

LYRIC OPERA

KANSAS CITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ellen McDonald
(816) 213-4355 (c)
publicity@kcopera.org

For Tickets: kcopera.org or (816) 471-7344
Lyric Opera of Kansas City
2017-18 Season Concludes with
The Barber of Seville
April 28; May 2, 4, and 6 at
The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

Kansas City, MO (April 3, 2018) – Lyric Opera of Kansas City concludes its 2017– 2018 season with Rossini’s comedic jewel, ***The Barber of Seville*, April 28; May 2, 4, and 6** at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. The production will be sung in Italian with English subtitles. High-resolution production and artists’ photos can be downloaded [here](#).

Rossini’s ***The Barber of Seville*** remains one of the great operatic comedies of the repertoire. While remaining true to every character, every gesture and every note of the original opera, this vibrant production of ***Barber*** draws inspiration from the magical realism of filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar, transforming the opera’s setting into a boldly colorful Carnival-like experience. Even after 200 years, this opera’s buoyant humor and elegant melodies have delighted the diverse tastes of every generation. Several of the most recognizable tunes have entered the world’s musical unconscious, most notably the introductory patter song of the swaggering Figaro, the titular barber of Seville. In ***The Barber of Seville***, audiences are first introduced to the beautiful Rosina, later known as the Countess Almaviva in ***The Marriage of Figaro***. ***The Barber of Seville*** is a delightful opera, perfect for the whole family.

Making their Lyric Opera of Kansas City debuts are **Jack Swanson** as Almaviva, **Jarrett Ott** in the role of Figaro, **Cassandra Zoe Velasco** in the role of Rosina, and **Matthew Burns** as Doctor Bartolo. Director **Michael Shell** will make his Lyric Opera debut as well. Returning to the Lyric Opera are **Brian Banion** (*The Marriage of Figaro*, 2011) as Don Basilio, Robert Gibby Brand (*The Pirates of Penzance*, 2017) and conductor **Leonardo Vordoni** (*The Italian Girl in Algiers*, 2014).

Three things about ***The Barber of Seville***:

1. Rossini and his librettists seem to admire assertive women: his characters Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*, Isabella in *The Italian Girl in Algiers*, and Angelina in *Cinderella* have agency, they propel the action, they have spectacular arias, and they get what they want – unusual for female opera characters at the time.
2. Rossini was known to be a prolific composer, and it’s believed that *The Barber of Seville* was composed in about three weeks, thanks in part to his recycling some music from two earlier operas.
3. Rosina’s singing lesson in Act Two of *The Barber of Seville* has been used by many sopranos as a mini-cabaret: singers from Pauline Viardot to Maria Callas have substituted the music in the score for other composers’ works, or other Rossini melodies.

Cast (View cast bios at the [Lyric Opera website](#))

Count Almaviva: Jack Swanson*
Rosina: Cassandra Zoe Velasco*
Figaro: Jarrett Ott*
Doctor Bartolo: Matthew Burns*
Don Basilio: Brian Banion
Berta: Ruby Dibble
Fiorello: Armando Contreras ~
Ambrogio: Robert Gibby Brand
An Officer: Tim Murray+
A Notary: Trevor B. Smith

Artistic Staff (View creative team bios at the [Lyric Opera website](#))

Director: Michael Shell*
Conductor: Leonardo Vordoni
Set Designer: Shoko Kambara, Opera Philadelphia
Costume Designer: Amanda Seymour, Opera Philadelphia
Lighting Designer: Driscoll Otto*
Wig and Make-up Designer: Alison M. Hanks
Chorus Master: Mark Ferrell
Stage Manager: Erin Thompson-Janszen

~ UMKC Apprentice
+ Resident Artist
@ former Lyric Opera Apprentice
* Lyric Opera Debut

Ticket availability varies by performance; best availability is at the Wednesday, May 2 performance. To purchase tickets, call Ticketing & Patron Services (816) 471-7344. Patrons can select their own seats and print their tickets at home by visiting www.kcopera.org. Limited student rush tickets are available 90 minutes before all performances for \$15, with a valid student ID.

Lyric Opera's production of *The Barber of Seville* is underwritten in part by The Lyric Opera Circle. 2017-2018 Season Sponsors: Richard J. Stern Foundation for the Arts & Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation.

Related Events

First Friday, April 6, from 5 to 8 p.m. Presented by Lyric Opera of Kansas City and Young Friends of the Lyric at the Beth Ingram Administration Building (1725 Holmes, KCMO). Featuring selections from *The Barber of Seville*, refreshments (including "The Figaro" signature cocktail), and hilarious quizzes such as "Guess the Celebrity Hair Style." There will also be two live haircuts by volunteer barber Tahki Bannister of [Silver Screen Salon](#) and [My Cuts Travel](#) for hair donations to [Children With Hair Loss](#). Free and open to everyone; no RSVP required.

Explore the Score

Thursday, April 12, 7 p.m.

Conductor **Leonardo Vordoni** shares a personal introduction to the music and characters of this Rossini masterpiece at the Michael & Ginger Frost Production Arts Building, 712 E 18th St., Kansas City, MO 64108. **FREE** Event, RSVP required at <https://kcopera.org/performances/the-barber-of-seville-18/> or by phone at (816) 471-7344.

The Barber of Seville “At Ease with Opera” Presentations:

Monday, April 9 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kauffman Foundation (4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO 64110). **Free and open to everyone. Beaumarchais: Gunrunner for the American Revolution**

In addition to writing the 1775 play which was the basis for *The Barber of Seville* (1816), playwright **Pierre Caron de Beaumarchais** (1732-1799) was a philanderer, intriguer, political revolutionary, and swordsman. His improbable life is brought to center stage by University of Kansas Professor **John C. Tibbetts**. Commentary and clips from Edouard Molinaro's 1996 film *Beaumarchais the Scoundrel* illustrate this amazing life as Beaumarchais connives, flatters, and protests his way through the theaters and courts of Louis XV and XVI.

Monday, April 16 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kauffman Foundation (4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO 64110). **Free and open to everyone. From Punk to Vintage: Aesthetics in Pedro Almodóvar's Films**

The distinctive style of Spanish filmmaker **Pedro Almodóvar** (b. 1949) inspired the look and flavor of this production of *The Barber of Seville*. Almodóvar gained international renown in 1988 for his dark comedy *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* which was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film and inspired a Broadway musical of the same name in 2010. His films are known for their complex narratives (as befits many operas), pop culture references, and vibrant colors. UMKC Associate Professor of Spanish **Alberto Villamandos** surveys the work of this important and influential Spanish filmmaker.

Monday, April 23 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kauffman Foundation (4801 Rockhill Road, KCMO 64110). **Free and open to everyone. "The Barber of Seville".... or "The Useless Precaution".... or "The buffa of all buffas"**

No matter what you call it, after a disastrous opening night, Rossini's opera *Il barbiere di Siviglia* soared into popularity and remains one of the most beloved operas of all time. How did this work move from boos and hisses to being one of the hottest tickets in town? It wasn't just Bugs Bunny's love of the tunes. **Rebecca Johnson** will answer these questions and more, in a detailed overview of this wickedly funny opera.

Young Friends of the Lyric

Young Friends of The Lyric provides an exciting outlet for young arts supporters (ages 21 and up) in Kansas City to get involved in the community, meet other young professionals and support Lyric Opera of Kansas City. Membership benefits include complimentary beverages at Lyric Opera performances, networking opportunities, restaurant discounts, invitations to special events and more.

Young Friends of the Lyric membership is \$40, and includes benefits for two for a full 12 months. To join, visit www.kcopera.org/yfl or contact Ticketing & Patron Services at (816) 471-7344.

Visit www.kcopera.org for more information about Lyric Opera of Kansas City 2017-2018 season and www.kauffmancenter.org for a downloadable media kit about the Kauffman Center.

2018-2019 Season at a Glance:

NEW PRODUCTION

West Side Story

Leonard Bernstein, 1957

Sung in English with English subtitles

Saturday, September 22, 2018 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, September 23, 2018 2:00 p.m.
Wednesday, September 26, 2018 7:30 p.m.
Friday, September 28, 2018 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, September 30, 2018 2:00 p.m.

Director: Francesca Zambello*

Conductor: David Charles Abell

Maria: Vanessa Becerra*

Tony: Andrew Bidlack

Riff: Brian Vu*

More casting info coming soon

Madama Butterfly

Giacomo Puccini, 1904

Sung in Italian with English subtitles

Saturday, November 3, 2018 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, November 7, 2018 7:30 p.m.
Friday, November 9, 2018 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, November 11, 2018 2:00 p.m.

Director: Ron Daniels*

Conductor: Ryan McAdams

Cio-Cio San: Karah Son*

Pinkerton: Georgy Vasiliev*

Sharpless: Daniel Belcher

Suzuki: Kristen Choi*

Goro: Julius Ahn*

Così fan tutte

Wolfgang A. Mozart, 1798

Sung in Italian with English subtitles

Saturday, March 16, 2019 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, March 20, 2019 7:30 p.m.
Friday, March 22, 2019 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 24, 2019 2:00 p.m.

Director: James Alexander

Conductor: Jane Glover *

Fiordiligi: Vanessa Vasquez*

Dorabella: Daniela Mack*

Ferrando: Alasdair Kent*

Guglielmo: John Viscardi

Despina: Maureen McKay

Don Alfonso: Patrick Carfizzi

The Pearl Fishers

George Bizet, 1863

Sung in French with English subtitles

Saturday, April 27, 2019 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 1, 2019 7:30 p.m.
Friday, May 3, 2019 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, May 5, 2019 2:00 p.m.

Director: Andrew Sinclair*

Conductor: Antony Walker*

Leila: Maeve Höglund*

Nadir: Sean Panikkar

Zurga: John Moore*

Nourabad: Christian Zarembo*

* Lyric Opera of Kansas City debut

About Lyric Opera of Kansas City

Lyric Opera of Kansas City was founded in 1958; it is one of the nation's premier regional opera companies and brings high quality live operatic performances to the people of the Kansas City area and a five-state region. Repertoire choices encompass original language performances of standard repertory as well as contemporary and American operas. The Company mounts productions that enrich the community it serves, as well as reflect the highest artistic standards of the profession. Lyric Opera offers innovative and award-winning programs designed to further music and arts education both in schools and in the community, and serves more than 18,000 students and educators each year.

Opera lovers can be fans of Lyric Opera of Kansas City on Facebook or follow us on Twitter at @kcopera or on Instagram @kcopera.

Lyric Opera of Kansas City is a member of OPERA America and this season is made possible with funding from Richard J. Stern Foundation for the Arts, and the Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation. Lyric Opera of Kansas City's production of *Rigoletto* is supported by the Master Craftsmen Foundation, Sherrill Mulhern. Lyric Opera's production of *The Barber of Seville* is underwritten in part by The Lyric Opera Circle.

###

**Please direct all media inquiries to Ellen McDonald, 816.213.4355.
For Tickets: kcopera.org or 816.471.7344**

PLEASE NOTE NEW CONTACT INFO. 816.444.0052 is no longer a working number: