

MS STATE Opera

*presents*

# *The Magic Flute*

*Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*



Lecture-Recital Hall  
124 Hardy Road  
Mississippi State, MS 39762

November  
13 & 14 @  
7:30 PM  
Free  
Admission

# MS State Opera

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presents

## THE MAGIC FLUTE

by

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
Libretto by Emanuel Schikaneder  
An Opera in Two Acts

**November 13 & 14, 2023**

**7:30 p.m.**

**Lecture-Recital Hall, Music Building**

Artistic Director

Music Director

Rehearsal Pianist

Chorus Master

Set & Costume Designer

Light Designer & Projections

Makeup Artist

Assistant Director & Visual Art

Roza Tulyaganova

Jeanette Fontaine

Rachel Wood

Cody Parrott

Marion Sansing

Kindal Gamill

Elizabeth Harwell

Taylor Clark

Reduced Orchestration by Jonathan Lyness

English Language Version by Ruth and Thomas Martin

Updated Libretto and Dialogues by Jeanette Fontaine, Adam Cromer,  
and Roza Tulyaganova

*Content Warning: There are themes of violence, sexual assault, and suicide  
in this production.*

# THE MAGIC FLUTE

## CAST

(in order of vocal appearance)

Tamino ..... Desmond Henderson (Nov. 13)  
Darryl Brundidge (Nov. 14)

First Lady ..... Aliyah Necaise

Second Lady ..... Zion-Nahzir Scott

Third Lady ..... Asia Ellis

Papageno ..... Blaine Rossell Smith

The Queen of the Night ..... Audrey Harper

Pamina ..... Emma Woodward (Nov. 13)  
Veronica Washington (Nov. 14)

Monostatos ..... Jacob King (Nov. 13)  
Jaylen Stowers (Nov. 14)

First Spirit ..... Sarah Beth Heard

Second Spirit ..... Sydney Williams (Nov. 13)  
Andie Nanney (Nov. 14)

Third Spirit ..... Matthew Parker

Speaker of the Temple/Second Armored Man ..... Justin Howard

Servants ..... Miranda Dickson  
Natalia Gonzalez  
Samuel Gonzalez  
Jarreau Weaver

Sarastro ..... Willian Da Silva

Priest/First Armored Man ..... Jakob Vernon

Papagena ..... Alexandria White (Nov. 13)  
Aniyah Mckissic (Nov. 14)

# CHORUS

<u>Soprano</u>	<u>Alto</u>	<u>Tenor</u>	<u>Bass</u>
Emma Haines	Blair Belcher	George Adams	Caige Baum
Emily Jennings	Miracle Chiyamwaka	Layne Pilcher	Caleb Beard
Sara Prator	Meredith Molen	Cooper Robertson	Griffin Bowers
Lane Spradling	Emma Ray	Samuel Somervell	Antryll Campbell
Brianna Smith	Sarah Joy Smith	Declan Storey	Caleb Studdie
Brooke Smith	Rianna Saucedo	Kyle Swindle	Grant Yeatman
	Sommer Williams		Colin Zazzara

# ORCHESTRA

First Violin .....	Serena Scibelli
Second Violin .....	Rodolfo Torres Santos
Viola .....	Daniel Stevens
Cello .....	Amy Catron
Bass .....	Bennett Smith
Flute .....	Olivia Boatman
Oboe .....	Jessica Haislip
Clarinet .....	Sheri Falcone
Bassoon .....	Denise Rowan
Horn .....	Matthew Haislip
Glockenspiel .....	Rachel Wood
Thunder Sheet .....	David Jackson

# SPECIAL THANKS

Jason Baker  
Henry Sansing  
Daniel Stevens  
Kelsey Trainer  
Jesse Wade  
Jennifer Winter  
The Band Area  
The Choral Area  
The Department of Communication

## SYNOPSIS

A mythical land between the sun and the moon. Three ladies in the service of the Queen of the Night save Prince Tamino from a serpent. When they leave to tell the queen, the birdcatcher Papageno appears. He lies to Tamino, boasting that it was he who killed the creature. The ladies return to give Tamino a portrait of the queen's daughter, Pamina, whom they say has been enslaved by the evil Sarastro. Tamino immediately falls in love with Pamina through her picture. The queen, appearing in a burst of thunder, tells Tamino about the loss of her daughter and commands him to rescue her. The ladies give a magic flute to Tamino and silver bells to Papageno to ensure their safety on the journey and appoint three spirits to guide them.

Sarastro's servant Monostatos pursues Pamina but is frightened away by Papageno. The birdcatcher tells Pamina that Tamino loves her and is on his way to save her. Led by the three spirits to the temple of Sarastro, Tamino learns from a high priest that it is the Queen, not Sarastro, who is evil. Hearing that Pamina is safe, Tamino charms the wild animals with his flute, then rushes off to follow the sound of Papageno's panpipes. Monostatos and his servants chase Papageno and Pamina but are left helpless when Papageno plays his magic bells. Sarastro enters in great ceremony. He punishes Monostatos and promises Pamina that he will eventually set her free. Pamina catches a glimpse of Tamino, who is led into the temple with Papageno.

Sarastro tells the priests that Tamino will undergo initiation rites. Monostatos tries to kiss the sleeping Pamina but is surprised by the appearance of the Queen of the Night. The Queen gives her daughter a dagger and orders her to murder Sarastro.

Sarastro finds the desperate Pamina and consoles her, explaining that he is not interested in vengeance. Tamino and Papageno are told by a priest that they must remain silent and are not allowed to eat or drink, a vow that Papageno immediately breaks when he takes a glass of water from a flirtatious old lady. When he asks her name, she replies, "Papagena!" and then vanishes. Tamino remains silent even when Pamina appears. Misunderstanding his vow for coldness, she is

heartbroken. Pamina contemplates suicide but the three spirits stop her, explaining that Tamino does indeed love her.

Papageno tries to hang himself on a tree but is saved by the three spirits, who remind him that if he uses his magic bells, he will find true happiness. When he plays the bells, Papagena appears and the two start making family plans.

Sarastro and the priests inform Tamino of the trials left to complete his initiation. Pamina and Tamino are reunited and face the ordeals of water and fire together, protected by the sounds of the magic flute.

The Queen of the Night, her three ladies, and Monostatos attack the temple but are defeated and banished. Sarastro blesses Pamina and Tamino as all join in hailing the triumph of courage, virtue, and wisdom.

Courtesy of The Metropolitan Opera

# NOTES FROM THE DIRECTORS

Mozart's *The Magic Flute* is a much beloved work in the operatic repertoire and is performed with frequency all over the world. Our production is an abridged version, intended for undergraduate performers.

The story is a fairy tale, transcending time and place. Mozart's score is also transcendent, providing some of the most beautiful music ever composed. However, the same cannot always be said for Schikaneder's original libretto. It reflects the attitudes and mindsets of the late-eighteenth century, with derogatory descriptions of women and people of color permeating the opera. In an effort to update this production and make it relatable to today's audiences and our diverse cast, we have altered the libretto and dialogues in many places replacing racism and misogyny with nobler ideals. In early rehearsals with the student performers we discussed these changes openly, relating the history of *The Magic Flute* and explaining our reasoning for revising the libretto and dialogues.

It is our hope that this production transports you to a land not bound by time, place, or prejudice. We leave you with the updated text from the Act I duet sung by Pamina and Papageno:

It's love that binds us all together,  
It offers everlasting joy,  
Its blessings are the gift of nature,  
Which no one ever can destroy.  
Love's higher purpose guides us all,  
We seek to answer true love's call.  
Rich and poor, and great and small,  
Only love fulfills us all.

– Jeanette Fontaine and Roza Tulyaganova

# PROGRAM NOTES

**Joannes Chrisostomus Wolfgang Gottlieb Mozart**

**BORN:** January 27, 1756. Salzburg, Austria

**DIED:** December 5, 1791. Vienna

**WORLD PREMIERE:** The world premiere occurred only two days after the work was entirely completed, at Vienna's Freihaustheater auf der Wieden

**US PREMIERE:** The first full production in the US was mounted in New York on April 17, 1833; the Overture had, however, been played in New Orleans as early as January 1806

**THE BACKSTORY** Mozart had finished almost all of *The Magic Flute* during the spring and early summer of 1791 when, in July, he was invited to compose an opera to Metastasio's already much-used libretto *La clemenza di Tito*, for the festivities surrounding the coronation in Prague of Emperor Leopold II as King of Bohemia. He gladly accepted, plunging into a flurry of composition that continued until the eve of the performance, which took place on September 6. *La clemenza di Tito* enjoyed only a moderate reception at first, due in large part to deficiencies in the casting, but audiences gradually warmed to it, and its final performance, on September 30, was a resounding success.

Mozart had to enjoy this cliffhanger of a triumph from a distance, since he had returned to Vienna two weeks earlier to oversee final preparations for the premiere of *The Magic Flute*. This opera marked an important new path for the composer. It was the first stage work he had written for the commercial theater, rather than on commission from an aristocratic court. This realignment may have been born out of necessity. In recent years, Mozart's principal link to the Italian-dominated Viennese court opera had been the librettist Lorenzo da Ponte. But in the spring of 1791, a series of scandals caught up with da Ponte, and the Emperor was compelled to dismiss him from his post as librettist to the royal court.



Mozart was badly in need of income, and the best way to earn serious money was through an imperial appointment (which was not likely at the moment) or a successful opera. He was already giving music lessons, playing piano recitals, and writing bushels of instrumental music, but none of this provided a sense of economic stability. Mozart's wife was not in good health and was forced to spend the summer at the spa in Baden-Baden with their five-year-old son; and another child was due in the course of the summer. The composer had begun to borrow substantial sums and, although his condition was far from desperate, he was flirting with what could easily escalate into financial disaster.

At about this time, Mozart renewed a friendship with Emmanuel Schikaneder, a singer-actor-dancer-manager-playwright who had had regular contact with the Mozart family since 1780, when a company he directed appeared in Salzburg. Mozart's father referred to Schikaneder as a "good honest fellow," and the warm relationship must have only increased when, four years later, Schikaneder produced a revival of Mozart's singspiel *The Abduction from the Seraglio* at Vienna's Kärntnertor Theater, which he was by then managing. Several years later, Schikaneder re-emerged at the helm of the city's thousand-seat Freihaustheater auf der Wieden, where he specialized in presenting lighthearted German-language singspiels, sometimes to his own librettos. His resident musical ensemble was impressive, including an orchestra of thirty-five players and a troupe of singing actors.

In crafting the libretto for *The Magic Flute*, Schikaneder drew on several collections of stories and fairytales popular in Germany and Austria at the time. His audience did not embrace the new work immediately but soon fell to its charms. Finally, Mozart had a hit on his hands. If he had not died little more than two months following the premiere, *The Magic Flute* would doubtless have changed his life.

Schikaneder's libretto has perplexed commentators ever since, as it effects something of an about-face halfway through the action. The heroic Tamino is sent by the Queen of the Night to rescue her daughter, Pamina, who she says has been kidnapped by Sarastro, her "ex," a sort of cult leader. Tamino sets out on his mission (accompanied by Papageno, a curious being who is half-man and half-bird) but soon discovers that Sarastro is actually the good guy, that he has in fact rescued Pamina

from the evil Queen. In the course of his quest, Tamino falls in love with Pamina, and the two prove their steadfastness through various trials in Sarastro's realm before the Queen and her wicked minions are banished.

**THE MUSIC** There does seem to be a good deal of hocus-pocus going on in *The Magic Flute*, and much of it, we are told, makes sense only when one understands that the work is an allegory for Masonic beliefs and rites. Schikaneder was a Freemason, and Mozart had also joined a Masonic lodge in 1784. The number three is said to hold mystical significance to Freemasons. Accordingly, the overriding key of *The Magic Flute* is E-flat major, with three flats in the key signature, and the Overture opens with a grand proclamation of each of the three notes of the tonic triad. Following this grave introduction, the orchestra skips off in a gleeful, fugal Allegro, only to be interrupted by another solemn proclamation of the three chords (this time in the dominant key of B-flat). The remainder of the Overture is notable for Mozart's brilliant use of counterpoint and dynamic contrasts, building a considerably more complex piece than one might expect from what is really only a single theme.

—James M. Keller

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.  
Lyceum Series: Masters of Soul  
Betterworth Auditorium, Lee Hall

Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 7:30 p.m.  
Lecture: Music as Pathway to Intercultural Understanding  
with Dr. Patricia Shehan Campbell  
Lecture-Recital Hall, Music Building

Friday, November 17, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.  
Jazz Ensemble Fall Concert  
Sills Band Hall

Sunday, November 19, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.  
Community Band Fall Concert  
Sills Band Hall

Sunday, November 19, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.  
Studio Recital: Horn Choir Play Along and Concert  
Lecture-Recital Hall, Music Building

Monday, November 20, 2023 at 7:30 p.m.  
Faculty and Student Brass Quintet  
Lecture-Recital Hall, Music Building

Tuesday, November 21, 2023 at 7:30 p.m.  
Studio Recital: Piano  
Lecture-Recital Hall, Music Building

Sunday, November 26, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.  
Student Recital: Tiffany Ferguson, percussion  
Lecture-Recital Hall, Music Building

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