

# KENTUCKY OPERA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT

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## **Kentucky Opera announces 2026/2027 season with four mainstage productions and a return to the Brown Theatre.**

LOUISVILLE, KY — Kentucky Opera proudly announces its 2026/27 season— an unexpected and powerful blend of four mainstage classics and compelling new works that invite us to see our world through the lens of family, both given and found.

The season opens with ***The Barber of Seville***, which will be **performed at the W. L. Lyons Brown Theatre** — one year ahead of Kentucky Opera’s anticipated return to its traditional performing home.

“In a season all about the family unit, it’s only natural for Kentucky Opera to return home to the Brown Theatre,” says General Director and CEO Ben Robinson, adding that “the projects for the year ahead are meant to be reflective of the Louisville community, and collaborative with Kentuckiana organizations that bring people together.”

The 2026/27 season will showcase new and expanded partnerships as Kentucky Opera deepens its connections across the Kentuckiana community. Richard Strauss’ landmark work, ***Salome***, will be **presented in a semi-staged production in collaboration with the Louisville Orchestra** at Whitney Hall.

“Kentucky Opera’s return to the Brown Theatre this October is a testament to Ben’s vision and to the way our community is already responding to his energy and ideas,” says Matthew Hamel, President of the Board of Trustees. “We need stories that inspire us and bring us together, and this season — with its vibrant mix of beloved classics and compelling new works — will do exactly that.”

## **SEASON DETAILS**

### *The Barber of Seville*

Music by Gioachino Rossini

Libretto by Cesare Sterbini

October 9 and 11, 2026

W. L. Lyons Brown Theatre

Witty antics and mayhem meet an exercise-fueled romp in Rossini’s madcap comedy. When a disguised count falls for the ward of a local bigwig, only a barber of quality can save the day. Featuring an internationally acclaimed cast headlined by baritone Charles Eaton in the title role, Minghao Liu as Almaviva, Lisa Marie Rogali as Rosina, Brian Kontes as Basilio, and Dennis Jesse as

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Bartolo.

## *COTTON*

Music by Damien Geter

Poetry by Nikki Giovanni, Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Lauren Alleyne, Charlotte Blake Alston, Trapeta Mayson, Glenis Redmond, Afaa Michael Weaver, & Alora Young

November 20, 21, & 22, 2026

Kentucky Opera Center for Cultural Health

The world-renowned visual artist John E. Dowell felt called in a dream by his grandmother to travel to South Carolina and photograph the fields where she had likely been enslaved. He used the resulting images to create his magnum opus, *COTTON: The Soft, Dangerous Beauty of Our Past*. Geter's work is a song cycle based on poetic impressions of Dowell's photographic collages and features a stunning lineup of commissioned works, including one of the last poems ever written by Nikki Giovanni. Profound, reverent, and deeply uplifting, *COTTON* is a reminder of our past and a ray of hope for our future. During this event, Kentucky Opera will partner with the University of Louisville School of Music to present a weeklong celebration of song, featuring a dynamic series of concerts and master classes unfolding across the city.

## *Così fan tutte*

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte

March 18, 20, & 21, 2027

Kentucky Opera Center for Cultural Health

Mozart's *Così fan tutte* will be presented at the Kentucky Opera Center for Cultural Health in March 2027. This sophisticated comedy examines relationships, trust, and fidelity. With soprano Emily Albrink and bass-baritone Michael Scarcelle, and conducted by Christopher Zemliauskas.

## *Salome*

Music by Richard Strauss

Libretto by Hedwig Lachmann

Based on the play by Oscar Wilde

Co-production with Louisville Orchestra

May 7 & 8, 2027

Whitney Hall

Oscar Wilde's decadent apocryphal tale explores the loss of innocence in one of the most impactful operas ever written. *Salome* will feature the full title role debut of internationally acclaimed soprano Jessica Faselt. Other cast members include Kentucky-trained baritone Reginald Smith, Jr. in his role debut as Jochanaan and Grammy-nominated tenor Omar Najmi as Narraboth. The production will be conducted by Teddy Abrams, Music Director of the Louisville Orchestra, and directed by Ben Robinson, General Director of Kentucky Opera.

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## ADDITIONAL EVENTS

In addition to mainstage events, Kentucky Opera will continue to produce the **Louisville Juneteenth Jubilee Commission's** Annual Celebration and will offer numerous auxiliary events, including **Evenings of Note at Oxmoor Farm** (September 26, 2026), **SongWeek** (November 15 to 22, 2026), and **A Holiday Cabaret** (December 11 to 13, 2026), as well as its regular scheduled **Awakenings** and **Opera Café** series. The company will also launch the **Kentucky Opera Supper Club**, a new no-host social series highlighting the extraordinary restaurant scene in Louisville and its ties to the season's programs.

## TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Season ticket packages will go on sale to the public on May 4, 2026. For more information, visit [KYOpera.org](http://KYOpera.org) or call 502.584.4500.

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## ABOUT KENTUCKY OPERA

For more than 70 years, Kentucky Opera has enriched the cultural and artistic landscape of the region. Designated the State Opera in 1982, Kentucky Opera is a producing company dedicated to sparking discovery, joy, and connection through the shared experience of music and theatre. We believe the power of the arts invites a more empathetic, compassionate, and just community. For more information, visit [KYOpera.org](http://KYOpera.org).

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SEASON 2026/2027



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## RECENTLY AT KENTUCKY OPERA

*La traviata* – Andrew Kung Group



*All is Calm* – Andrew Kung Group



*Songbird* – MEG Photography LLC



*Songbird* – MEG Photography LLC