

ARIADNE

auf Naxos

by Richard Strauss





The Composer
Writer of the opera



The Soprano/ Ariadne
*Star of the
Composer's opera*



Zerbinetta
*Comedienne and
leader of the
burlesque group*



The Major-Domo
*Head of the household
of the wealthiest
man in Vienna*



The Tenor/ Bacchus
*Male lead of the
Composer's opera*



The Music Master
*The Composer's
teacher*



Harlekin



Truffaldin



Brighella



Scaramuccio

Four male members of the burlesque group

Both groups resent having to perform on the same night: The operatic artists deem the vaudeville act ridiculous while the comedians consider the opera deadly dull.



Suddenly, the Major-Domo, the nobleman's head servant, appears to announce that the opera and comedy must be performed simultaneously for the evening fireworks to begin on time.



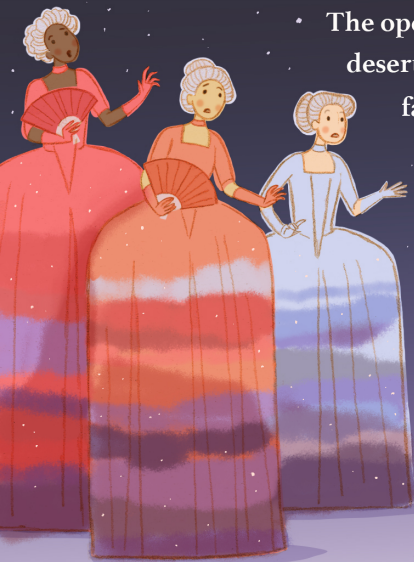
The Composer is dismayed at this news, but Zerbinetta has an idea. Since the Composer's opera portrays Ariadne abandoned by Theseus on the island of Naxos, the comedians can also appear on the island and encourage her to find a new lover.



Newly inspired by his budding love for Zerbinetta, the Composer agrees to compromise and continue with the performance—until he realizes what he has done.



The opera begins with Ariadne deserted on the island, lamenting her fate while three Nymphs look on.



Ariadne longs for death and eagerly awaits the arrival of Hermes, who will escort her to the afterlife.

Then, the members of the comedy troupe arrive on the island and try to cheer up Ariadne—



though she is not amused by their song-and-dance routine.



Zerbinetta approaches the princess and tries to convince her that the only way to get over a broken heart is to find someone new.



The Nymphs announce the arrival of a ship on the island.



Ariadne believes Theseus has returned, but it is in fact the god Bacchus, who has just escaped from the sorceress Circe.



Bacchus is enchanted by Ariadne's beauty, and she finds herself transformed by this new love.



They prepare to depart the island together and ascend to the heavens.



Before the curtain closes, Zerbinetta reminds the audience that her solution was right all along.

