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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.