

LEON WILSON CLARK
OPERA SERIES

SHEPHERD SCHOOL OPERA STUDIO

and the

SHEPHERD SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

present

THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

An opera in four acts by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte

English translation by Edward Dent

Deborah Karner, guest director

Larry Rachleff, conductor

Hal Lanier, musical preparation

Graeme McDonnell, set and lighting design

Johanna Langert, costume design

March 20, 22, 24, and 26, 1994

7:30 p. m.

Wortham Opera Theatre

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

CAST

<i>Count Almaviva</i>	<i>Robert Ames</i>
<i>Countess Almaviva</i>	<i>Stephanie Dillard</i>
<i>Figaro, manservant to Count Almaviva</i>	<i>Peter Lindskoog</i>
<i>Susanna, maidservant to Countess Almaviva</i>	<i>Tracy Rhodus</i>
<i>Cherubino, the Count's page</i>	<i>Kandi Wiley</i>
<i>Marcellina, the Count's head housekeeper</i>	<i>Vanessa Van Valin</i>
<i>Doctor Bartolo, the doctor from Seville</i>	<i>Raymond Granlund</i>
<i>Don Basilio, the abbot and music master</i>	<i>Francisco Almanza</i>
<i>Don Curzio, the Count's lawyer</i>	<i>Julián Altschul</i>
<i>Antonio, the Count's gardener and uncle of Susanna</i>	<i>Alan Hicks</i>
<i>Barbarina, daughter of Antonio</i>	<i>Kara Kane</i>
<i>Two young girls</i>	<i>Rebecca Coberly</i> <i>Susan D'Albergo</i>

CHORUS

*Donald Barkauskas, Rebecca Coberly, Susan D'Albergo,
Jeffrey Jackson, Michelle Jockers, Kara Kane, David Mebane,
Beth Munkres, Paul Neal, Kimala Ross, Scott Rudy, Oliver Soell*

COVERS

*Julián Altschul, Anné-Marie Condacse,
Karen Foster, Alan Hicks, Michelle Jockers*

SHEPHERD SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Violin I	Viola	Flute	Trumpet
<i>Yenn Chwen Er,</i> <i>concertmaster</i>	<i>Dominic Johnson,</i> <i>principal</i>	<i>Lisa Garner</i>	<i>George Chase</i>
<i>Rachel Tsuchitani</i>	<i>Aaron Bielish</i>	<i>Lisa Waters</i>	<i>Dennis de Jong</i>
<i>Amy Sauers</i>	<i>Kelly Dylla</i>	Oboe	Timpani
<i>Inga Ingver</i>	<i>Erwin Foubert</i>	<i>Jeffrey Champion</i>	<i>Douglas Cardwell</i>
<i>Kristin Lacey</i>		<i>Judy Christy</i>	
<i>Magdalena Villegas</i>	Cello	Clarinet	Continuo
	<i>Martin Osten,</i> <i>principal</i>	<i>Juliet Lai</i>	<i>Hal Lanier</i>
Violin II	<i>Scott Brady</i>	<i>Xin-Yang Zhou</i>	Orchestra Manager
<i>Rebecca Ansel,</i> <i>principal</i>	<i>Mary Ellen Morris</i>	Bassoon	<i>Martin Merritt</i>
<i>Jeanine Tiemeyer</i>	<i>Katherine de Béthune</i>	<i>Eric Anderson</i>	Orchestra Librarian
<i>Gabrielle Stebbins</i>	Double Bass	<i>Charles Bailey</i>	<i>Ellen Fuchs</i>
<i>Andrew Cheung</i>	<i>Nicholas Walker,</i> <i>principal</i>	Horn	
<i>Eugenia Wie</i>	<i>Kurt Johnson</i>	<i>Wade Butin</i>	
		<i>Tricia Giesbrecht</i>	

PRODUCTION STAFF

Stage Director Deborah Karner
Conductor Larry Rachleff
Musical Preparation Hal Lanier
Vocal Coach Richard Bado
Set Design and Lighting Design Graeme McDonnell
Costume Design Johanna Langert
Wig and Make-Up Design Robin Farmer
Production Managers Claire Rieffel, Kimberly Orr
Stage Manager and Properties Master Alex Stutler
Master Carpenter Kirk Markley
Stitchers Ariana Myers, Martha Redelmeier
Costume Crew Sara Bayer, Lara Bruckmann, Nikkola Karlsson
Technical Crew Don Goza, Karen Foster, Alex Stutler
Running Crew Karen Foster, Ryan Minor

The Marriage of Figaro

KV 492

by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

First performed in Vienna on May 1, 1786.

*The action covers one day and takes place in the castle
and grounds of Aguas Frescas, the domain of Count Almaviva.*

ACT I - A room between the suites of the Count and Countess.

ACT II - The Countess' dressing room.

INTERMISSION

(15 minutes)

ACT III - The Count's Grand Hall.

INTERMISSION

(10 minutes)

*ACT IV - A place in the Count's garden where the scented
pines are closest.*

This production is made possible by a generous
endowment from the late Dr. Leon Wilson Clark.

SYNOPSIS

The Marriage of Figaro is the second play in a trilogy written by Pierre Caron de Beaumarchais. In the first play, *The Barber of Seville*, we meet Dr. Bartolo, a wealthy doctor who lives in Seville. His household includes Marcellina, his housekeeper, and Rosina, his young ward. Dr. Bartolo employs Figaro as his barber and the nosy Basilio to give Rosina singing lessons. Figaro is, at this point in his life, the barber of Seville. Bartolo intends to marry Rosina but Rosina is in love with a young man who is courting her in secret. That young man is Count Almaviva, and he pays Figaro to help him steal Rosina from Bartolo's clutches. Figaro does this and Rosina marries Almaviva and becomes the Countess. Bartolo, furious with Figaro, is left fuming and sputtering.

The Marriage of Figaro takes place three years later at Aguas Frescas, Count Almaviva's estate outside of Seville. Figaro, now the Count's steward, is about to marry Susanna, a young woman who has been raised on the Almaviva estate by her uncle, Antonio, the drunken gardener. She is the personal maid of the Countess, and her uncle Antonio's daughter Barbarina is her cousin.

Figaro's impending marriage puts a crimp in the plans of almost everyone at the castle. First is the Count, who would like to sleep with Susanna, probably regularly but definitely before anyone else does. Towards this end he has employed Basilio, now the singing teacher at Aguas Frescas, to let Susanna know of his amorous intention. Susanna tells Figaro of the Count's proposal and Figaro declares "If you (Count) are after a little amusement, you may go dancing but I'll play the tune."

Figaro, at some previous time, has borrowed money from Marcellina, who is now Count Almaviva's head castle-keeper, and there exists a contract which Figaro signed saying that if he does not pay back to Marcellina 20,000 silver crowns, he will marry her. Figaro cannot repay Marcellina, and she wants to marry him immediately. She invites Dr. Bartolo up from Seville to help her figure out how to make the contract stick. Her plan is to aggravate Susanna about the Count's attentions, causing Susanna to more vehemently refuse his advances. The Count, not at all accustomed to being told "no" to anything by anyone, will then, out of frustration and anger, assist Marcellina to marry Figaro so that he can have a better chance at Susanna.

Meanwhile, the Countess, who passionately eloped with the man of her dreams three years ago, is wondering what happened to love, to dreams, and to her man. She would like the feeling of love to be returned to her and her husband. Towards this goal, she enters into Figaro's scheme to trap the Count while the Count is making advances to Susanna and thus embarrass him into renewed conjugal consciousness.

Now, amidst all of this plotting and scheming, is a 13-year old boy whose hormones are driving him crazy. He has just discovered women and no longer knows who he is or how he should act — no longer the child, not yet the man. Cherubino is the Countess' godson who is at Aguas Frescas as a page to the Count in order to learn about courtly manners and eventually become a noble lord himself. The problem is that he is learning all too well the Court games but not quite the right timing, and, like a puppy, he always ends up in the wrong place at the wrong time, upsetting all the machinations of the adult players. Since Cherubino is learning his lessons from the Count, he is exploring his new-found appreciation of women with the same women to whom the Count is showing attention. The Count views Cherubino as an aggravation and a threat and sends him off to one of his military units as a captain. But Figaro prevents Cherubino from leaving the estate in order to use him as part of his "Let's trap the Count!" plot.

Finally, Figaro and Susanna do get married, but by that time the Countess has arranged with Susanna that Susanna will make an assignation in the garden with the Count (which Susanna does right in the middle of her own wedding). She, the Countess, and her maid, Susanna, will exchange cloaks so that when the Count comes to woo Susanna in the garden, he will actually be seducing the Countess dressed in Susanna's cloak. Figaro knows nothing of this particular plot and is truly tormented to think that his beloved new wife is untrue to him. He really thinks that the Countess' cloak - IS the Countess.

But we, the audience, know that it is all part of the final moments of the opera.

BIOGRAPHIES

DEBORAH KARNER is a stage director with first-hand knowledge of operatic performance. Her vocal studies were with Judith Raskin, and as a singer she has performed a wide variety of operatic roles and concert repertoire.

Ms. Karner has directed traditional and contemporary opera in Italy, Austria, and the U.S. Her contemporary productions have ranged from performance art collaborations with the Magic Circle Opera Repertory Ensemble (New York City) and *Carrying Place* (Maine) to new works with the New York Lyric Opera and premieres with Cornell Musica Nova (Ithaca, New York) and *Festa Musicale Stiana* (Italy).

Ms. Karner maintains a private studio in New York, teaching stage technique for singers. Her work as director and dramatic coach has led her to create an ongoing workshop which develops an operatic performance technique as a synthesis of acting, movement, and singing.

Ms. Karner has been Artistic Director of the Ithaca Opera Association and is currently an artist-in-residence for the Metropolitan Opera's in-school program "Creating Original Opera."

GRAEME F. McDONNELL, lighting and scenic designer, most recently designed the lighting for *The Dressing Room* on Theatre Row in New York City. Mr. McDonnell has created the lighting designs for the award winning *Mambo Mouth* at the American Place Theatre, *Jacques Brel ...* at the Village Gate, E. Katherine Kerr's *On the Zipline*, Ted Whitehead's *The Man Who Fell in Love with his Wife* with Kevin Conway, and *Santiago* by Maria Irene Fornes. His regional credits include New York Lyric Opera's production of *Mary Dyer*, *The Armageddon Radioactive Revue*, *Cinderella*, *The Fantasticks*, *Jacques Brel ...*, *The Lady Dick*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *The Nutcracker*, *Pergolesi*, and *Way Out West*.

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