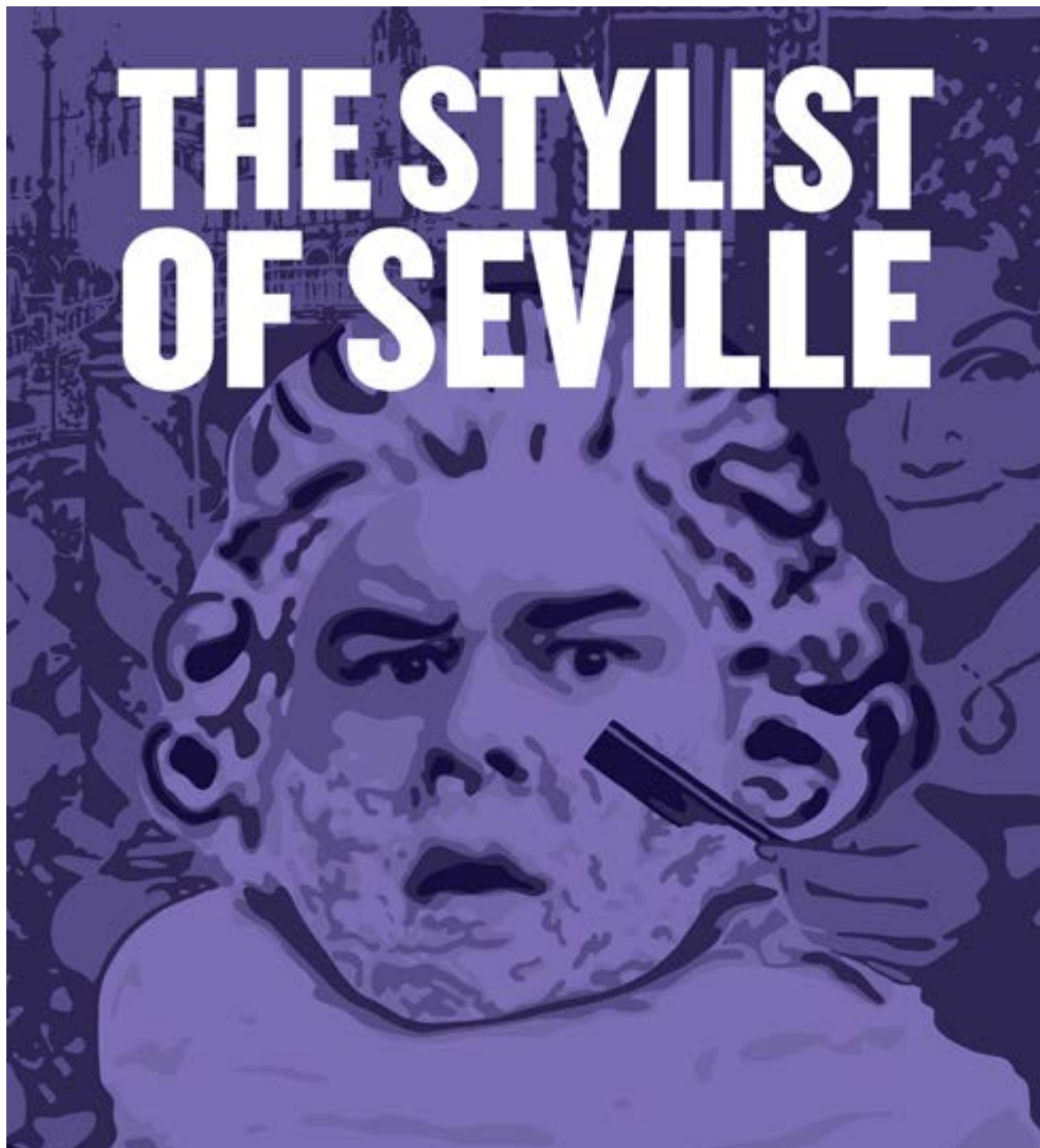


TOLEDO OPERA ON WHEELS



THE STYLIST OF SEVILLE

Music by Gioachino Rossini

Directed by James M. Norman

Adapted for Toledo Opera by Jennifer Cresswell

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Cast of Characters

- Figara, a stylist and jill-of-all-trades
- Count Almaviva, a charming count who wants to find someone who will love him for who he is inside, not for his money
- Rosina, the beautiful and intelligent ward of Dr. Bartolo. She is feisty and wants to find love
- Dr. Bartolo, Rosina’s guardian who wants to marry her
- Lindoro, a poor student who the Count disguises himself as to court Rosina
- Don Alonso, a music teacher who the Count disguises himself as to be nearer Rosina

Synopsis

Setting: 17th Century in Seville, Spain

Scene 1: Outside the home of Dr. Bartolo

Count Almaviva, dressed in disguise as a poor young student named Lindoro, is serenading Rosina outside her window. Figara appears and the Count asks her help in encouraging Rosina to fall in love with him. There is just one catch - he doesn’t want Rosina to know that he is a wealthy count, but wants her to fall in love with him for who he is on the inside. Figara agrees, since the Count is rich and can pay her for her services. The Count runs and hides as Dr. Bartolo comes out of his house. He overhears Bartolo telling Figara that he is in love with his ward, Rosina, and plans to marry her by the end of the day. Figara comes up with a plan that will enable Count Almaviva to enter Dr. Bartolo’s house; he will disguise himself as “Don Alonso,” a substitute for Rosina’s music teacher, Don Basilio.

Scene 2: Inside the home of Dr. Bartolo

Alone in the courtyard, Rosina admits to herself that she has fallen in love with the poor student who serenades her outside her window each morning. She resolves to marry him and writes a note to him. Figara passes by and she convinces her to deliver the note. Just as she passes it to Figara, Dr. Bartolo returns and demands to know what is going on. Rosina will not say a word and he locks her in the house as punishment.

Scene 3: Inside the home of Dr. Bartolo

Count Almaviva arrives at Dr. Bartolo’s home, disguised as the substitute music teacher, “Don Alonso.” When called to her music lesson, Rosina recognizes him at once as Lindoro, but plays along to fool Dr. Bartolo. Figara shows up unexpectedly, insisting that she must shave Dr. Bartolo that afternoon. As she distracts Bartolo, the Count and Rosina plan their elopement. Bartolo eventually catches on and banishes Figara and the Count immediately. He lies to Rosina and tells her that Figara and the Count were only tricking her. She believes him and offers to marry him. Dr. Bartolo runs off to draw up a marriage contract. While he is gone, Figara and Count Almaviva return. The Count reveals his true identity to Rosina, who is overjoyed and the two agree to marry as soon as possible. Dr. Bartolo returns, but he is too late, and accepts the situation. Led by Figara, all four characters accept their lives happily.



Resident Artists 2021-2022

Grace Wipfli, soprano



Grace Wipfli, from Toledo, Ohio, has proven to be an impressive, charming, and promising young soprano. Performance highlights include: Sa femme in Milhaud's *Le Pauvre Matelot*, Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*), The Governess (*The Turn of the Screw*), Ann Truelove (*The Rake's Progress*), and The Beggar Woman (*Sweeney Todd*). Most recently, while attending the 2021 Sewanee Summer Music Festival, Ms. Wipfli was chosen as a winner of the Jacqueline Avent Concerto Competition. She was awarded an Encouragement Award from the Midwest Region of the 2020 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Ms. Wipfli made her Carnegie Hall debut as the Soprano Soloist in Ralph Vaughan Williams' "Dona Nobis Pacem," in March of 2020, days before the world shut down. She is currently in her second season as Toledo Opera's Soprano Resident Artist and made her Toledo Opera debut in *Il Trovatore*. She is a proud graduate of Northwestern University where she earned her Master of Music and Capital University where she completed her Bachelor of Music. Ms. Wipfli currently studies with Laura Brooks Rice.

Katherine Kincaid, mezzo soprano



Katherine Kincaid is a mezzo-soprano from Jacksonville, Florida who recently graduated with a Master of Music in opera from the University of Maryland as a part of the Maryland Opera Studio, where she studied with Delores Ziegler. In 2019, Ms. Kincaid graduated from Florida State University with a Bachelor of Music in voice performance. She recently performed with the Maryland Opera Studio as Ramiro (*La finta giardiniera*). Her past roles include Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Orphée (*Orphée e Euridice*), and Mrs. Lowe (*The Manchurian Candidate*). Katherine has performed with the Seagle Music Colony, Oberlin in Italy, Classical Singing and New York in June, and CCM Opera Bootcamp. She is also a trained classical pianist and songwriter. This season with Toledo Opera, Ms. Kincaid will be singing Flora (*La Traviata*).

Fran Daniel Laucerica, tenor



Praised for his clarity and agility, Cuban-American tenor, Fran Daniel Laucerica, is a versatile musician who shines equally in operatic and concert repertoire. Mr. Laucerica is a recent graduate from the Boston Conservatory with a master's degree in opera performance and prior to that, he graduated from Northwestern University. He was also part of the 2020 Wolf Trap Opera Studio Artist program, where he performed scenes from *Billy Budd* and *Fellow Travelers* and returned to Wolf Trap Opera for the 2021 summer season, where he covered the roles of Comte Barigoule (*Cendrillon*) and Satyavan (*Savitri*). Mr. Laucerica's other recent operatic performance credits include Ernesto (*Don Pasquale*), The Magician (*The Consul*), The Vain Man/The Snake (*The Little Prince*), Reverend Samuel Parris (*The Crucible*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Albert (*Albert Herring*). In concert, Mr. Laucerica has had the opportunity to perform as a Tenor Soloist in *Carmina Burana*, *Henry VIII*, Mozart's *Coronation Mass*, Puccini's *Missa di Gloria*, and *Messiah*. Additionally, since beginning his time at Northwestern, he has had the opportunity to perform in many world and regional premieres of works, including as Miguelín in Omar Najmí's, *En la ardiente oscuridad*, and the tenor soloist in David Lang's *a house* and Samuel Carl Adams' *Light Readings*.

Andrew Payne, baritone



Baritone Andrew Payne hails from Waynesboro, Pennsylvania and is a student of Jennifer Rowley. Previously, he has studied with W. Stephen Smith at Northwestern University where he received his M.M. in voice and opera, and with Marcus DeLoach, where he graduated from Temple University with a B.M. in voice performance. Past operatic roles have been Howard (*Dog Days*), Sam (*Trouble in Tahiti*), Guglielmo (*Così Fan Tutte*), Benoît/Alcindoro (*La Bohème*), Johann and the Albert understudy (*Werther*), Nick Shadow (*The Rake's Progress*), Frank (*Die Fledermaus*), Claudio (*Béatrice et Bénédicte*) and the Gendarme (*Les Mamelles de Tirésias*). Mr. Payne has also been the baritone soloist in Stacey Garrop's oratorio, *Terra Nostra* and has also performed internationally in a world premiere production of *The Mad Hatter* in the West End of London. This summer, he made a guest appearance performing in the Savannah Voice Festival. Mr. Payne has recently won first place in Opera Idol hosted by Sherrill Milnes, third place in the NATS Philadelphia Chapter in 2015, and was a recipient of the Middleburg Music Scholarship in 2017. He has performed in masterclasses with Sherrill Milnes, Jennifer Rowley, Warren Jones, Anthony Michaels-Moore, and Brenton Ryan.

Mercy Olson, pianist



Pianist Mercy Olson pursues creating meaningful connections between listeners, performers, and the music they play. A Southeast Michigan native, Ms. Olson earned a Bachelor of Music in piano performance at the University of Toledo and a Master of Music in collaborative piano from Ohio University. As the Opera Theater at OU pianist, she performed impactful works such as Jake Heggie's *Farewell, Auschwitz; Pieces of 9/11*; and cabaret songs by Kurt Weill. While the Singing Men of Ohio pianist, Ms. Olson shared choral works in Chicago, Nashville, and Cleveland during their 2020 spring break tour and has collaborated for performances such as student honors recitals at the Toledo Museum of Art; NATS vocal competitions; and Toledo Symphony Young Artist, OU, and UT concerto competitions. She was selected to participate in the 2021 Collaborative Piano Institute featuring faculty such as Jamie Barton and Martin Katz. Additionally, she has premiered new chamber works for the West Fork New Music Festival and sOUndings concerts. As Vice President of the OU Collegiate Chapter of Music Teachers National Association, she helped create children's concert engagement events, was part of commissioning a new piano ensemble representing the Athens, OH region, and presented at the MTNA national conference. The chapter received the 2020 MTNA Chapter of the Year award.

What is Opera?

Opera is a theatrical drama or comedy told in music through powerful, unamplified voices no-microphones used.
Opera combines several art forms—vocal and instrumental music, theater, drama, visual art and often dance—into one complete theatrical experience.

The Basic Elements of Opera

Singing Is The Primary Method Of Expression. The most defining aspect of opera is that the majority of lines are sung instead of spoken. The characters express their thoughts and feeling in song rather than speech. Because it usually takes longer to sing something than to say it, however, the action may sometimes seem slower than in a play. Occasionally, even in an opera, characters may speak rather than sing, but the vast majority of lines will be sung.

Opera Combines Many Different Art Forms. Much of the excitement of opera comes from its use of multiple art forms. Opera combines singing, acting, orchestral music, poetry, dance, mime, theatrical scenery, costumes and lighting in a unique art form all its own. The word "opera" itself is an Italian word derived from the Latin word "opus," which means work (as in work of art).

An Opera Tells A Story. As in a play, opera is performed on a stage with scenery, props and lighting, by actors wearing costumes, make-up and wigs to create a specific character, time, and place. While the actors sing their lines they are accompanied by a piano, small instrumental ensemble, or even a full orchestra, that may be either to the side of the stage or beneath the stage in the orchestra "pit." Opera stories come from many different sources: mythology, the Bible, fairy tales, literary classics and history. Operas may be about mythological gods, historic heroes, royalty, or ordinary people from the past or present. The words sung in an opera are written down in a libretto (Italian for "little book"). The libretto is sometimes sung in a language other than English, depending on the nationality of the composer and librettist (the author of the libretto).

The Music In An Opera Reflects The Mood And Events In The Story. The addition of music to telling a story tends to greatly increase the emotional intensity of a performance. Even if you cannot understand the words being sung, the music provides many clues. It reflects a character's feelings; it hints at a turn in the plot; it may even describe an event (a storm, for example). If something sad or frightening is about to happen, you may hear a warning in the music before the action takes place.

An Opera Is Structured Like A Play. Most operas begin with an overture, which is an introductory piece of instrumental music that often presents musical themes heard in the opera. As in a play, an opera is divided into one or more acts and various scenes that contain a mixture of arias (one singer), duets (two singers), ensembles (more than two singers, such as trios, quartets, etc.), scenes with a chorus, and sung dialogue called recitative.

The Creative Team: Career Possibilities

Many people work together to create an opera production. Members of the creative team include the singers, the conductor, the stage director, and the designers (sets, lighting, costumes, wig and make-up). These careers often involve many years of study and hard work to master.

The Conductor. The conductor communicates information about the music and the timing of the show to the singers on the stage and to the orchestra through the gestures he or she makes, often using a baton. The conductor is usually addressed using the Italian term, as "Maestro" or "Maestra." The conductor trains for his/her work just like the singers. He or she must have a broad knowledge of singing, the orchestra, and music in general. The orchestral score, with approximately twenty staves (individual lines) of music, must be studied and mastered long before rehearsals even begin. The conductor uses the score as a guide as he or she coaches the singers and the orchestra toward a performance.

The Stage Director. An operatic stage director faces all the challenges of a theatrical stage director, plus a few special concerns. The opera must be staged to obtain the greatest emotional effect by moving the singers about with a natural flow that enhances the meaning of the story without interfering with the music. The composer has built the framework within which the stage director must work. Entrances, duets, fights, exits, shipwrecks, and all other stage "business" must take place within a specified number of measures or beats. Action must be compressed or extended as written by the composer. Like a conductor, a stage director must be completely familiar with the musical score. He or she must know Italian, French, German, or whatever language is being sung, as well as have a working knowledge of everything and everyone both on stage and backstage. He or she is also often the person working with the designers to make sure everything on stage is a cohesive whole.

The Designers. Every element the audience sees on stage (the sets, the costumes, the lights, the wigs and make-up) requires a person with special skills to plan and implement how that element is going to enhance the story of the opera. Set designers create sets that transport the audience to a different time and place, and that remain light enough to move

around during scene changes and small enough to store in the theaters “wings” (space off to the side of the stage, out of the audience’s view). Costume designers must make each character unique through what they wear. Lighting designers take a theater that is normally completely dark and use electric light and color to create different settings (night vs. day) and moods (energized, spooky, etc.), and to draw the audience’s attention to different characters or locations on stage. Wig and Make-up designers can adjust an actor’s age, hairstyle, add distinguishing marks like scars and tattoos, and help further tailor the unique impression each character’s appearance makes on the audience.

The Singers. Singers are often hired to sing a role a year or more in advance and, in the world of professional opera, must have their roles memorized before the first rehearsal. If the role is new to them they need to not only learn all their notes but also all the words to their role, often in a foreign language. In addition, singers must learn the parts of the singers and orchestra around them so they’ll know how those elements relate to their own role. Voice teachers help singers with their vocal technique and vocal coaches help them with language, musical style, and character development. Coaches also play the orchestra score on the piano so singers can learn their parts in the context of the whole. Singers are always in the process of learning new roles so that they can work in many places, including other countries. This advanced preparation is crucial because there is rarely much time to rehearse once the cast, conductor, and director are assembled.

Rehearsals/Behind the Scenes

The cast of an opera isn’t assembled until approximately three weeks before the opening night. The singers, who are often chosen by audition, come from around the country and sometimes the world and may not have met each other before the first rehearsal. The conductor leads them through the music with piano accompaniment, showing them his or her interpretation of tempo and phrasing. The stage director shows them where and when and how to move around the stage and how to interpret the drama. This collaboration of conductor and stage director with the singers brings the opera’s plot and music to life.

The opera is staged in a rehearsal room first, using tape on the floor to let the singers know where sets and stairs will be. It moves to the theater’s stage just a few nights before opening. It is then that the orchestra is brought into the process, along with the technical aspects of theater such as lights, costumes, sets, and make-up. Technically and logistically, the opera usually comes together in just five days.

Once in the theater, a stage manager runs rehearsals. Although invisible to the audience, the stage manager is responsible for coordinating the efforts of the stage crew who work backstage (including props people, lighting people, stage hands, costumers, electricians, carpenters, and more), the singers (helping them time entrances, costume changes, and breaks), and conductor (letting him or her know when everything is ready to begin). Video and audio monitors make it possible to see the conductor and hear the orchestra throughout the backstage areas of the theater, and the stage manager can communicate with the singers in their dressing rooms using a PA system. Everyone must be in the right place, at the right time, in the right costume, holding the right prop through many changes and throughout a long drama that cannot stop once it’s begun.

Given that most operas are around three-hours long, in a foreign language, performed entirely from memory, and involve the coordination of many people and art forms, it is a truly incredible feat that they can be performed with only a few weeks of rehearsal and a few days of work in the theater. It takes a team of extremely skilled, very hard working people for opera to be successful.

Activity

Pre-Performance Class Discussion:

What Is an opera? Describe the roles of the many different people who prepare for and perform in an opera. Which role appeals to you as a possible career?

Post-Performance Class Discussion:

Now that you have experienced an opera, would you like to change your opera career choice?

Rossini the Composer

Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868) is often referred to as one of the greatest composers of opera that ever lived. He was known primarily for an operatic style of his own invention called bel canto or beautiful singing. This bel canto singing is made up of beautiful florid passages that contain lots of scales and arpeggios, often moving quickly in succession.

Rossini composed 39 operas over the span of his lifetime, and *The Barber of Seville* is widely considered his most popular work. The story of the fun and multi-talented barber, Figaro



Gioachino Rossini
1792-1868

playing match maker between the lovely Rosina and disguised Count Almaviva is continuously performed all over the world and has been adapted for movies, the stage, and even a Looney Tunes cartoon.

Rossini began composing opera when he was just 13 years old and was heavily influenced by the music of Haydn and Mozart. Other operas that Rossini is famous for are *La Cenerentola* (Cinderella), *The Lady of the Lake*, and *William Tell*.

Rossini invented the Italian opera as we know it today complete with overture, arias, scenas, and finales. His singable melodies caused instant popularity. Nearly all of his operas are comedies, complete with wit and relatable themes. Rossini was the composer to begin what we now know as the Bel canto era, defined literally as *beautiful singing*; a style of pure, smooth, flowing singing associated with the 18th century.

Interesting Facts:

- Rossini was a huge foodie, he loved to cook and even invented his own dish, the tournedos Rossini.
- Rossini loved Mozart so much that he was nicknamed Tedeschino, the little German.
- One of the few composers to die both wealthy and popular – a rarity in the opera world.

The Operatic Voice

Being an opera singer is hard work! Singers need to be physically strong and have superb technique in order to sustain long phrases (musical thoughts): this means they have excellent control of both the inhalation and exhalation of their breath. Likewise, their voices must maintain a resonance (using the cavities in the face to increase the audibility of the voice, even when singing quietly) in both the head (mouth, sinuses) and chest cavities. All this resonance is necessary to achieve the volume required to be heard above the orchestra that accompanies the singers. Opera singers do not usually use microphones, so they must project their voices throughout a whole theatre using only their muscles and technique! All voices are defined by both the actual voice “type” and the selection of repertoire for which the voice is ideally suited. The range, pitch, and tone of a singer’s voice will determine what kind of role they will play in the opera. Below are a list of the voice types (and ranges) commonly found in operas:

Female Voice Types

• Soprano (“sopra” = “over”)

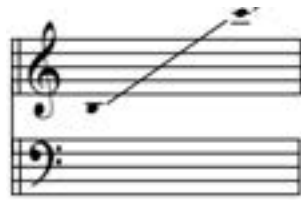
The highest pitched female voice. Soprano voices vary by sound type: there are coloratura sopranos, who can sing very high notes and rapid passages with ease, dramatic sopranos, whose voices have great power, and lyric sopranos, whose voices have exceptional beauty and can sustain long passages. Composers often (but not always) write the female lead role in an opera for a soprano.

• Mezzo-Soprano (“mezzo” = “medium”)

Lower than the soprano and higher than contralto. Usually plays either the character of a young boy (this is called a trouser role) or a complex character with energy and awareness of life, or an evil character. Bizet’s Carmen is one of the most famous mezzo roles in opera, and is a rare lead role for a mezzo.

• Contralto (“contra” = “against” & “alto” = “high”)

The lowest pitched female voice, these singers have a deep, well rounded sound. Contraltos more rare than sopranos or mezzos, and they are usually given the role of a maid, mother, or grandmother. Olga in Tchaikovsky’s Eugene Onegin is one such role.



Male Voice Types

• Tenor (“tenere”= “to hold” - central notes of harmony)

The highest sounding male voice: often the leading role. Tenors, like sopranos, can have lyric or dramatic sound quality. Luciano Pavarotti was one of the world’s most famous lyric tenors. Tenors typically play characters that fall in love with Sopranos, such as Alfredo in Verdi’s La Traviata.

• Baritone (from the Greek term for “deep sounding”)

These voices are more mellow-sounding and slightly lower than tenors. The roles sung by bartones are usually father figures or counts and other nobles, and these are often important roles in the story (like Rigoletto in Verdi’s Rigoletto).

• Bass (“low”)

Basses are the lowest sounding human voices, and they often play roles of wise and older characters in opera, like kings, emperors, or gods. They can also play profoundly evil characters, like Satan in Mephistopheles or Faust. The basso profundo is the lowest voice in singing, and is commonly heard in Russian opera. One of the most recognizable bass roles in opera is Leporello in W.A. Mozart’s Don Giovanni.



Class Activities

Pre-Performance:

Grades K-5:

On Being Sad/Happy: Class Discussion

Describe a time when you were very sad or happy. How did you feel? What made you feel that way?

Design a Promotional Poster

Create a poster to promote the upcoming performance of *The Stylist of Seville*. Display the poster in your school a week before the performance.

Grades 5-8:

On Comedies: Class Discussion

What do you know about comedies? Can you remember the names of any? What do you know about the story of *The Stylist of Seville*?

Music Listening Activity

Rossini wrote during the beginning of the Romantic era, an era that was known for its emotional outpouring and sentimentality. Rossini however, resisted these impulses. Instead, he turned to comedy, flavoring his music with catchy melodies, charm, and witty banter. In Figaro’s aria, “Largo al factotum,” the singer is required to articulate many syllables one after the other at a remarkable, tongue-twisting speed. This is known as a patter song. The effect is quite impressive yet comedic. “Largo al factotum” appears in the first act, and this recording is of the late Russian baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky.

Objective:

The objective of this lesson is to ensure you are familiar with music from the opera. You should be able to consider the impact of repeated listening to enhance your understanding of a piece of music.

Materials:

High quality recording of Largo al Factotum (https://youtu.be/TKDXr_fimQ8)
8.5” x 11” piece of paper divided into four columns (landscape)

Lesson:

1. Listen to the aria straight through while writing down what you are hearing, feeling, and questioning each time.
2. Brainstorm a list of things you could listen for:
 - Type of voice (female, male, soprano, tenor, etc.)
 - Instruments you hear (violin, cello, trumpet, piano, etc.)
 - Tempo - fast, slow, both, etc.
 - Form - does the aria have sections you can identify - does anything repeat?
 - How does it start? How does it end?
 - What emotion could be used to describe the music?
 - How does it make you feel?
3. Repeat the listening activity at each lesson and add to your list. Your questions can be used to focus on new aspects of the aria.
4. After the last listening session, participate in a group discussion on how your appreciation and understanding changed over time. Did the music grow on you? Were you able to anticipate each section? What did you hear at the end that you didn’t hear at the beginning?

Extension:

Repeat the listening activity with another aria or ensemble number from *The Barber of Seville*. When does a piece of music “stick.” Why is some music easy to listen to repeatedly and other music becomes less than interesting over time?

Class Activities

Post-Performance:

Grades K-5:

Main Idea: Class Discussion

What do you think is the main idea or main theme of *The Stylist of Seville*?

On Being Sad/Happy: Class Discussion

How did Rosina's experience of being sad and then happy differ from your own ideas about what to do when you are sad or happy?

Grades 5-8:

Personal Response: Class Discussion or Writing

How do Rosina and the Count's feelings, emotions, or experiences in the opera relate to your own life?

At what point(s) in the opera would you have acted differently than Rosina and the Count?

What do you think is the main theme or moral of *The Stylist of Seville* story?

Grades K-8:

Fan Letters

Using the words in the word bank below, write a letter to one or more of the performers from *The Stylist of Seville*. What did you like most? What did the music sound like? Did the singers use props or costumes to help tell the story? Who was your favorite performer? If you prefer, draw your favorite part of the performance. Give the letter or the drawing to your teacher to send back to Toledo Opera.

