

# CALGARY OPERA

Media Release

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## ***THE BARBER OF SEVILLE* BRINGS VOCAL FIREWORKS AND COMIC BRILLIANCE TO CALGARY AUDIENCES**

**CALGARY, AB** — Calgary Opera closes its season with a lively celebration of comedy and vocal brilliance in *The Barber of Seville*. Packed with disguises, romantic misfires, and the most recognizable aria in opera, Gioachino Rossini's beloved masterpiece hits the stage of the Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium from **April 18 - 24, 2026**, in a production that promises razor-sharp timing, fearless high notes, and laugh-out-loud chaos.

“Humans have been laughing at the same things since recorded history — each other and ourselves. The word ‘comedy’ comes from the Greek *komos*, meaning revelry — and that spirit is at the heart of these performances,” said Stage Director Elizabeth Stepkowski Tarhan.

“Whether you grew up on Buster Keaton, the Three stooges, *Three's Company* or belly laughed during *Guardians' of the Galaxy*, you will be delighted by this production. A sprinkling of practical jokes, a dusting of physical comedy and a dollop of Spanish inspired dance, are all icing on the delicious cake that is Rossini's masterpiece.”

In *The Barber of Seville*, a hopelessly romantic Count seeks the heart of a clever young woman, while she outsmarts her overbearing guardian — with a little help from the most famous barber in opera. Rosina is no passive heroine; perceptive, strategic, and not easily fooled, she drives the action as much as the men around her, bringing a sense of contemporary female agency to this classic comedy.

Rosina is performed by South African mezzo-soprano Siphokazi Molteno, who is quickly establishing herself as one of the most important voices of her generation. Her portrayal highlights Rosina's wit, independence, and vocal brilliance, bringing fresh energy to this beloved role.

A barber was far more than a man with a razor — he was one of society's most connected figures. In the early 19th century, barbers still carried the legacy of

the barber-surgeon, offering grooming, minor medical care, and serving as trusted presences across social classes. As hubs of conversation and gossip, barber shops were places where news spread quickly, making the barber both observer and influencer — a role perfectly embodied by Figaro, who moves effortlessly between worlds, orchestrating events with wit and precision. Add disguises, schemes, and the world-famous “Figaro!” aria, and the result is a comic romp that has delighted audiences for more than two centuries.

Figaro is performed by baritone Grisha Martirosyan, making his Calgary Opera debut. He recently participated in the Young Singers Project at the Salzburg Festival, performing in Verdi’s *Macbeth*. Martirosyan is a graduate of the Royal Opera House’s Jette Parker Artists Programme and a former member of the Mascarade Emerging Artists Program in Florence, with performances at Teatro La Fenice.

“*The Barber of Seville* sparkles with wit, precision, and unstoppable momentum. The orchestra is truly a character in the comedy — every crescendo, every rhythmic surprise drives the humour forward. Rossini really found a way to organize chaos in the music, not by describing feelings, but providing a running soundtrack that keeps a rhythm and pulse throughout the production, which helps us unveil the life and plot of the piece. The music truly gives structure to the production,” said Conductor Daniela Musca.

Internationally acclaimed for her passionate interpretations, refined attention to detail, and commitment to orchestral sound, Musca has appeared with leading European ensembles including the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Malmö Symphony, and Helsingborg Symphony, and has conducted at major festivals across Scandinavia and Europe. *The Barber of Seville* marks her debut with Calgary Opera.

“What excites me most about this production is that it’s going to be very entertaining for the audience - its energy and playfulness, and how it invites audiences to experience opera as something vibrant, fast-paced, and full of joy.”

Recommended for ages 12 and up, this lively production is fast, clever, and pairs dazzling singing with playful physical comedy, making it the perfect introduction to opera for newcomers and a must-see for longtime fans. With bold and colourful set and costume design that amplifies the energy on stage, the escalating chaos becomes a timeless comedic engine, building momentum as disguises multiply, plans unravel, and Figaro stays one step ahead.

“This production emphasizes that great comedy continues to connect across generations,” added Stepkowski Tarhan.

## **CAST**

Figaro: Grisha Martirosyan  
Rosina: Siphokazi Molteno  
Count Almaviva: John Tessier  
Dr. Bartolo: Dion Mazerolle  
Don Basilio: Adam Lau  
Berta: Kelsey Ronn  
Fiorello: Luke Noftall  
Sergeant: George Theodorakopoulos  
Ambrogio: Ryan Nauta

## **ARTISTIC TEAM**

Conductor: Daniela Musca  
Stage Director: Elizabeth Stepkowski Tarhan  
Set & Lighting Designer: Scott Reid  
Costume Designer: Heather Moore  
Chorus Director: Mark Morash  
Head Coach: Emily Hamper  
Répétiteur: Evan Mounce  
Stage Manager: Shelby-Jai Flick  
Assistant Stage Managers: Jennifer Yeung, Kennedy Greene

Featuring The Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, sung in Italian with English translations. Run time is approximately 3 hours, including one 25-minute intermission.

Opera Talk: Offered one hour prior to each performance in the First Floor Balcony Lobby.

## **MORE INFORMATION & TICKETS**

Saturday, April 18, 2026 – 7:30 p.m.  
Sunday, April 19, 2026 – 2:00 p.m. (new matinee)  
Friday, April 24, 2026 – 7:30 p.m.

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit [CalgaryOpera.com](http://CalgaryOpera.com) or call Calgary Opera Audience Services at 403-262-7286. Tickets are 50% off for ages 18 & under.

Media assets are available [HERE](#).

**For Further Information, please contact:**

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### **ABOUT CALGARY OPERA**

Founded in 1972, Calgary Opera is one of Canada's leading professional opera companies. For 53 years, the not-for-profit arts company has made a name for itself nationally and internationally for its commitment to the development of Canadian talent and the creation of new opera works, including seven world premieres. Through education and community outreach, Calgary Opera fosters a love of music and theatre in young people and provides opportunities for young artists to develop skills for successful professional careers in the performing arts industry.

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