



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***The Barber of Seville* to open this weekend at Sarasota Opera**

Sarasota, FL—Sarasota Opera will open Gioachino Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* on Saturday, Feb. 22. One of the most beloved comic operas in the repertoire, it is also one of the most frequently performed works worldwide. There will be ten performances of the opera through March 29 at the Sarasota Opera House.

The opera is a comedic masterpiece filled with wit, slapstick humor, and clever dialogue. Its comic elements are timeless and continue to entertain audiences of all ages. Rossini's score is packed with memorable melodies and energetic, engaging music. The overture is particularly famous and has been used in various films, cartoons, and commercials. Warner Brothers famously used it as the soundtrack for a Bugs Bunny cartoon entitled *The Rabbit of Seville*.

The story revolves around the efforts of Count Almaviva to win the love of Rosina, with the help of the resourceful Figaro, while thwarting the plans of her guardian, Dr. Bartolo. The plot is full of twists, disguises, and humorous situations that keep the audience entertained from start to finish.

Before the curtain rises, opera patrons can attend a pre-performance dinner in a private room at Sage Restaurant, around the corner from the Opera House, that includes a talk by the production's stage director, Marco Nisticò. Cocktails will be served at 5 p.m., dinner at 6 p.m. Cost is \$200 per person (tickets to the performance are additional).

Korean-American tenor, [Hak Soo Kim](#), will sing the role of Count Almaviva, who is determined to win the heart of the beautiful Rosina. This is his seventh season with Sarasota Opera. His most recent performance here was as Lindoro in *L'italiana in Algeri*. He was a resident tenor at Los Angeles Opera. When he isn't singing opera, Hak Soo Kim, formerly head sommelier at Per Se restaurant in New York City, is consulting for restaurants. Mezzo-soprano [Lisa Marie Rogali](#) will make her Sarasota debut as Rosina. She has sung Hansel in Opera Birmingham's *Hansel and Gretel* and sang the title role in *Carmen* with Virginia Opera this fall. Opera News described her debut performance with Minnesota Opera as "a tour de force of diction, precision and pizzazz."

Italian baritone [Filippo Fontana](#) will return to Sarasota Opera to reprise the role of Figaro, which he sang with the company in 2018. This is his eighth season with Sarasota Opera, where he most recently sang the roles of Nanni in *L'infedelta delusa* (2024), Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* (2023), and Count Robinson in *Il matrimonio segreto* (2022). In 2020, Fontana sang the title role in *The Barber of Seville* at the Teatro La Fenice, and the role of Dandini in *La Cenerentola* at the Teatro dell'Opera di Roma in 2019.

Bass-baritone [Andrew Gilstrap](#) will make his Sarasota debut in the role of Don Bartolo. He has sung the roles of Leporello in *Don Giovanni* with Wolf Trap Opera, Antonio in *The Marriage of*

Figaro and Il padre di Nencio in *L'infedeltà delusa* with the Bayerische Staatsoper, Basilio in *The Barber of Seville* and Immigration Officer in *Flight* with Minnesota Opera, and Sourin in *Pique Dame* with Des Moines Metro Opera.

Bass [Young Bok Kim](#), marking his 21st year with Sarasota Opera, will sing the role of Don Basilio. In Sarasota, he has sung the title role in Verdi's *Attila*, Sparafucile in Verdi's *Rigoletto*, and Raimondo in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, among others. A native of South Korea, he has also sung Don Alfonso in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* with the National Opera of Korea and the Seoul Metropolitan Opera. Kim currently lives in New York where he made his New York City Opera debut as Colline in *La bohème*.

The Barber of Seville will be conducted by [Marcello Cormio](#) and directed by Marco Nisticò, with set design by Jeffrey W. Dean. Costumes were designed by Howard Tsvi Kaplan, hair and makeup are by Sue Schaefer, and lighting by Ken Yunker. It will be sung in Italian, with English supertitles for 10 performances through March 29.

The Barber of Seville will be performed Feb 22, 25, 27, March 2 (matinee), 5, 9 (matinee), 14, 21, 27 (matinee), and 29. Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m. and matinee performances begin at 1:30 p.m.

For pre-performance dinner reservations, contact the Sarasota Opera Development Department at 941-366-8450, ext. 813 or email development@sarasotaopera.org. Tickets for performances are on sale at the Sarasota Opera Box Office, by phone at 941-328-1300, in person at 61 N. Pineapple Ave., Sarasota, or online at <https://tickets.sarasotaopera.org>.

For more information, visit <https://www.sarasotaopera.org/event/barber-seville>.

About Sarasota Opera

This is Sarasota Opera's 66th Season of bringing world-class opera to Florida's Gulf Coast. The company was launched in 1960 in the historic 320-seat Asolo Theater on the grounds of Sarasota's Ringling Museum of Art. In 1984 the company moved into the former A.B. Edwards Theater — now the Sarasota Opera House. Since then, the company has gained an international reputation as one of the leading regional opera companies in the U.S. through initiatives such as the Masterworks Revival Series and the Verdi Cycle. The company's Sarasota Youth Opera is the most comprehensive Youth Program in the U.S. The Sarasota Opera House, which underwent a \$20 million renovation and rehabilitation in 2007, has been called "one of America's finest venues for opera" by Musical America. Since 1983, the company has been under the artistic leadership of Victor DeRenzi and administrative leadership of General Director Richard Russell since 2012. Sarasota Opera is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture and the National Endowment for the Arts. Programs are paid for in part by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax revenues. Sarasota Opera • 61 N. Pineapple Avenue • Sarasota, FL 34236 • (941) 366-8450 • SarasotaOpera.org.

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