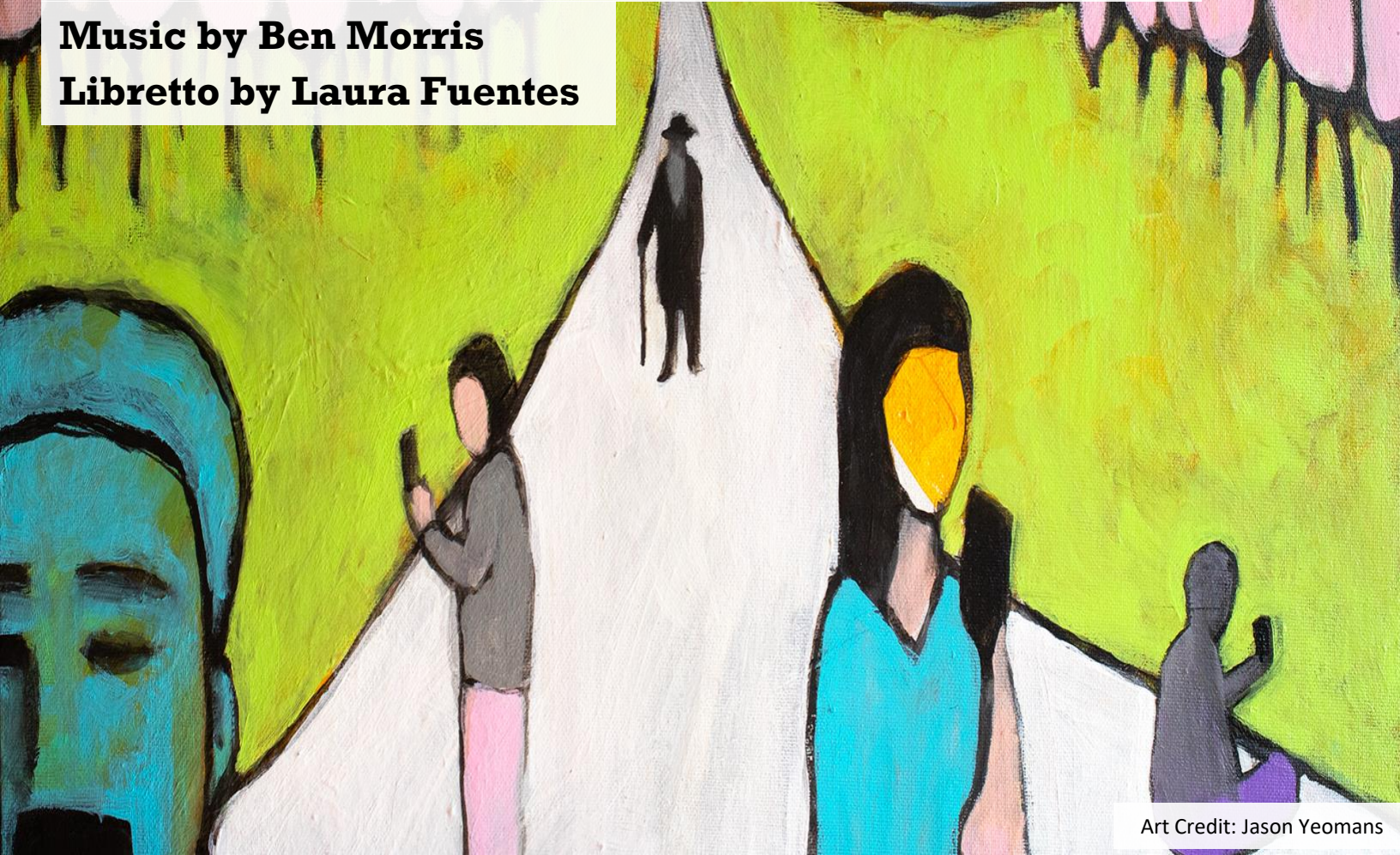


The Rip Van Winkles

Music by Ben Morris

Libretto by Laura Fuentes



Art Credit: Jason Yeomans

Prepared for GGF by Kelley Rourke, Nick Richardson and Olivia Lerwick.

THE INSIDE SCOOP

Have you ever wondered how (or why) an opera gets made? This packet offers a sneak peek behind the scenes of a brand-new opera, *The Rip Van Winkles*. Keep reading to meet the opera's creators and learn more about what inspired them to create a modern riff on a beloved story.

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Meet the Creators

Ben Morris is a versatile composer who likes to draw from diverse musical styles when creating his works. He has written music for everything from symphony orchestras, to jazz bands, to operas, and has also worked as an orchestrator and music assistant for film. An avid traveler, Ben can often be found hiking and/or exploring new countries, looking for inspiration along the way.



How did you get interested in being a composer?

I first became interested in composing through my dad, who is a documentary filmmaker. When I was young, he would play me all of the big film scores (think **John Williams**!) as well as jazz and rock classics from the 1960s and 70s. I heard jazz pianist [Keith Jarrett](#) and composer Maria Schneider in New York when I was in high school and got inspired to create my own music. I got into writing operas and musicals through Stephen Sondheim — my favorite piece of his is *Sunday in the Park with George*.



John Williams has written the film scores for more than 100 films, including the [Star Wars](#) saga, the first two *Jurassic Park* films, the first three *Harry Potter* films, *E.T.: The Extra Terrestrial*, and *Jaws*. He also maintains a busy career as an orchestral composer and conductor. (“John Williams Hollywood Bowl” by Alex McNayr is licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](#).)

Do you play any instruments?

I play piano and **melodica**. I used to play the flute in high school. But I’m a terrible singer!

What did you study in college?

I studied music composition, jazz piano, and history in college.

What was your first opera? Do you have any memorable musical experiences?

My first opera was *Las Auténticas*, an opera about a taco truck. I wrote it with Laura Fuentes (who also wrote the libretto for *The Rip Van Winkles!*). When she pitched the idea to me, I couldn’t resist writing an opera about one of my favorite kinds of food!

What other things are you interested in? Do they influence how you write or what you write about?

Outside of music, I like to travel and hike. I love reading history books, visiting art museums, and reading. Most of my pieces are inspired by things outside of music — everything from food to historical sites to beautiful vistas to bustling cities to kid’s books and everything in between. I’m drawn to the quirky and weird — things you wouldn’t normally think would be inspiring for a piece of music!



The **melodica** is a breath-powered keyboard instrument. Its sound comes from reeds that vibrate when air moves past them. (“Melodicas” is licensed under [CC BY-SA 3.0](#).)

What advice do you have for young artists?

If you’re interested in pursuing music or the arts for a living, find the things you love — pieces of music or stories or paintings or movies or plays — and try to find out what makes them tick. See if you can imitate things you like. Keep experiencing different kinds of music and art. Things that you find confusing or boring now might become your favorite pieces of art later in life, so try to keep an open mind! Work hard, practice, and try hard in school. Read books, travel, and learn about the world.

Meet the Creators



[Laura Fuentes](#) is a Baltimore-area librettist, playwright, and mother of two. Her works for the operatic stage have been commissioned and performed by the Washington National Opera's American Opera Initiative, The Glimmerglass Festival, Peabody Opera Theatre, Boston Opera Collaborative, Art Song Colorado/Sohap Ensemble, College Light Opera Company, and Victorian Lyric Opera Company.

How did you get interested in being a librettist?

I was singing the role of [Zerlina](#) in the opera *Don Giovanni*, and the singer who played Zerlina's boyfriend, Masetto, was an opera composer. He was looking for someone to write a libretto for his next opera, and I said I would give it a try. I've been writing libretti ever since!

Do you play any instruments?

I'm a singer by training, but these days I'm mostly writing for the stage.

What did you study in college?

I studied music and theater in college, including playwriting. I also have graduate degrees in vocal performance and in communication.

What was your first opera? Do you have any memorable musical experiences?

When I was 11, I auditioned for my middle school musical, *You Ain't Nothin' But a Werewolf*. I wasn't cast, so I decided to write my own musical with some friends. We even talked our teachers into letting us present it to the whole 7th grade class. Our musical didn't have werewolves, but it did have a chorus of singing and dancing bananas!

What other things are you interested in? Do they influence how you write or what you write about?

In addition to writing libretti, I also have a full-time career as a fundraiser for a big research university. In my job, I get to use my writing skills to raise money for important work across many different topics, from criminal justice to affordable housing to public health. Some of this work makes its way into my operas, like the themes of journalism and social media culture in *The Rip Van Winkles*. I'm also a mom of two kids, so I like to write about families when I can.

What advice do you have for young artists?

Remember that there are many different ways to be an artist! It's totally possible to have more than one passion, and other experiences (and even other careers) can make your artistic practice even stronger. I've met some really impressive artists who are full-time moms or who have jobs in law, science, manufacturing, food, education, and all kinds of other fields. There are lots of exciting things to do in life, so never feel like you have to limit yourself to just one.

The Origins of Rip Van Winkle

The short story that our opera is based on, *Rip Van Winkle*, is an Americanized version of a German folktale written by [Washington Irving](#). Born in 1783, Irving is recognized as one of America's first great authors (remember that he was born when America was only 7 years old!). Other than RVW, Irving is best known for his spooky tale [The Legend of Sleepy Hollow](#), which follows school teacher Ichabod Crane's encounter with the headless horseman. Can you guess who else was a famous American author at the same time? [James Fenimore Cooper](#)! Cooper's father founded Cooperstown, and Cooper himself became famous for his novel *The Leatherstocking Tales*. Both Irving and Cooper were greatly influenced by the [beauty of Upstate New York](#), and most of their stories take place right where you live.



An illustration of *Rip Van Winkle* by Arthur Rackham.
(Public domain)

Rip Van Winkle, the main character of one of Washington Irving's most famous stories, lives in the Catskill Mountains. Rip enjoys nothing so much as sitting at the local tavern and talking with friends as well as going hunting with his dog, which is how he finds himself in the woods one summer's day.

While out hunting, Rip meets a man in strange, old-fashioned clothing who's carrying a barrel, which Rip then offers to help carry up the mountain. As Rip follows the man, he hears the sound of distant thunder but sees no lightning and feels no rain. He and the man eventually come to a hollow where other men dressed in a similarly strange fashion are playing nine-pins (a type of bowling.) The rumbling balls crash mightily into the pins, creating the sound of thunder that Rip had noticed earlier. The men begin to pour drinks from the barrel, and, unable to rein in his curiosity, Rip steals some of the drink for himself. The more he drinks, the sleepier he becomes, and soon Rip is snoring soundly.

When he wakes up, everyone is gone, and his rifle is rusted and unusable. Rip sets out for the town, but nothing looks the same. His house is abandoned, everyone dresses differently, and an unfamiliar flag is flying on his favorite tavern. After much confusion, he discovers that his daughter is now a grown-up woman with a baby boy she's named after Rip, her father, who has been missing for 20 years. Rip also learns that he is no longer a subject of King George but a citizen of the new United States of America.

After Rip tells his story, most of the townsfolk think that he's lost his mind. There is, however, an old man named Peter Vanderdonk, who remembers Rip and claims that there are strange creatures in the mountains. In fact, he says that members of the ghostly crew of the explorer [Henry Hudson](#) come back every once in a while to check on the land, and that his own father saw them once in old Dutch clothes and heard the thunder of their nine-pins game.

Peter's story calms any fears the townsfolk had about Rip. He happily continues his life of idleness as an old man who loves to tell stories of the past while drinking a pint or sitting on his porch.

Ready to read the original story? [Click here.](#)

“It was 20 years ago today...”

Can you imagine what it would be like to fall asleep for twenty years and then wake up in a world that had been going on without you? No? Neither could Rip Van Winkle. That’s probably why he missed some important clues, like his rusted rifle and the extra-long beard growing from his chin. Lots of other things had happened, too. His village was full of new buildings. People were wearing a new style of clothing. His children had grown up, and old friends were no longer around. Most mind-blowing of all: the entire government had changed, thanks to the American Revolution. Back when Rip had followed the strange old man into the mountains, New York was one of thirteen colonies under the control of the British king. When he woke up, the flag of the newly-formed United States was flying. Citizens were lining up for an election!

Have you been asleep for the last 20 years? Here’s what you missed...

- May 21, 2003: The finale of *American Idol* Season 2 drew 38.1 million viewers. It was the most watched episode in the series’ history. Ruben Studdard was crowned [the winner](#).
- December 26, 2004: A 9.1-magnitude earthquake in the Indian Ocean caused a tsunami that struck Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and other South Asian countries.
- April 23, 2005: The first video was uploaded to YouTube. It’s called [“Me at the zoo”](#) and it features one of YouTube’s founders talking about elephants at the San Diego Zoo.
- August 29, 2005: **Hurricane Katrina** made landfall in Louisiana as a Category 3 hurricane. It was one of the deadliest and most destructive hurricanes in US history.
- January 16, 2007: Netflix began its online streaming service, replacing DVD rentals.
- June 29, 2007: Apple released its first version of the iPhone.
- August 17, 2008: US swimmer [Michael Phelps won 8 gold medals](#) in the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the most gold medals in a single Olympics by any athlete.
- January 20, 2009: **Barack Obama** was sworn into office as President of the United States. He’s the first person of African descent to be President.
- Spring 2010: **Silly Bandz** were the hottest kids’ fashion accessory, and school districts banned them for being “distractions” in the classroom.
- July 15, 2012: The K-pop song [“Gangnam Style”](#) by South Korean rapper/singer Psy was released on YouTube. It later became the first video to pass 1 billion views on the site.
- November 27, 2013: Disney’s *Frozen* was released in theaters. It made \$1.285 billion at the box office, a record high for an animated film.
- June 26, 2015: The US Supreme Court legalized marriage equality in all 50 states.
- August 2016: American Gymnast [Simone Biles](#) captured the world’s attention with her incredible performances at the Rio Olympics, winning five medals.
- Spring 2017: Kids across the US played with **fidget spinners**. (And, yes, they too were banned in some schools.)
- March 11, 2020: The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic, shutting down schools and businesses around the world for a few months.
- August 30, 2021: The US removed the last of its military troops from Afghanistan, marking a formal end to the Global War on Terrorism.
- September 8, 2022: Queen Elizabeth II died. She was Britain’s longest-serving monarch with 70 years as Queen.



Hurricane Katrina
(Public domain)



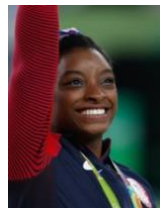
Barack Obama
(Public domain)



Fidget spinner
(Public domain)



Silly Bandz
("Variety of Silly Bandz 2010" by Scot Scoop is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).)



Simone Biles
("Simone Biles at the 2016 Olympics..." by Agência Brasil Fotografias is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#). Cropped.)

Think about it!

- What event from your life deserves to be remembered in 20 years? Draw a picture or write a diary entry. It could be something that happened globally, something personal, or something in between. Ask your friends and family what they want to remember, too.
- What might the future look like 20 years from now? What technology will we use then? Draw the possibilities. Use your imagination! Then compare your drawing with someone else’s.
- Look at this [timeline of cell phones](#) and compare the different models. How did they change over time? What might have caused those changes? Which is your favorite style, and why?

Rip Van Winkle in *The Rip Van Winkles*

excerpted from the program note by Kira DeLanoy

The Rip Van Winkles is set in a secluded upstate town that is suspiciously short on cell reception. It tells the story of Fabi, a New York City transplant learning to adapt to this new town — and unraveling a mystery along the way. “When we were brainstorming ideas for this opera, we knew we didn’t want to retell the exact story of ‘Rip Van Winkle.’ Instead, we wanted to offer a modern take on it — with original characters and an original setting,” shares composer, Ben Morris. Librettist Laura Fuentes adds, “We wanted to follow in the footsteps of past Glimmerglass youth operas and put a new twist on the source material, bringing it closer to the world of the youth performers.”

When Fabi discovers that not only is she physically separated from her friends but can’t connect with them virtually either, she decides to find out why there is no cell reception in her new home. Rallying the town’s teens, they uncover a 20-year-old lie and set off a series of fraught, funny, and touching exchanges between the town’s teens, parents, and grandparents. “Thematically, we were interested in exploring how groups of people deal with conflict and polarization, and how they can find common ground across an ideological divide,” says Laura.

“Rip’s story serves as a running metaphor across our piece. We thought about what it would be like to miss the last 20 years of technology entirely. What if you had fallen asleep and missed the advent of social media and 20 years of cultural references, and then what would it be like to have that world sprung upon you all at once,” says Laura. In Irving’s original tale, as Rip tries to reconcile the present reality with his past, he faces the challenges of reintegrating into a society that has transformed politically, socially, and economically. His wife passed away, and his daughter has grown into a woman with a family of her own. His village, once part of a British colony, is now part of an independent nation.

When Fabi and the town teens confront their parents, it forces the town to grapple with issues that are all too familiar to those who have lived with cell phones these past 20 years — the positives and negatives of living in a society that is always plugged in, online, and connected. “In this opera, we have choruses of grandparents, young teens, and parents, embodying their generational values through different musical styles: disco, musical theater, and traditional operatic singing. There’s often conflict between these styles and values, but it’s not about choosing one side over another; it’s about addressing differences and growing together as a community,” says Ben, continuing, “it is a plea to listen to other people, to other perspectives.”

Both “Rip Van Winkle” and *The Rip Van Winkles* are tales of transformation, not only for the protagonists but also for the societies in which they live. Through Rip’s experiences, Irving explores the consequences of neglecting responsibilities and the inevitable march of time. Rip’s amiable nature helps him adapt to his new world. For Fabi and the teens, parents, and grandparents of their town, compromise is ultimately the way forward. Both stories remind their audiences of the difficulties of navigating change and the importance of actively participating in the world.



Think about it!

Our opera is inspired by Irving’s *Rip Van Winkle*, but it’s not an exact copy of the story. In the same way, James F. Rotondo III’s set design (left) is inspired by a beautiful small town in upstate New York, but it’s not an exact copy.

Can you guess which buildings served as inspirations? What differences do you notice in the town?

Musical Influences in *The Rip Van Winkles*

by Ben Morris

When I'm composing an opera or a musical, I like to search through other operas and musicals for inspiration. Laura's libretto is rich with references and styles, and I wanted to understand how other composers have set similar rhyme schemes and forms in the past. And since most of the characters in *The Rip Van Winkles* have missed the past 20 years of culture and technology, we wanted to include plenty of older musical references as well as newer ones. The ultimate goal was to internalize these broad musical references, combine them, and compose in my own personal style, rather than just copying them verbatim.

Since this opera is structured somewhat like a musical, with clear individual "numbers" and set-pieces, it allowed me to keep those influences very broad and go in a lot of different directions. Here's a [Spotify playlist](#) with a lot of the references I'm discussing. (You can scan the QR code for the playlist too!)



As you can see, the musical influences include everything from Disney to Broadway musicals to classic opera influences to 70s disco classics. I'm influenced by Stephen Sondheim as much as I am by Giacomo Puccini, Giuseppe Verdi, and Alban Berg.

Setting the Scene

In the beginning of the opera, we introduce a small American town. I knew that I wanted to have some "Americana" sounds in the opening — think composers like Aaron Copland, Ned Rorem, and Leonard Bernstein (*On the Town*, *West Side Story*, *Our Town*, and *Appalachian Spring*). There's a little bit of the music from the 1966 TV feature *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* in there with the opening bell tolls of Whoville.



Illustration of Rip Van Winkle
by Arthur Rackham.
(Public domain)

"It's a Wonderful Scheme"

When we're introducing the parents and their evil scheme to block cell phone service in "It's a Wonderful Scheme," Laura and I wanted a classic soft shoe villain feeling — a dated, self-aware vintage boomer villain vibe. I came up with a bouncy, jazzy, and minor-feeling vamp. What immediately came to mind was Disney villains — Scar in *The Lion King* ("Be Prepared"), Ursula in *The Little Mermaid* ("Poor Unfortunate Souls"), The Shadow Man in *The Princess and the Frog* ("Friends on the Other Side"), "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch," Oogie Boogie in *The Nightmare Before Christmas* ("Oogie Boogie's Song"), as well as classics like Dukas's *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* and "Pink Elephants on Parade" from *Dumbo*.

(Continued on next page.)

Musical Influences in *The Rip Van Winkles*

by Ben Morris

On the Beat

The Reporter Quartet's text and music have a militant, youthful feeling. My first musical association was the classic 19th-century military fife and drum, harmonized with a technique called "horn fifths." There's also a mock field drum in the lower register of the piano at the beginning of the number.



Horn 5ths

"The British Grenadiers" is the most readily recognizable tune in this style. There's also "Follow the Fold" from *Guys and Dolls*, "Battle Hymn of the Republic," "Munchkinland" from *The Wizard of Oz* and "March of the Toys" from *Babes in Toyland*. Other references for this kind of choral music are the choral numbers from Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance* and *H.M.S. Pinafore*. There's a bit of naïveté and immature optimism in this music that goes well with the teens' youthful confidence.

I found similar dramatic works that featured a court scene, as is prominently featured in *The Rip van Winkles* — Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes*, the musical 1776, "Sit Down, You're Rockin' the Boat" from *Guys and Dolls*, and Jason Robert Brown's *Parade*. These influences gave me a good idea on how to create the back-and-forth in a cross-investigation.

(Continued on next page.)



Illustration of Rip Van Winkle by Arthur Rackham.
(Public domain)

Musical Influences in *The Rip Van Winkles*

by Ben Morris

“Live a Little”

The most fun part of this process was creating “Live a Little,” the grandparents’ disco number. Generally, Laura writes the lyrics first and I write the music. But for this one, I wrote a little disco tune (one that Laura’s kids could dance to), and Laura wrote the lyrics after me. The grandparents, who are of the generation that would have listened to disco as teens, embody the kind of fun and light-heartedness associated with disco music.

“Live a Little” takes influence from the 1970s disco classics — “Disco Inferno” by The Trammps, “Boogie Wonderland” and “September” by Earth Wind & Fire, “Night Fever” by the Bee Gees, and “Don’t Stop ’til You Get Enough” by Michael Jackson. The most important thing about disco music is the **groove** and the rhythm, especially in the bass and drums. In this number, I wanted to create that disco groove in the piano and in the vocal parts.

The melody in disco often uses the pentatonic scale, which I use in “Live a Little.” This scale uses 5 notes and is found in all kinds of popular and folk music from blues to Chinese folk music:



Pentatonic Scale

Most popular music genres are driven by a backbeat in the drums, with the kick drum on beats 1 and 3 and the snare on beats 2 and 4.

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Snare		■		■		■		■
Kick	■		■		■		■	

Typical Backbeat

In disco, often the accented beats fall in unexpected places, often anticipating (landing before) the quarter note beats by an 8th note or a 16th note — as in the bassline in the beat below. This is called **syncopation**. Listen to the groovy, offset syncopation in the bassline of the piano when you sing “Live a Little!”

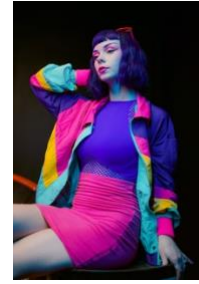
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Snare		■		■		■		■
Kick	■		■		■		■	
Bass	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Disco Syncopation

Whose Nostalgia Is It, Anyway?



Have you ever heard the word *nostalgia*? Many things nowadays are described as being nostalgic, from TV shows like *Stranger Things* to the [countless fashion trends](#) that draw on the past like **butterfly hair clips** and **neon windbreakers**. What is it that makes nostalgia so powerful?



To answer these questions, let's first look at the definition of *nostalgia*. According to the Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, the word *nostalgia* means...

- a **feeling of sadness** mixed with **pleasure** and **affection** when you think of happy times in the past
- the state of **being homesick**

Let's start with the second definition. If you've spent time away from home, say at camp or even a sleep-over, it's easy to relate to the feeling of homesickness. Now imagine feeling homesick for something that happened in the past — like a happy memory. That feeling is called *nostalgia*. You may roll your eyes when parents say things like “When I was a kid...,” but your parents are probably just trying to relate to you by remembering what their lives were like when they were your age. At its heart, nostalgia is about reflecting on our relationships with places and people in our past.

How does nostalgia apply to *The Rip Van Winkles*? In this version of the story, the parents and the grandparents have different responses to their feelings of nostalgia. The parents think fondly of their childhood without social media, and they want the same for their children. (Think about the song “It's a Wonderful Scheme.”) The grandparents, on the other hand, remember trying lots of new things when they were young. (Think of the song “Live a Little.”) Their nostalgia for their youth only makes them encourage their grandchildren to live in the present so they can create *their own* memories. The grandparents don't want to preserve the past, they want to embrace the future and have a little fun!

Think about your own past. Are there things you remember fondly? Maybe a holiday tradition or fireworks on the Fourth of July? There may also be memories that make you sad or even a little afraid. How do these memories affect you? You may be smiling or even laughing at a funny memory of a friend, or your heart may be racing and your stomach may be queasy when you think about a mean comment someone made about you in person or online.

These memories form our identity and ultimately affect how we will act in the future. Will we act on our fears like the parents did in the opera? Or will we embrace the present, even when it might be something scary like performing on-stage for the first time or learning a new skill like water-skiing? The greatest power we have in the present is the ability to choose our next step. In order to make informed choices, we need to understand our pasts, which might involve engaging in a little nostalgia.

Think about it!

Ask your parents or grandparents what technology was new when they were young. What was it called? What did it do? Did their parents and grandparents love it, or were they afraid of it? Why?

(Photo credits: Monstera/Pexels, Yaritza/Pexels. Free use.)

Conflict in *The Rip Van Winkles*

A *conflict* between parents and children drives the plot of *The Rip Van Winkles*. The parents want to keep their children away from the internet, but the children want to be online. Who is right? Who is wrong? Who will win? Who will lose? Those questions keep us interested in the story as it unfolds.

Here are some definitions of conflict from Merriam-Webster:

- an extended struggle: fight, battle
- a clashing or sharp disagreement (as between ideas, interests, or purposes)
- mental struggle resulting from needs, drives, wishes, or demands that are in opposition or are not compatible.

Conflict is a part of life. We all have needs, drives and wishes, and they are not always compatible. People often have good reasons for their different wishes. In *The Rip Van Winkles*, the parents block the cell signal because they wish to avoid the negative consequences of the internet. They are worried that kids will spend all their time online, and they fear kids will be vulnerable to cyberbullies. The children wish to enjoy the positive aspects of the internet. They want to connect to other kids and learn about the world.

Conflict can be exciting when it is part of an opera, a movie, a book, or even an athletic event. But in real life, it can be uncomfortable, especially when the conflict involves friends and family. Winning doesn't feel very good if someone you love has to lose.

In *The Rip Van Winkles*, the parents and children ultimately find a solution that addresses both of their wishes: they decide to allow a cell signal, but only in the town square. Both the parents' wishes and the children's wishes are satisfied. Everyone wins and no one loses.

Think about it!

- Imagine a different ending for *The Rip Van Winkles*. What if the parents won and the children lost? What if the children won and the parents lost? Bonus: Can you imagine a *different* ending where everyone wins?
- Can you find other examples of conflict in *The Rip Van Winkles*? How are each of the conflicts resolved? Can you imagine different solutions with different consequences?
- Think of a recent conflict you experienced. How did you handle it? How did/does that feel? Can you think of another option?

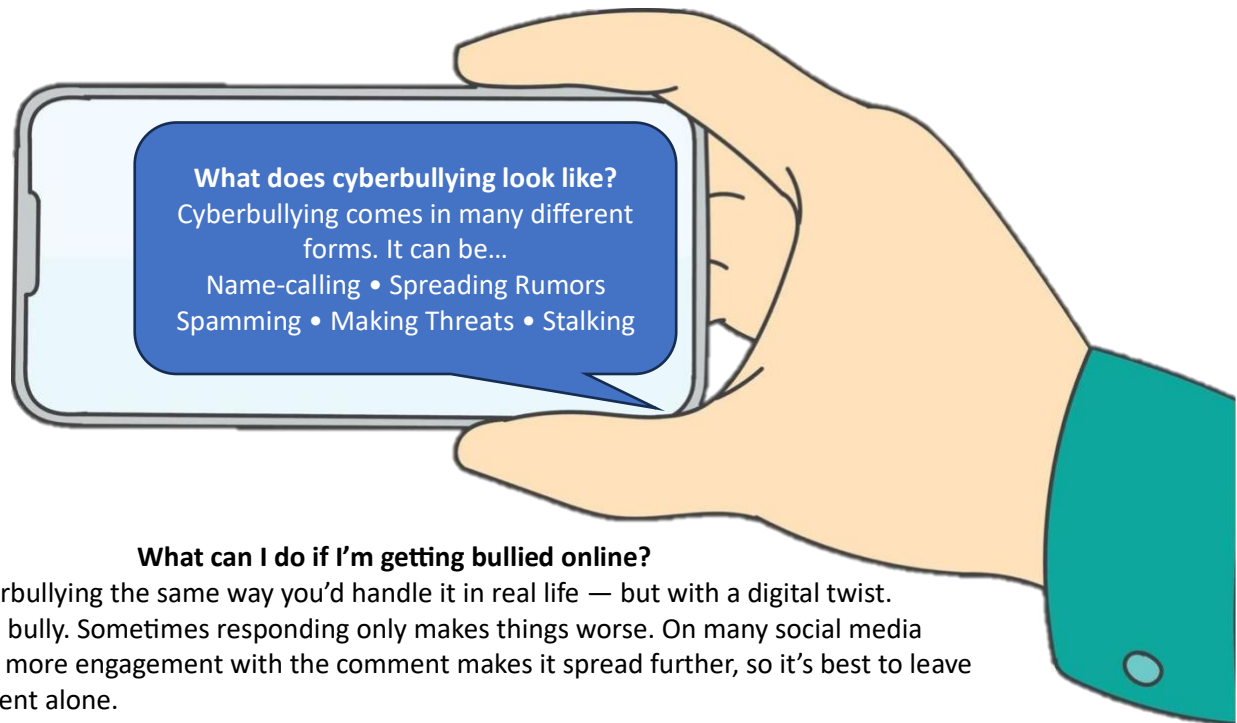


[Rip Van Winkle](#) by John Quidor, 1829.
(Public domain)

Cyberbullying — When “The Magic Portal” Gets Ugly

As Fabi and her friends are live-streaming their town’s court trial on social media, they get some unfriendly feedback from other users online. (“What’s wrong with kids these days?”) Sometimes comments on the internet can get personal and are meant to hurt, embarrass, or make fun of someone else. This is called “cyberbullying” — bullying that occurs online, in cyberspace — and it can be a problem for tweens, teens, and grown-ups alike.

The effects of cyberbullying go beyond your screen. Cyberbullying impacts the real world, too. It can make your school or workplace feel uncomfortable. It can also get you in trouble at school and even with the law in some places. In 2022, the [Pew Research Center’s survey](#) found that nearly half of all teens ages 13 through 17 have experienced some form of cyberbullying.



What can I do if I’m getting bullied online?

You can treat cyberbullying the same way you’d handle it in real life — but with a digital twist.

- Ignore the bully. Sometimes responding only makes things worse. On many social media platforms, more engagement with the comment makes it spread further, so it’s best to leave the comment alone.
- Take a screenshot. Having proof helps you explain the whole situation.
- Tell an adult you trust, like a family member, a teacher, or even a guidance counselor. They can help you heal and take the next steps.

If the bullying occurs on social media, you can report it to the company so that they can stop it from happening in the future. You can also block the bully from contacting you again. Ask an adult if you need help reporting or blocking a bully.

How else can I stop cyberbullying?

You can help make the internet, social media, and even texting be a more friendly space!

- Think about what you post online. Ask yourself, would you say this out loud or do this in real life? How might someone react in the real world?
- Don’t hit send right away. Re-read your message. Sometimes what you mean to say doesn’t translate well online. By taking a second to look over your work, you can make sure your message is clear.
- Support your friends. Give them uplifting, positive messages — both online and in person. If they’re getting cyberbullied, let them know you’ve got their back.

Adapted from [A Smart Girl’s Guide to the Internet](#) by Sharon Cindrich (American Girl, 2009), [StopBullying.gov](#), and the [Pew Research Center](#).

Rip Van Winkle in Your Own Backyard

Want to see where Rip wandered? (And slept?) **Kaaterskill Clove Lookout** is a 1.8-mile roundtrip hike outside of Palenville that gives you stunning views of the entire Clove. Nearby are the **Kaaterskill Falls**, the highest cascading waterfall in the entire state of New York.

The **Rip Van Winkle Bridge** (pictured below) connects the Village of Catskill to the Town of Hudson. It includes the **Rip Van Winkle Skywalk**, a pedestrian walkway over the Hudson River. See if you can spot Rip lying in the mountains!

Rip Van Winkle Lake in Tannersville hosts a summer concert series, a skate park, and a gyro-fest!

At Hunter Mountain Resort you can find a life-sized statue of Rip Van Winkle. The **Rip Van Winkle Monument** was carved out of local bluestone by sculptor and film actor [Kevin VanHentenryck](#).

How long did it take for *this* Rip Van Winkle to “wake up”? 14 years!



“Olana Sunset” by Mark Rosengarten is licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#).

Youth Opera at The Glimmerglass Festival

The Rip Van Winkles is the fifth youth opera commissioned by The Glimmerglass Festival. Previous works include: *Odyssey* (Ben Moore/Kelley Rourke), *Wilde Tales* (Laura Karpman/Kelley Rourke), *Robin Hood* (Ben Moore/Kelley Rourke) and *The Jungle Book* (Kamala Sankaram/Kelley Rourke).

These operas have been performed by young people across the country at organizations including Young People's Chorus of NYC, Minnesota Opera, Coral Reef Cuda Chorus, Seattle Opera, Walnut Hill School for the Arts, Opera Santa Barbara, Houston Grand Opera, and West Chester University.

The Glimmerglass Youth Ensemble has also been featured in Glimmerglass productions of *the little match girl passion* (Lang), *Noah's Flood* (Britten), *The Little Prince* (Portman/Wright), *The Sound of Music* (Rodgers & Hammerstein), *La bohème* (Puccini/Illica and Giacosa) and more.

Left: Odyssey, 2015. Right: The Jungle Book, 2022.

(Photos by Karli Cadel for GGF.)

