

**February 29, 2016 - For Immediate Release**

Chris Cox, Director of Marketing and Communications  
 Office: 412.281.0912 ext. 217  
 Mobile: 412.427.7088 or  
 Email: [ccox@pittsburghopera.org](mailto:ccox@pittsburghopera.org)

**Pittsburgh Opera presents THE BARBER OF SEVILLE**  
*Rossini's madcap comedy favorite, not seen here since 2010*

<b>What:</b>	Rossini's <a href="#">THE BARBER OF SEVILLE</a>
<b>Where:</b>	Benedum Center for the Performing Arts, Downtown Pittsburgh
<b>When:</b>	Saturday, April 2, 8:00 p.m.  Tuesday, April 5, 7:00 p.m.  Friday, April 8, 7:30 p.m.  Sunday, April 10, 2:00 p.m.
<b>Run Time:</b>	2 hours 45 minutes, including 1 intermission
<b>Language:</b>	Sung in Italian with English texts projected above the stage
<b>Tickets:</b>	Start at \$12 for all performances. Group Discounts available. Call 412-456-6666 for more information or visit <a href="http://pittsburghopera.org/tickets">pittsburghopera.org/tickets</a> .
<b>Media Events</b>	<i>Please contact <a href="mailto:ccox@pittsburghopera.org">ccox@pittsburghopera.org</a> for reservations</i>  Photo Call (3/21, 12:30 PM) – Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters  Full Dress Rehearsal (3/31, 7:00 – 10:00 PM), Benedum Center
<b>Related Events</b>  <i>See pages 6-7          of this release.</i>	Brown Bag concert (3/19)  Opera Up Close (3/20)  WQED Preview (3/26 & 4/1)  Meet the Artists (4/5)  Audio Description (4/5)  Student Matinee (4/7)



Figaro offers to help Rosina communicate with her true love, Almoviva. Photo: Nanc Price for Edmonton Opera

## **Pittsburgh, PA...**

Pittsburgh Opera continues its 77th season with the always popular comedy THE BARBER OF SEVILLE.

Almoviva is in love with the beautiful and virtuous Rosina, who is essentially held captive by Bartolo. Enlisting the aid of town barber Figaro, Almoviva attempts to thwart Bartolo's plan to marry Rosina and marry her himself.

Rossini's madcap comedy is guaranteed to send you out laughing or humming a tune. It features an amazing ensemble cast – including two former [Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artists](#) with tremendous personalities, [Kevin Glavin](#) and [Jonathan Beyer](#) – and debuts by [Michele Angelini](#) and [Emily Fons](#), both of whom have received superlative reviews around the world in their roles. [Antony Walker](#) conducts.

THE BARBER OF SEVILLE was originally set in Seville, Spain in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Pittsburgh Opera is performing a more contemporary version that is set in Hollywood during the 1950s. For example, instead of Bartolo being a doctor with Rosina as his ward, in this production Bartolo is a movie producer and Rosina is his studio's starlet. There will be many recognizable characters from Hollywood's heyday sprinkled throughout this lively production, which will conjure some of the most treasured moments from Hollywood's golden age.

On stage April 2, 5, 8 and 10, it brings laughs and fun to the Benedum Center. Tickets start at \$12.

## Three facts about THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

1. The 1816 premiere in Rome was a “disastrous failure.” The audience hissed and jeered so much so that Rossini feigned illness to avoid conducting the second performance. The second performance, however, turned out to be a roaring success and THE BARBER OF SEVILLE has become “one of the greatest masterpieces of comedy within music.”
2. The famous Bugs Bunny cartoon ‘[Rabbit of Seville](#)’ was voted #12 on a list of the top 50 cartoons of all time. ‘Rabbit of Seville’ features Bugs Bunny tricking Elmer Fudd into appearing on stage for a performance of THE BARBER OF SEVILLE, where they engage in hijinks set to an arrangement of Rossini’s actual overture.
3. “Largo al factotum”, aka “Figaro! Figaro! Fig-a-ro!”, is among the most legendary and recognizable arias in opera history. It’s been covered by everyone from Robin Williams (in ‘Mrs. Doubtfire’) to Woody Woodpecker. This *pièce de résistance* is “one of the most difficult baritone arias to perform”.

## The story, in brief

Pittsburgh Opera’s production of Rossini’s THE BARBER OF SEVILLE takes place in Hollywood during the 1950s.

### Act I

Count Almaviva comes in disguise to the house of Doctor Bartolo and serenades Rosina, whom Bartolo keeps confined to the house. Figaro the barber, who knows all the town’s secrets and scandals, arrives. He explains to Almaviva that Rosina is Bartolo’s ward, not his daughter, and that the doctor intends to marry her. Figaro devises a plan: the count will disguise himself as a drunken soldier with orders to be quartered at Bartolo’s house so that he may gain access to the girl. Almaviva is excited and Figaro looks forward to a nice cash reward.

Enchanted by the count’s serenade, Rosina resolves to use her considerable wiles to meet its owner, whom the count leads her to believe is a poor student named Lindoro. Bartolo appears with Rosina’s music master, Don Basilio. Basilio warns Bartolo that Count Almaviva, who has made known his admiration for Rosina, has been seen in Seville. Bartolo decides to marry Rosina immediately. Figaro, who has overheard the plot, warns Rosina and promises to deliver a note from her to Lindoro. Bartolo suspects that Rosina has indeed written a letter, but she outwits him at every turn. Angry at her defiance, Bartolo warns her not to trifle with him.

Almaviva arrives, creating a ruckus in his disguise as a drunken soldier, and secretly passes Rosina his own note. Bartolo is infuriated by the stranger’s behavior and noisily claims that he has an official exemption from housing soldiers. Figaro announces that a crowd has gathered in the street, curious about the argument they hear coming from inside the house. The civil guard bursts in to arrest Almaviva, but when he secretly reveals his true

identity to the captain, he is instantly released. Everyone except Figaro is amazed by this turn of events.

## Act II

Bartolo suspects that the “soldier” was a spy planted by Almaviva. The count returns, this time disguised as Don Alonso, a music teacher and student of Don Basilio. He announces he will give Rosina her music lesson in place of Basilio, who, he claims, is ill. “Don Alonso” tells Bartolo that he is staying at the same inn as Almaviva, and has found a letter from Rosina. He offers to tell her that it was given to him by another woman, seemingly to prove that Lindoro is toying with Rosina on Almaviva’s behalf. This convinces Bartolo that “Don Alonso” is indeed a student of the scheming Basilio, and he allows him to give Rosina her music lesson. She sings an aria, and, with Bartolo dozing off, Almaviva and Rosina express their love.

Figaro arrives to give Bartolo his shave, and manages to snatch the key that opens the doors to Rosina’s balcony. Suddenly, Basilio shows up, looking perfectly healthy. Almaviva, Rosina, and Figaro convince him with a quick bribe that he is sick with scarlet fever and must go home at once. While Bartolo gets his shave, Almaviva plots with Rosina to elope that night. But the doctor overhears them and furiously realizes he has been tricked again.

Bartolo summons Basilio, telling him to bring a notary so Bartolo can marry Rosina that very night. Bartolo then shows Rosina her letter to Lindoro, as proof that he is in league with Almaviva. Heartbroken and convinced that she has been deceived, she agrees to marry Bartolo. A thunderstorm rages. Figaro and the count climb a ladder to Rosina’s balcony and let themselves in with the key. Rosina appears and confronts Lindoro, who finally reveals his true identity as Almaviva. Basilio shows up with the notary. Bribed and threatened, he agrees to be a witness to the marriage of Rosina and Almaviva. Bartolo arrives with soldiers, but it is too late. Almaviva explains to Bartolo that it is useless to protest and Bartolo accepts that he has been beaten. Figaro, Rosina, and the count celebrate their good fortune.

- Courtesy of Opera News, freely edited

For additional information, videos, musical samples, and cast biographies, visit [pittsburghopera.org](http://pittsburghopera.org).

## Tickets and Group Discounts

- Tickets to all performances of [THE BARBER OF SEVILLE](#) start at \$12
- All performances are at the [Benedum Center](#), 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Penn Avenue, in Pittsburgh's Cultural District
- To purchase tickets, call 412-456-6666, visit the Theatre Square Box Office, or visit [pittsburghopera.org/tickets](http://pittsburghopera.org/tickets).
- Group discounts are available. For discounted group tickets (6 or more), contact Randy Adams at 412-281-0912, x 213

## Sponsors

- The 2015-16 Pittsburgh Opera season is generously supported by [PNC](#)
- [WQED-FM](#) is Season Media Sponsor

## Cast and Artistic Team

Count Almaviva	<a href="#">Michele Angelini</a> <sup>+</sup>
Rosina	<a href="#">Emily Fons</a> <sup>+</sup>
Doctor Bartolo	<a href="#">Kevin Glavin</a> <sup>**</sup>
Figaro	<a href="#">Jonathan Beyer</a> <sup>**</sup>
Don Basilio	<a href="#">Brandon Cedel</a> <sup>+</sup>
Berta	<a href="#">Claudia Rosenthal</a> <sup>*</sup>
Fiorello	<a href="#">Brian Vu</a> <sup>*</sup>
Ambrogio	Bill Ivens
Ufficiale	Jesse Lee Davis II
Conductor	<a href="#">Antony Walker</a>
Stage Director	<a href="#">Linda Brovsky</a>
Set Designer	<a href="#">Allan Stichbury</a>
Costume Designer	<a href="#">Parvin Mirhardy</a>
Lighting Designer	<a href="#">Andrew Ostrowski</a>
Wig & Make-up Designer	James Geier
Stage Manager	Cindy Knight
Assistant Conductor	<a href="#">James Lesniak</a>
Chorus Master	<a href="#">Mark Trawka</a>
Associate Coach/Pianist	<a href="#">James Lesniak</a>
Second Pianist	<a href="#">Sean Kelly</a>
Asst. Stage Director	<a href="#">Jennifer Williams</a> <sup>*</sup>
Assistant Stage Manager	<a href="#">Sarah Cowing</a>
Assistant Stage Manager	Randy Ahmed

+ Pittsburgh Opera debut

\* Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist

\*\* Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist alumnus

## Related Events for THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

### **Brown Bag Concert, “Bel Canto”**

**Saturday, March 19 - 12:00 p.m.**

**George R. White Opera Studio, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, [2425 Liberty Avenue](#)**

“Bel canto” is Italian for “beautiful singing”, and this free concert will live up to the name. Our [Resident Artists](#) will treat you to works by Bellini, Donizetti and Rossini, with selections from THE BARBER OF SEVILLE, including the famous “Largo al factotum” (aka “Figaro! Figaro! Figaro!”), as the highlight. Guests can meet the performers after this casual, one-hour concert. Free and open to everyone; no RSVP required. Bring a friend and bring a lunch! Doors open at 11:30 a.m. Handicapped parking available by reservation. For more information: 412-281-0912 or [pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/march-brown-bag-concert](http://pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/march-brown-bag-concert)

### **Opera Up Close: THE BARBER OF SEVILLE**

**Sunday, March 20 from 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM**

**George R. White Opera Studio, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, [2425 Liberty Avenue](#)**

Opera Up Close is an in-depth look at the music and story of Rossini’s THE BARBER OF SEVILLE with singers and the production’s conductor. Admission is \$5; free to members of [FRIENDS of Pittsburgh Opera](#) and \$50+ donors. Handicapped parking is available by reservation. For more information: 412-281-0912 or [pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/opera-up-close-the-barber-of-seville](http://pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/opera-up-close-the-barber-of-seville).

### **THE BARBER OF SEVILLE Previews on WQED-FM 89.3 and WQED.ORG**

**Saturday, March 26 from 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM and**

**Friday, April 1 from 7:00 PM - 7:30 PM**

Hosted by WQED, and broadcast over the airwaves on WQED-FM 89.3 as well as the WQED website, THE BARBER OF SEVILLE preview gives listeners an engaging introduction to the singers, music, and story of the opera. For more information: [pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/wqed-preview-the-barber-of-seville1](http://pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/wqed-preview-the-barber-of-seville1)

### **Audio Description: THE BARBER OF SEVILLE**

**Tuesday, April 5, 7:00 PM**

**Benedum Center**

Ticketholders with visual impairments are invited to use Pittsburgh Opera’s Audio Description service at our Tuesday performances. Trained volunteers describe the scenery, costumes, and stage action. The listeners hear these descriptions via headphones. Those wishing to use Audio Description should reserve seats to the Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> performance by contacting Randy Adams at 412-281-0912, ext. 213 or [groups@pittsburghopera.org](mailto:groups@pittsburghopera.org). Braille and large-print programs are also available.

## **Meet the Artists of THE BARBER OF SEVILLE**

**Tuesday, April 5**

**Immediately following the opera, in the Benedum Center's Lower Lobby**

Ticketholders for the Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> performance of THE BARBER OF SEVILLE are invited to gather in the Benedum Lower Lobby immediately following the performance for interviews with [General Director Christopher Hahn](#) and the stars of the opera. This event is free to all Tuesday performance ticketholders.

## **Student Matinee performance of THE BARBER OF SEVILLE**

**Thursday, April 7 from 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM**

**Benedum Center**

Pittsburgh Opera's Student Matinee program is an affordable way to introduce students in grades 3-12 to the world of opera. It's a complete mainstage performance at the Benedum Center put on just for students and educators. THE BARBER OF SEVILLE is a perfect opera for young people. It has recognizable music, plus madcap humor, comedic staging, and intriguing costumes. Tickets are only \$10. At least one teacher per school must attend a prerequisite Workshop for Educators either March 3rd or March 5th. For more information, visit [pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/student-matinee-the-barber-of-seville](http://pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/student-matinee-the-barber-of-seville), or contact Marilyn Egan, Director of Education, at [megan@pittsburghopera.org](mailto:megan@pittsburghopera.org).

## **COMING UP NEXT for Pittsburgh Opera:**

**Stravinsky's [THE RAKE'S PROGRESS](#), April 30, May 3, 6 & 8, 2016**

Pittsburgh Opera celebrates its 77th season in 2015-16. Established by five intrepid women in 1939, Pittsburgh Opera is viewed as one of the most vibrant opera organizations in the U.S., with a rich artistic tradition, outstanding educational programs, an acclaimed artist training program, and a progressive outlook toward the future. Its green initiative culminated in LEED® Silver certification for its Strip District headquarters, and its capacity as a true community partner has increased significantly under General Director Christopher Hahn's leadership.

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