contend with was how authentically the characters would exist. For me, this story of salvation could not have been told without naturalistic acting, and so the world of *Cinderella* had to become multidimensional as well. To further expand from *Cinderella's* flattened, fairytale origin, I also decided to investigate different magical underpinnings that would dialogue with the various Christian elements of the play; for example, it only made sense that the golden Eucharist of the Mother's body delivered in Church would stem from witchcraft.

Religious tropes would be invoked and interwoven with paganism to expand the definition of spirituality outside religious precedent. This intermingling would be but one of many instances where doubling proved inte-



gral: twins, double casting, and the crafting of two icons for each actor all explore the nature of wholeness in this play.

I knew the process behind realizing this production would have to deal with issues of faith: From where do we derive our strength? What propels us to keep going when all seems lost? How does faith vary from person to person, and how does it manifest at the level of community?

For the first half of the creative process while the script was still evolving, weekly meetings were held for all members of the production to gather and discuss the source of their faith. Within the community of the production, there were also five actor-painter subgroups that met weekly to discuss character development and personal growth.

From meeting with the community as a whole, meeting with the community of artists, and having individual consultations with the actors, I decided to take a leap of faith. I realized that the narrative we were generating was no longer about Cinderella finding a man. Instead of journeying to the altar as a bride, Cinderella would turn inward for completion—asserting her identity as the Light of God to conquer Darkness and restore love in her home.

In my own home, I wish to thank my family for their limitless love and support. My parents have been an incredible stand for me during the emotional journey of *Cinderella*. The love of my grandmothers and the guidance of my own mystical aunt were also crucial to my wellbeing during the process. And a great many thanks goes out to my brother, Matthew, for helping me work and rework the structure of the story.

My deepest gratitude goes out to the wonderful creative team I am so blessed to have worked with. And thanks to you, the viewer, for entering the world of *Cinderella*.

May you see the Light of your own Living God.

May you cast yourself as savior in the story of your own life.

ANDREW MICHAEL SOTIRIOU, SY '13

WRITER, DIRECTOR, ART DIRECTOR

Cinderella

Saybrook College, 242 Elm St.
in the SY Underbrook,
Entrance H

The Light of God

Written & Directed by Andrew Sotiriou
Produced by Nicholas Leingang
Musical Direction by Alexandra Turrini
A Creative and Performing Arts Production;
co-funded by the Hellenic Studies Program

April 4 - 6, 8 pm
April 7, 2 pm

Creative Team

CAST

Clio Contogenis	<i>Cinderella</i>
Monica Hannush	<i>Mother/Mystic</i>
Tiffany Polk	<i>Elder Sister 1</i>
Grace Steig	<i>Elder Sister 2</i>
Alex Steiner	<i>Father/Priest</i>

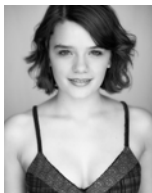
ARTISTS

Rebecca Aston	<i>Mother/Mystic</i>
Katelyn Chan	<i>The Cow (Mask-Maker)</i>
Isabella Huffington	<i>Book Illustrator</i>
Susanna Koetter	<i>Elder Sister 1</i>
Jacqueline Lee	<i>Cinderella</i>
Larissa Pham	<i>Elder Sister 2</i>
Autumn Von Plinsky	<i>Father/Priest</i>

CREW

Andrew Michael Sotiriou	<i>Writer/Director/Art Director</i>
Nicholas Leingang	<i>Producer</i>
Max Ritvo	<i>Dramaturg</i>
Charlotte McCurdy	<i>Kinetic Consultant</i>
Andrew Freeburg	<i>Assistant Director/Technical Director/Lighting Designer</i>
Alexandra Turrini	<i>Musical Director</i>
Paul Doyle	<i>Book Designer</i>

Actors



CLIO CONTOGENIS, TD '14

Cinderella

She has acted all her life, and has been in several shows at Yale, including Coriolanus and Urinetown this semester, but never has she participated in a production quite like this one. It has been shocking and enlightening to realize how similar she is to Cinderella in so many ways, and how different she is in others. She has enjoyed the process of becoming so invested in this role that she sometimes does not know where she ends and Cinderella begins, and values how hard she has been pushed throughout this whole process. Finally, she would like to thank Andrew for being such a lovely and inspiring director.



MONICA HANNUSH, PC '15

Mother/Mystic

Monica is so proud to be a part of the gifted and loving Cinderella community. Can't thank Andrew enough for all of his piercing insight, and the beautiful Clio for letting her scream at her. The development of the role took some picking of brain scabs and facing of some hideous truths: the least she could do to contribute to the life that the amazing artists and other actors gave to the production. Also she is grateful to have worked with the cast of Osama Play just a few short weeks before Cinderella.



TIFFANY POLK, DC '12

Elder Sister 1

Tiffany is a senior Psychology major. She is the director of Red Hot Poker, and has been in the group since her freshman year. She is one of Cinderella's elder sis-



ters in this production. She loves the role, and feels as though it has helped her to channel the evil bitch that was always deep down inside. She would like to thank Andrew, Grace, Nick, and HIP STUDENT for helping her in this journey.



GRACE STEIG, SM '15

Elder Sister 2

Grace is thrilled to be a relative newcomer to theatre at Yale. This semester, she was sound designer for *The Gershins Go Camping*, but she makes her acting debut as the second Elder Sister in *Cinderella*. She couldn't have chosen a more inspiring and immersive project to be a part of and has truly valued the creativity of all the collaborators. She would like to give special recognition to Larissa, whose art has been formative in creating Elder Sister 2, and to Andrew, for guiding the show along its whole process. Grace appreciates your support in attending this production and hopes you enjoy the experience.



ALEX STEINER, BK '13

Father/Priest

Alex hails from Los Angeles, California, but has always dreamed of living in a small Greek mountain village. When neither in rehearsal nor performing exorcisms, Alex can be found hanging out with friends or debating in the Yale Conservative Party. He would like to thank his parents, the gentlemen of Berkeley B-32, and everyone involved in this production.

Artists



REBECCA ASTON, MC '14

Mother/Mystic

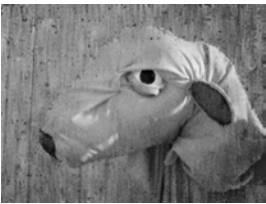
Rebecca is an art major exploring identity embodied in the objects and culture we carry with us, but more importantly the spaces and holes we carry when such things are cut from our lives. It has been interesting for her to translate her painting style into a Byzantine style. Byzantine art was used as a visual religious trope to explore the concept of spirituality in an individual. With the characters of the mother and the mystic she focused on the banality of the exalted; both figures are now frail in their old age and the mother especially does not fit the dichotomy of good and evil. The mother made a life for herself as best as she could, however, the results were flawed and her knitting in the icon represents this. It trails from her hands, departing from the Byzantine style and so reminds us of the mother's imperfections.



KATELYN CHAN, SM '15

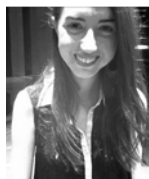
Cow (Mask-Maker)

Katelyn Chan hails from Anchorage, AK, where throughout high school she designed theater sets and costumes. Her theatrical participation is not limited to backstage work; Katy is an accomplished actress who has enjoyed success in state theater circles. At Yale, Katy is an active member of the Saint Thomas More Chapel community. At heart she is an Alaskan outdoors girl. She has enjoyed growing with the Cinderella community, developing the Byzantine motif and translating it into the design of the cow mask for the mother. As the artwork was developed, the mask grew into a costume for the mother, maintaining the three dimensional anatomy of the cow while flattening the cow's markings into the traditional style of Byzantine art. Working with wire and fabric has become second nature to Katy





as she has extensively pursued both mediums in separate projects. The opportunity to merge these mediums in the mask has proved to be both a gift and a challenge in the creation of the mask.



ISABELLA HUFFINGTON, DC '14

Book Illustrator

She has been doing modern art for the last 5 years and before that she was doing classical art. Isabella likes using simple shapes to create complex designs, going from an individual object to a large whole. She likes creating designs that look computer generated but doing them by hand, as she doesn't think technology needs to permeate into every aspect of our lives. She had her first show in 2010. This is her first time doing art for a production, so it was quite a bit of fun for her to collaborate and work off each other's ideas.



SUSANNA KOETTER, JE '13

Elder Sister 1


Susanna is a Boston native majoring in art and art history with a focus in painting. Totally unversed in Byzantine iconography prior to the Cinderella project, Susanna discovered the incredibly useful skill of collage as a means to construct useful painting references. She simply cannot get enough of that gold spray paint.



JACQUELINE LEE, MC '14

Cinderella

This is Jacqi's first time working on a collaborative production, and it was definitely a new and impactful experience for her. She concentrates mostly in painting and graphic design. In her work, she is interested in exploring the idea of spirituality -- the idea of being and of existing as a mind and soul. How you hold your-



self together and how you are held together by things outside of yourself and even outside of your world. What guides you. What allows you to move through moments of both tension and release, of both fragility and strength. What allows you to hold still and remain composed and hold onto a core when the environment and the circumstances around you change. It was very interesting for her to reflect on both the character of Cinderella and herself in relation to her character. Jacqi believes that process added a level of investment to the paintings and the overall experience, which made this project unique.



LARISSA PHAM, CC '14

Elder Sister 2


Larissa is a sophomore currently pursuing questions in the fields of studio art, art history, and psychology. Her most recent work deals with the construction (and de-construction) of identity: the things that hold us together as well as compress and confine us. So far, this query has manifested in large-scale paintings and drawings of an installation composed of found branches and other organic material. In working on the icons for Cinderella, Larissa sought to focus on the twin ideas of possession and exorcism. What forces are we imprisoned by and what do they look like? And what does freedom look like, as well?



AUTUMN VON PLINSKY, TD '13

Father/Priest

For Autumn being an artist for this show has definitely been a unique experience compared to previous theater work she has done while at Yale. Working actively with the person she was attempting to represent proved both a little confusing and challenging, but both in a good way. Her previous and current theater experience has usually been that of translating a very outlined idea into a solid reality (as technical director, graphic designer,



and artistic consultant for several Dramat and Sudler shows), so the opportunity to invent under fewer restrictions was a somewhat new experience. Her question to herself still remains as to what realm she considers her contribution to this project to fall under.

Crew



ANDREW MICHAEL SOTIRIOU, SY '13

Writer/Director/Art Director

Cinderella: The Light of God has transformed Andrew Michael, a junior American Studies major in Saybrook College. As the concept for Cinderella evolved, so has he: in his resolve, his ability to love, and the strength of his faith. As a Yale undergraduate, Andrew Michael has art directed productions of Martin Buber's *Elijah* and Aeschylus' *The Persians*; Cinderella is his debut as a playwright and director. His love and gratitude to all who helped Cinderella see the stage.



NICHOLAS LEINGANG, SY '13

Producer

Nicholas Leingang is from North Dakota and junior in Environmental Studies major. One of five children, he has found a second family in groups like Red Hot Poker and the Cinderella cast, and entertains himself primarily with hating capitalism, loving the environment, and cooking vegetables constantly.

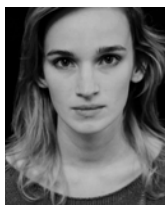


MAX RITVO, JE '13

Dramaturg

Max was drawn to this project due to a special interest in Hellenic, West African, and Afro-Caribbean magic

practices. This was his first time as a Dramaturg. He studies poetry and is Editor in Chief of the Yale Poetry Review.



CHARLOTTE MCCURDY, JE '13

Kinetic Consultant

She is the co-Director of The Control Group and co-creator on the upcoming production FEED. She is grateful to the Cinderella process for re-grounding her in reflection of what her purpose and current exploration in live performance is really about.



ANDREW FREEBURG, TD '13

Assistant Director/Technical Director/
Lighting Designer

An actor by training and designer by calling, Andrew has done a few shows in his time at Yale, but never anything as strange and beautiful as Cinderella. It has been a privilege to design in concert with such great artists, and together we created something that is not simply beautiful but intentional, purposeful, down to the most minute detail. In the past, he has crafted scenes for Adding Machine: A Musical, Blackbird, True West, and Assassins, and has been in scenes of The Persians, Julius Caesar, and Coriolanus. Oh, and come see The Girl from Andros in two weeks!



ALEXANDRA TURRINI, SY '13

Musical Director

Alexandra is studying physics. This is her first time musical directing for a Yale production, but she previously musical directed the a cappella group The New Blue. She is a third year member of the Yale Women's Slavic Chorus, a group of women singing music from across the Balkan countries. The music presented comes from a variety of different countries: from Bosnia to



Bulgaria to Georgia, and was chosen to fit the theme, emotions, and movement of each scene in Cinderella. Alex is thrilled to have worked on this show, and is grateful to Andrew and the Cinderella cast and crew for giving her this opportunity.



PAUL DOYLE, BK '13

Book Designer

Paul is majoring in Art. This is his first time working on a dramatic production at Yale, and he has thoroughly enjoyed translating the spirit of Cinderella into the design of this publication with the help of Andrew, Maria, and Isabella.



Magic and Morality in Sotiriou's *Cinderella*

Sotiriou's adaptation of the Greek folktale *Cinderella* is an act of transubstantiating Christianity into magic. By magic I mean an individualized, customized relationship with the supernatural. There is no mediating allegory or congregation, no institutional or ethical normativity that must be orthopractically negotiated around to get what you want. There is just an imagined ritual, the faith in the ritual, and the imaginer setting her own terms. The Christian themes in *Cinderella*—reincarnation, redemption, and immaculate conception are made domestic—brought into the mouths and onto the bodies of a family warring over alcoholism, promiscuity, sadism and deeply involved in a personal struggle with the supernatural. Magic is not bad, and it isn't good either. It's powerful.

What is most luminous about this manner in which the supernatural develops out of the actions and personalities of individuals is that an ethics develop from psychological and social collision as well. Ethics here are not proscribed by a hegemonic religious diction, nor do they come from an entirely rationalized secular framework, humanistic, utilitarian, or otherwise—the ethics rather coalesce around the unspoken, the intuitive, the heartfelt. Our empathy with Cinderella is instructive in the way Christ's parables must've been instructive to those who could feasibly make real people out in them. What is ultimately suggested by the folktale is a moral pedagogy that is not entirely unified, maybe not entirely rationally justifiable, but which undeniably speaks to us. For it is here, in the automatic, apolitical realm of moral reflex, in the vast tracts of space in which we agree without needing to discuss it—for instance—love is a good thing, that the vast majority of our ethical and emotional lives get played out.

Ultimately we come full circle to Christian ethics and themes, but first, magic is accepted as real and the characters receive the gift of it. In the end, we reach our vital truisms out of the way our sympathies are constructed. It might seem a bit like allowing monkeys to bang on a type-writer until they produce Shakespeare, this permission of arbitrary emotional drives being



powered by magic until they end up in the Christian confines—but the one premise that *is* perhaps stipulated by the folktale, magical paradigm, is that there's something divine about these monkeys. As Man is created in the image of God, his magic and his feelings resolve themselves in a matter mimetic to God's will. The diluvian sisters, the rainbow of Cinderella—they are rhythmic pulsations of pre-Christian Gods, of Christ, and of a host of other unnamable, or unnamed ontological positioning satellites. They are part of the rhythms of human discourse. Christian themes, then, are not responsible for the ethics of the folktale, they represent one manifestation, very present in the mind of Sotiriou and in the mind of the folk bard who first spun this yarn, of a dynamic, collective, fundamentally human, fundamentally social way of life and understanding of the supernatural's place in it.

MAX RITVO, JE '13
DRAMATURG

Performed Music in *Cinderella*

The songs performed in *Cinderella* are traditional pieces from across the Balkans arranged for a choir. Each song has a rich cultural tradition surrounding it, and the subject matter ranges from the horrors of war to the Virgin Mary, from a tale of three girls by the river to the coming of Easter. They feature dialects not currently spoken today, but are still actively sung. Singing groups around the world are keeping the cultural traditions of these songs alive, among them the Yale Women's Slavic Chorus.

The music chosen for *Cinderella* places emphasis on the mood and emotional undercurrent behind characters and their interactions with one another. For example, the slaughter scene in which the Elder Sisters kill the Mother is underscored by the Dove Song, a blend of a song from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Mongolia. The two high-pitched voices are stand-ins for the Elder Sister, while the deeper voice weighing down the song represents a mournful *Cinderella*. In this performance both recordings and live voices will be used, each song providing another layer to the *Cinderella* folktale.

ALEXANDRA TURRINI, SY '13
MUSICAL DIRECTOR

LIST OF SONGS

Ja Urani: Serbia, Yale Women's Slavic Chorus (Live)
A Shto Cemo Ljubav Kriti: Bosnia, Unknown Artist
Subrali sa se Subrali: Bulgaria, Kitka
The Dove Song: FYROM/Mongolia, Yale Women's Slavic Chorus (Live)
Kon Bezhit: Russia, Unknown Artist
Izrazlo Dŭrvo Visoko: Bulgaria/FYROM, Yale Women's Slavic Chorus (Live)
Ladarke idu V Selo: Croatia, Lado
Deivoiko Mari Xubava: Bulgaria, Yale Women's Slavic Chorus (Live)
Prochu Se Moma Nedelya: Bulgaria, Yale Women's Slavic Chorus

SINGERS

Leslie Hiciano, BR '14
Chihiro Isozaki, TC '15
Celia Rostow, JE '13



The Geography of Knowledge: The Internal Space of Cinderella's House and the External Space of the Village

The most popular fairy tale of all time, "Cinderella" unfolds within a small, circumscribed geographical sphere that features little in the way of description. Contrast the marine paradise of Hans Christian Andersen's "Little Mermaid" or the sumptuously furnished mansion of the Beast in Beaumont's "Beauty and the Beast." The action of "Cinderella," the Greek "Cinderella" undoubtedly a part of the tale's tradition, occurs in two spaces portrayed with a spare amount of detail: the house of Cinderella and her sisters, the internal space; and the space of the village or beyond the village, the external space. These spaces lend themselves to a number of interpretations. Cinderella's house in particular can assume many guises, reminiscent of the sacred hearth in ancient Rome where the Vestal virgins tended the civic fire or else representing the turbulent oedipal period in a young girl's life.

Usually feminists and psychoanalysts have examined "Cinderella" based on a constellation of principle characters and, to an extent, the setting. That said, the setting, as starkly developed as it is, exhibits an intriguing pattern. Cinderella's house, quite capable of retaining its feminist or psychoanalytical glosses, appears to be a space of knowledge, a place where information resides, familial truth lives, secrets are revealed. Conversely, in the unspecified region beyond the village or the village itself, the environment outside Cinderella's house seems to be a place of ignorance, mystery, or wonderment; the village church most notably embodies these notions. Considered together, the two settings of Cinderella gesture to a geography of knowledge, awareness, or cognizance such that the truth belongs to the internal space of Cinderella's house and ignorance to the external space of the village and its surroundings.

The internal space of Cinderella's house distinguishes itself as a realm of knowledge, with Cinderella and her mother in possession of this knowledge or those who make known this knowledge to the ignorant. The first instance of knowledge manifesting itself occurs in the cow, an incarnation of the mother who grows anxious about the conduct of her disobedient elder



daughters. The bovine creature seems to understand the sort of household in which she finds herself; she lives in a family with cruel, ungrateful children who bully the youngest child. In effect, the household is far from ideal and promises much misery for a weaker party whoever that may be. All these thoughts coalesce in the cow who “turned her head, looked [at Cinderella] in the eyes, and mooed sorrowfully ... as if she felt the pain of her child.”

To be explicit, the “pain” amounts to: the elder sisters “ordered the youngest sister to do their work. The youngest sister would obediently complete the chore. Day and night she found herself in the kitchen and at the fireplace ... the youngest sister had a face and clothes forever stained with soot. The cow of course also knows the perpetrators responsible for Cinderella’s mistreatment. Her interaction with them differs dramatically from the interaction with her youngest child: “When the two elder daughters came near her though, she hit them with her horns.” The comportment of the cow, to a degree, may serve as a foreshadowing of the future that indeed visits misfortune upon herself as well as to Cinderella. Comprehending all this, the cow, omniscient in the ways of her family, makes marks of distress or shows signs of aggression, since she appreciates the gravity of the present situation and anticipates prospective hardship.

The cow’s husband next learns the sort of household in which he finds himself when Cinderella reveals that his wife has changed into a cow, instigated by the behavior of the elder daughters. This declaration eventually persuades the father to seek his fortune elsewhere, and he abandons his children to their own devices. The act of abandonment is particularly interesting: no doubt his conspicuous absence allows the conflict among the women of the tale to develop, but it may additionally make a statement about knowledge. The father now knows all, that some of his children do not love nor respect the parents. He joins his wife in understanding; a sympathy of information shared connects them to one another, aside from their married status. The male equivalent of transforming into a cow entails leaving the flawed familial unit. Both reactions represent ways in which people manage the burden of knowledge; and granted, the knowledge in question can be difficult to stomach. Nevertheless, awareness of the facts has affects, causing change and altering relationships.

The most striking altered relationship is the one between Cinderella and her mother, or Cinderella and the cow. The elder sisters slaughter and consume the cow, leaving Cinderella to gather the bones, which she places into a chest that later receives a proper Christian burial. However, the bones continue their transformative work, changing into a chest filled with gleaming florins and liras. Since Cinderella alone paid respect to her dead mother, she alone enjoys the knowledge of the great treasure in the environs of the familial home: “she covered the chest quickly so that no one would see the riches that appeared before her.” The store of money belongs to her



exclusively, just as the secret of its location belongs to her exclusively. By extension, knowledge of parental, especially maternal, favor belongs to her alone. The gold coins, on a reciprocal scale, seem to be the fulfillment of the implied promise that the cow makes to assist, in some manner, her youngest daughter whom she knew would meet with adversity. Moreover, this second transformation suggests another moment of foreshadowing, hinting that Cinderella's degradation will soon turn into her ascendancy.

On the way to the ascent, Cinderella makes use of the gold florins and liras, throwing them to the worshippers at an Easter service. The elder sisters also attend the service and receive the money along with the other members of the church, leading them to mock Cinderella's staying home and needlessly excluding herself from a lavish munificence. At this point, Cinderella engages in a striking display of dramatic irony, replying to her jeering siblings: "I do not have a need for liras and florins ... What would I do with them? Where do I go so that I can spend them." Indeed, Cinderella does not need florins and liras because she possesses a chest full of them. However, she knows perfectly well what to do with them: offer them to the Easter worshippers to attract the attention of someone rich or socially powerful. After all, the church constitutes a venue where all the classes of society can mingle without reservation. Furthermore, she knows where to go to spend them: to church to purchase, in a crude materialistic way, the regard of, once more, that rich, important someone; she plans literally to buy her way out of her current station. Cinderella's retort deflects any suspicion that may fall upon her while belying her strategic resourcefulness, since only she understands the true significance of what occurs behind the scenes at church.

The fruition of Cinderella's efforts culminates in the fitting of the slipper on the girl's foot, perhaps the most iconic instant in the fairy tale. Not surprisingly, the moment of revelation takes place in Cinderella's house. The prince and his small retinue visit all the houses in the village, requesting that every girl and woman try on the slipper. Within the right house, with the right foot "effortlessly [giving] shape" to the slipper that does "not require any force at all to fit," Cinderella is revealed to be the benevolent spirit that spills money on the Easter worshippers. The "old woman" dressed in stained rags reveals herself to be the girl "with a beautiful character." In effect, the fitting of the slipper imparts the knowledge that the young girl who sat amongst the ashes will marry the prince, "a man desired by all the women in the village," that the youngest child in a certain family in the village will be the wife of a future monarch, that this girl and the mysterious girl at church are one in the same. The house, much like an oracle, is the seat of all this information. Within the house, explanations emerge.

Outside the house, in the external space, ignorance emerges. When he returns to his abode, the father of Cinderella expresses puzzlement over the location of his wife. He does not see her nor does he realize that she has



transformed into a cow since he has been away from his house: "The father of the family ... lived apart from it. He roamed wherever he could find work because there was none to be found in the village." In pursuing the role of breadwinner, he neglects all else, unaware of the conduct of his elder daughters toward his youngest child and the ensuing anxiety this causes his wife. His absence precludes him from knowing that his household is in a state of disarray, disconnecting him from reality until he bothers to discover the problem with a direct question to his children. By extension, his ignorance arises from his residing in the external space beyond the house. "Roaming wherever" denies him knowledge and the access to knowledge. The search for employment, in taking him outside the familial home, robs him of information. He only gains knowledge once he reenters the house.

Interestingly, another house, the church, a house of God, also seems to be a place of ignorance. During Easter service, the church marks the sight where Cinderella casts down the treasure of the gold coins from an upper story balcony. However, none of the worshippers knows who or what is responsible for the generous display: "no one saw her as she traveled from her home. She ... entered from the back door ... without being noticed by anyone. ... she scattered about the liras and florins. ... Cinderella was able to leave unnoticed." While the villagers gather the coins, they do "not give a second thought to who was throwing" the money. This inattention makes sense, since the church is of course beyond Cinderella's house. It, too, becomes a part of the external space where dwells the lack of knowledge. Much like the father, the villagers at church do not know about all that transpires within the walls of their communal house of worship; they do not know about the actions of one of their own, just as the father does not know about the transformation of his own wife into a cow.

Yet the congregants are curious. They cannot address a question to anyone, as the father can, but they do try to make an effort to discover the following year, at the next Easter service, who throws the money. The narrator of the tale says: "Someone, however, in the darkness, distinguished that from the women's sector a girl came running," inspiring the others to wonder about the occurrence, though without anyone capable of supplying an explanation. Some knowledge reaches the villagers, but the mystery and wonderment mount; overall, ignorance prevails. The subsequent year, when the attempt to discover the liberal spirit is more concerted, the villagers can only claim that they saw a beautiful girl, a description that does add something to the aggregate store of knowledge but a description nonetheless that could apply to multiple girls within or outside the village. The net results still leaves the church-goers ignorant of the faceless benefactor. After all, they do not even know whether this beautiful girl belongs to their village or not, whether she be rich or poor, whether her character be good or bad. Again,



the church is not Cinderella's house but just another edifice in the external space under ignorance's jurisdiction.

The Greek "Cinderella" suggests a notion of a geography of knowledge. Information seems to reside comfortably in Cinderella's house, the internal space, where Cinderella herself and her mother chiefly possess knowledge. In contrast, the external space of the territory beyond the village and the village church distinguish themselves as realms of ignorance, though hints at the truth may arise.

NIKKI SINGH, TC '12



CINDERELLA



ELDER SISTER 1



ELDER SISTER 2



MOTHER



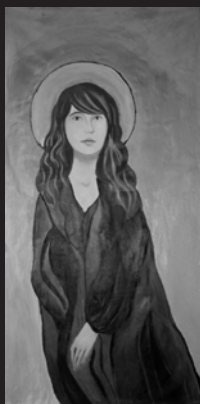
FATHER



CINDERELLA



ELDER SISTER 1



ELDER SISTER 2



MYSTIC



PRIEST

Cinderella

A Folktale from Nymphaio (A Village in Northern Greece)

Translated by Andrew Michael Sotiriou

From the book by Nikolaou Lousta:
Folklore Study of Nymphaio (in Greek).
Thessaloniki, 1996, pages: 141-144

There was and there wasn't, once upon a time, a family composed of a father, a mother, and three girls. As it happens in life, the three girls possessed different qualities. The two older sisters possessed a very bad character.

They were difficult, disobedient, egotistical, and lazy, but their worst character flaw was that they—with all their might—hated their younger sister. They hated her because she was more beautiful than them. She was helpful, common, sweet, and full of goodness. This sister also had an intense love for her mother, completely unlike the elder sisters, who were indifferent and did not express love—neither for their parents who gave them birth nor for other people. The father of the family, the majority of the time, lived apart from his wife and children. He roamed wherever he could find work because there was none to be found in the village. Because of this lack, the mother and her three daughters remained alone in the village for most of the year. The primary issue in the home was the disobedience of the elder daughters, which was only intensified by the awful manner that they treated their mother. These daughters never performed a single task that was asked of them—instead, they ordered the youngest sister to do their work. The youngest sister would always obediently complete the chore. Day and night she found herself in the kitchen and at the fireplace—at this time there were no electric kitchens as we have today. All the food was cooked in the fireplace, and because of this the youngest sister had a face and clothes forever stained with soot. Her sisters bestowed upon her the title Cinderella and mocked her constantly. The mother experienced great grief and worry, and threatened her two elder daughters that she would turn into a cow—then, she said, they would understand what they had to lose. This warning was met with laughter as the two older sisters continued to mock their mother. Only the youngest feared that their mother would realize the threat. “Please don't, my Good Mother. How can you leave me? How can you leave me here with sisters that hate me so?” And the older these sisters got, the worse they became.

Their mother didn't last and one day she transformed into a cow. The youngest, when she saw the cow, let out a torrent of tears and hid behind the fireplace—day and night lamenting the fate that had befallen her mother. She approached the cow; she embraced her, she pet her and she cried with her whole heart. The cow turned her head, looked her daughter in the eyes, and mooed sorrowfully: Moo, moo . . . as if she felt the pain of her child. When the two elder daughters came near her though, she hit them with her horns. They stopped approaching her and agreed that they should slaughter her because she did not give milk.

Soon after the transformation, the father arrived in the village. When he went into the house and didn't find his wife, the mother of his children, he was puzzled. He became uneasy when he asked the children where their mother was and he received no response.

"I've asked you so many times where your mother is and not one of you answers me. I ask you once more: What happened to your mother?" No reply. Each girl hung her head in shame, for they did not dare to look their father in the eyes. Suddenly, the youngest girl gained the courage to open her mouth and timidly told her father: "Our mother has become a cow."

"What . . . What did you say? She became a cow?" He stood frozen. "But . . . how?" he asked.

"My two older sisters tired her so, and gave her such grief each day, that she could no longer stand it—and she became a cow."

"Is it true, my girls?" he asked the eldest daughters, but he did not receive a reply. They continued to hang their heads and remain silent. In this moment he realized who the offenders behind the transformation were, and he turned to the youngest daughter before they could go to the stable together.

When they arrived there, he gently caressed the cow and tears began to run from his eyes. He couldn't stay any longer and he left crying.

The next day he told his girls that after this incident he could no longer stay with them. He told them that he would be leaving to go abroad, and that he didn't know if he would return to such a house, where children do not respect and love their parents. He only felt sorry for his youngest daughter, who was not at all to blame. He left and never again returned.

Now the eldest daughters could do as they pleased in the house. Cinderella became a servant to her sisters, and one day these sisters finally decided to slaughter the cow.

Cinderella began to cry, insisting, "It's a sin for us to slaughter our mother!" But who heard her? The cow was slaughtered and eaten over the course of several months. The only one who did not put a bite in her mouth was Cinderella, who gathered the bones of her mother as if they were sacred relics and placed them in a chest in the ground—taking care to cover it well so that it did not appear and no one could bother it.

Later after some time, she went to tend to the bones and—behold—a miracle occurred. The bones transformed into thousands of florins and liras. Cinderella was blinded by the sheen of the gold and she covered the chest quickly so that no one would see the riches that appeared before her.

Time passed. Our small Cinderella spent time wallowing about the fireplace and mourning her mother, but life continued. Spring came and with it came Easter. The eldest sisters dressed in their best and readied themselves to go to church for The Resurrection. "You won't be coming with us to church?" they asked Cinderella.

"I grieve for our mother," she told them, "and you both know very

well that we mourn our own for many years. Go by yourselves to make merry at church."

As soon as they left though, she changed her clothes and filled her pockets with florins and liras from the chest, and in no time at all she arrived at the church. The entire village was attending liturgy that night, and no one saw her as she travelled from her home. She left her horse outside the church, and quietly entered from the back door into the women's sector of the church without being noticed by anyone. The moment when the priest began to sing the "Christos Anesti" (signaling the Church's recognition of Christ's Resurrection) she scattered about the church the liras and florins. Overwhelmed, men and women threw themselves upon the bounty. They gathered the unexpected money that came from the sky, without giving a second thought to who was throwing it. With the confusion that ensued, Cinderella was able to leave unnoticed and arrive home before her sisters.

She took off her clothes and put on her work rags once more. She resumed her chores at the fireplace, and in a short while the sisters returned with gold in their hands. All smiles and arrogance they told Cinderella—*she* who did not want to go to church—what *she* missed out on: each person could have his fill of gold coins the moment of the Resurrection. "I do not have a need for liras and florins," responded Cinderella, "What would I do with them? Where do I go so that I can spend them? You two who run around all the time will no doubt make use of them."

The same event took place the next Easter. Someone, however, in the darkness, distinguished that from the women's sector a girl came running. It was from this distinction that all the village began to question the strange occurrence: no one could explain it. The news did not take long to reach the king and the royal family. Upon hearing the story, the prince devised a plan to catch this girl—if she was, in fact, a girl. The evening of Easter mass the following year, he smeared the terrace of the back entrance that led to the women's sector with honey. He said: "The honey will cause her to stick and we'll catch her. We'll see who she is and learn from where she finds so many liras to scatter about!"

Naturally, Cinderella again dressed in her gown, mounted her horse, and travelled to church. Stopping at the back door, she saw the smeared honey and understood the purpose for which it was smeared. She jumped over it, and told herself that she would do likewise upon exiting the church. She threw the liras and florins, but many people from the church were looking to the women's sector and saw the unknown girl.

They shouted: "We saw it! We saw it! It's a beautiful girl!" Cinderella, upon hearing the voices, left as quickly as she could so that they would not catch her, but in her rush and state of fright, she forgot about the smeared

honey. She stepped in it, and one of her slippers was stuck to it. How could she turn back to go get it? She mounted her horse and became invisible as she rode off into the night. She returned to her nest, to her fireplace. In a short while her sisters returned with liras.

“Did you hear the news, sister? The girl who’s been throwing gold coins these past three years, because she was in such a rush to flee, left behind a slipper! Now the prince has given an order that all that girls in the village must try the slipper on. He will take the girl whose foot the slipper fits as his wife!”

The following day, the prince and his attendants went from house to house so that each girl could try the slipper on. This slipper meant that any girl in the village could be the lucky one to wed the prince—but no one proved a match for it. The prince finally arrived at Cinderella’s house. Cinderella’s sisters, all dressed up, tried to shove their fat feet into the slipper . . . but to no avail. The prince and his attendants readied to leave because the sisters, who hated Cinderella so, did not mention that there was yet another girl in the house. Luckily, one of the prince’s officials noticed that by the fireplace in the other room sat, with her back turned, an old woman. He assumed this because her clothes were black and stained from the cinders of the fireplace. He called: “My prince, there is down by the fireplace another woman.”

The prince and his entourage together changed direction and moved toward the fireplace. There they saw, beneath the stained and ragged clothes, a girl with a beautiful character who was both scared and humble. “Why did you hide and not want to try as well?” asked the prince.

“Why should I try?” replied Cinderella. “I am an unfortunate poor girl that has lost her mother. I have not left this house for almost three years now.”

“My girl, we cannot make exceptions,” said the prince. “Everyone must abide by the order. We will try the slipper on everyone. Please unfold your leg so that we can try it on you.” The slipper did not require any force at all to fit—Cinderella’s foot effortlessly gave shape to it. Everyone was astonished, Cinderella’s sisters most of all, for they did not wish to believe that their sister would marry the prince, a man desired by all the women in the village. Cinderella brought out the other slipper, and when she washed and dressed in her new clothes, she lit up with beauty. They went to the palace, and after a short while was held the fantastic wedding ceremony, which was attended by all the princes and princesses of the land.

Cinderella, blessed as the wife of the prince, and having a very big heart, forgave her two wicked sisters and married them off to princes as well.

And they all lived well and we lived better!

