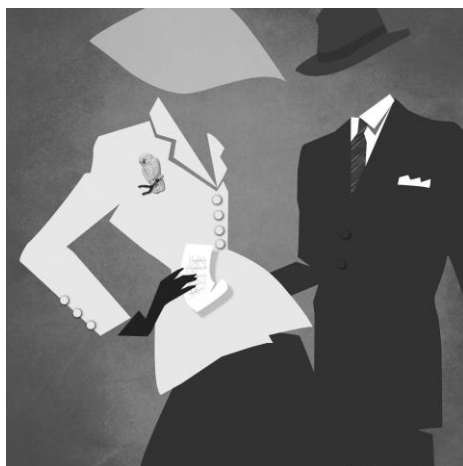


MSU Music

MSU OPERA THEATRE PRESENTS

The Marriage of Figaro

by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart



7:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 22, 2017

8:00 p.m., Friday, March 24, 2017

8:00 p.m., Saturday, March 25, 2017

3:00 p.m., Sunday, March 26, 2017

Fairchild Theatre, MSU Auditorium Building

The 2016-2017 MSU Opera Theatre season
is generously supported by

The Worthington Family Foundation

The Marriage of Figaro is sponsored by

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College of Music
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Since its premiere in 1786, Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* (The Marriage of Figaro) has been an enduring masterpiece. Based upon the French play by Beaumarchais, it was composed a mere two years after the play debuted and was banned at Versailles (although Marie Antoinette did play Suzanne (Susanna) at a private performance at the Petite Trianon, her personal idyll). The conflict between the noble Count and the proletarian Figaro sparked waves of controversy across eighteenth-century Europe, especially in France, so close to revolution.

Through all eras, *Figaro* remains relevant. Productions have been updated to many time periods, even a prescient Peter Sellars setting in Trump Tower in the 80s! We've chosen to set this production in post-World War II Europe. The deprivation of war had given way to a sort of recovery, but the vast chasm between classes still lingered.

The genius of Lorenzo da Ponte's libretto is that he keeps the complicated action going while given each character depth and detail. Listen for the Count's many insults to Figaro, and how Figaro ripostes each insult with an answer that proves him superior. Also watch for Susanna's support of the Countess: socially "above" her class, and yet bound together as sympathetic women are. And when the Countess forgives the Count at the end of the opera, we are certain that she won't forget.

In our current era of the "1%," *Figaro* continues to shine a light on how the more things change, the more they stay the same. Regardless of the clothes we wear, we are all, tragically, human: complicated, loving, dense, simple, hating, betraying, supporting ... human.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

Susanna, maid to the House of Almaviva	Angela Lee/ Catherine Goode*
Figaro, factotum to the House of Almaviva, her fiancé	Zaikuan Song Kyle White*
Marcellina, lender of money to Figaro and hopeful of his hand in marriage	Rachel Shaughnessy/ Jenna Buck*
Bartolo, a lawyer of dubious reputation	Tyler Frisbie
Cherubino, a young nobleman in service to the House of Almaviva	Christine Roberts/ Suzanna Feldman*
Count Almaviva, a nobleman	Brian Major/ Nicholas Kreider*
Don Basilio, a conniving music master	Jonathan Walker Van Kuren/ Nicholas Hudak*
Rosina, Countess Almaviva, bride to Almaviva for a mere three years	Elizabeth Dugan/ Katie Bethel*
Antonio, gardener and Susanna's uncle	Gabriel Reitemeyer/ Tyler Martin*
Don Curzio, a notary	David Anderson/ Jon Henrikson*
Barbarina, Antonio's teenage daughter	Quinn Rulison/ Laura Broscoe*
Contadine, serving girls	Anna Bolton, Anna Doering/ Kalli Allen, Bailey Shepherd

Servants of the palace, local yokels: Justine Alexander, Christine Boddicker, Jillian Brennan, Julia Janowski, Michaela Larsen, Colleen Morence, Grace Reberg, Juliana Rowley, Lucille Sears, Noah Colandrea, Matthew Greenberg, Nathan Hartges, Eric Locker, Sawyer Schlarf

*March 22, 25 performances

Conductor
Daniel Beckwith

Stage Director
Melanie Helton

Act I and II will be performed back to back, with a short pause in between. Acts III and IV will also be performed consecutively, with a short pause in between.

STAFF FOR MSU OPERA THEATRE

Music Director	Daniel Beckwith*
Producer	Melanie Helton
Scenic Design	Lex Van Blommestein
Set Construction	Mark R. Willoughby
Lighting Design	Brent Wrobel*
Costume Designer	Stephanie Henderson*
Wig and Makeup Design	Martha Ruskai*
Production Stage Manager	Ashley Wright
Technical Director	Mark Willoughby
Musical Preparation	Daniel Beckwith*, Elden Little
Assistant Conductor	Soo Han
Chorus Master	Chelsea Berner
Directing Intern/Production Assistant	Samuel Meade
Wig and Makeup Artist	Raine (Yong) Jiang
Logo Artist	Barbara Hranilovich
Head Electrician/Light Board Operator	Michael Wright
Head Carpenter	James Yocum
Deck Carpenter	Marty Barron
Stagehand	Tom Rivera
Surtile Operators	Ben Maines, Nicole Cloutier
Fairchild Theatre Stage Manager	Ron Fenger
Recording Services	Jennifer Shangraw, Steve Boughton
Publicity, MSU College of Music	Michael Sundermann
	Kathleen Adams
Budget Officer	Tammy Hoebecke
Rehearsal Accompanist	Jared Burseth

*Guest Artist

Grateful Acknowledgments

James Forger, Dean, College of Music

MSU Vocal Arts Area Faculty:

Jane Bunnell, Marc Embree, Richard Fracker (chair), Melanie Helton, Harlan Jennings, Elden Little, Anne Nispel, David Rayl, Jonathan Reed, Mark Rucker, Sadie Rucker, Sandra Snow

Kevin Noe, Director of Orchestral Activities, College of Music

Deborah Moriarty, Chair, Piano Area; Zhihua Tang, Collaborative Piano

MSU Department of Theatre, Kirk Domer (Chair)

Wharton Center, Sandy Thomley, Production Manager

Rebecca Surian, Director of Development, College of Music

Gregg Bloomfield, Director of Administrative Services, College of Music

Christine Babiak-Smith, Jennifer Deslover, Shawn Mahorney,

Amy Rivard, Chuck Roberts, Charlene Wagner, College of Music

Albion College Department of Theatre

THE STORY

ACT I. A country estate somewhere in Europe, circa 1948. While preparing for their wedding, the valet Figaro learns from the maid Susanna that their philandering employer, Count Almaviva, has designs on her. At this the servant vows to outwit his master. Before long the scheming Bartolo enters the servants' quarters with his housekeeper, Marcellina, who wants Figaro to marry her to cancel a debt he cannot pay. After Marcellina and Susanna trade insults, the amorous page Cherubino arrives, reveling in his infatuation with all women. He hides when the Count shows up, furious because he caught Cherubino flirting with Barbarina, the gardener's daughter. The Count pursues Susanna but conceals himself when the gossiping music master Don Basilio approaches. The Count steps forward, however, when Basilio suggests that Cherubino has a crush on the Countess. Almaviva is enraged further when he discovers Cherubino in the room. Figaro returns with fellow servants, who praise the Count's progressive reform in abolishing the *droit du seigneur* — the right of a noble to take a manservant's place on his wedding night. Almaviva assigns Cherubino to his regiment in Seville and leaves Figaro to cheer up the unhappy adolescent.

ACT II. In her boudoir, the Countess laments her husband's waning love but plots to chasten him, encouraged by Figaro and Susanna. They will send Cherubino, disguised as Susanna, to a romantic assignation with the Count. Cherubino, smitten with the Countess, appears, and sings his newly-penned love song. While Susanna goes out to find a ribbon, the Count knocks at the door, furious to find it locked. Cherubino quickly hides in a closet, and the Countess admits her husband, who, when he hears a noise, is skeptical of her story that Susanna is inside the wardrobe. He takes his wife to fetch some tools with which to force the closet door. Meanwhile, Susanna, having observed everything from behind a screen, helps Cherubino out a window, then takes his place in the closet. Both Count and Countess are amazed to find her there. All seems well until the gardener, Antonio, storms in with crushed geraniums from a flower bed below the window. Figaro, who has run in to announce that the wedding is ready, pretends it was he who jumped from the window, faking a sprained ankle. Marcellina, Bartolo and Basilio burst into the room waving a court summons for Figaro, which delights the Count, as this gives him an excuse to delay the wedding.

THE STORY (CONTINUED)

ACT III. In an audience room where the wedding is to take place, Susanna leads the Count on with promises of a rendezvous in the garden. The nobleman, however, grows doubtful when he spies her conspiring with Figaro; he vows revenge. Marcellina is astonished but thrilled to discover that Figaro is in fact her long-lost natural son by Bartolo. Mother and son embrace, provoking Susanna's anger until she too learns the truth. Finding a quiet moment, the Countess recalls her past happiness, then joins Susanna in composing a letter that invites the Count to the garden that night. Later, during the marriage ceremony of Figaro and Susanna, the bride manages to slip the note, sealed with a hatpin, to the Count, who pricks his finger, dropping the pin, which Figaro retrieves.

ACT IV. In the moonlit garden, Barbarina, after unsuccessfully trying to find the lost hatpin, tells Figaro and Marcellina about the coming assignation between the Count and Susanna. Susanna and the Countess enter, ready for their masquerade. Alone, Susanna rhapsodizes on her love for Figaro, but he, overhearing, thinks she means the Count. Susanna hides in time to see Cherubino woo the Countess — now disguised as Susanna — until Almaviva chases him away and sends his wife, who he thinks is Susanna, to an arbor, to which he follows. By now Figaro understands the joke and, joining the fun, makes exaggerated love to Susanna in her Countess disguise. The Count returns, seeing, or so he thinks, Figaro with his wife. Outraged, he calls everyone to witness his judgment, but now the real Countess appears and reveals the ruse. Grasping the truth at last, the Count begs her pardon. All are reunited, and so ends this "mad day" at the court of the Almavivas. (Synopsis from *Opera News*).

MSU SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Kevin Noe, Director of Orchestras
Daniel Beckwith, Conductor

* Denotes String Principal Players

Violin I

Austin Burket *
Alexander Casson*
Seakyung Hur
Wen-Yi Lo
Yung-Hsuan Lo
Kyle Peters

Violin II

Daniela Diaz*
Andrew Hatfield*
Ashley Heska
Saikat Karmakar
Hadiya Knight
Namjoo Oh
Yulia Orlova

Viola

Kyle Krause
Erin Lancour
Yi-Pei Lin*
Alyssa Moskowitz
Yury Ozhegov*
Isaac Sarvar

Cello

Stephanie Hong
JinHyun Kim*
Dooeun Lee
Hyojung Yoo

Bass

Matt Boothe*
Billy Poulos

Flute

Alex Hoelzen
Stephania Neumann

Oboe

Alana Rosen
Aaron Woodman

Clarinet

Anastasia Bonotto
Sarah McMichen

Bassoon

Zongjie Huang
Quinton Doucet

Horn

Nicole VandenBosch
Nathan Doss

Trumpet

Eduardo Farias
Fil Starostka

Timpani

Josh Flynn

Harpsichord

Elden Little

GUEST ARTIST

Daniel Beckwith, hailed as one of the most exciting conductors of his generation, has enjoyed an international career that has taken him to The Metropolitan Opera, The New York City Opera, The Lyric Opera of Chicago, The San Francisco Opera, and the opera companies of Houston, Fort Worth, Miami, Cincinnati, Cleveland, St. Louis and Utah; The Canadian Opera Company, Calgary Opera, Vancouver Opera; the UK's Glyndebourne Festival and Opera North; Le Grand Théâtre du Genève and The Australian Opera.

Mr. Beckwith served as assistant to James Levine for six seasons at the Metropolitan Opera and was given his conducting debut with *Don Giovanni* in 1995 after Mr. Levine observed his conducting of a stage rehearsal. On the strength of these performances, Daniel Beckwith was engaged for several important debuts conducting the works of George Frideric Handel, both nationally (*Serse*, Seattle Opera) and internationally (*Rinaldo*, Grand Théâtre du Genève, *Theodora*, The Glyndebourne Festival).

A frequent partner with soprano Renée Fleming, they have performed in concert at Carnegie Hall, Spain's Santander Festival and television appearances on Good Morning America, The View and Martha Stewart Living. He has accompanied a "who's who" of important singers, including Benita Valente, Carol Vaness, Nancy Gustafson, Marilyn Horne, Frederica von Stade, Jennifer Larmore, Denyce Graves, Susanne Mentzer, Jerry Hadley, Ben Heppner, Richard Leech, Nathan Gunn and Samuel Ramey.

MSU OPERA THEATRE 2017 GRADUATES

Undergraduates: Kalli Allen (*The Magic Flute, Così fan tutte, Xerxes, Le Nozze di Figaro*), David Anderson, BM (*The Magic Flute, La Boheme, Così fan tutte, Xerxes, A Room with a View, Le Nozze di Figaro*); Anna Doering, BM (*Così fan tutte, Xerxes, Le Nozze di Figaro*); Tyler Frisbie, BM (*The Magic Flute, Xerxes, MSU/China IX, L'Elisir d'Amore, Le Nozze di Figaro*); Keane Garcelon, BA, (*A Room with a View*); Angela Lee, BM (*La Boheme, A Room with a View, Le Nozze di Figaro*); Emma Parravano, BM (*A Room with a View*); Aaron Petrovich, BM (*The Magic Flute, La Boheme, Così fan tutte, Xerxes, A Room with a View, The Savage Land/Bernstein Sings America, L'Elisir d'amore*), Rachel Shaughnessy, BM (*La Boheme, Xerxes, A Room with a View, Le Nozze di Figaro*); Lindsay Snyder (*A Room with a View*); Alina Tamborini (*The Magic Flute, La Boheme, Così fan tutte, Xerxes, A Room with a View, The Savage Land/Bernstein Sings America, L'Elisir d'amore*)

Graduates: Katie Bethel, MM (*A Room with a View, The Savage Land/Bernstein Sings America, Le Nozze di Figaro*); Dan Ewart (*The Magic Flute, La Boheme, Così fan tutte, MSU-China IX*); Catherine Goode, MM (*L'Elisir d'Amore, Le Nozze di Figaro*); Carl Hengen, MM (*L'Elisir d'Amore*); Nicholas Kreider, MM (*A Room with a View, The Savage Land/Bernstein Sings America, L'Elisir d'Amore, Le Nozze di Figaro*), Steve Martin, DMA (*A Room with a View, MSU China IX-X*); Jon Oakley, MM (*A Room with a View, The Savage Land/Bernstein Sings America*); Christine Roberts, MM (*A Room with a View, The Savage Land/Bernstein Sings America, Le Nozze di Figaro*); Jonathan Walker Van Kuren, MM (*A Room with a View; The Savage Land/Bernstein Sings American*)

STUDENT NEWS

David Anderson (student of Richard Fracker), Catherine Goode (student of Melanie Helton) and Kyle White (student of Marc Embree) will all be appearing in leading roles at the Seagle Colony in the Adirondacks, NY, this summer. Catherine Goode and Nicholas Kreider (student of Richard Fracker) won Encouragement Awards at the MET Auditions in Detroit. Isaac Frishman (student of Richard Fracker) will be in the Young Artist Program of Des Moines Opera, following his professional debut as Ramiro in Opera St. Louis' *La Cenerentola*. Steven Martin (student of Richard Fracker) will be returning to Santa Fe Opera as an apprentice this summer.

MSU OPERA THEATRE 2017 GRADUATES

ALUMNI NEWS

Jonathan Kirkland (BM 2008, student of Richard Fracker) opened in the Chicago production of *Hamilton* in the leading role of George Washington to rave reviews. Baritone Harry Greenleaf (student of Richard Fracker/Harlan Jennings) appeared to acclaim as Anthony in productions of *Sweeney Todd* at the Glimmerglass Festival, New Orleans Opera and in Europe, as well as appearing on the stage of Michigan Opera Theatre. Johnathan Riesen (BM 2014, student of Richard Fracker) continues a busy schedule of appearances in leading roles in Shreveport, Binghamton and Pensacola. Schyler Sheltrown (MM 2016, student of Melanie Helton) was awarded an Encouragement Award at the MET auditions in Detroit.

Mark Your Calendars for our 2017-2018 Season!

Engelbert Humperdinck

Hansel and Gretel

Adelheid Wette, librettist

(sung in English)

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Sunday

November 15, 16, 17, 19

(Please notice slight change in regular schedule)

Kurt Weill's

Street Scene

Langston Hughes, librettist

Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday

March 21, 23, 24, 25

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MSU Opera Society is the community support organization of the MSU Opera Theatre. We are grateful to our members for their generous contributions.

The 2016-17 MSU Opera Theatre season is generously funded by the Worthington Family Foundation

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Please consider how much you enjoy the Opera Theatre productions and send your check or money order made payable to Michigan State University with "MSU Opera Society - AE0605" written on the memo line. Mail your contributions to:

Opera Theatre

College of Music Advancement Office
333 W Circle Drive, Room 105
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824

For information about the MSU Opera Society, please contact the College of Music Advancement Office at (517) 353-9872 or e-mail Rebecca Surian at surian@msu.edu.