

WAUSAU DANCE THEATRE

## **THE STORY OF SLEEPING BEAUTY**

Long ago, there was a great celebration in the palace of King Florestan XIV for the christening of his only child, Princess Aurora. The Master of Ceremonies, Cattabalutte, invites the entire kingdom for this most precious moment. The fairies arrive, along with their attendants, to bless Aurora with the gifts of life to guide her in the years to come. Among them is the Lilac Fairy who brings the gift of wisdom.

Carabosse bursts in with her lost children of the land. Furious because they had forgotten to invite her, she curses Aurora one day she will prick her finger and die. All the Lilac Fairy can do is turn death into a deep sleep from which one day a prince will awaken her.

Time has moved on and Aurora is celebrating her twentieth birthday. An old woman is discovered with a spindle - strictly forbidden as the King and Queen remember the curse placed on Aurora. King Florestan is furious but the old woman is pardoned when four princes arrive, seeking Aurora's hand.

Aurora accepts a rose from each prince then seizes a spindle proffered by the old woman. As she pricks her finger, the old woman is revealed as Carabosse. The Lilac Fairy intervenes and Aurora and the entire kingdom fall into a deep sleep.

Decades later, in the great forests of the time, the handsome Prince Désiré and his hunting party are resting from the chase. While they play and dance, Désiré remains aloof from the girls' attentions. As the hunt moves off, the Lilac Fairy appears to the melancholy Prince. She tells him the story of the Sleeping Beauty, conjuring up a vision of her to his wondering gaze. The vision of Aurora, the Sleeping Beauty, then dances with the fairies, but the Prince is prevented from reaching her.

Enraptured, Désiré implores the Lilac Fairy to take him to Aurora. She leads him through the forest to the enchanted palace. He gazes at the Sleeping Beauty then kisses her. As Aurora takes Prince Désiré in her arms, the palace and the kingdom awake to life. The spell is broken.

The King and Queen hold a great celebration for the newly betrothed Désiré and Aurora. Fairy-tale characters provide the entertainment for the guests. The couple dance to show their love and appreciation.

At their wedding, the Lilac Fairy appears to bless the marriage. And they all live happily ever after.