



Mozart's Marriage of Figaro: A Short Guide to a Great Opera (Great Operas)

Michael Steen

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Although the story of Figaro's success in preventing the Count of Almaviva's seduction of his fiancée Susanna was politically explosive, it was tolerated in the court of the relatively enlightened Habsburg Emperor Joseph II. Mozart's opera, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, uses a libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte, and was premièred in Vienna in 1786. It was based on a famous play by the Frenchman Beaumarchais, a sequel to *The Barber of Seville*. Characters including Figaro, the Countess, Cherubino the page, Doctor Bartolo and Barberina the gardener's daughter sing a succession of famous arias – such as *Se vuol ballare*, *Non più andrai*, *Dove sono*, *Porgi amor* and *Voi, che sapete*, to mention but a few – in which Mozart's musical characterisation is legendary. Written by Michael Steen, author of the acclaimed *The Lives and Times of the Great Composers*, 'Short Guides to Great Operas' are concise, entertaining and easy to read books about opera. Each is an opera guide packed with useful information and informed opinion, helping to make you a truly knowledgeable opera-goer, and so maximising your enjoyment of a great musical experience. Other 'Short Guides to Great Operas' that you may enjoy include *Così fan tutte*, *Don Giovanni* and *The Barber of Seville*.

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