



Wesfarmers Arts

# SYNOPSIS & CASTLIST

West Australian Opera presents

## THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

His Majesty's Theatre

23, 26, 28, 30 October 2021

Conductor **Christopher van Tuinen**

Director **Patrick Nolan**

Assistant Director **Margrete Helgeby Chaney**

Associate Director **Heather Fairbairn**

Choreographer **Elise May**

Set and Costume Designer **Marg Horwell**

Lighting Designer **Bernie Tan-Hayes**

Figaro **Jeremy Kleeman**

Count Almaviva **Teddy Tahu Rhodes**

Countess Almaviva **Lisa Harper-Brown**

Susanna **Prudence Sanders**

Cherubino **Amy Yarham**

Doctor Bartolo **Robert Hofmann**

Marcellina **Nicole Youl**

Don Basilio **Matthew Lester**

Don Curzio **Ry Charleson**

Barbarina **Brianna Louwen**

Antonio **Callen Dellar**

Featuring **West Australian Opera Chorus**

Featuring **West Australian Symphony Orchestra**

### ACT ONE

It is the morning of Figaro and Susanna's wedding and they are preparing a room the Count has given them as a gift.

Susanna warns Figaro the Count intends to seduce her and Figaro vows to prevent this from happening.

Figaro once borrowed money from Marcellina and promised to marry her if he was unable to repay the debt. Marcellina has enlisted Doctor Bartolo, who has an old score to settle with Figaro, to help enforce the arrangement.

Cherubino, the teenage page who has been banished by the Count for flirting with the gardener's daughter, confesses to Susanna he is in love with the Countess. The Count arrives and Cherubino hides. Thinking he is alone with Susanna, the Count makes a move on her. Interrupted by Basilio he is also forced to hide. When he overhears Basilio gossiping about Cherubino's crush on the Countess, the Count reveals himself. Cherubino is also discovered just as Figaro returns.

In a bid to outwit the Count, Figaro reminds the Count that he abolished the droit de seigneur, an ancient right of the lord of the manor to take a manservant's place on his wedding night. The Count is flustered and decides to send Cherubino into the military.

### ACT TWO

Susanna tells the Countess of the Count's plans to seduce her and together they hatch a plan to catch out the Count.

They plot to send the Count an anonymous letter suggesting the Countess has a lover whom she will meet later that evening. Meanwhile, Susanna will arrange to meet him in the garden but they will send Cherubino dressed as Susanna in her place so the Countess can surprise him.

Executive Director Carolyn Chard AM

Artistic Director Christopher van Tuinen

Figaro fetches Cherubino and Susanna and the Countess begin to dress him. Susanna goes into another room just before the Count arrives, furious after receiving the anonymous letter about the Countess' imaginary lover. Cherubino hides and the Countess refuses to unlock the door, telling her husband Susanna is in there trying on a wedding gown. While the Count takes his wife with him to find the tools to break down the door, Susanna swaps with Cherubino who escapes out a window. Antonio, the gardener, bursts in, upset about his flowers that were trampled in Cherubino's escape. Figaro takes the blame for the flowers just as Marcellina, Bartolo and Basilio burst in with a court summons for Figaro, demanding a delay to his wedding to Susanna.

### ACT THREE

The Count broods on the events of the morning while Susanna and the Countess come up with a new plan.

The new plan is Susanna will arrange to meet the Count later that evening but the Countess will go disguised as Susanna. The Count is delighted with Susanna's suggestion for a meeting but remains determined to make Figaro marry Marcellina.

Basilio arrives and announces Figaro must marry Marcellina but Figaro says he cannot marry her without his parents' consent and he doesn't know who his parents are. Marcellina recognises a birthmark on Figaro which identifies him as her long-lost son. The Countess grieves for her lost love with the Count. When Susanna arrives, the Countess dictates a love note for Susanna to give to the Count.

Barbarina, the gardener's daughter, and Cherubino (now dressed as a girl) are discovered by the Count just as the ceremony starts, but Figaro saves him again.

During the ceremony Susanna manages to slip the love note, sealed with a pin, to the Count, who pricks his finger, dropping the pin.

Figaro knows nothing about of Susanna's new plan but recognises the exchange of a love note.

### ACT FOUR

Figaro suspects Susanna of planning a meeting with the Count and becomes jealous while Susanna and the Countess dress as one another for a rendezvous in the garden.

Cherubino arrives, looking for Barbarina, whom he has arranged to meet in secret. Cherubino sees the Countess now dressed as Susanna and begins to flirt with 'Susanna' as the Count arrives and scares him away. The Count begins to woo 'Susanna' as Figaro disturbs them. The real Susanna dressed as the Countess calls on Figaro, intending to lead him on for fun. He sees through the disguise and joins in the deception, making exaggerated love to 'the Countess'. The Count thinks he sees Figaro with his wife. Outraged, the Count calls everyone together to witness his wife's infidelity, but the real Countess appears and the Count begs her forgiveness. All are reunited and everyone rejoices!

*Duration 2hrs and 50 minutes with one 20-minute interval. Sung in Italian with English surtitles. Casting correct at publication but may be subject to amendment. THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO is an Opera Queensland production. This production premiered on 15 July 2021 in Brisbane, Australia.*

### GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



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