CLEVELAND OPERA THEATER

PRESENTS

THE MARRAIGE OF

FIGARO

MOZART

GRADE College +

CLEVELAND OPERA THEATER

Have questions about Mozart or *Le nozze di Figaro*? Contact our Director of Education and Outreach, Megan Thompson at mthompson@clevelandoperatheater.org



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Cover Art by Andrew Lobosco Booklet by Nicole Veigas

Welcome!

We are excited to bring you this opportunity to explore Cleveland Opera Theater's production of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's masterpiece, Le Nozze di Figaro (The Marriage of Figaro). Cleveland Opera Theater's mission is to produce vibrant, accessible, innovative, and engaging opera in Greater Cleveland. When we embarked on this project, the first thing we did was explore what resources exist for families to experience, explore, and engage in this opera. What we discovered is that most of the resources that are easily accessible are designed for young opera novices, not adults. We aimed to create something a bit more mature for you to use as you watch our production.

Unlike most media, we in the opera world believe "spoilers" actually enhance your enjoyment of the opera, so we suggest reviewing the synopsis and the characters before watching our production. Knowing what is about to happen on stage makes it easier to focus on the beauty of the music and exciting visuals rather than trying to follow the plot.

Happy listening,

Megan Thompson Director of Education and Outreach Cleveland Opera Theater

Stephanie Ruozzo Education and Outreach Associate Cleveland Opera Theater

About Mozart

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in Augsburg, Austria on January 27, 1756 to a violin teacher, though he grew up in the city of Salzburg. He began studying the keyboard at age 3, giving public concerts at age 5, making court appearances at 6, and touring Europe as a wunderkind ("wonder kid") at 7. At the realization of his son's extraordinary natural ability, Leopold abandoned his previous education pursuits to focus on Wolfgang's musical education. For the next several

vears. Leopold served as his son's impresario: coaching, advertising, scheduling performances, and arranging travel. The young boy was able to get so much practice because of his highly skilled family; his sister Nannerl was as much of a piano prodigy as Wolfgang, so they constantly practiced and performed together. They found favor in the courts of most European capitals, including the courts of



Louis XV in Paris and Maria Theresa in Vienna. Mozart's first published piece of music was a violin sonata (a piece of chamber music for solo violin accompanied by piano) from 1764. As a child, Mozart studied for a brief period of time with Johann Christian Bach, the son of famed composer Johann Sebastian Bach. Back in Vienna by 1768, Mozart wrote his first opera, *La Finta Semplice (The Pretend Idiot)*.

Shortly after taking this important step as a composer, Mozart was appointed Konzertmeister (a combination of conductor and composer) at the Bishop's court in Salzburg. During his years at this post, Mozart spent time studying extensively in Italy and honing his skills as an opera craftsman. He learned to write the "recitative" (conversational portions) first and to keep his arias (the solo songs) private as long as possible so that no other composers or performers could steal them. He also began studying the libretti (or lyrics) of Metastasio, the renowned Italian poet

whose verses served as the ideal model for all opera composers to set to music. Mozart felt that Salzburg was too provincial a post for him, though, and continually lobbied for more prestigious appointments in larger cities. Unfortunately, a new archbishop named Colloredo came to preside over the court in Salzburg, and he did not get along well with Mozart. The composer began to travel and seek other posts more frequently.

By 1781, Mozart had matured as a composer and *Idomeneo*, widely regarded as his first serious opera, premiered. Tired of feuding with Colloredo, he moved to Vienna, the capital of Austria, where he made a living as a freelance performer (even accompanist), composer, and music teacher. It was at this time that Mozart's personal style and technique as a composer flourished. The composer found his unique voice; Cliff Eisen and Stanley Sadie describe the music of this period as "distinguished by its melodic beauty, its formal elegance and its richness of harmony and texture...deeply coloured by Italian opera though also rooted in Austrian and south German instrumental traditions." Mozart was also unique in his compositional versatility, demonstrating the ability to work in a variety of musical genres. No matter how successful Mozart was as a professional, he could not obtain a position as official court composer for the Emperor of Austria. He did receive frequent commissions though, including the one for *Die Entführung aus dem Serail (The Abduction from the Seraglio)* 1782 for the *Nationalsingspiel* company sponsored by Emperor Joseph II in Vienna.

Shortly after this flourishing of German-language singspiel at the Austrian court, Joseph II decided to promote Italian-language opera. To comply with this program, Mozart sought suitable libretti from several poets, resulting in a few abortive efforts that were left unstaged. Mozart finally selected Lorenzo da Ponte's

adaptation of a French farce play by Pierre Beaumarchais: Le mariage de Figáro. Written during the reign of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette (Emperor Joseph II's sister) in pre-Revolution Paris, the play was an incendiary commentary on the lecherousness of the aristocracy. The play was banned by French authorities, but Mozart wanted to adapt it in conformity with Italian comic opera, or opera buffa. It is perhaps surprising that a sovereign would commission and promote Le Nozze di Figaro, which premiered at the Burgtheater in 1786, but because Joseph II wanted to discredit the Austrian aristocracy in favor of a courtcentric system of bureaucracy, the political implications worked in his favor. A debate about the musical representation of class struggles has raged ever since. However, Eisen and Sadie



comment that:

The allegedly seditious politics of the opera may be overstated: Da Ponte was careful to remove the more inflammatory elements of Beaumarchais' play, and the characters and events of the opera are well situated within the commedia dell'arte tradition. Nevertheless, social tensions remain, as in Figaro's 'Se vuol ballare', the Act 2 finale, and the Count's music early in Act 3. Individual arias also reflect the social standing of the various characters: this may be exemplified by a comparison of Bartolo's blustery, parodistic vengeance aria 'La vendetta' and the Count's 'Vedrò, mentr'io sospiro', with its overtones of power and menace, or between the breadth and smoothness of the Countess's phraseology as opposed to Susanna's. Ultimately, however, *Figaro* may be no more than a comic domestic drama, though not without reflecting contemporary concerns about gender and society

We know without a doubt that, throughout his life, Mozart was a loyal supporter of the Austrian emperor, and he enjoyed great fame thanks to Joseph II's promotion of his compositions. We should also note that da Ponte made several key revisions to the original French text in order to make the story more palatable to a peaceful and contented court of nobles.

Because of his status as a "freelancer," though, Mozart eventually traveled to London and Prague to complete other commissions (mostly orchestral). Over the next few years, he collaborated with the same librettist (lyricist), Lorenzo da Ponte, for two more opera buffe: Don Giovanni and Così fan tutte. In 1787, Mozart at last received a small appointment as a composer of chamber and dance music for the Imperial court, but this was a sinecure that did not provide full-time employment. When Joseph II died shortly before the premiere of Così fan tutte and his brother Leopold assumed leadership of Austria, Mozart's fortunes fell further. Leopold was not supportive of opera buffa and requested grander subjects for serious opera, or opera seria. Mozart's father died around this time, and Mozart's wife, Costanze, also experienced her own health crises. This resulted in a period of decreased productivity and fewer concerts for the composer.

The final year of his life, by contrast, was a highly productive one. Mozart received three large commissions at this time: the first for a Requiem Mass to be composed anonymously (which the patron hoped to pass off as his own composition at the premiere), the second for a final singspiel, *Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute)*, and the third for an *opera seria* to celebrate Leopold's new title as King of Bohemia, *La Clemenza di Tito (The Clemency of Titus)*. While Mozart did live to see the premieres of the two operas, he died before completing the Requiem. Despite his artistic success, Mozart was not a good money manager, and was frequently in debt as an independent musician. He died at the sadly young age of 35, still at the height of his compositional ability.



1760

1755

Samuel Johnson publishes the great A Dictionary of the English Language.

1756

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is born in Salzburg, Austria

1756

First chocolate candy factory begins operation in Germany

1758

Hailey's Comet appears for the first time after Hailey's discovery of it

1761

Mozart writes his first composition, a minuet and trio for piano, at age 5

1763

Treaty of Paris ends French and Indian War

1763

Mason-Dixon Line is drawn

1763

Wolfgang and his sister, Nannerl, tour Europe as child prodigies



1764

The American City of St. Louis is established

1765

First paved sidewalks appear in London

1765

Great Britain imposes the Stamp Act on the 13 American Colonies

1765

Mozart writes his first symphony in London

1770

1768

Premiere of Mozart's first opera at the age of twelve in Vienna, Bastien und Bastienne

1768

The first volume of the Encyclopediac Britannica is published

1767

Mozart survives smallpox and his first opera, Apollo et Hyacinthus, is performed in Salzburg



1770

Mozart receives the Order of the Golden Spur from Pope Clement.

1770

Beethoven is born

1770

He begins ten years of unhappy employment in the household of the Archbishop of Salzburg

1770

Boston Massacre occurs

1770-1

Granted papal knighthood and a private audience with the Pope

1773

Boston Tea Party

1774

"Johnny Appleseed" xis born in Massachusetts

1775

La Finita Giardiniera premiers in Munich

1780

1775

American Revolution begins

1775

Watt's steam engine is invented

1775

Benjamin Franklin and Benjamin Rush organized the first American society in Philadelphia for the abolition of slavery.

1776

U.S. Declaration of Independence is signed

1777 Mozart's mother dies of a fever while chaperoning Mozart on a concert tour

1778

Leaves his employment with the Archbishop of Salzburg to seek fame in Vienna

1780

Pennsylvania is the first state to abolish slavery

1780

The modern piano is made

1780

The first fountain pen is invented

1780

On May 19th, a mysterious darkness enveloped much of New England and part of Canada in the early afternoon; the cause has never been determined.

1781

William Herschel discovers the planet Uranus

1782

Benjamin Franklin presides over preliminary peace talks between England and the American revolutionarie

1782

Mozart marries Constanze Weber, the younger sister of a former love

1783

American Revolution ends with the signing of The Treaty of Paris



1780

1783

The first flight in a hot air balloon in the United Kingdom

1783

Mozart and Constanze's son dies in Vienna while they are traveling to Salzburg

1784

Another son, Carl Thomas, is born. He is one of only two Mozart children to reach adulthood

1784

Threshing machine is invented, making wheat harvesting faster and easier

1785

Carbonated soda is invented

1786

Le nozze di Figaro premiers in Vienna

1787

Mozart's father, Leopold, dies and Don Giovanni premiers in Prague

1787

The U.S. Constitution is ratified

1788

Mozart completes his last three symphonies

1789

Washington is inaugurated as the first President of the United States

1789

Storming of the Bastille begins the French Revolution

1790

Cosi fan tutte premiers

1790

Washington, D.C. is founded as the permanent federal capital of the U.S.

179

The U.S. Bill of Rights is ratified

1791

Mozart composes his last two operas, Die Zauberflöte and La Clemenza di Tito and starts his Requiem. He dies on December 5 after a brief fever

Opera Synopsis



ACT I

A manor house near Seville, the 1930s. In a storeroom that they have been allocated, Figaro and Susanna, servants to the Count and Countess Almaviva, are preparing for their wedding. Figaro is furious when he learns from his bride that the Count has tried to seduce her. He's determined to have revenge on his master. Dr. Bartolo appears with his former housekeeper, Marcellina, who is equally determined to marry Figaro. She has a contract: Figaro must marry her or repay the money he borrowed from her. When Marcellina runs into Susanna, the two rivals exchange insults. Susanna returns to her room, and the Count's young page Cherubino rushes in. Finding Susanna alone, he speaks of his love for all the women in the house, particularly the Countess. When the Count appears, again trying to seduce

Susanna, Cherubino hides. The Count then conceals himself when Basilio. the music teacher, approaches. Basilio tells Susanna that everyone knows Cherubino has a crush on the Countess. Outraged, the Count steps forward, but he becomes even more enraged when he discovers Cherubino and realizes that the boy has overheard his attempts to seduce Susanna. He chases Cherubino into the great hall, encountering Figaro, who has assembled the entire household to sing the praises of their master. Put on the spot, the Count is forced to bless the marriage of Figaro



and Susanna. To spite them and to silence Cherubino, he orders the boy to join the army without delay. Figaro sarcastically sends Cherubino off into battle.

ACT II

In her bedroom, Rosina, the Countess, mourns the loss of love in her life. Encouraged by Figaro and Susanna, she agrees to set a trap for her husband: They will send Cherubino, disguised as Susanna, to a rendezvous with the Count that night. At the same time, Figaro will send the Count an anonymous note suggesting that the Countess is having an assignation with another man. Cherubino arrives, and the two women lock the door before dressing him in women's clothes. When Susanna steps into an adjoining room, the Count knocks and is annoyed to find the door locked. Cherubino hides himself in the dressing room, and the Countess lets her husband in. When there's a sudden noise from behind the door, the Count is skeptical of his wife's story that Susanna is in there. Taking his wife with him, he leaves to get tools to force the door. Meanwhile, Susanna, who has reentered the room unseen and observed everything, helps Cherubino escape through the window before taking his place in the dressing room. When the Count and Countess return, both are astonished when Susanna emerges from the room. Figaro arrives to begin the wedding festivities, but the Count questions him about the note he received. Figaro successfully eludes questioning until the gardener, Antonio, bursts in, complaining that someone has jumped from the window. Figaro improvises quickly, feigning a limp and pretending that it was he who jumped. As soon as Antonio leaves, Bartolo, Marcellina, and Basilio appear, putting their case to the Count and holding the contract that obliges Figaro to marry Marcellina. Delighted, the Count declares that Figaro must honor his agreement and that his wedding to Susanna will be postponed.



ACT III

Later that day in the great hall, Susanna leads on the Count with promises of a rendezvous that night. He is overjoyed but then overhears Susanna conspiring with Figaro. In a rage, he declares that he will have revenge. The Countess, alone, recalls her past happiness. Marcellina, accompanied by a lawyer, Don Curzio, demands that Figaro pay his debt or marry her at once. Figaro replies that he can't marry without the consent of his parents for whom he's been searching for years, having been abducted as a baby. When he reveals a birthmark on his arm, Marcellina realizes that he is her long-lost son, fathered by Bartolo. Arriving to see Figaro and Marcellina embracing, Susanna thinks her fiancé has betrayed her, but she is pacified when she learns the truth. The Countess is determined to go through with the conspiracy against her husband, and she and Susanna compose a letter to him confirming the meeting with Susanna that evening in the garden. Cherubino, now

dressed as a girl, appears with his sweetheart, Barbarina, the daughter of Antonio. Antonio, who has found Cherubino's cap, also arrives and reveals the young man. The Count is furious to discover that Cherubino has disobeyed him and is still in the house. Barbarina punctures his anger, explaining that the Count, when he attempted to seduce her, promised her anything she desired. Now, she wants to marry Cherubino, and the Count reluctantly agrees. The household assembles for Figaro and Susanna's wedding. While dancing with the Count. Susanna hands him the note, sealed with a pin. confirming their tryst that evening.







ACT IV

At night in the garden, Barbarina despairs that she has lost the pin the Count has asked her to take back to Susanna as a sign that he's received her letter. When Figaro and Marcellina appear, Barbarina tells them about the planned rendezvous between the Count and Susanna. Thinking that his bride is unfaithful, Figaro curses all women. He hides when Susanna and the Countess arrive, dressed in each other's clothes. Alone, Susanna sings of love. She knows that Figaro is listening and enjoys making him think that she's about to betray him with the Count. She then conceals herself—in time to see Cherubino try to seduce the disguised Countess. When the Count arrives looking for Susanna, he chases the boy away. Figaro, by now realizing what is going on, joins in the joke and declares his passion for Susanna in her Countess disguise. The Count returns to discover Figaro with his wife, or so he thinks, and explodes with rage. At that moment, the real Countess steps forward and reveals her identity. Ashamed, the Count asks her pardon. Ultimately, she forgives him, and the entire household celebrates the day's happy ending.

*From The Metropolitan Opera Guild, "Pathways for Understanding The Marriage of Figaro by W.A. Mozart," Pathways to Understanding, Accessed April 11, 2020, https://www.metguild.org/uploaded-Files/MOG/Opera_in_the_Classroom/Opera-Based_Learning/Pathways%20for%20Understanding_Le%20Nozze%20di%20Figaro.pdf.



Count Almaviva
baritone

Countess Rosina Almaviva soprano

Susanna - the countess's maid *soprano*

Figaro - personal valet to the count bass

Cherubino - the Count's page mezzo soprano; sometimes sung by soprano (pants role)

Marcellina - Doctor Bartolo's housekeeper soprano

Bartolo - doctor from Seville; also a practicing lawyer bass

Basilio - music teacher tenor

Don Curzio - judge *tenor*

Barbarina - Antonio's daughter *soprano*

Antonio - the Count's gardener; Susanna's uncle bass

Chorus of peasants, villagers, and servants

Operatic voices can be classified by a variety of means. At base we define singers by the vocal range of their voice (basically what notes they can sing), but opera has also determined other ways to classify singing voices based on other qualities of the voice. Here, we take a look at the voice types Mozart utilized in Le Nozze di Figaro:

Soprano: the highest female voice, sopranos often take the leading roles in operas. Mozart wrote music for two different types of sopranos in this opera.

Soubrette Soprano: Soubrettes tend to have the lightest and brightest voices of the sopranos. These are usually the ingenues of opera. Susanna and Barbarina are both typically sung by soubrettes.

Lyric Soprano: lyric sopranos usually possess a fuller, richer sound than the soubrette, making them sound more mature. The Countess is usually sung by a lyric soprano.

Mezzo-Soprano: Singing slightly lower than the soprano, mezzos very often sing supporting roles in opera, particularly older women and pants roles. Mozart decided to write two different roles for mezzo-sopranos in Le Nozze di Figaro.

Lyric Mezzo-Soprano: similar in tone quality to lyric sopranos, lyric mezzos tend to sing the bulk of the mezzo roles written in operas. In Le Nozze di Figaro, Cherubino and Marcellina are both mezzo sopranos.

Tenor: the highest male voice, tenors are often the leading role, but not this time! Mozart decided to only write a couple of tenor roles into this opera, both of which act as comedic relief.

Buffo Tenor: These tenors are really good actors who can also sing in a distinct "character voice." In this opera, Don Basilio and Don Curzio are portrayed by buffo tenors.

Lyric Baritone: Singing in a range between tenor and bass, the lyric baritone is a light, mid-range male voice. Mozart wrote the role of Count Almaviva for a lyric baritone.

Bass-baritone: The bass-baritone has the low notes of the bass, but unlike the bass, these singers are comfortable in their higher register, closer to a typical baritone range. Figaro is most often sung by a bass-baritone.

Lyric Bass: This is the lowest male voice type of all. Rarely do these singers get the girl, but they often portray fun, supporting characters. Doctor Bartolo is a great example!

Buffo Bass: like buffo tenors, these are the comedic, low-voiced characters. In Le Nozze di Figaro, Antonio is the buffo bass.



Artistic and Production Staff

Figaro - **CHRISTOPHER HOLMES**

Susanna - MARIAN VOGEL

Count Almaviva - BRIAN KEITH JOHNSON

Countess Rosina - RACHEL E. COPELAND

Cherubino - AMANDA FINK

Don Bartolo - JASON BUDD

Marcellina - LAURA AVDEY

Don Basillio - ETHAN BURCK

Antonio - JAMES EDER

Barbarina - GILLIAN HOLLIS

Don Curzio - SPENCER LAWRENCE BOYD

Flower Girls / Wedding Singers – MEGAN SLACK & NICOLE FUTORAN

Chorus

Sopranos

Mary Grace Corrigan Nicole Futoran Gillian Hollis Megan Slack Dawna Rae Warren

Tenors

Ethan Burck Robert Bordon Spencer Lawrence Boyd Christian Thomas

Mezzo Sopranos

Lauren Wright Amanda Krohne Janessa Janke Kara Ross

Baritones / Bass Baritones

Timothy Bates Michael Borden Cody Russell Gould Ryan Honomichl

Supernumeraries - Sue Hundermark, John Bowers, & Beshoy Hanna

Conductor - Domenico Boyagian

Stage Director - Scott Skiba

Scenographic Design and Technical Director - Matthew D. McCarren

Costume Design - Esther Haberlen

Production Stage Manager and Assistant Stage Director - Robert Pierce

Scenic Artist - Jennifer Hitmar Shankland

Makeup Design - Tamiko Jenkins

Wardrobe Mistress - Mackenzie Malone

Wig Design and Rental - Wigs & Whiskers Ltd.

Assistant Conductor / Chorus Master - Gaddiel Dombrowner

Rehearsal Pianist and Performance Keyboardist - Tatiana Loisha

Assistant Technical Director & Carpenter - Caleb Wimbrow

Wig and Makeup Assistant - Danielle Tapp

Assistant Scenic Artist - Thomas Hitmar

Supertitle Operator - Marie Lineman

Supertitles by - Chadwick Creative Arts

Props & Furniture Rental - Cleveland Play House

Templelive Cleveland Masonic Auditorium

Property Manager - Romanina G. Campea

Production Manager - Lisa Campea-Kish



Libretto Act Libre

English

Cast

CONTE DI ALMAVIVA (baritone) LA CONTESSA DI ALMAVIVA (soprano)

SUSANNA (soprano)

FIGARO (bass)

CHERUBINO

(soprano or mezzo-soprano)

MARCELLINA (mezzo-soprano)

BARTOLO (bass)

BASILIO (tenor)

DON CURZIO (tenor)

BARBARINA (soprano)

ANTONIO (bass)

CHORUS

peasants and the count's tenants

Overture

ACT ONE

Count Almaviva's Castle near Seville (A half-furnished room with a large armchair in the centre. Figaro is measuring the floor. Susanna is trying on a hat in front of a mirror.)

Italian

Personaggi

Il Conte di Almaviva - baritono

La Contessa di Almaviva -soprano

Susanna - soprano

Figaro - basso-baritono

Cherubino, paggio del Conte - mezzosoprano

Marcellina - mezzosoprano

Bartolo, medico di Siviglia - basso

Basilio, maestro di musica - tenore

Don Curzio, giudice - tenore

Barbarina - soprano

Antonio, giardiniere del Conte e zio

di Susanna - basso

Due Donne

Coro di Contadini, di villanelle e di vari ordini di persone

Sinfonia

ATTO PRIMO

Il castello del Conte Almaviva presso a Siviglia (Una stanza mezzo smobiliata. Si vedono una grande poltrona e una sedia. Figaro sta misurando l'impiantito. Susanna allo specchio si sta mettendo un cappellino.) No. 1: Dilettino

FIGARO

Five...ten...twenty...

thirty...thirty-six...forty-three...

SUSANNA

How happy I am now;

you'd think it had been made for me.

FIGARO

Five...

SUSANNA

Look a moment, dearest Figaro.

FIGARO

ten...

SUSANNA

look a moment, dearest Figaro.

FIGARO

twenty...

SUSANNA

look a moment.

FIGARO

thirty...

SUSANNA

look a moment,

look here at my cap!

FIGARO

thirty-six...

SUSANNA

look here at my cap.

FIGARO

forty-three...

N° 1: Duettino

FIGARO

Cinque...dieci...venti...

trenta...trentasei...quarantatre...

SUSANNA

Ora sì, ch'io son contenta.

Sembra fatto inver per me.

FIGARO

Cinque...

SUSANNA

Guarda un po', mio caro Figaro...

FIGARO

dieci...

SUSANNA

guarda un po', mio caro Figaro.

FIGARO

venti...

SUSANNA

guarda un po'.

FIGARO

trenta...

SUSANNA

guarda un po', guarda adesso il mio cappello!

FIGARO

trentasei...

SUSANNA

guarda adesso il mio cappello.

FIGARO

quarantatré...

SUSANNA

look a moment, etc.

FIGARO

Yes, dear heart, it's better that way. You'd think it had been made for you.

SUSANNA

Look a moment, etc.

FIGARO

Yes, dear heart, etc.

SUSANNA

How happy I am now, etc.

FIGARO

Yes, dear heart, etc.

SUSANNA, FIGARO

Ah, with our wedding day so near...

SUSANNA

how pleasing to my gentle husband

FIGARO

how pleasing to your gentle husband

SUSANNA, FIGARO

is this charming little cap which Susanna made herself, etc.

SUSANNA

What are you measuring, my dearest Figaro?

FIGARO

I'm seeing if that bed the Count is giving us will look well here.

SUSANNA In this room?

SUSANNA

guarda un po', mio caro Figaro, ecc.

FIGARO

Sì, mio core, or è più bello, sembra fatto inver per te.

SUSANNA

Guarda un po', ecc.

FIGARO

Sì, mio core, ecc.

SUSANNA

Ora sì ch'io son contenta, ecc.

FIGARO

Sì, mio core, ecc.

SUSANNA, FIGARO

Ah, il mattino alle nozze vicino,

SUSANNA

quant'è dolce al mio tenero sposo,

FIGARO

quant'è dolce al tuo tenero sposo,

SUSANNA, FIGARO

questo bel cappellino vezzoso che Susanna ella stessa si fe', ecc.

SUSANNA

Cosa stai misurando, caro il mio Figaretto?

FIGARO

lo guardo se quel letto che ci destina il Conte farà buona figura in questo loco.

SUSANNA

In questa stanza?

FIGARO

Indeed, our generous lord is giving it to us.

SUSANNA

For my part, you can keep it.

FIGARO

For what reason?

SUSANNA (tapping her forehead)

I have my reasons here.

FIGARO (with a similar gesture)

Why won't you let them be transferred here too?

SUSANNA

Because I don't want to; are you my servant or not?

FIGARO

But I don't understand why you should so dislike the most convenient room in the castle.

SUSANNA

Because I am Susanna and you are a fool.

FIGARO

Thank you, don't be too complimentary! Tell me, would we be better off anywhere else?

FIGARO

Certo, a noi la cede generoso il padrone.

SUSANNA

lo per me te la dono.

FIGARO

E la ragione?

SUSANNA (toccandosi la fronte)

La ragione l'ho qui.

FIGARO (facendo lo stesso)

Perché non puoi

far che passi un po'qui?

SUSANNA

Perché non voglio.

Sei tu mio servo, o no?

FIGARO

Ma non capisco

perché tanto ti spiaccia

la più comoda stanza del palazzo.

SUSANNA

Perché io son la Susanna e tu sei

pazzo.

FIGARO

Grazie, non tanti elogi: guarda un

росо

se potria meglio stare in altro loco.

To continue reading the libretto, click **here!**

Glossary

A

ACT: A portion of an opera designated by the composer, which has a dramatic structure of its own.

ARIA: A solo piece written for a main character, which focuses on the character's emotion.

ASIDE: A comment from an actor directly to the audience that the other characters cannot hear.

ARTIST MANAGER OR ARTIST REPRESENTATIVE: An agent who represents artists by publicizing their talents, finding roles for them, negotiating their contracts and handling other business matters for them.

B

BATON: A short stick that the conductor uses to lead the orchestra.

BEL CANTO: An Italian phrase literally meaning "beautiful singing." A traditional Italian style of singing that emphasizes tone, phrasing, coloratura passages and technique. Also refers to opera written in this style.

BUFFO: From the Italian for "buffoon." A singer of comic roles (basso-buffo) or a comic opera (opera-buffa).

BLOCKING: Directions given to actors for on-stage movements and actions.

BOW, BOWING: The bow is the wand used to play string instruments. The concertmaster determines when the bows should rise or fall, and this bowing is noted in the score so that all move in the same direction.

BRAVO (BRAH-voh): Literally, a form of applause when shouted by members of the audience at the end of an especially pleasing performance. Strictly speaking, "bravo" is for a single man, "brava" for a woman, and "bravi" for a group of performers.

CABALETTA (cah-bah-LEHT-tah):

Second part of a two-part aria, always in a faster tempo than the first part.

CADENZA (kuh-DEN-zuh): A passage of singing, often at the end of an aria, which shows off the singer's vocal ability.

CANZONE, CANZONETTA (Cahn-TSOH-neh, cahn-tsoh-NEHT-tah): A folk-like song commonly used in opera buffa.

CARPENTER: The carpenter works on the construction of the sets. Production Carpenter is the title given to the one in charge of the backstage crew, even though working with wood may not be involved.

CAVATINA (cah-vah-TEE-nah): The meaning of this term has changed over the years. It now usually refers to the opening, slow section of a two part aria. In Rossini's time it referred to the entrance, or first aria sung by a certain character. Norma's "Casta diva" is an example of a cavatina in both senses. See also SCENA

CHOREOGRAPHER: The person who designs the motions of a dance.

CHOREOGRAPHY: The act of setting movement to create a dance.

CHORUS: A group of singers, singing together, who sometimes portray servants, party guests or other unnamed characters; also the music written for them.

CHORUS MASTER: The one in charge of choosing chorus members and rehearsing them for performance. If there is a backstage chorus, it is usually conducted by the chorus master who is in communication with the conductor of the orchestra.

claque (klak): A group of people hired to sit in the audience and either applaud enthusiastically to ensure success or whistle and boo to create a disaster. In past years, leading singers were sometimes blackmailed to pay a claque to insure that claqueurs would not create a disturbance. Even now, a claque is sometimes used but rarely acknowledged.

COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE (cohm-MEH-dee-ah dehl-AHR-teh): A type of comic opera popular in Italy in the 16th to 18th centuries that involved improvisation using stock characters and gestures. The characters were often masked to represent certain archetypes.

COMPOSER: A person who writes music.

COMPRIMARIO (cohm-pree-MAH-ree-oh): A secondary or supporting role or a person singing such a role.

concertato (cohn-chehr-TAHtoh): A large ensemble of soloists and chorus generally found in the second movement of a central finale, to which it forms the lyrical climax.

CONCERTMASTER: The first-chair violinist who plays occasional solos and is responsible for coordinating all of the stringed instruments. The concertmaster decides on the bowing so that all of the string players' bows move in unison.

conductor: The leader of the orchestra, sometimes called Maestro. This person leads all the musicians (instrumentalists and vocalists) in the performance of an opera; an accomplished musician with a strong sense of rhythm and an in-depth understanding of the voice and each orchestral instrument, he or she must also be able to communicate nuances of phrasing and inspire great performances from all players.

CONTINUO (cohn-TEE-noo-oh): An extemporized chordal accompaniment for recitativo secco, usually by a harpsichord, cello or double bass. Opera seria continuo often used an ensemble of harpsichord and theorbo (member of the lute family). Opera buffa continuo used a single keyboard and string bass.

corp, vocal: The wishbone-shaped edges of muscles in the lower part of the throat whose movements creates variations in pitch as air passes between them. Often spelled incorrectly as "chord."

COSTUME DESIGNER: Works with the set designer to prepare costumes that are appropriate for the rest of the production. Often oversees the preparation of the costumes.

COSTUME SHOP: A special area set aside for the making of the costumes or for adjusting those that are rented.

COVER: The name given to an understudy in opera; someone who replaces a singer in case of illness or other misfortune.

CRESCENDO (kri-SHEN-doh): A gradual increase in volume. Orchestral crescendos were one of Rossini's trademarks.

CUE: In opera, a signal to a singer or orchestra member to begin singing or playing.

CURTAIN CALL: At the end of a performance, all of the members of the cast and the conductor take bows. Sometimes this is done in front of the main curtain, hence the name curtain call. Often, however, the bows are taken on the full stage with the curtain open.

CUT: To omit some of the original material from the score.

D

DA CAPO ARIA (DAH CAH-poh): An aria in the form ABA. A first section is followed by a shorter second section. Then the first is repeated, usually with added ornamentation.

DESIGNER: A person who creates the lighting, costumes and/or sets.

DIAPHRAGM: A muscle beneath the lungs and above the stomach which acts as a trampoline does, pushing the air from the lungs at a desired rate.

DIRECTOR (STAGE DIRECTOR): One who prepares an opera or play for production by arranging the details of the stage settings and stage effects, and by instructing the performers in the interpretation of their roles.

DIVA: Literally "goddess," it refers to an important female opera star. The masculine form is divo.

DOUBLE ARIA: An aria which consists of two parts. The first part, or cavatina, is usually slow and the second, or cabaletta is faster. There is often recitative between the two sections.

DOWNSTAGE: See STAGE AREAS.

DRAMATIC (Voice type): The heaviest voice, capable of sustained declamation and a great deal of power, even over the largest operatic orchestra of about 80 instruments. This description applies to all voice ranges from soprano to bass.

DRAMATURG: One who suggests repertory, advises on the suitability of competing editions of operas and writes

or edits material for program books and supertitles.

DRESS (a wig): To prepare a wig for use.

DRESSER: A member of the backstage staff who helps the artists change their costumes. The principal singers usually have their own dresser. Supers and chorus members share dressers.

DRESS REHEARSAL: A final rehearsal that uses all of the costumes, lights, etc. While sometimes it is necessary to stop for corrections, an attempt is made to make it as much like a final performance as possible.

DUET: An extended musical passage performed by two singers. They may or may not sing simultaneously or on the same musical line.

DYNAMIC: The degree of loudness and quietness in music. See PIANO and FORTE.

E

ELECTRICIAN: One who is charged with executing the lighting design according to the specifications of the lighting designer.

to be the custom for a singer to repeat a popular aria if the audience called "encore" loudly enough. This is still done in the middle of an opera in countries such as Italy, but it is rare elsewhere. Soloists frequently give encores at the end of a concert but not an opera.

ENSEMBLE: Two or more people singing at the same time, or the music written for such a group.

F

FALSETTO: A method of singing above the natural range of the male voice. Often used in opera for comic effects such as a man imitating a woman.

FINALE: The last musical number of an opera or the last number of an act.

FLY, FLY TOWER: A high space above the stage where pieces of the set are often raised up or flown out of sight when not in use.

FULL PRODUCTION: A performance that includes all the elements of live theater: lights, costumes, props, makeup, design and audience. In opera, this includes music provided by an orchestra or piano along with the characters' singing.

G

GENERAL DIRECTOR: The head of an opera company. The one ultimately responsible for all artistic and financial aspects of everything in which the company is involved.

GRAND OPERA: Specifically, a serious opera of epic proportions with no spoken dialogue, composed in 19th-century France (such as Les Huguenots by Meyerbeer); more broadly, an opera sung and produced in the "grand manner."

Н

HELDEN: Prefix meaning "heroic." Applicable to other voices but usually used in Heldentenor.

HOUSE MANAGER: For performances, the person who is responsible for the audience and all that happens from the entry to the theater, to the box office, to the seating and audience behavior in the hall.

Ι

IMPRESARIO: A person who sponsors entertainment. In opera, the general director of an opera company.

INTERLUDE: A short piece of instrumental music played between scenes or acts.

INTERMISSION: A long break, usually about 20 minutes, between the acts of an opera, during which the audience is free to move around.

1.

LEITMOTIV (LEIT-moh-tif) or MOTIF: A short, recurring musical phrase associated with a particular character or event.

LIBRARIAN: In charge of preparing the music for the orchestra. Scores are usually rented and have to be annotated to reflect cuts and other changes for a given production.

LIBRETTO: The text or words of an opera.

LIGHTING DESIGNER: One who designs and coordinates the light changes that help create opera's overall effect. Much of this is now computerized.

LYRICS: The sung words or text of a musical comedy or operetta song.

M

MAESTRO (mah-EHS-troh): Literally "master;" used as a courtesy title for the conductor. The masculine ending is used for both men and women.

MAGIC OPERA: An opera in which there are many magical effects and often animals appearing on stage. Often the plot of a magic opera involves the rescue of one of the major characters.

MAKEUP DESIGNER: One who designs and applies makeup to actors in order to appear properly under stage lighting, or to appear older, younger, as a creature, etc.

MARK: To sing very softly or not at full voice. A full-length opera is very hard on a singer's voice so most mark during rehearsals. During dress rehearsals singers try to sing at full voice for at least some of the time.

MELODRAMA: In a technique which originated with the French; short passages of music alternating with spoken words.

N

NUMBER OPERA: An opera composed of individual numbers, such as recitative, arias, duets, ensembles, etc. Between the numbers there is often a chance for applause. Most of the operas of Mozart, Rossini and Bellini can be called number operas.

0

OPERA: Simply stated, a play that is sung. In opera, singing is the way characters express feeling; as it often takes longer to say something in music than it would in speech, the action may seem delayed or even interrupted. Opera (the Latin plural for opus, meaning "work") can involve many different art forms (singing, acting, orchestral playing, scenic artistry, costume design, lighting and dance). Like a play, an opera is acted out on a stage with performers in costumes, wigs and makeup; virtually all operatic characters sing their lines, although there are exceptions for a role that is spoken or performed in pantomime.

OPERA BUFFA (BOOF-fah): An opera about ordinary people, usually, but not always comic, which first developed in the 18th century. Don Pasquale is an example of opera buffa.

OPERA SERIA (SEH-ree-ah): A "serious" opera. The usual characters are gods, goddesses or ancient heroes. Rossini was one of the last to write true opera serie, such as his last opera, Guillaume Tell.

OPERA TEXT: See SUPERTITLES.

OPERETTA or MUSICAL COMEDY:

A play, some of which is spoken but with many musical numbers. See also SINGSPIEL.

ORCHESTRA: The group of instrumentalists or musicians who, led by the conductor, accompany the singers.

orchestral color to written music by assigning various instruments different parts of the music. This requires a complete knowledge of instrumentals and their timbre, range, etc.

OVERTURE: An orchestral introduction to an opera. (French: ouverture; German: ouverture; Italian: sinfonia).

P

PANTS ROLE or TROUSER ROLE: A role depicting a young man or boy but sung by a woman (can be a soprano or mezzo).

PARLANDO (pahr-LAHN-doh): A style of singing like ordinary speech. It can occur in the middle of an aria.

PATTER SONG: A song or aria in which the character sings as many words as possible in a short amount of time.

PIANO-VOCAL SCORE: Usually a reduction of an opera's orchestral score. See SCORE.

PIT: A sunken area in front of the stage where the members of the orchestra play.

PIZZICATO (pit-tsee-CAH-toh): Playing a string instrument by plucking the strings instead of using the bow.

PRELUDE: Usually a short introduction that leads into an act without a break, as opposed to an overture which is longer and can be played as a separate piece. Wagner called his introductions preludes even though some are quite long.

PRIMA DONNA: Literally "first lady;" the leading woman singer in an opera. Because of the way some have behaved in the past, it often refers to someone who acts in a superior and demanding fashion. The term for the leading man is primo uomo.

PRINCIPAL: A major singing role, or the singer who performs such a role.

PRODUCTION: The combination of sets, costumes, props, lights, etc.

PRODUCTION CARPENTER: Carpenter in charge of organizing and handling all aspects of the sets and equipment.

PRODUCTION MANAGER: The administrator responsible for coordinating the sets, costumes, rehearsal facilities and all physical aspects of a production. Often, the person who negotiates with the various unions representing stage hands, musicians, etc.

PROMPT: To help a singer remember lines, some opera houses will place a person (prompter) in a box below and at the very front of the stage.

PROPS (PROPERTIES): Small items carried or used by performers on stage.

PROPERTY MASTER: One who is responsible for purchasing, acquiring and/or manufacturing any props needed for a production.

G

QUARTET: An extended musical passage performed by four singers.

QUINTET: An extended musical passage performed by five singers.

R

RECITATIVE: Words sung in a conversational style, usually to advance the plot. Not to be confused with aria.

REDUCTION: In a piano reduction, the orchestra parts are condensed into music which can be played by one person on the piano.

RÉPERTOIRE (REP-er-twahr): Stock pieces that a singer or company has ready to present. Often refers to a company's current season.

RÉPÉTITEUR (reh-peh-ti-TEUR): A member of the music staff who plays the piano for rehearsals and, if necessary,

the piano or harpsichord during performances. They frequently coach singers in their roles and assist with orchestra rehearsals.

RIGGER: One who works on ropes, booms, lifts and other aspects of a production.

ROULADE or RUN: A quick succession of notes sung on one syllable.

S

a dramatic episode which consists of a variety of numbers with a common theme. A typical scena might consist of a recitative, a cavatina and a cabaletta. An example is the "Mad Scene" from Lucia di Lammermoor.

SCENIC CHARGE: One who is responsible for painting by reproducing color, texture, preparation and aging of stage surfaces.

SCORE: The written music of an opera or other musical work.

SET, SET DESIGNER: The background and furnishings on the stage and the person who designs them.

SERENADE: A piece of music honoring someone or something.

SEXTET: A piece for six singers.

singspiel (zing-shpeel): German opera with spoken dialogue and usually, but not necessarily, a comic or sentimental plot. Examples include The Abduction from the Seraglio and Der Freischütz.

SITZPROBE (ZITS-proh-bah): Literally, "seated rehearsal," it is the first rehearsal of the singers with the orchestra and no acting.

STAGEHAND: One who works behindthe-scenes setting up lighting, props, rigging, scenery and special effects for a productios are raked, that is higher in back than in front, upstage is at the back and downstage at the front. If an actor stays upstage, all the others have to turn their backs to the audience when speaking to him. This is the origin of the phrase "to upstage someone."

STAGE DIRECTOR: The one responsible for deciding the interpretation of each character, the movements of the singers on stage, and other things affecting the singers. Is in charge at rehearsals.

STAGE MANAGER: The person in charge of the technical aspects of the entire opera, including light changes, sound effects, entrances (even of the conductor) and everything else that happens.

STROPHIC: Describes an aria in which the same music repeats for all stanzas of a text.

SUPERNUMERARY: Someone who is part of a group on stage but doesn't sing. It is usually shortened to Super.

SUPERTITLES: Translations of the words being sung, or the actual words if the libretto is in the native language, that are projected on a screen above the stage.

SYNOPSIS: A written description of an opera's plot.



TECHNICAL DIRECTOR: Supervisor of those who implement the concepts of the designers. He or she works with carpenters, painters, electricians, sound designers and stagehands and oversee the building of sets, props and hanging of lights.

TESSITURA: Literally "texture," it defines the average pitch level of a role. Two roles may have the same range from the lowest to the highest note, but the one with a greater proportion of high notes has the higher tessitura.

THROUGH-SUNG: An opera in which the music is continuous, without divisions into recitative and aria.

TRAGÉDIE LYRIQUE: Early form of French opera that recognized a distinction between the main scenes and divertissements consisting of choruses, dances, etc.

TREMOLO: The quick, continuous reiteration of a pitch.

TRILL: Very quick alternation of pitch between two adjacent notes. See coloratura.

TRIO: An ensemble of three singers or the music that is written for three singers.



VERISMO: Describes the realistic style of opera that started in Italy at the end of the nineteenth century. Although the peak of the movement was past by the time of Puccini, his operas are a modified form of verismo.

VIBRATO: A natural wavering of frequency (pitch) while singing a note. It is usually inadvertent as opposed to a trill

VOCAL COACH: A member of an opera company who coaches singers, helping them with the pronunciation, singing and interpretation of a role.

VOCAL CORDS: Wishbone-shaped edges of muscles in the lower part of the throat whose movements creates variations in pitch as air passes between them. Often spelled incorrectly as "chord."



WIG DESIGNER: Designs and oversees the creation of the wigs used in a production.

*Based on National Opera Teacher and Educator Source (NOTES), "Glossary of Terms," Opera America, Accessed April 11, 2020, https://www.operaamerica.org/Applications/Notes/glossary.aspx.

Recommendations for books and resources

If you have enjoyed our production of Mozart's Le Nozze di Figaro and would like to learn more about the composer and the opera, please check out these resources we've compiled!

Mozart

Mozart: A Life

Mozart: Requiem of Genius (The True Story of Wolfgang Mozart) (Historical Biographies of Famous People)

<u>Mozart's Letters, Mozart's Life</u>

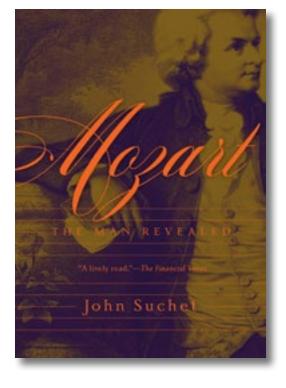
Sentimental and Anti-Sentimental in "Le nozze di Figaro"

<u>Social Tensions in 'Le Nozze di Figaro'</u>

The Fandango Scene in Mozart's Le nozze di Figaro

Tonal Organization in 'Buffo' Finales and the Act II Finale of 'Le nozze di Figaro'

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART: The Greatest Pure Musician the World Has Ever Known. The Entire Life Story. Biography, Facts & Quotes (Great Biographies Book 46)



Recommendations for videos and recordings

About the Opera:

Opera Cheats: Le nozze di figaro
Opera in Brief: The Marriage of Figaro
The Plot of Mozart's Le Nozze di Figaro - In under 7 minutes!
Setting the Scene: Le Nozze di Figaro

Full Productions:

<u>Le Nozze di Figaro - Glyndebourne (1999)</u> <u>Le Nozze di Figaro - Salzburg (2006)</u>

"Cinque, dieci, venti" Figaro and Susanna Duet (5:45 in our production)

"Cinque, Dieci, Venti" - Alison Hagley and Gerald Finley (Glyndebourne, 1994)
"Cinque... dieci... venti... trenta..." - Rosemary Joshua and Luca Pisaroni (Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, 2004)

"Cinque, dieci, venti" - Jennifer France & Joshua Bloom (Garsington Opera, 2017)

"Se vuol ballare signor contino" Figaro's Aria (13:46 into our production)

"Se vuol ballare signor contino" - Bryn Terfel (Théâtre du Chatelet, 2001)

"Se vuol ballare signor contino" - Erwin Schrott (Royal Opera House, 2011)

"Se vuol ballare, signor Contino" - Luca Pisaroni (Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, 2004)

"Via resti servita, madama brillante" Marcellina and Susanna Duet (21:38 in our production)

<u>"Via resti servita" - Alison Hagley and Wendy Hillhouse (Glyndebourne, 1994)</u> <u>"Via resti servita" - Rosemary Joshua and Sophie Pondjiclis (Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, 2004)</u>

"Non so piu" Cherubino Aria (25:22 in our production)

"Non so piu" - Isabel Leonard (Metropolitan Opera, 2014) "Non so piu" - Kate Lindsey (Royal Opera House, 2016)

"Porgi Amor" Countess' Aria (~44:45 in our production)

"Porgi Amor" - Annette Dasch (Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, 2004) "Porgi Amor" - Sally Matthews (Glyndebourne, 2012)

"Sull'Aria" Susanna and Countess Duet (1:51:32 in our production)

<u>"Sull'Aria" - Sally Matthews and Lydia Teuscher (Glyndebourne, 2012)</u> <u>"Sull'Aria" - Rachel Willis-Sørensen and Christiane Karg (Metropolitan Opera, 2017)</u>

"Deh vieni, non-tardar" Susanna's Aria (2:05:30 in our production)

"Deh vieni, non-tardar" - Kathleen Battle (Metropolitan Opera, 1985)
"Deh vieni, non-tardar" - Alison Hagley (Monteverdi Choir, 1994)



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