

PITTSBURGH OPERA

November 18, 2019

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Pittsburgh Opera produces Pittsburgh debut of George Frideric Handel's Baroque classic *Alcina*, Jan. 25-Feb. 2

What:	Alcina Music composed and libretto adapted by George Frideric Handel
Where:	Pittsburgh CAPA School Theater, 111 9th Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15222
When:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sat., Jan. 25, 2020 * 8:00 PM • Tues., Jan. 28, 2020 * 7:00 PM • Fri., Jan. 31, 2020 * 7:30 PM • Sun., Feb. 2, 2020 * 2:00 PM
Run Time:	2 hours, 22 minutes, with one intermission
Language:	Sung in Italian with English texts projected above the stage
Tickets:	<p>Single tickets for adults are \$52; tickets for kids and teens ages 6-18 are half-price.</p> <p>For tickets call 412-456-6666, visit the Box Office at Theater Square, or online at pittsburghopera.org or CulturalDistrict.org.</p> <p>Group discounts, including student discounts, are available.</p>
Media Events	<p>Photo Call (Mon., Jan. 13, 12:30 PM) - location TBA</p> <p>Full Dress Rehearsal (Thurs., Jan. 23, 7:00 PM) - CAPA Theater</p>
Related Events See pages 6-8 of this release.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January Brown Bag concert (1/4) • Opera Up Close (1/12) • WQED Preview (1/18 & 1/24) • Pre-Opera Talks (1 hour prior to all performances) • Pittsburgh Opera mobile app (real-time during all performances) • Audio Commentary (1/28) • Meet the Artists (1/28)

PITTSBURGH OPERA

Overview of *Alcina*

Alcina is a Baroque masterpiece by George Frideric Handel. The title character, Alcina, is a malicious sorceress who lives on an enchanted island with her sister Morgana. Alcina uses her magic spells to trick men into falling in love with her. But once she tires of them, she turns them into animals or inanimate objects.

Alcina's current crush is Ruggiero, a chivalrous knight she has captured. Ruggiero's fiancé Bradamante, and her tutor, Melisso, arrive to bring Ruggiero home. But Alcina and Morgana have no intention of letting him leave, setting the stage for a climactic showdown. Will Ruggiero regain his senses in time? Will Alcina's evil spell finally be broken?

All performances will be in the cozy confines of Pittsburgh CAPA Theater in downtown Pittsburgh, which is ideally suited for Baroque performances.

Pittsburgh Opera is pleased to partner with [Chatham Baroque](#) for **Alcina**. Founded in 1990, Chatham Baroque continues to excite local, national, and international audiences with dazzling technique and lively interpretations of 17th- and 18th-century music played on authentic period instruments.

Pittsburgh Opera Music Director [Antony Walker](#) conducts. [Matthew Haney](#) directs.

As always, English supertitles will be projected above the stage.

Single tickets for adults are \$52; kids and teens ages 6-18 are half-price. For tickets call 412-456-6666, visit the Box Office at Theater Square, or online at [pittsburghopera.org](#) or [CulturalDistrict.org](#). Group discounts, including student discounts, are available.

Fun facts about *Alcina*

1. The story was originally taken from Italian poet [Ludovico Ariosto's](#) chivalric epic [Orlando furioso](#) (The Frenzy of Orlando), which harkens back to 1516 and was also the source material for Handel's operas *Orlando* and *Ariodante*.
2. **Alcina** premiered in 1735, but after 1738 another 190 years would elapse before it was performed again, in Leipzig in 1928. While still rare, it has been performed in a number of cities since then. These will be Pittsburgh Opera's first performances of **Alcina**.
3. Like many Baroque operas, **Alcina** contains a pants role (female singer portraying a young man). Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist [Antonia Botti-Lodovico](#), who performed a pants role in last year's [afterWARds: Mozart's Idomeneo Reimagined](#), sings the role of chivalrous knight Ruggiero.

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The story, in brief

ACT I, Scene 1. A deserted spot surrounded by hills. Bradamante, disguised as her brother Ricciardo, along with her tutor Melisso, have been ship-wrecked and cast ashore while searching for her lover Ruggiero. They meet Morgana, Alcina's sister, who falls in love with the disguised Bradamante and promises to take them to Alcina. With a clap of thunder, the hills part, and Alcina is revealed, surrounded by her court, including Ruggiero. She receives the travellers graciously and tells Ruggiero to show them the sights of the island. Bradamante confronts Ruggiero, who recognizes her as Ricciardo but denies any interest in Ricciardo's sister - he is the faithful lover of Alcina. He runs off to find her. Oronte, Alcina's commander-in-chief, rightly suspecting the constancy of Morgana, whom he loves, charges Bradamante with having stolen Morgana's love. Morgana defends Bradamante and insults Oronte. Bradamante tries to calm their mutual recriminations.

ACT II, Scene 2. Oronte, coming upon Ruggiero, who is sighing for the absent Alcina, decides to alleviate his own jealousy by making Ruggiero jealous too. Oronte concocts a tale that Alcina now loves "Ricciardo" and will no doubt soon add Ruggiero to her collection of discarded and transformed lovers. Ruggiero believes him and heaps reproaches on the puzzled Alcina, who assures him that her feelings are unchanged. Bradamante accuses Ruggiero of disloyalty, but he retaliates with defiance, accusing her, as Ricciardo, of having stolen Alcina's love. Bradamante discloses her identity, but Melisso, worried that Ruggiero is not yet ready for this information, convinces him that she is not really Bradamante. Morgana warns Bradamante that Ruggiero has persuaded Alcina to change her into a wild beast, so Bradamante tells Morgana to assure Ruggiero that she does not love Alcina, but another. Morgana departs happily, thinking she is that other. Alcina laments Ruggiero's jealousy, hoping that their love will soon be as untroubled as before.

ACT II, Scene 1. Melisso, disguised as Ruggiero's tutor Atlante, reproaches him with having abandoned the path of glory and gives him a magic ring that brings him to his senses. Ruggiero regrets his faithlessness to Bradamante and wishes to send a message of defiance to Alcina, but Melisso advises him to pretend that he still loves her and make his escape on the pretext of going hunting. Bradamante again reveals her identity, only to have Ruggiero reject this revelation as another of Alcina's deceptions.

ACT II, Scene 2. Alcina is preparing to change Ricciardo into a wild beast to appease Ruggiero, while Morgana tries to dissuade her and Ruggiero assures her that he is no longer jealous, so drastic measures are no longer necessary. Alcina notices that Ruggiero is not in his usual spirits and he suggests a hunt as a restorative. She consents and he departs. Oronte brings the news that Ruggiero is planning to flee, and Alcina prepares to foil this plan. Oronte tells Morgana that her new love is about to leave her, but she refuses to believe this and departs scornfully, leaving him to lament her power over him. Ruggiero is at last convinced that Bradamante is really herself. Morgana discovers them embracing, and, apparently taking in her stride the revelation that Bradamante is a woman, reproaches her with being a faithless guest and Ruggiero with betraying Alcina. Ruggiero looks forward to the ending of the enchantments.

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ACT II, Scene 3. Alcina begins to make spells to bind Ruggiero to her, but loses heart and casts her wand aside.

ACT III, Scene 1. Morgana tries to ingratiate herself with Oronte, who pretends indifference, but has to admit to himself that he still loves her. Alcina upbraids Ruggiero for trying to leave her. He tells her that his betrothed Bradamante now has his love. Alcina threatens vengeance, though is unable to obliterate her tender feelings for him. Bradamante and Melisso join Ruggiero to plan their campaign. Melisso tells them that the island is surrounded by Alcina's enchanted monsters and advises Ruggiero to take a Gorgonian shield and winged horse to help him in the fray. Although worried at leaving his beloved, Ruggiero sets off, followed by Melisso and Bradamante, who vows to free those lying under enchantment. Oronte announces to Alcina the complete defeat of her forces and she laments her cruel fate.

ACT III, Scene 2. Ruggiero and Bradmante confront Alcina, each advising the other not to be taken in by her deceptions. She tries both pleading and threats in vain. Ruggiero returns the defeated Oronte's sword and then smashes the urn that holds Alcina's secret power. All her spells are broken, and the rocks, trees, and animals resume their human shapes. They rejoice at their liberty and all celebrate the triumph of love.

- Adapted from opera-arias.com

Ticketing Information

- Single tickets for adults are \$52; tickets for kids and teens ages 6-18 are half-price. Call 412-456-6666 or visit pittsburghopera.org/tickets.
- Group discounts, including student discounts, are available. For more information about [group ticket services and discounts](#) for groups of six or more people, contact Regina Connolly at (412) 281-0912, ext. 213 or groups@pittsburghopera.org.

Sponsors

- [PNC](#) is the 2019-20 Pittsburgh Opera Season Sponsor
- [WQED-FM](#) is Pittsburgh Opera's Media Sponsor
- [Ambridge Regional Distribution and Manufacturing Center](#) is the Tuesday performance and 'Meet the Artists' post-show event sponsor

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Cast and Artistic Team: *Alcina*

Alcina
Ruggiero
Bradamante
Morgana
Oronte
Melisso

[Caitlin Gotimer](#)*
[Antonia Botti-Lodovico](#)*
[Laurel Semerdjian](#)**
[Natasha Wilson](#)*
[Angel Romero](#)*
[Tyler Zimmerman](#)*

Conductor
Stage Director
Set Designer
Costume Designer
Lighting Designer
Wig Master
Stage Manager
Asst Stage Manager

[Antony Walker](#)
[Matthew Haney](#)*
Sarah Delaney Boyle
Jason Bray
Nate Wheatley
Nicole Pagano
Cindy Knight
Jinah Lee

- + Pittsburgh Opera debut
- * Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist
- ** Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist alumni

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Related Events for *Alcina*

[Brown Bag concert](#)

Saturday, January 4, Noon - 1:00 PM

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

You're invited to our free January Brown Bag concert! Join us for an afternoon celebrating the best of operatic arias.

The performance takes place in the George R. White studio at Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, 2425 Liberty Avenue in the Strip. It's free and open to everyone. Bring a friend and bring a lunch! Meet our [Resident Artists](#) afterward at an informal reception.

Doors open at 11:30AM. No reservations needed, except for handicapped parking in the Pittsburgh Opera garage. If you need a handicapped parking spot, please call Sue Solito at 412-281-0912 ext. 100. Handicapped parking reservations are due by 4:00 PM Friday, January 3rd.

For more information: <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/january-brown-bag-concert4>

Opera Up Close: *Alcina*

Sunday, January 12, 2:00 - 3:30 PM

Founders' Room, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, [2425 Liberty Avenue](#)

Join Robert Boldin, Artistic Administrator, and special guests from the production, for an in-depth look at [Alcina](#).

Admission is \$5; free to members of [FRIENDS of Pittsburgh Opera](#) or the [New Guard](#), and \$50+ donors.

No reservations needed, except for handicapped parking in the Pittsburgh Opera garage. If you need a handicapped parking spot, please call Sue Solito at 412-281-0912 ext. 100. Handicapped parking reservations are due by 4:00 PM Friday, January 10th.

For more information: <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/opera-up-close-alcina>

PITTSBURGH OPERA

***Alcina* Previews on WQED-FM 89.3 and WQED.ORG/FM**

Saturday, January 18, 12:30 - 1:00 PM

Friday, January 24, 7:00 - 7:30 PM

Make time for this half-hour preview of Handel's [Alcina](#), with candid commentary from singers and directors. Hosted by WQED's Anna Singer, and broadcast over the airwaves on WQED-FM 89.3, as well as the WQED website, WQED's preview of **Alcina** gives listeners an engaging introduction to the singers, music, and story of the opera.

For more information: <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/wqed-preview-alcina>.

Pre-Opera Talks

1 hour before each performance, CAPA Black Box Theater

All ticketholders are invited to attend a [Pre-Opera Talk](#) one hour before each performance's curtain in the CAPA Black Box Theater (across the hall from the main theater where the performances take place). Learn about the composer, the story, and some juicy details about the opera! These talks are free to all ticketholders.

Pittsburgh Opera Mobile App

Real-time during each performance

Pittsburgh Opera's innovative mobile app delivers real-time supplemental content to patrons via their smartphones during the performance. Free for both iOS and Android devices. Please use responsibly and be considerate of those around you. Learn more at pittsburghopera.org/app.

Audio Commentary: *Alcina*

Tuesday, January 28, 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 supertitles, scenery, costumes, and stage action. The listeners hear these descriptions via assistive listening devices. Those wishing to use Audio Description should reserve seats to the Tuesday, January 28th performance of **Alcina** by contacting Regina Connolly at 412-281-0912, ext. 213, or groups@pittsburghopera.org. Braille and large-print programs are available at all performances.

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Meet the Artists of *Alcina*

**Tuesday, January 28, immediately following the performance
CAPA Black Box Theater**

Pittsburgh Opera [General Director Christopher Hahn](#) interviews the stars of [Alcina](#) after the Tuesday evening performance, in the Black Box Theater at CAPA, 111 9th Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15222.

You can ask your own questions and mingle with the artists too! This event is free to all Tuesday ticketholders.

“Meet the Artists” is generously sponsored by Ambridge Regional Distribution and Manufacturing Center. Learn more at <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/meet-the-artists-alcina>

COMING UP NEXT for Pittsburgh Opera:

The Last American Hammer, Feb. 22 – March 1, 2020

Pittsburgh Opera celebrates its 81st season in 2019-20. 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, internationally-recognized 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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