



SEEN at a Norfolk Hotel buffet which was enjoyed by more than two hundred other theatregoers are Barber of Seville actors from left to right: Erni Togl who sings the role of Marzelline; director and producer Thomas Tarjan; Friedemann Hanke (Basilio); Dorit Hanak (Rosina); musical director Wolfgang Bozic; and Freddy Gross of the Austrian Embassy in Nairobi.

'Barber' opera sure to please audience

IN the tradition of great musicals of time, *The Barber of Seville* may have Nairobi music lovers thronging the Kenya National Theatre for next two weeks.

The opera has been made more palatable by having the leading soloists from famous opera houses in Austria, that threshold of classical music in Europe.

A story of love and wit, *The Barber* all revolves around a barber called Figaro (Gottfried Hornik) who offers to make a match between young and beautiful Rosina (Dorit Hanak) who lives in woe of her cruel guardian who is also designing to make her his wife and young Count Almaviva (Thomas Tarjan) who fell in love with her even before he had met her.

Figaro the barber turns out to be more than just a shaver and proves to

THEATRE

Reviewed by
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be quite a good match maker, thwarting the efforts of Rosina's physician guardian, Dr. Bartolo (played by Robert Granzer).

Where the count enlists the help of Figaro to make sure that he weds Rosina, Dr. Bartolo enlists the help of her music teacher Basilio (Friedemann Hanke) to coach her in both fields. And as it often happens in love, Dr. Bartolo's housekeeper, Marzelline (Erni Togl) is deeply in love with him and no doubt she is frustrated by his

attentions to the other woman. How on earth will the matches be made and between who and who? That, if you want, you can leave to the barber's good wits and to the count's money.

There is beautiful singing and there is beautiful music in the whole performance. Whoever said that the appreciation of music is universal had a point. I understand that the action scene is set in a town in Spain—Seville. As for the language, I still don't know whether they were using Spanish or Italian. All I know is that I enjoyed the whole performance.

The opera is brought to us by the Nairobi City Players and I believe even if not so intended is marking the 150th anniversary of the death of that famous Austrian composer, Schubert. The two hour opera directed by Dr. Thomas Tarjan with Dr. Wolfgang Bozic directing the music is good entertainment for all the family, and I wouldn't limit this to the music loving ones alone.

The soloists will also be taking part in a Schubert concert to be staged at the same theatre by the Kenya Conservatoire of Music on Sunday 6th August at 8.30 to mark Schubert's death. The Conservatoire is presenting this in collaboration with the Austrian Embassy and the Nairobi City Players. Dr. Wolfgang Bozic who is conducting the opera will also conduct the concert.

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FRIEDEMANN Hanke, soloist from the Graz Opera, who sings the part of "Basilio" in the current production of "The Barber of Seville"; in addition to regular appearances at the Graz Opera he has played in many European festivals, and particularly in Germany. He has given numerous concert performances for the Vienna Concert Theatre and throughout Europe, including television appearances.

His superb bass voice and comedy talent are eminently suited to the part of "Basilio", one of opera's much-loved buffoons