

PITTSBURGH OPERA

February 20, 2019

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Rejections, objections, and deceptions - Pittsburgh Opera presents a fresh take on a classic comedy, Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*

What:	Don Pasquale Music by Gaetano Donizetti , Libretto by Giovanni Ruffini
Where:	Benedum Center for the Performing Arts, downtown Pittsburgh
When:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sat., April 27, 2019 * 8:00 PM • Tues., April 30, 2019 * 7:00 PM • Fri., May 3, 2019 * 7:30 PM • Sun., May 5, 2019 * 3:00 PM (note special start time)
Run Time:	2 hours, 30 minutes, with one intermission
Language:	Sung in Italian with English texts projected above the stage
Tickets:	<p>Single tickets for adults start at \$14; tickets for kids and teens ages 6-18 are half-price. Student discounts available. Call 412-456-6666 or visit pittsburghopera.org/tickets.</p> <p>Group Discounts available for groups of six or more. Contact Regina Connolly at (412) 281-0912, ext. 213 or groups@pittsburghopera.org.</p>
Media Events	<p>Photo Call (April 15, 12:30 PM) - location TBA</p> <p>Full Dress Rehearsal (April 25, 7:00 PM) - Benedum Center</p>
Related Events	<p>Free Brown Bag concert (4/13)</p> <p>Opera Up Close (4/14)</p> <p>WQED Preview (4/20 & 4/26)</p> <p>New Guard Lounge (4/27)</p> <p>Meet the Artists (4/30)</p> <p>Audio Commentary (4/30)</p>
See pages 5-7 of this release.	

PITTSBURGH OPERA



Photo by Philip Groshong for Cincinnati Opera

Pittsburgh, PA... [Pittsburgh Opera](#) will finish its 80th season with a fresh take on Gaetano Donizetti's [Don Pasquale](#), one of history's greatest comic operas, in a 1950s Hollywood production that has never been performed in Pittsburgh.

The story concerns old and wealthy bachelor Don Pasquale, who has been the caretaker of his nephew, Ernesto, for some time. Pasquale attempts to secure Ernesto's future by arranging a marriage between Ernesto and a "proper" girl. However, Ernesto is in love with the young widow Norina, and refuses to marry Pasquale's suggested bride. With the help of their friend Dr. Malatesta, Ernesto and Norina set out to trick Don Pasquale into letting them marry after all.

Dr. Malatesta has Norina impersonate his sweet, innocent sister and marry Pasquale in a fake wedding. She then drives Pasquale up the wall with a series of outrageous antics until he is at her mercy and will agree to anything to get rid of her.

This production is a Hollywood retrospective with a focus on The Silent Film Era and the Golden Years of the 1950s.

As always, English supertitles will be projected above the stage.

Single tickets for adults start at just \$14; kids and teens ages 6-18 are half-price. For tickets call 412-456-6666, visit the Box Office at Theater Square, or online at pittsburghopera.org or CulturalDistrict.org. Group discounts, including student discounts, are available.

Gary Wedow conducts. Chuck Hudson directs.

PITTSBURGH OPERA

Fun facts about *Don Pasquale*

1. Star soprano Lisette Oropesa, who is singing the role of Norina, is an accomplished marathon runner. During her most recent Pittsburgh Opera performances, for 2015's **The Daughter of the Regiment**, she ran the Pittsburgh Marathon the morning after the show's opening night.
2. Movie buffs will love the plethora of classic movie references woven throughout this production, including **Sunset Boulevard**, **Breakfast at Tiffany's**, **The Nutty Professor**, **Auntie Mame**, **Pleasantville**, **Ed Wood**, **Dracula**, and **The Wizard of Oz**.
3. Director Chuck Hudson studied under the French master of comedy [Marcel Marceau](#) at his school in Paris. Hudson is bringing many of the lessons he learned from Marceau about comic timing, style, and technique to this production.

The story, in brief

Hollywood, CA: the 1950s

Act I, Scene 1: A room in Don Pasquale's mansion

Don Pasquale is an old film star from the Silent Movie era as famous as the great Nora Desmond. He lives in an old mansion on Sunset Boulevard that is as devoid of color as his old black-and-white films. His ward and nephew, Ernesto, has refused an arranged marriage, proclaiming his love for Norina, a popular Hollywood starlet. Don Pasquale, outraged, decides to disinherit the boy and beget his own heirs. To do this he needs a wife, and he has called on a family friend, Dr. Malatesta, to help him find one. Malatesta, siding with Ernesto and Norina, makes a plan to teach the headstrong Pasquale a lesson. He glowingly describes to him his beautiful and completely imaginary sister and tells him that the girl is in love with him. Before long, the old bachelor is convinced he loves the girl and expresses his desire to marry her with Technicolor enthusiasm. Furthermore, he is prepared to cut Ernesto out of his will. Unaware that Dr. Malatesta has a plot afoot; Ernesto grows bitter at the apparent betrayal by his good friend, Malatesta.

Scene 2: A Hollywood Soundstage

Shooting a scene from her next Hollywood movie, Norina's screen persona boasts about knowing all the tricks to win a man's love. Malatesta arrives and reveals to Norina his plans for fooling Don Pasquale: Norina is to enact the role of Malatesta's sister, wed the old bachelor in a fake ceremony and then drive him so crazy with her whims and demands that he will be eager to find a way out of the unpleasant staged marriage. Malatesta hires local stage hands to help out, but there is no time to tell Ernesto.

Act II: Don Pasquale's mansion

Realizing that he will never be able to marry Norina without his inheritance, Ernesto laments his situation as passionately as any of his uncle's Silent Films. When he leaves, Malatesta

PITTSBURGH OPERA

arrives with Don Pasquale's "bride" and introduces her to Pasquale, who is outlandishly dressed in an old costume worthy of Rudolph Valentino. Without further delay, a ceremony takes place, during which Ernesto returns and is forced to witness the contract, and he is finally told what is afoot. As soon as the mock ceremony ends, Norina turns into a fiery shrew who torments Don Pasquale with her nasty short temper and extravagant ways.

INTERMISSION

Act III, Scene 1: Don Pasquale's mansion

Having turned Don Pasquale's mansion into a kind of Hearst Castle, Norina invites the elite of the Hollywood film world to cavort at Don Pasquale's expense. Exquisitely gowned, Norina brazenly leaves the house to attend a late-night concert, and as part of the plan, she drops a letter where Don Pasquale must find it. It is a love letter from Ernesto, inviting her to a rendezvous in the garden of the Hollywood Bowl. Don Pasquale realizes that he cannot endure the situation any longer. Furious, he calls Malatesta, who promises to fix everything.

Scene 2: The garden of the Hollywood Bowl

Disguised as a Hollywood crooner, Ernesto sings a love song to Norina, who responds fervently for Don Pasquale's eaves-dropping ears. Don Pasquale springs upon the conspirators, who then happily reveal their plot. Immensely relieved to discover that his marriage has been like scenes from a popular Hollywood sex comedy, Don Pasquale forgives everyone involved and happily gives Norina to Ernesto.

Ticketing Information

- Single tickets for adults start at \$14; tickets for kids and teens ages 6-18 are half-price. Call 412-456-6666 or visit pittsburghopera.org/tickets.
- Group discounts, including student discounts, are available. For more information about [group ticket services and discounts](#), contact Regina Connolly at (412) 281-0912, ext. 213 or groups@pittsburghopera.org.

Sponsors

- [PNC](#) is the 2018-19 Pittsburgh Opera Season Sponsor
- [WQED-FM](#) is Pittsburgh Opera's Media Sponsor
- [Ambridge Regional Distribution and Manufacturing Center](#) is the Tuesday performance and 'Meet the Artists' post-show event sponsor

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Cast and Artistic Team: *Don Pasquale*

Don Pasquale	Kevin Glavin **
Norina	Lisette Oropesa
Ernesto	Javier Abreu **
Malatesta	Joshua Hopkins +
Conductor	Gary Wedow
Stage Director	Chuck Hudson +
Scenic Designer	Peter Nolle +
Costume Designer	Kathleen Trott +
Lighting Designer	Thomas Hase+
Projection Designer	Doug Provost+
Stage Manager	Cindy Knight
Asst Stage Director	Matthew Haney *
Asst Stage Manager	Alex W. Seidel
Asst Stage Manager	Nick Garcia
Wig and Make-up Designer	James Geier
Asst Wig and Make-up Designer	Nicole Pagano
Asst Lighting Designer	Todd Nonn
Prop Master	Johnmichael Bohach
Asst Conductor	Glenn Lewis
Chorus Master	Mark Trawka
Associate Coach/Pianist	James Lesniak

+ Pittsburgh Opera debut

* Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist

** Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist alumnus

Related Events for *Don Pasquale*

April Brown Bag concert

Saturday, April 13, Noon - 1:00 PM

George R. White Opera Studio, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, [2425 Liberty Avenue](#)

You're invited to our free April Brown Bag concert! This month, we'll focus on what is new in the opera world! Experience beautiful selections from modern operas.

It's free and open to everyone. Bring a friend and bring a lunch! Meet the Resident Artists afterward in an informal reception.

Doors open at 11:30 AM. Handicapped parking is available by reservation. For more information: 412-281-0912 or <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/april-brown-bag-concert3>.

PITTSBURGH OPERA

Opera Up Close: *Don Pasquale***Sunday, April 14, 2:00 - 3:30 PM****Founders' Room, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, [2425 Liberty Avenue](#)**

Join Robert Boldin, Artistic Administrator, and special guests from the production, for an in-depth look at Donizetti's **Don Pasquale**.

Admission is \$5; free to members of [FRIENDS of Pittsburgh Opera](#) or the [New Guard](#), and \$50+ donors. Handicapped parking is available by reservation. For more information: 412-281-0912 or <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/opera-up-close-don-pasquale>.

Don Pasquale* Previews on WQED-FM 89.3 and WQED.ORG*Saturday, April 20, 12:30 - 1:00 PM****Friday, April 26, 7:00 - 7:30 PM**

Hosted by WQED's Anna Singer, and broadcast over the airwaves on WQED-FM 89.3 as well as the WQED website, WQED's preview of **Don Pasquale** gives listeners an engaging introduction to the singers, music, and story of the opera. For more information:

<https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/wqed-preview-don-pasquale>.

[Pittsburgh Opera New Guard](#) opening night lounge**Saturday, April 27 – prior to the performance and during intermission****South Lounge at the Benedum Center**

The Pittsburgh Opera [New Guard](#) is a community for young professionals, ages 21-40, who have a passion for Pittsburgh Opera. Members can enjoy exclusive access to a free lounge, with private bartender, at opening night performances at the Benedum Center. Membership also comes with free and discounted opera tickets, pre-sales or special rates for Pittsburgh Opera Special Events, and more. [Visit our website](#) or [join our Facebook group](#) for future event details.

Audio Commentary: *Don Pasquale***Tuesday, April 30, 7:00 PM****Benedum Center**

Ticketholders with visual impairments are invited to use [Pittsburgh Opera's Audio Description service](#) at our Tuesday performances. Trained volunteers describe the supertitles, scenery, costumes, and stage action. The listeners hear these descriptions via assistive listening devices. Those wishing to use Audio Description should reserve seats to the Tuesday, April 30, performance of **Don Pasquale** by contacting Regina Connolly at 412-281-0912, ext. 213, or groups@pittsburghopera.org. Braille and large-print programs are available at all performances.

PITTSBURGH OPERA

Meet the Artists of *Don Pasquale*

**Tuesday, April 30, immediately following the performance
Benedum Center lower lobby**

Pittsburgh Opera [General Director Christopher Hahn](#) interviews the stars of **Don Pasquale** in the Benedum Center lower lobby after the Tuesday evening performance. You can ask your own questions and mingle with the artists too! Free to all Tuesday ticketholders.

“Meet the Artists” is generously sponsored by Ambridge Regional Distribution and Manufacturing Center.

Learn more at <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/meet-the-artists-don-pasquale>.

COMING UP NEXT for Pittsburgh Opera:

Our [2019-20 Season](#), beginning with Mozart’s [Don Giovanni](#), October 12, 2019

Pittsburgh Opera celebrates its 80th season in 2018-19. Established by five intrepid women in 1939, Pittsburgh Opera is viewed as one of the most vibrant opera organizations in the U.S., with a rich artistic tradition, outstanding educational programs, an acclaimed artist training program, and a progressive outlook toward the future. Its green initiative culminated in LEED® Silver certification for its Strip District headquarters, and its capacity as a true community partner has increased significantly under General Director Christopher Hahn’s leadership.

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