


LYRICAL OPERA THEATER

Presents:



PUCCINI'S

# La Bohème

Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica

Opera in four acts set in Paris, France 1830.

**September** 9, 13, 15 & 19, 2023

Mid-Valley Performing Arts Center  
2525 Taylorsville Blvd.  
Taylorsville, UT

[www.LyricalOperaTheater.com](http://www.LyricalOperaTheater.com)

## Lyrical Opera Theater's 2024 Season

# THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

Gioacchino Rossini



Revel in this tale of pranks and skullduggery and disguises all centered around one lovely lady.

**February 10, 14, 16 & 18, 2024**  
Mid-Valley Performing Arts Center

GEORGES BIZET'S

# CARMEN

Libretto by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy

September 7 - 13, 2024



*Carmen*...a steamy story of seduction, jealousy and maniacal murder.

**September 7, 11, 13 & 15, 2023**  
Mid-Valley Performing Arts Center

Dear Esteemed Patrons,

With immense pleasure and anticipation, we extend our warmest welcome to you for our upcoming opera season, a journey into the realm of musical enchantment and theatrical splendor. As the curtain rises on this year's offerings, we are thrilled to present an array of captivating performances that promise to leave an indelible mark on your hearts and minds.

Allow us to introduce the first jewels in our crown of productions – "La Bohème" and "The Barber of Seville." These two timeless classics, each distinct in their narrative and melody, shall transport you through the corridors of emotion, from the heartwarming camaraderie of bohemian Paris to the uproarious hilarity of Seville's comical escapades.

"La Bohème," Puccini's masterful creation, invites you to experience the tender tapestry of young Parisian lives interwoven with joys and sorrows. Set against the romantic backdrop of 1830s Paris, this tale is an embodiment of the universal emotions that unite us all. Join us in embracing the beauty of human connection through music and drama.

In delightful contrast, "The Barber of Seville," by Rossini, spins a tale of disguises, mischief, and uproarious humor. The vivacious characters and spirited melodies promise an evening filled with laughter and fun as we journey through a world of wily schemes and unexpected love.

But our commitment to artistic enrichment doesn't stop there. We proudly continue our educational outreach assembly designed to captivate young minds – "Little Red Riding Hood...a children's opera." Through this imaginative performance, we introduce the magic of opera to the next generation, fostering a love for music and storytelling that will last a lifetime.

As we embark on this season's voyage, we are deeply honored to have you as a part of our cherished audience. Your presence and support are the driving forces behind our dedication to the arts, and we are excited to share these remarkable moments with you.

Thank you for being an integral part of our opera family. We eagerly await the privilege of entertaining and enlightening you with these exquisite productions.

Yours in harmony,

Lynnette Owens/Executive Director

# LYRICAL *Opera* THEATER

Proudly Presents

**PUCCINI'S**

## *La Bohème*

Libretto by Luigi Illica & Giuseppe Giacosa  
Opera in four acts set in Paris, France in 1830

### **CAST:**

**Rodolfo:** Anthony Ruiz (Sept. 9 & 13)  
Daniel Perez (Sept. 15 & 17)

**Mimi:** Chelsea Alexandra (Sept. 9 & 13)  
Lily Peterson (Sept. 15 & 17)

**Marcello:** Daniel Tuutau (Sept. 9 & 13)  
Jordon LeBaron (Sept. 15 & 17)

**Musetta:** Jocelyn van Wyk (Sept. 9 & 13)  
Heather Shelley (Sept. 15 & 17)

**Schaunard:** Marc Abbott (Sept. 9 & 13)  
Christopher Stockslager (Sept. 15 & 17)

**Colline:** Ricky Parkinson (Sept. 9 & 13)  
Matthew Castleton (Sept. 15 & 17)

**Benoit:** Rod Hansen

**Alcindoro:** Gary Later

**Parpignol:** Alex Harrelson

**Chorus:** Amy Banta, Emily Jameson,  
Deborah Naylor, Emily Mijarez,  
Heather Hillstead, Rod Hansen,  
Jed Shirts, Aaron Read, Bran Read,  
Smera Nair, Emily Tuutau,  
Nila Nachimuthu, Alex Harrelson

**Stage Manager:** Matilda Black

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Jayden Dudley

**Stage hands:** Aaron Read, Kaden Larsen

**Lighting:** Jack Dingman

**Wigs & Makeup:** Daniel Perez

**Sound, Scenery, Staging:** Lyrical Opera Products, Inc.

**PROGRAM ORDER:** **Act 1** then a 5 minute pause,  
**Act 2** then a 15 minute intermission,  
**Act 3** then a 15 minute intermission,  
**Act 4**

## Synopsis

**Setting:** The Bohemian quarter of Paris, France around 1830.

**Act 1:** In an old attic apartment a group of young artists are living together in poverty. On the night of Christmas Eve, they all intend to go to a bar, but Rodolfo wants to finish writing a poem. He promises to join the others soon and is left alone. A neighbor, the seamstress Mimi, knocks on Rodolfo's door seeking a light for her candle and introduces herself. The two of them fall in love.

**Act 2:** Rodolfo and Mimi join his friends at the Café Momus. The singer Musetta comes along accompanied by her elderly rich lover, Alcindoro. She spies her former lover, Marcello and abandons Alcindoro sending him off to buy her a new pair of shoes so she can join Marcello. The group enjoy a Christmas Eve meal then ditch the scene leaving the bill to be paid by Alcindoro for all of them.

**Act 3:** Time has passed, and it is now a cold winter morning. Mimi has lived with Rodolfo, but they quarrel because of his apparent jealousy. Mimi seeks out Marcello asking him why Rodolfo is recently so cold to her. The two hear Rodolfo coming, and Mimi hides. Rodolfo tells Marcello, "I love Mimi, but she has tuberculosis. I'm poor and feel like I'm killing her because I can't take care of her properly. I should say goodbye to her." Mimi, upon hearing this, begins sobbing and draws the attention of Rodolfo who tries to comfort her. Although they love each other they decide to live separately.

**Act 4:** After some time, the poor Bohemian artists once again live together in the old attic apartment. Musetta runs into their room bringing with her the dying Mimi whom they try to comfort. Mimi wants to die at Rodolfo's side. His friends go out to try to come up with the money to buy her medicine. Rodolfo and Mimi reminisce about their times together. Their friends come back with medicine but in vain. Mimi dies in Rodolfo's arms of the consumption that has racked her.

## Cast biographies:

### **Rodolfo:** Anthony Ruiz



**Anthony Ruiz** has performed in various settings and with varying disciplines including chamber choirs, jazz, musical theatre, band, opera, and more! In fact, his introduction to the world of music began with instruments. That passion sewed by playing low brass instruments has driven him to explore vocal performance and many genres that have ultimately led him to where he is now: Performing on stage with Lyrical Opera Theater. He sang Normano in LOT's *Lucia di Lammermoor* and sang in UVU's *La Bohème* and A voice for

Good's production of *The Lamb of God* by Rober Gardner, taking on the role as Peter. He participated in Utah Valley Vocal Arts *Le nozze di Figaro* by Mozart.

### **Rodolfo:** Daniel Perez



**Daniel** is a tenor originally from Mexico, now resides in Provo, Utah. He's currently a Vocal Performance student at UVU. Daniel's most recent roles include Arturo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, Rodolfo in *La Boheme*, Algernon Moncrief in the American premiere of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Camille de Rossillon in the *Merry widow*, and Alfred in *Die Fledermaus*. He also has performed as an ensemble member for multiple performances with Utah Opera, Utah Lyric Opera and Utah Vocal Arts Academy. Daniel also works for the Hale Center Theater as a hair and makeup crew, and has designed for UVUs theatrical shows as well.

This production is funded in part by the ARP Act and the Utah State Legislature through Utah Arts & Museums.



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## **Mimi:** Chelsea Alexandra

Chelsea Alexandra is thrilled to debut with the Lyrical Opera Theater as our beloved Mimì. She is excited to revisit *La Bohème* as she studied and performed the role last summer in Novafeltria Italy where she attended La Musica Lirica. Chelsea has been featured in the U of U's productions of *Gianni Schicchi* as Lauretta and scenes from *Così fan tutte* as Fiordiligi. Chelsea spent this summer with the Utah Vocal Arts Academy where she sang in masterclasses with Frank Lopardo and Costa-Jackson and was delighted to perform the title role of Marina Massenet's *Cendrillon*. Chelsea is currently studying under the tutelage of Kirstin Chávez, Artist in Residence, at the U of U.



## **Mimi:** Lily Peterson

Lily Peterson is a Senior at UVU and will graduate in April of 2023 with her Bachelors in Vocal Performance. Her most recent roles have been Antonia in *The Tales of Hoffmann* at her university November of 2022, as well as Nella in *Gianni Schicchi* with the UVAA summer Program 2022. Lily is currently studying with soprano Marina Costa-Jackson. When Lily isn't singing, she loves exercising with her husband and taking her dog on walks.



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## Marcello: Daniel Tuutau



**Daniel Tuutau**, Baritone, is originally from Los Angeles, California. He holds BA and MM degrees from the University of California, Santa Barbara and a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Vocal Performance from the U of U. He sang Rigoletto in Lyrical Opera Theater's *Rigoletto*, Germont in *La Traviata*, Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Ford in *Falstaff*. Roles with the University of Utah's Lyric Opera Ensemble include Don Magnifico in Rossini's

*La Cenerentola*, the Count in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, and Ford in Verdi's *Falstaff*. He was also recently involved in the chorus with Utah Opera in their productions of Puccini's *Turandot*, Bizet's *Les pêcheurs de perles*, and Mozart's *Così fan tutte*.

## Marcello: Jordon LeBaron



**Jordon LeBaron**, baritone, studied voice at Utah State University where he received his bachelor of music degree in vocal performance. Since then, he has enjoyed performing in several opera, oratorio, musical theater, and jazz productions. Some of his recent credits include: Sciarone (Tosca), Pharaoh (Joseph), Silvio (Pagliacci), Betto (Gianni Schicchi), Frolo (The Hunchback of Notre Dame), Bass soloist (Handel's Messiah), and The LeBaron Singers on YouTube.

He is especially grateful for his beautiful and talented wife, Angela, with whom he often shares the stage. They have three amazing kids.

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A graphic with a white background. On the left, the word "YOU" is written in large, white, sans-serif font, with the "Y" on a purple background and the "O" on a green background. Below it, the text "have helped fund us!" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. Underneath that, the word "THROUGH" is written in a large, white, sans-serif font, with the "T" on an orange background and the "HROUGH" on a blue background. At the bottom, "ZOO, ARTS &amp; PARKS" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. To the right of this text is the ZAP IS YOU.ORG logo, which features a vertical stack of four icons: a bird, a tree, a person, and an elephant. To the left of the icons is the text "SALT LAKE COUNTY SE". Below the icons is the text "ZAP IS YOU.ORG". At the bottom right of the logo are three social media icons: Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Below the social media icons is the website address "www.zapisyou.org".



## **Musetta:** Jocelyn van Wyk



Idaho-raised soprano **Jocelyn van Wyk** is an actress, stage director, private voice teacher and owner of Sejo Studios. She completed her Masters of Music in Opera Performance in the spring of 2020, from Longy School of Music of Bard College. She has performed many operatic and music theater roles. Most recently she was part of Utah Festival Opera and Music Theater's summer season. This is Jocelyn's third production with Lyrical Opera Theater. Jocelyn specializes in character development and loves telling beloved stories in new meaningful ways.

## **Musetta:** Heather Shelley



**Heather** settled here after performing in China for 2 yrs. Degrees: English BA, Linguistics MA, Tesol GC, and Theater BA (Music, Dance, & Psychology minors). Music Directed at: The Empress, West Jordan Arts Council, Cultural Celebration Center, TAFT, Midvale Arts Council, Lehi Arts Council, & Draper Historic Theater. She often works as a choreographer or dialect coach. She's learned 7 languages and is still fluent in 5. Recently: *Mary Poppins* - Draper Historic and *Elle Woods* - Desert Star. Favorite roles: Sibella-A *Gentleman's Guide...*, Milly-*Seven Brides...*, Gwendolyn-*The Importance...*, *Earnest*, & Rosalinda-*Die Fledermaus*. By day she works as a real estate agent and wrangles 3 little boys. Insta: heatherwalshshelley

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## **Schaunard:** Marc Abbott



**MARC ABBOTT**, baritone, studied opera under tenor Harry Dunstan of the American Center for Puccini Studies, performing in multiple operas over the years with the Center - Pictordu (*Cendrillon*, Viardot); in several Puccini operas as Guglielmo Wulf (*Le Villi*), Michele (*Il tabarro*) and Scarpia (*Tosca*); Herr Colas (*Bastien und Bastienne*, Mozart). He also played St. Thomas (*Savior of the World*). Recently, he sang in the ensemble in Utah Festival Opera & Musical Theatre's *Carmen* (*Bizet*). In addition to *La bohème*, he is returning next February as Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Rossini). He currently teaches voice at Utah State University.

## **Schaunard:** Christopher Stockslager



**Chris** is a Utah native who graduated with his BA in Classical Voice from Westminster College in 2015. In 2017, he earned his MM also in Classical Voice from The Manhattan School of Music under Metropolitan Opera legend, James Morris. Previous role highlights include Lord Savage in *Jekyll & Hyde*, Peter in *Company*, Frank Butler in *Annie*, *Get Your Gun*, The Black Cat in *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, Julius Caesar in *Giulio Cesare*, Athamas in *Semele*, the title role in *Don*

*Giovanni*, and various operatic, musical theatre, and jazz scenes and concerts. Chris is currently pursuing a career in musical theatre and jazz.

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## **Colline:** Ricky Parkinson



Ricky's eclectic musical endeavors have taken him from a cappella groups (BYU Vocal Point, ICCA champions in 2006) to opera (Utah Opera Chorus) to early music (5 seasons with Utopia Early Music Ensemble) to musical theater. He has performed in musical theater productions at Pioneer Theater Company (Olin Britt in *The Music Man*), Hale Center Theater in Sandy (Smudge in *Forever Plaid*) and Orem (Javert in *Les Miserables*), and Centerpoint Legacy Theater (Adam in *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, and Adam in *Children of Eden*). He was most recently seen as Henry Higgins in *My Fair Lady*, and Ladahlord in *James and the Giant Peach*.

## **Colline:** Matthew Castleton



**Matthew Thomas Castleton** (Salt Lake City, Utah) is delighted to appear with Lyrical Opera Theater. While Mr. Castleton has a large swath of operatic and musical theatre experience, recent credits include Tonio in *Pagliacci* and Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Lyrical Opera Theater), *La Bohème* (Utah Opera) and Chabrier's *L'Étoile* (Sin City Opera). Mr. Castleton also was a young artist at the 2009 La Musica Lirica Opera Young Artist Program (Novafeltria, Italy). He holds both Bachelors (2010) and Masters (2014) Degrees in

Music-Vocal Performance from the U of U. When he is not performing, Matthew works at The Home Depot.

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## **Benoit:** Rod Hansen



This is **Rod Hansen's** second production with Lyrical Opera Theater. Earlier this year he sang in the chorus of *Pagliacci*. Prior to that, he appeared in musicals, such as *Spamalot* and *Fiddler on the Roof*. He is often found performing at Evermore Park in Pleasant Grove, or in other settings as a medieval style bard; singing, playing guitar, and juggling.

## **Alcindoro:** Gary Later



**Gary's** love of music is what got him involved in musical theatre and opera nearly a decade ago. Some of his favorite community theatre productions, have been *The Music Man*, *Man of La Mancha*, and *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*. His favorite musical theatre role—consistent with his love of music—was the part of the baritone in the barbershop quartet of *The Music Man*. He has sung with Utah Opera Chorus in the operas *Norma* and *The Barber of Seville*. Gary is excited to be singing in

Lyrical Opera Theater's production.

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sam's club 

## **Parpignol:** Alex Harrelson



Driven by an overarching love for story and song, **Alex Harrelson** delights in building a genuine connection between himself and his audience. He has brought this love of connection beyond the operatic stage, giving compelling recitals that reignite art song and song cycles to new audiences. Alex is currently a second year Masters student at the University of Utah, where he studies under Dr. Robert Breault. Recent opera performances for Alex include performing as Lindoro in Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algeri* as a part of the La Musica Lirica summer program. During the first year of his Masters program, he performed as Anthony in Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd*. He sang Ferrando in a selection of scenes and arias from Mozart's *Così fan tutte*.

## **Chorus:** Amy Banta



**Amy Banta** didn't know she could sing until she was almost 30. Now she's making up for lost time. In Washington, D.C. she performed at The National Cathedral and with The Georgetown Gilbert and Sullivan Society, singing for prominent members of all branches of government. Locally, she's performed at The Empress Theatre and with The Motley Wandering Minstrels. She also sings and plays Celtic Harp (and occasionally the banjo) with her folk trio "The High Desert Harpies."

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# Rocky Mountain Power Foundation

## **Chorus:** Emily Jameson



This is **Emily's** second experience with opera. She is very excited to be a part of the La Bohème Opera Chorus. Emily has been performing in musical theatre productions for the past four years. Favorite roles include: Fastrada in *Pippin* and Miss Andrew in *Mary Poppins*. Other favorite shows include *Into the Woods* and *Addams Family*.

## **Chorus:** Deborah Naylor



**Deborah** graduated with her Bachelors degree in voice from BYU-Idaho in 2018 where she studied under famous soprano Kris Ciezinski. This will be Deborah's first production with Lyrical Opera. Her most recent roles have been Dorothee in *Cendrillon* at UVAA, Lady Beaconsfield with Draper Historic Theatre and Evangeline Barley in *Gentlemen's Guide to Love and Murder* at Charity Play. When she isn't on the stage she can be found teaching piano and voice lessons out of her home, working in finance and spending time with her family outdoors.

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## **Chorus:** Emily Mijarez



**Emily** is excited to be making her second appearance at Lyrical Opera. She played the role of Flora in Lyrical Opera's performance of *La Traviata* in 2019. However, she has spent most of her musical career on the musical theater stage. She has performed at The Hale Theater Orem in *South Pacific* and *Guys and Dolls*, as well as in many local community productions. Her favorite roles to date are Lucy in *Jekyll and Hyde* and Ms. Hannigan in *Annie*. Emily is extremely grateful to her family, friends and husband who encourage

her daily to pursue her dreams. She is also very grateful to Lynnette Owens who continues to push her outside her comfort zone.

## **Chorus:** Heather Hillstead



**Heather Hillstead** began performing at the age of twelve with the Bigfork Summer Playhouse in Kalispell, Montana where she grew up. She received a Bachelor of Music from the University of Idaho and a Master of Music in Vocal Performance at the University of Northern Colorado. She has performed various mass and choral works with the Greeley Philharmonic, the Glacier Symphony Orchestra, and even performed as part of a quartet for a promotional tour for Disney's *A Christmas Carol*. Favorite past roles include Tosca in Puccini's *Tosca*, Cherubino

in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Mercedes in Bizet's *Carmen*, and Helen in Hindemith's one act opera *Hin und zurück*. She currently works as a Business Analyst in addition to singing and teaching voice lessons.

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## **Chorus:** Smera Nair



**Smera Nair** takes vocal and piano lessons privately with Lynnette Owens. She is a talented singer and pianist and enjoys performing songs in English, Latin and Italian. She recently played the role of Giulia in *Gianni Schicchi* and the shepherdess in *Tosca* and has performed at the Festa Italiana in Salt Lake City for the past 2 years. In her free time, Smera loves to go swimming, biking and spend time with her family and her pet dog, Buddy.

## **Chorus:** Emily Tuutau



**Emily Tuutau** was born into a musical family and loves to sing and perform on stage. She is a fast learner and follows stage directions well. She has performed in four of Lyrical Opera Theater's productions...the role of Trouble in *Madama Butterfly*, an Acolyte in *Tosca*, Giulia in *Gianni Schicchi* and a Villager in *Pagliacci*.

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## **Chorus:** Nila Nachimuthu



Hi, my name is **Nila**, and I'm a 9-year-old who plays piano and sings in English and Italian. I'm on the swim team, chess club, and I do jiu-jitsu, math class, summer camp, ice skating, and yoga. I love animals more than anything in the world. I am about to perform in my first opera, *La Bohème*.

## **Stage Manager:** Matilda Black



**Matilda** has been passionate about tech for five years now. She has worked on shows such as *The Importance of being Earnest*, *Little Women*, and *Into the Woods*. She also plays the piano, is absolutely nerdy, and has a deep fascination with science and the natural world.

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