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Opera Colorado Closes 2018-19 Season with Mozart's Comic Masterpiece *The Marriage of Figaro*

**Limited tickets remain for this lavish production, set among the courtly
opulence of 18th century Seville**

**Performances run May 4-12 at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House
at the Denver Performing Arts Complex**

DENVER—Opera Colorado closes its triumphant 2018-19 season with a lavish production of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, an opera frequently lauded as the pinnacle of the art form. *The Marriage of Figaro* opens **Saturday, May 4**, at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House in downtown Denver, with additional performances on **May 7, 10, and 12**.

Mozart's brilliantly paced comedy finds its wily title character on the day of his wedding to his beloved Susanna. But their household is overseen by the wandering eye of Count Almaviva, who is intent on seducing the bride-to-be—stoking not only the couple's ire, but also the frustrations of the long-suffering Countess.

What unfolds is hilarious chaos, led by both **stage director Matthew Ozawa** (making his return after directing Opera Colorado's acclaimed production of *La Bohème* in the 2017-18 season) and **Opera Colorado Music Director Ari Pelto**, who conducts these performances.

"For me, *The Marriage of Figaro* is the best opera there is," says Pelto. "It makes you love humanity, because all these characters are flawed but they're all beautiful at the same time. Even the Count, whom I've never considered to be a bad person, but rather just a person who behaves

badly. Mozart had an incredible understanding of the human soul, and he expresses that so perfectly throughout the entirety of *Figaro*.”

A true ensemble piece, this production of *The Marriage of Figaro* sees the return of several familiar voices, including **bass-baritone Ryan Kuster** in the title role of Figaro. In 2012, *The Boulder Daily Camera* praised Kuster in Opera Colorado’s production of *Carmen*, saying “[his] character has the most famous of all the opera’s many great tunes, and Kuster’s delivery does not disappoint.” Opposite Kuster is **soprano Maureen McKay**, as Susanna. Of her recent turn at Lyric Opera of Kansas City, *The Kansas City Star* wrote, “Maureen McKay, as Susanna, the quick-witted, fiery bride, challenged their schemes and bravado and jealousies. Her ‘Deh vieni, non tardar’ was exquisite.”

Opera Colorado’s production also features world-renowned **bass-baritone Simone Alberghini**, who in Opera Colorado’s 2012 production sang Figaro, but now takes on the role of Count Almaviva. Opposite Alberghini as Countess Almaviva is **soprano Ellie Dehn**, who previously performed Donna Anna in Opera Colorado’s 2013 *Don Giovanni*, and has been praised as “a revelation” (*Chicago Sun-Times*). **Mezzo-soprano Adriana Zabala**, heard last season in Opera Colorado’s world premiere of *Steal a Pencil for Me*, sings the mischievous Cherubino, with **mezzo-soprano Margaret Gawrysiak** as Marcellina and **bass-baritone Stefano de Peppo** in his Opera Colorado debut as Dr. Bartolo.

Rounding out the cast are members of **Opera Colorado’s 2018-19 Artist in Residence Program**, including tenor Aaren Rivard (as both Don Basilio and Don Curzio), baritone Eric McConnell (Antonio) and soprano Rebekah Howell (Barbarina).

“This is always billed as Mozart’s greatest opera, and it truly is,” says **General & Artistic Director Greg Carpenter**. “Not only did Mozart and his librettist, Da Ponte, perfectly pace the drama, but Mozart’s music is so brilliantly and stylistically specific to each character. This is one of those operas that we love because it’s a great story told through completely immersive and engaging music. This is Mozart storytelling at its best.”

Opera Colorado’s 2018-19 season has seen a string of sold-out events, and limited tickets remain across all performances of Mozart’s *The Marriage of Figaro*.

The production opens Saturday, May 4, and runs through Sunday, May 12. For tickets and information, visit operacolorado.org or call the Opera Colorado Box Office at 303.468.2030.

***The Marriage of Figaro* is sponsored by Richard King Brown Ph.D. with additional support provided by Ellie Caulkins.**

THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

Composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, with a libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte

May 4, 7, 10, and 12, 2019

The Ellie Caulkins Opera House at the Denver Performing Arts Complex

Performed in Italian, with English and Spanish subtitles at every seat

Cast (In Order of Vocal Appearance)

Figaro	Ryan Kuster
Susanna	Maureen McKay
Dr. Bartolo	Stefano de Peppo*
Marcellina	Margaret Gawrysiak
Cherubino	Adriana Zabala
Count Almaviva	Simone Alberghini
Don Basilio	Aaren Rivard^
Countess Almaviva	Ellie Dehn
Antonio	Eric McConnell^
Barbarina	Rebekah Howell^
Don Curzio	Aaren Rivard^

Opera Colorado Orchestra

Opera Colorado Chorus

Conductor	Ari Pelto
Stage Director	Matthew Ozawa
Lighting Design	Lucas Krech
Wig and Makeup Design	Ronell Oliveri
Chorus Master and Asst. Conductor	Sahar Nouri

**Opera Colorado Debut*

^Opera Colorado Artist in Residence

Scenery designed by Boyd Ostroff; Scenery provided by the Florentine Opera Company. Costumes designed by Deborah Trout for Seattle Opera; Costumes executed by Seattle Opera Costume Shop.

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ABOUT OPERA COLORADO

Opera Colorado has served as a cornerstone of Denver's cultural community since 1981. In addition to its mainstage performances at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House each season, the company affirms its commitment to the future of the art form by annually presenting new works; with its nationally recognized Artist in Residence Program that trains the next generation of opera performers; and by each year reaching more than 45,000 students and adults through its many education and community engagement programs throughout the Rocky Mountain region. The 2018-19 season has featured Verdi's *La Traviata* (November 2018) and Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* (May 2019) at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House, and a sold-out double-bill of the one-act operas *After Life* and *Josephine* by Tom Cipullo at the Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art (February/March 2019). The upcoming 2019-20 season will include Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* and Puccini's *Tosca*, all at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House. For more information, visit www.operacolorado.org.