

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Vancouver Opera presents *The Barber of Seville*

A Feast of Frivolous Fun on Stage in Rossini's Comic Masterpiece

Only **FOUR** Performances in Vancouver at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre
February 13, 15, 20 at 7:30pm & February 23 at 2:00pm

JANUARY 13, 2020, VANCOUVER, B.C. - Vancouver Opera's 2019-2020 season continues with the comic masterpiece ***The Barber of Seville*** by Gioachino Rossini. Memorable melodies and mischievous escapades create frivolous fun in the pursuit of true love.

"Vancouver Opera is thrilled to present Rossini's comic masterpiece under the direction of Ashlie Corcoran," said Tom Wright, Vancouver Opera Interim General Director. "This is the 9th time Vancouver Opera has mounted a main-stage production of *The Barber of Seville* and we couldn't think of a better production to chase away the February blues than with Rossini's greatest masterpiece of comedy and music."

Canadian stage director Ashlie Corcoran, Artistic Director of the Arts Club Theatre Company, returns to the Vancouver Opera mainstage following her 2011 engagement as Assistant Director on *The Barber of Seville*. Corcoran has previously directed at the Canadian Opera Company, Opera Philadelphia and professional theatres across Canada. Making his Vancouver Opera debut is Canadian conductor Nathan Brock who began his career in Montreal under Kent Nagano.

First performed at Rome's Teatro Argentina in 1816, *The Barber of Seville* is one of Rossini's most hilarious operas, combining mischievous antics involving theft, secret notes, disguises and bribery all in the pursuit of true love alongside memorable melodies. Edward Nelson makes his Vancouver Opera debut in the entertaining role of Figaro assisting Count Almaviva, tenor Isaiah Bell, in his pursuit of Rosina, mezzo-soprano Julie Boulianne.

CAST:

Baritone Edward Nelson brings his flexible voice to the humorous role of Figaro in his Vancouver Opera debut. Based in America he has performed with the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis as Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus*, the San Franicsco Opera in *Don Pasquale* and *Madame Butterfly*. He performed with the Norwegian National Opera as Dandini in *La Cenerentola*.

Tenor Isaiah Bell makes his Vancouver Opera debut. From Victoria, this Canadian-American brings his critically acclaimed voice and stage presence to the lovestruck role of Count Almaviva. Working with the Canadian Opera Company on the world premiere of *Hadrian* he created the role of Antinous. He appeared with the Toronto Symphony in George Benjamin's *Written on Skin,* at the National Arts Centre Orchestra in *War Requiem* and in *Elektra* at l'Opéra de Montréal.

French-Canadian mezzo-soprano Julie Boulianne brings her agility and expressive power to Rosina. Her recent roles include Siebel in *Faust* for the Royal Opera House in Japan and Cenerentola in *La Cenerentola* for l'Opéra de Montréal and Opera de Limoges. She was last seen on stage at Vancouver Opera in 2015 as Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*.

Canadian bass-baritone Thomas Goerz returns to the Vancouver Opera stage as Dr. Bartolo. He was last seen in Vancouver Opera's productions of *Otello* as Lodovico, *Dark Sisters* and as Sacristan in *Tosca*. Other recent engagements include *Anna Bolena* and *Elektra* with the Canadian Opera Company, Owen Hart in *Dead Man Walking* in Montreal, Calgary and Vancouver as well as in *Ours* at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa.

South Korean baritone Taehyn Jun makes his Vancouver Opera debut as Don Basilio. His recent appearances include Mephistopheles in *Faust* at the Seoul Metropolitan Opera, Fasolt in *Das Rheingold* at the Numberger Opernhaus and in *Gesler* for Korea National Opera at the Opera House in Seoul Arts Center.

Two of the Vancouver Opera's Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program members, Nicholas Borg and Gena van Oosten, join the principal cast in this Rossini operatic favourite.

Canadian baritone Nicholas Borg is bringing his vocal prowess to the role of Fiorello. A graduate of the University of Toronto's Opera Performance program, his recent roles include Baron Douphol in *La Traviata,* Marcello in *La Bohème*, Pangloss in *Candide* and Figaro in the Canadian premiere of Mercadante's lost opera, *I Due Figaro*.

Mezzo-soprano Gena van Oosten is bringing her vocal sensitivity to the role of Berta. Previous roles include Flora in *La Traviata,* Tisbe in *La Cenerentola*, Eduige in *Rodelinda* and the First Witch in *Dido and Aeneas*.

The principal cast is joined by the Vancouver Opera Chorus and the Vancouver Opera Orchestra.

Ashlie Corcoran directs with assistant director Amanda Testini who is a member of the Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program. Set design for *The Barber of Seville* is by Ken MacDonald. Dana Osborne is the costume designer. Associate conductor/chorus director is Leslie Dala and lighting design is by Kimberley Purtell. Theresa Tsang is stage manager and Kinza Tyrrell is principal répétiteur/assistant chorus director. Musical preparation is by Tina Chang and Andrea Van Pelt, also a member of the Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program. Assistant stage managers are Michelle Harrison and Collette Berg.

While *The Barber of Seville* is sung in Italian, English SURTITLES™ will be projected above the stage.

Opening night of ***The Barber of Seville*** is Thursday February 13 at 7:30pm, with subsequent evening performances on Saturday February 15 and Thursday February 20 at 7:30pm, and a 2:00pm matinee on Sunday February 23. All performances take place at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre (Georgia and Hamilton), Vancouver. Tickets start at $50 and are available at the Vancouver Opera Ticket Centre, by telephone (604 683 0222), or online at vancouveropera.ca.

Vancouver Opera has the continuing support of The Canada Council for the Arts, Canada Heritage, the BC Arts Council and BC Provincial Government, the City of Vancouver and Vancouver Civic Theatres.

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