

TEATRO LIRICO D'EUROPA
Presents
IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA
(THE BARBER OF SEVILLE)
by Gioachino Rossini
Libretto by Cesare Sterbini
after the comedy LE BARBIER DE SEVILLE
by Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais

Artistic director/Stage director
Musical director/Conductor
Sets/Costumes/Light
Harpichord

Giorgio Lalov
Krassimir Topolov
Giorgio Lalov
Elaine Rinaldi

Characters

FIGARO	Petar Danailov
ROSINA	Viara Zheleova
COUNT ALMAVIVA	Benjamin Brecher
DR. BARTOLO	Hristo Sarafov
DON BASILIO	Konstantine Videv
BERTA	Jo-Anne Herrero
FIGORELLO	Vladimir Hristov
AMBROGIO	Giorgio Dinef

Chorus of peasants, soldiers
Time and place: Seville, Spain, 18th century

There will be a 20-minute intermission after the first 45 minutes of Act I.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Formed in 1988 by Giorgio Lalov, European opera touring company Teatro Lirico D'Europa boasts of over 4,000 performances worldwide and 10 consecutive seasons of major U.S. tours. The company embarks on its 11th season of touring America in fall 2009 and winter 2010 with over 70 performances of five different full-scale operas, including a traditional version of Johann Strauss's DIE FLEDERMAUS, performed in the original German with English supertitles. The production will

travel to the most outstanding venues across the United States with the Sofia Symphony Orchestra and Chorus and professional dancers. Soloists for the productions were chosen from auditions held in major cities around the world, including Moscow, New York, Prague, San Juan and Sofia, Bulgaria. The principal singers are professionals with major operatic careers. Visit the Web site of JENNY KELLY PRODUCTIONS for an in-depth history of Teatro Lirico D'Europa, including hundreds of U.S. reviews, video clips, and a huge photo gallery: www.JennyKellyProductions.com.

MEET THE ARTISTS

PETAR DANAILOV (Figaro)

German critics extol Danailov as a bel canto singer who has a deep and distinctive lyric baritone timbre with a full range of nuances. In 1995, he graduated from the Vladiguero State Music Academy in Bulgaria and made his first stage appearances in Varna and Burgas. Since then, he has become a regular soloist at the Sofia National Opera House. In 2000, he won first prize at the Boris Christoff International Competition. From 2003-2005, he was a leading baritone soloist at the Opera Theatre in Bonn, where he had a great triumph as Macbeth. He was also featured there in Janacek's FROM THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD, Verdi's LA FORZA DEL DESTINO and Tchaikovsky's EUGENE ONEGIN. Before that, he was in a production of Rossini's THE BARBER OF SEVILLE directed by Dario Fo in Munich and in London.

Recently, Mr. Danailov has sung Germont in LA TRAVIATA and Sharpless in MADAMA BUTTERFLY at the Staatsoper in Hamburg. For seven consecutive seasons, he has been a guest soloist in Klagenfurt, Austria, singing Rodrigo in DON CARLO, Marcello in LA BOHÈME, Taddeo in L'ITALIANA IN ALGERI, Ashton in LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR, and Germont in LA TRAVIATA. At the Toscana Festival in Italy, he took part in LA TRAVIATA, PAGLIACCI, CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA, IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA AND CARMEN. He is also a frequent guest artist at the Auditorium of Palma de Mallorca.

Danailov is also much sought after as a concert singer. He has had major successes in Orff's CARMINA BURANA, Bach's ST. MATTHEW PASSION and Brahms' EIN DEUTSCHES REQUIEM. He has recorded with Bulgarian National Radio and Television. In September of 2009, Mr. Danailov sang the role of Baron Scarpia in Puccini's TOSCA at the National Opera House of Kishnau, Moldova, and the title role in Verdi's RIGOLETTO at the Asta Opera Theatre in Malta.

VIARA ZHELEZOVA (Rosina)

Bulgarian mezzo-soprano, Viara Zhelezova made her debut with Baltimore Opera Theatre as Rosina in IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA in November 2009 and was highly praised by opera critics of the BALTIMORE SUN and OperaOnline.us. Ms. Zhelezova graduated from the Bulgarian National Conservatory of Music and joined the roster of the Bulgarian National Opera, where she has performed leading mezzo roles alongside such singers as Ghena Dimitrova, Nicolai Giuselev and Anna Tomova Sintova. She has appeared as a guest artist with opera companies throughout Eastern and Western Europe. In the United States, Ms. Zhelezova has performed the roles of Carmen in Bizet's masterpiece, Rosina in IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA, Zerlina in DON GIOVANNI,

Cherubino in LE NOZZE DI FIGARO, Suzuki in MADAMA BUTTERFLY and Prince Orlofsky in DIE FLEDERMAUS, to outstanding critical acclaim.

BENJAMIN BRECHER (Count Almaviva)

The American tenor Benjamin Brecher has gained great acclaim with his many performances on opera and concert stages. Mr. Brecher has performed with numerous Opera companies including: New York City Opera, Opera de Montréal, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Central City Opera, Chautauqua Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Lyric Opera of Cleveland, the Harrisburg Opera, Toledo Opera, the Santa Fe Opera, Berkshire Opera, Arizona Opera, Anchorage Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Skylight Opera Theatre, the Glimmerglass Opera, the Aspen Opera Theatre and the Ohio Light Opera. He has performed various roles with The New York City Opera since 1997; appearing in its productions of IL VIAGGIO A REIMS, IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA, DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE, CARMEN, and the New York premiere of CENTRAL PARK. Other engagements include LA SONNAMBULA, I CAPULETI E I MONTECCHI and OTELLO with Opera Orchestra of New York and Lindoro in L'ITALIANA IN ALGERI with Opera de Montréal and Opera de Nice.

On the concert stage, Mr. Brecher has performed a wide range of répertoire with the world's finest symphonies, including the orchestras of: Baltimore Budapest Buffalo Chautauqua Chicago, Cincinnati, Detroit, Edmonton, Evansville, Ft. Myers, Ft. Wayne, Ft. Worth, Green Bay, Indianapolis, Jacksonville, Knoxville, Mexico City, Milwaukee, Omaha, Naples, Pittsburgh, Portland, Rome, St. Louis, San Antonio, Seattle, Toledo and, Toronto. He has also sung with The National Arts Orchestra of Ottawa and the National Symphony at The Kennedy Center. The tenor has recorded IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA with The Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra.

During the 2009 -10 season, Mr. Brecher is performing the world premiere of Steve Swartz's first opera SEANCE in Santa Barbara and the Benjamin Britten Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings in Wisconsin. He is singing Ernesto in *DON PASQUALE* at the Belle Isle Festival in France, and he is appearing in concerts with The Naples Philharmonic. In April of 2009, he sang the National Anthem at Camden yards for opening day of the Baltimore Orioles' baseball season.

Mr. Brecher is a graduate of The Juilliard Opera Center, New England Conservatory of Music and Bowling Green State University. He and his family live in Santa Barbara, California, where he is the head of the voice area at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

KONSTANTINE VIDEV (Don Basilio)

The Bulgarian bass graduated from the National Academy of Music with a Master of Opera degree under Professor Assen Silimsky. He has been a principal soloist with the Sofia National Opera since 1986 and a guest artist with opera companies in Belgium, Cypress, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and The Netherlands. His répertoire includes all the major basso roles of Puccini, Verdi and Mozart.

HRISTO SARAFOV (Dr. Bartolo)

Mr. Sarafov has been active on the stage for his entire adult life, as a soloist in operetta, opera, and as an actor. After graduating from the National Academy of Music in Sofia, the Sofia National Opera immediately engaged him for the role of Bartolo in Rossini's *IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA*. He has performed in hundreds of performances of opera with Giorgio Lalov worldwide since 1990.

JO-ANNE HERRERO (Berta)

Mezzo-soprano Jo-Anne Herrero holds a Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance from the Conservatory of Music in Puerto Rico and a Master of Music degree from the University of Nevada at Reno. She has been a soloist with the Symphony Orchestra of Puerto Rico and has portrayed principal roles with both of the island's main opera companies: Teatro de la Opera and Opera de Puerto Rico. In addition, she has served as choral director for both of these opera companies and she has prepared various choruses for the Casals Festival.

GIORGIO LALOV (Stage Director)

Co-founder of Teatro Lirico D'Europa and current general manager and artistic director of Teatro Lirico D'Europa, Gueorgui (Giorgio) Lalov also serves as stage director for MOZART FESTIVAL OPERA.

Mr. Lalov was born in Telesh, Bulgaria in June 1958. His father, "Lalo," a doctor, and his mother, Stoiyanka, an elementary school teacher and Bulgarian folk singer, were educated patrons of the arts. When the elder Mr. Lalov died, Giorgio was only nine years old, but because he was an excellent student, he had the good fortune to be accepted at an elite boarding school in the capital city of Bulgaria, where all the lessons were taught in French. When he graduated from high school in 1976, he was fluent in French and English. That fall he entered the Bulgarian National Academy of Music and went on tour throughout Italy with a choir from the university. While in Milan, he auditioned for the famous International School for Young Opera Singers at La Scala, was accepted and went on to make his operatic debut at La Scala at the age of 25.

After living in Italy for a short time, Mr. Lalov became fluent in Italian. In 1986, while on tour with an opera company in France, he met Yves Josse, a former ballet dancer who was booking opera and ballet tours. They became business partners. Mr. Lalov had many resources: He spoke several languages, was able to organize the creation of sets and costumes in Bulgaria and put together an excellent orchestra and chorus. He also knew many fine opera singers in Bulgaria, central Europe, and the United States. By 1988, Messrs. Josse and Lalov were collaborating on what was to become the most successful opera touring company in Europe. At the time of Mr. Josse's death in 1995, Teatro Lirico had presented over 250 performances a season throughout Europe.

In 1990, Mr. Lalov established the Sofia Symphony Orchestra and Chorus. Winter 2000 marked Teatro's first major American tour. The reviews from the 10 consecutive tours Teatro Lirico D'Europa has completed thus far in the United States speak for the high quality and consistency of the company. The fact that the company is able to tour with many different productions is an indication of Mr. Lalov's hard work, excellent

organizational skills and unfailing dedication to the art of opera. In spring 2009, the impresario became the artistic director of Baltimore Opera Theatre. The new company will present full-scale productions of opera at Baltimore's famous Hippodrome Theatre, featuring European and American singers and musicians as well as local talent.

I'm not alone in hoping that Giorgio Lalov stays happy and healthy and continues to bring us such magnificent productions. We can only hope to see more from this company in years to come.

ILLINOIS TIMES — Ann Kerr

“The physical productions and Lalov's stagings were reassuringly traditional and tell the story clearly. The solo and ensemble singing in all three operas was lusty, whole hearted, full-throated, and honest... something personal and passionate that is often missing from evenings of opera in prestigious venues... resounding chorus and experienced orchestra.”

OPERA NEWS – Richard Dyer

KRASSIMIR TOPOLOV (Conductor)

The young Bulgarian maestro was educated in Vienna. In addition to conducting hundreds of performances for Teatro Lirico D'Europa on tour in central Europe and the United States since 1995, he is a guest conductor with opera companies in Bulgaria and other Eastern European countries.

ELAINE RINALDI (harpsichord)

Elaine Rinaldi attended the University of Miami's Frost School of Music on a full scholarship and went on to do her graduate work at the Mannes School of Music in New York City. She made a critically hailed professional solo recital debut at Gusman Concert Hall in Miami and has gone on to be an acclaimed recitalist. She has held the positions of assistant or cover conductor at various United States regional opera companies, and for four seasons she was the principal guest conductor of the DiCapo Opera Theatre in New York. She has also served as resident associate conductor and chorus director with Florida Grand Opera. In addition to her work as a coach, choral director and conductor, Rinaldi frequently appears as an accompanist and solo harpsichordist.

Synopsis of the Opera

ACT I, SCENE 1. A small square in Seville before dawn. Disguised as a student, Count Almaviva serenades Rosina. He learns from Figaro, a former servant, now the city barber and general factotum, that she is Dr Bartolo's ward, and that he has access to the house. Rosina contrives to drop a note for Almaviva, sending her guardian on a wild-goose chase to pick it up and causing him to resolve to keep her under even closer guard. The letter asks for information about her unknown suitor's name, rank and intentions. When

Bartolo has set off in search of his crony Don Basilio the music teacher to arrange his marriage to Rosina, Almaviva sings another serenade, telling her that he is a poor student called Lindoro.

Inspired by the Count's munificence, Figaro declares that he can get him into the house, disguised as a drunken soldier seeking a billet.

ACT I, SCENE 2. Inside Dr Bartolo's house. Rosina is determined to marry her unknown suitor, while Bartolo is set on marrying her himself. He tries to interrogate his servants about what has been going on in his house, but they can only yawn or sneeze, because Figaro has dosed them. Basilio tells Bartolo that Count Almaviva has been seen in Seville and advises getting rid of him by slander. They retire to work on the marriage contract. Figaro, who has overheard their plans, tells Rosina and urges her to write to his "poor cousin." The letter is already written and she gives it to him. Bartolo, suspecting that she has been writing, confronts her with the evidence. She has an answer to all his accusations, but he is not convinced and says he will lock her in her room when he goes out. Almaviva bursts in, disguised as a drunken soldier. In the confusion, he slips Rosina a note that is seen by Bartolo, but Rosina smartly substitutes the laundry list. The night watchmen arrive to quell the riot, but are awed by a document produced by Almaviva.

ACT II. Inside Bartolo's house. Bartolo is voicing his suspicions about this soldier when Almaviva appears again, this time disguised as "Don Alonso," a supposed pupil of Don Basilio, who, he says, is indisposed and has sent him to give Rosina's music lesson. To allay Bartolo's suspicions, he produces Rosina's note, pretending it has fallen into his hands by accident and suggesting that Bartolo tell her it was given to him by a mistress of the count, to prove that he is trifling with her affections. Rosina sings an aria to the count's accompaniment and as Bartolo dozes off, the count explains his plan for eloping with Rosina later that night.

Figaro appears to shave Bartolo and manages to get hold of the key to the balcony. Basilio arrives, but is told to go home because he looks so ill, advice he accepts the more readily because Almaviva slips him a bribe. Figaro begins to shave Bartolo, while Almaviva and Rosina continue to arrange the elopement. Bartolo realizes what is going on and the count and Figaro make their escape.

Basilio comes back with the unwelcome news that the unknown suitor is probably Almaviva himself, a conclusion he has reached because of the size of the bribe. Bartolo sends Basilio to bring the notary to perform the marriage with Rosina and, producing her letter to the count, convinces her that her affections are being trifled with, so she tells him of the planned elopement and agrees to marry him. He goes to get the law to arrest Figaro and Almaviva.

During the storm Figaro and Almaviva climb a ladder to the balcony, only to be confronted by an angry Rosina, but the count calms her fears by revealing his identity.

Figaro urges haste, but the ladder has been taken. Basilio arrives with the notary and they get him to solemnize Almaviva's marriage to Rosina. Bartolo and the law arrive too late.