

Il barbiere di Siviglia

GIOACHINO ROSSINI 1816

SUNG IN ITALIAN

APPROXIMATE RUNNING TIME: 160 minutes

Through this opera, lively and colourful Rossini gives his audience a festival of famous arias framed in a number of hilarious situations where having fun seems to be the only thing that matters.

Composed in 1816, it is considered the most successful example of Italian opera buffa. The libretto, written by Cesare Sterbini, is based on the opera of the same name by Beaumarchais, although the sociological inferences are more rarefied and vague in Rossini's version. The events are chronologically preceding those told of in *The Marriage of Figaro*. Some of the arias contained in this opera, such as Basilio's, Figaro's soloist part and Rosina's, are to be acknowledged as the most representative of the classical repertoire.



Peter Mattei

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MAIN CHARACTERS

FIGARO : barber (baritone)

ROSINA : heir and Don Bartolo's pupil (contralto)

LE COMTE ALMAVIVA : Rosina's lover (ténor)

BARTOLO : (basso)

BASILIO : music teacher (basso)

THE PLOT

A In Seville, Count Almaviva is trying to seduce Doctor Bartolo's pupil Rosina, who is almost kept in captivity by Bartolo who is also in love with her. After becoming the count's valet, barber Figaro helps his master to win the girl's love.

Act 1

Count Almaviva, disguises as Lindoro, and a music band gather by Don Bartolo's house to sing a serenade for Rosina, who is locked up inside. Having gotten no reaction whatsoever, disconsolate Lindoro finally pays the musicians and decides to leave. Nevertheless, barber Figaro presents him with a solution; Almaviva dresses up as a drunkard soldier and the two trick their way into Don Bartolo's house. Once inside, the Count easily wins Rosina's love. However, Don Bartolo does not buy Almaviva's story and, under Rosina's music teacher Don Basilio's advice, he reports him to the police in order to give him a bad name.

Act 2

Almaviva manages to pass himself off as Don Bartolo's assistant gaining his way in Bartolo's house so to spend some time with Rosina. Unfortunately, Figaro, who is also in the house to shave Bartolo, fails in creating a diversion and when the old man realises what is going on under his own roof, flies into a rage. After kicking them all out, he shows a letter to Rosina in an attempt to prove Figaro and Almaviva were only trying to play her for a fool. This guts the poor girl that eventually accepts to marry Don Bartolo, who is ecstatic and promptly summon the notary. Almaviva and Figaro then breaks into the flat and talks Rosina into believing Almaviva's words and marry him.

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