## Cyclops

Craig Bakalian

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## Foreword

For over a year and a half I have toiled and worked on this comic opera. I have learned much from this endeavor. Understanding the comedy of the play Cyclops was a life lesson that no institution of education could have taught me. Before I began to set the play to music, I read the play countless times until I fully gleaned the play's jokes. There are jokes that a modern audience will not understand because of the icons and symbols of the ancient Greek era, but the overall humor; the misogyny, the drunken worship of Bacchus, the phallic symbols, the role of the tricksters playing tricks on tricksters, maintains excitement and interest for any human living in any time period. However, it must be said that this play is for children ages 21 and older. The allusion of rape, and the jokes about it are not for an immature mind. The phallic fire-pointed olive tree log being hoisted in and out of a cave at a monster's eyes is a complete suggestion of sexual intercourse or anal sex. The suggested rape of Silenus by Cyclops is a very difficult and inappropriate comedic expression, however it must be understood in context of the ancient Greek era.

Given the banality and vulgarity expressed in this opera, it must be stated that this opera is all men. The men are stupid bumbling fools without a woman to guide their minds. All of the characters' views of Helen of Troy should be seen as trite expressions of manly weakness. The scenes of drinking wine should be exaggerated in this opera. The characters should wobble and stumble as drunkards do. Odysseus should be overly patronized as a hero warrior. The Satyrs should be a constant buzzing and mocking of the main characters Silenus, Odysseus, and Cyclops. The mighty Boss Cyclops should never be taken seriously. Silenus's complaints should be viewed as woeful self pity.

Given the fact that this is a comedy, it is important to stage this as scenes from ancient Greece; a simple primitive island with a cave is all that should be required. Any attempt at modernizing the scenes would remove the context of its characters, especially Cyclops. The cave can be sexualized along with the log that is poked into the eye of Cylops. The Satyrs are normally costumed with hanging phallus, often erect. As stated before, this opera is for children age 21 and older. However, one could do away with all of the sexual tones of this opera and still perform it with glee.

Understanding ancient Greek drama requires research. I would urge any opera director to study Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, all of Euripides's plays that have been archived, and most importantly, a thorough reading of Joseph Campbell's documents about ancient myth and religion. It must be understood that this opera was created as a parody upon the opera world itself; the scenes and costumes must be maintained in the margins of the stage. I think this type of approach to drama is referred to as pantomime. The audience should never feel like it is Odysseus singing, they should know it is a tenor in a costume. It would be ignorant to attempt or force an individual expression of beauty on the staging and costumes because the beauty comes from a desperation of being trapped; I know this is a very subtle point, but it is important. There is no freedom of beauty in this opera, the men are trapped in their foolish minds, only to be released from the trap by lies and tricks. Odysseus is a trickster as in any ancient myth, exactly similar to any Native American animal trickster myth. There is nothing superior about the men of this play, the humor and comedy resides in their inferior state. Cyclops is a standard ogre found in many myths throughout the world. Even though Silenus is the elder father of the island, the alpha male who isn't an alpha male, he is full of pity and subjected to the threats of Cyclops.
${ }^{4}$ The music (the score is in C with no instrument transpositions) I created in this opera should remain as a means of enhancing the drama of the play. The pit instrumentation should be minimal; no more than three first chair violins, three second chair violins, two violas, two cellos, and one double bass. However, I urge the music director to use electric string instruments with the possibility of altering the timbre to meet the needs of the drama in any way the director seems fit. The accordion is the substitute instrument replacing the baroque harpsichord. The accordion plays a central part of the orchestra, it must be amplified, and it also has the possibility of altering its timbre. The flute, saxophone (primarily baritone), trumpet and trombone should also be amplified with a microphone. The percussion players, depending upon the opera stage, audience seats, and the percussion instrument, may not need amplification. All of the electronic amplified instruments will require a complex mixing board run by a sound engineer.

The vocalist should be amplified with microphones, especially while the orchestra is playing in full force. Cylops's voice timbre can be altered in ways that would inflect his dominance and downfall during the drama. It is up to the director to use these special effects. I am leaving the possibility of using digital sound processing effects on all instrumental and vocal parts as an enhancement. The director should use DSP as a special effect and not as a general form of music expression. But, this opera can be performed with no digital sound processing effects. It is the director's choice. I must also state that I have little experience in DSP; the music score has no markings for DSP. The closest I get to a digital sound effect is the implementation of a didgeridoo, which may need to be amplified!

It must also be noted that the parts are not included with the score. You must contact Craig Bakalian craigbakalian@verizon.net to get a set of complete parts. It must also be noted that the score does not contain phrasing marks. Again, please contact Craig Bakalian for a score with phrasing marks.

Craig Bakalian
December 24, 2018

## Acknowledgements

I have to thank, with great respect and gratitude, George Theodoridis for his English translation of this ancient Greek play by Euripides. I must thank him for allowing me to use his translation in this opera. We have contacted each other via email, and share similar attitudes and approaches towards the monetization of artistic efforts. Mr. Theodoridis maintains a similar attitude about the performance of his work as I do; you must contact us if you are performing this opera for profit or not-for-profit. The Portable Document Format (PDF) file that I freely downloaded from his website expresses everything any professional opera director needs to know before producing it, or even planning to produce it. Please see the section below on performance rights. You must contact me at my email, craigbakalian@verizon.net before any plans of performance of this opera.

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## Damn All Women









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## Here Comes Cyclops

Act II
Craig Bakalian




Odysseus

Silenus

Satyrs










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## Die as a Noble










$30$


$32$















## Look Up at Me Act II

Craig Bakalian

















Who Are These Men Act II





## They Beat Me


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## A Change in the Menu

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\underset{\text { Act II }}{\text { Hold the Crap }} \quad \text { Craig Bakalian }
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Timpani






Odysseus
Silenus

Cyclops














Where Are You From?








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## God of Wealth






















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