

SEVILLE, OPERA STAGE:

SANTA CRUZ NEIGHBORHOOD

(Virtual tour)

ROSSINI IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA

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OPERAS IN SEVILLE

- There are 128 operas inspired by Seville, including DON GIOVANNI AND THE WEDDINGS OF FIGARO by Mozart, THE BARBER OF SEVILLE by Rossini and CARMEN by Bizet.
- The first in 1671 and the last in 2006, both on the myth of Don Juan. It reflects the strength of the ties between the universal operatic repertoire and the Andalusian capital.

CHARACTERS FROM SEVILLE

- Specifically, the Sevillian character that has given rise to more operas has been Don Juan Tenorio, about whom they account for 49 operas.
- After Tenorio, it is Figaro who has been taken more times to the opera, with 38 compositions.
- In addition, it is also worth noting the character of Carmen.

WHY SEVILLE?

- Why do some of the most notable operas take a city like Seville as their scenographic setting, apparently so far away (culturally and geographically) from the places where their librettos and scores were generated?
- Exotic and encompassed in that generic South, at the very gates of Africa, Seville was, after all, Europe.
- With a mantilla, a bull, a fan, castanets, "men with long sideburns", Seville allowed for a balanced ambiguity between reality and fantasy, impossible to achieve, for example, in Vienna, Paris or any Central European city.

WHY SEVILLE?

- For 2 centuries (16th and 17th), Seville was the only port of navigation with Spanish America and attracted to the city an important foreign colony that created in Europe an image of a rich and diverse city where everything was possible.

- Throughout the 16th to 19th centuries, these topics were distributed throughout Europe by travelers who arrived in Seville.
- Topics appear that make Seville the ideal place for the recreation of local myths, such as Don Juan Tenorio.
- Or for the placement of characters with a strong theatrical presence, such as Carmen.
- **A CITY, IN SHORT, WHOSE MERE MENTION IMMEDIATELY UNLEASHES ALL THE SIGNS OF PASSION, ADVENTURE OR MYSTERY.**

SEVILLE, OPERA STAGES IN THE SANTA CRUZ NEIGHBORHOOD:

1. STATUE OF DON JUAN.

2. BALCONY OF ROSINA.

3. INN OF THE LAUREL.

4. LILIAS PASTIA TAVERN.

5. DOÑA ANA PANTOJA'S HOUSE.

6. FIGARO HOUSE.

STAGE 1: STATUE OF DON JUAN

PLACE: PLAZA DE LOS REFINADORES (REFINERS SQUARE)



- We begin the tour in the Plaza de los Refinadores, where this statue has been erected since 1975 in homage to this great myth linked to the history of Seville.
- This square gets its name from the leather refiners, who were in the area centuries ago, but now its popularity is due, in addition to its beauty, framed between the Murillo Gardens and the Santa Cruz neighborhood, to a play and its protagonist: Don Juan Tenorio.
- The first play in which the myth of D. Juan Tenorio appears, without a doubt the most universal character in Spanish theatre, is "El Trickster of Seville and Stone Guest". Of disputed authorship, it is traditionally attributed to Tirso de Molina (1583-1648) and is preserved in a publication from 1630. In the aforementioned work, D. Juan, a Sevillian nobleman, alters the social order by dishonoring as many women as they put in front of him and he is finally punished by the funerary statue of one of his victims, the father of one of the outwitted ladies, which kills him and drags him to hell. It is said that

Tirso's work was a nod dedicated to the gentlemen of the time, whose profanation of the honor of women was praised worldwide.

- Don Juan personifies a Sevillian legend that inspired, in addition to Zorrilla and Moliere, Lorenzo da Ponte (author of Mozart's D. Giovanni libretto).

OPERA: DON GIOVANNI, OSSIA IL DISSOLUTO PUNITO (1787)

(Don Juan, that is, the dissolute punished) by Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART (1756-1791).

(The action takes place in Seville in the 17th century)

SCENE: "Madamina, il catalogo è questo" ("Young lady, this is the catalogue") aria by Leporello, criado de D. Giovanni.

- To illustrate D. Juan's vile conqueror status, we show how, in Mozart's opera, his servant, Leporello, introduces him in the well-known aria from the catalogue.
- Don Giovanni and Leporello, flee from the last misdeed of the libertine (disgrace of a woman and death of her father in a duel). A street near Don Giovanni's palace. Knight and servant talk. Leporello allows himself to criticize the kind of life that the libertine leads, while the latter, ignoring him, tells him what his next conquest will be. They hide when Doña Elvira approaches. The lady comes eagerly looking for the conqueror from Burgos so that he fulfills his promises. The gallant, who has not recognized her, approaches her to court her. Seeing her he tries to sneak away and tells Leporello to tell him her reasons. The latter, taking out a book, enumerates Don Giovanni's conquests.

ARIA 1: "Madamina, il catalogo è questo"

Young lady, this is the catalogue
Of the beautiful women loved by my master
It is a catalogue I drafted myself
Look, read with me.

In Italy, six hundred and forty;
In Germany, two hundred and thirty-one;
A hundred in France, ninety-one in Turkey;
But in Spain, they're already one thousand
and three.

Among these, peasants
Maids, city dwellers
There are countesses, baronesses
Marchionesses, princess.
There are women from every level
Every shape, every age.

His custom is to praise
The blonde for her kindness,
The brunette for her loyalty,

The white for her sweetness.

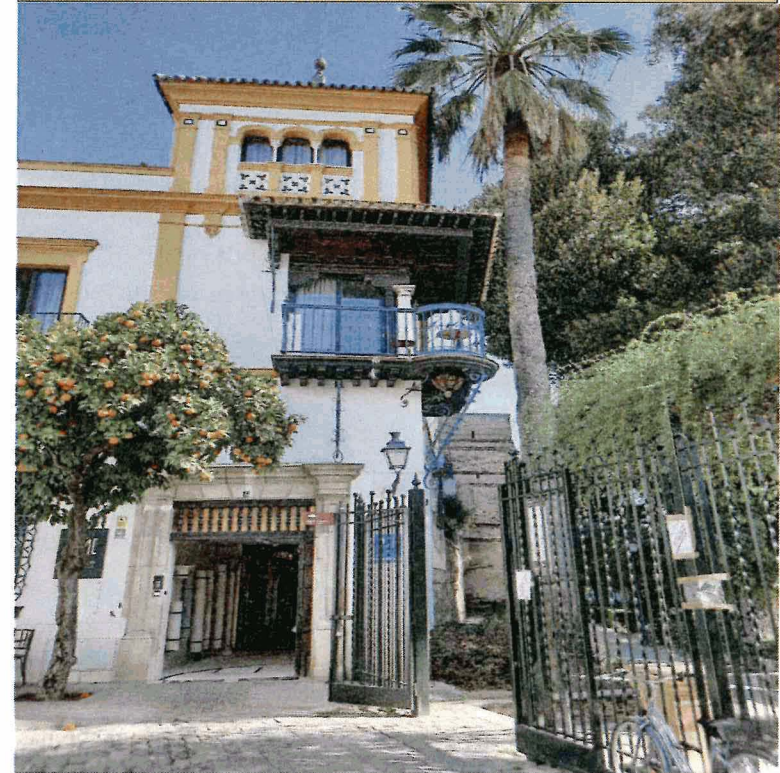
He wants a tubby woman in winter
A slim woman in summer;
[He says] tall women are majestic
Small women, always charming.

He seduces old women
For the pleasure of having them in his list;
His main passion
Is the young inexperienced.

He doesn't care if she's rich
If she's ugly, if she's beautiful:
As long as she wears a skirt,⁴²
You know what he does...

Hmm, hmm...
You know what he does...

STAGE 2: BALCONY OF ROSINA PLACE: PLAZA DE ALFARO (ALFARO SQUARE)



- Although the story clings more to a legend than to reality, it is said that the beautiful Balcón de Rosina, located in a corner building in the Plaza de Alfaro, in the heart of the Barrio de Santa Cruz, was one of the settings in which Beaumarchais developed his play 'The Barber of Seville', which Sterbini was inspired to write the libretto for Rossini's opera. Theoretically, it is the balcony of the house where Rosina is "held" by her tutor Don Bartolo and at whose feet Almaviva approaches to woo the girl. Although nobody disputes the beauty of the enclave and the peculiarity of its history, what is striking is that

the date of construction of the balcony is, curiously, later than the creation of the work. Either way, it's a magical place.

- However, reality makes this legend impossible. The house was acquired by the current owners in 1925 and three years later the owner undertook the reforms inside and on the façade. To do this, he bought the cover from a 17th century palace located in Ecija, and it was also in 1928 when the famous balcony was built, which corresponded rather to a whim of the landlord when trying to reproduce the one described in Rossini's Opera. In any case, it must be recognized, and surely the author would agree, that the exposed corner exceeds any expectation.

OPERA: THE BARBER OF SEVILLE (1816) BY GIOACHINO ROSSINI (1792-1868).

(The action takes place in Seville at the end of the 18th century)

SCENE: "Una voce poco fa" ("A voice a while back") aria by Rosina, in love with Count Almaviva.

- We are in the 2nd scene of the first act. She takes us inside Don Bartolo's house, where Rosina sets out to tell us who she is and what's wrong with her. Count Almaviva has sung to her from the street at the foot of the balcony. Rosina reflects on what she has heard with her famous cavatina "Una voce poco fa" ("A voice recently"), the first half of which is dedicated to evoking the previous scene, when Almaviva sang to her "Se il mio nome saper voi bramate" ("If you want to know my name"), from Rosina's point of view. Lindoro's voice (this is how the count has become known) moved her and she will do everything possible to win her love. The second part is more lively and in it Rosina portrays herself as docile but capable of the wickedness of a viper ("I am docile, I am ubbidiente", "I am docile, I am obedient"). The embellishments and agilities of the Rossinian song allow the voice to imitate, precisely, the movements of a snake.

ARIA 2: "Una voce poco fa"

A voice a while back
echoes here in my heart;
already my heart has been pierced
and Lindoro inflicted the wound.

Yes, Lindoro shall be mine;
I swear it, I will win.

My guardian will refuse me;
I shall sharpen all my wits.
In the end he will be calmed
and I shall rest content...

Yes, Lindoro shall be mine;
I swear it, I will win.

Yes, Lindoro shall be mine;
I swear it, yes

I am docile, I'm respectful,
I'm obedient, gentle, loving;
I let myself be ruled, I let myself be ruled,
I let myself be guided, I let myself be guided.

But,
but if they touch me
on my weak spot,
I'll be a viper
and a hundred tricks
I'll play before I yield.

And a hundred tricks
I'll play before I yield.

STAGE 3: INN OF THE LAUREL (BAY LEAVES)

PLACE: PLAZA DE LOS VENERABLES (VENERABLES SQUARE)



- An example of the exoticism that the city of Seville represented for librettists and composers is the Hostería del Laurel, where we can easily imagine D. Juan in one of his exploits.
- In 1844 the illustrious Valladolid poet and playwright, José Zorrilla y Moral, stayed at the Hostería del Laurel while he wrote his best-known work "Don Juan Tenorio". It is said that much of his inspiration for creating his characters and framing the story came from those around him at the time.
- In the work, set in Seville in 1545, in the last years of the reign of Carlos I of Spain, La Hostería del Laurel is the tavern in which Don Juan and Don Luis had agreed to meet a year after their bet, it is where almost the entire Act I of the work takes place.

- In 1978 the father of the current owner acquired ownership of the restaurant and in 1989 the cozy hotel was created, which is located in the same building, in a beautiful square in the Barrio de Santa Cruz. Travelers, Sevillians and university tunas pass through a place steeped in history that is lived in its walls, in its decoration.
- In this square is the building that gives it its name, the old Hospital de los Venerables Sacerdotes. It was founded more than three centuries ago by Canon Justino de Neve to welcome and care for elderly and helpless clerics. At the end of the 17th century, the Hospital factory was built by the architects Juan Domínguez and Leonardo de Figueroa, on the site donated by the Duke of Veragua and thanks to generous donations from the nobility, the clergy and social institutions such as guilds and brotherhoods. Throughout its history, the life of the building has gone through various vicissitudes, until it lost its care function in the 1970s.

OPERA: DON GIOVANNI

SCENE: "Deh, vieni alla finestra..." ("Oh, come to the window") aria by D. Giovanni.

- Act II opens at dusk and we can imagine the scene in one of the streets of the Santa Cruz neighborhood, very close to the Hostería del Laurel. Leporello and Don Giovanni meet in front of Doña Elvira's house. Don Giovanni's intention is to seduce one of Doña Elvira's servants. To do this she asks Leporello to exchange clothes, which he reluctantly accepts. Then begins a duet between the two ("Hey, vi, buffone, non mi seccar!", "Hey, come on, buffoon, don't bother me!") that describes the particular relationship between the two characters: they detest each other, the master despises to the servant, who threatens to leave, but they remain together as if they were the real protagonist couple of the drama.
- Then, hearing Doña Elvira's voice, Don Giovanni urges Leporello to impersonate him in order to seduce her and take her away, thus leaving him free to seduce the maid. It is a trio in which the libertine cynically tells her again that he loves her, while Leporello humorously comments on the situation. When Doña Elvira has fallen into the trap, she descends from her and her servant, pretending to be her master,

promises to love her again, while the lady reveals her true feelings. The seducer frightens and drives the couple away so he can woo the maid. When both have left, Don Giovanni sings a serenade, accompanied by a mandolin, under the maid's window, the famous "Deh! come alla finestra, oh my treasure...!" "Ah, look out the window, my treasure...!", whose lyrics are a hymn to the art of seduction.

ARIA 3: "Deh, vieni alla finestra"

Ah ah ah! It looks like luck is on my side, let's see!

These are the windows. Now I'll sing.

(Sings accompanied by the mandolin)

Oh, come to the window, my darling

Oh, come to console my tears.

If you refuse me some relief

Before your eyes I want to die!

You've got a mouth sweeter than honey

You, that keep sugar inside your heart!

Don't be cruel to me, my joy!

Show yourself at least, my dear love!

STAGE 4: LILAS PASTIA'S TAVERN

PLACE: CALLES JUDERÍA, AGUA, VIDA, Y PLAZA DE DOÑA ELVIRA (JEWISH STREETS, WATER, LIFE, AND DOÑA ELVIRA SQUARE)



- This is the tavern that Carmen and her friends frequent. Already at the end of the first act, when Carmen tries to convince D. José to untie her so that she can escape, she sings the Seguidilla to the soldier: "Près des remparts de Séville, chez mon ami Lilas Pastia..." (Near the walls Seville, at my friend Lilas Pastia's house) in which Carmen has fun. Also the second act begins in the tavern, with Carmen and her friends having dinner with some soldiers and dancing afterwards in the tablao. In these and other streets of the intricate Barrio de Santa Cruz, gypsies like Carmen managed to outwit the security forces and get away with their escapades.
- However, the globetrotter must know the origins of this neighborhood that gives off so much magnetism, and be aware of its Jewish origin, since Seville was erected in the time of Fernando III (13th century) in the second most important Jewish community in Spain. and that religious imprint has "fossilized" here in the form of the beautiful neighborhood of Santa Cruz.
- Well, what has been said, in this area the Jewish quarter of Seville settled, and then it suffered its departure after the expulsion of the

Jews in 1483, although some did not leave the neighborhood definitively. However, at the end of the 19th century, Santa Cruz languished and only recovered its splendor with the reforms promoted as a result of the Ibero-American Exposition of 1929. In this way, the visitor will come across a network of narrow streets that rewards the walker with one of the best perspectives of the Giralda.

OPERA: CARMEN (1875) BY GEORGE BIZET (1838-1875)

(The action takes place in Seville in the middle of the 18th century)

SCENE: "Les tringles des sistres tintaient..." (Gypsy Song), aria by Carmen.

- Lilas Pastia Tavern. It is night, Carmen and her friends have dinner with Zuñiga and other soldiers in her favorite tavern. It is full of people, many of them gypsies, who drink, laugh, sing and dance. Carmen, accompanied by Frasquita and Mercedes, her friends, goes up to the tablao and dances singing the Chanson bohème (Gypsy Song): "Les tringles des sistres". It is a theme with accelerando and crescendo, with a violent rhythm, accompanied by drum and sistrum (an instrument similar to a rattle), with the ornaments of wooden instruments creating a climate of enormous vitality, as well as an appreciable charged atmosphere. of sensuality.

Aria 4: "Les tringles des sistres tintaient..."

The sistrums' rods were jingling
With a metallic clatter,
And at this strange music
The gypsies leapt to their feet.

Tambourines were keeping time
and the frenzied guitars
ground away under persistent hands,
the same song, the same refrain.

Tra la la la
Copper and silver rings
glittered on ducky skins;
Orange- and red-striped
dresses floated in the wind.

The dance was married to the song
at first timid and hesitant,
then livelier and faster!
it grew and grew!

Tra la la la
The gypsies stormed away
on their instruments with all their might,
and this deafening uproar
bewitched the zingaras!

Beneath the rhythm of the song,
passionate, wild, fired with excitement,²⁴
they let themselves be carried away,
intoxicated, by the whirlwind!

Tra la la la

STAGE 5: DOÑA ANA PANTOJA'S HOUSE

PLACE: PLAZA DE LA ALIANZA (ALLIANCE SQUARE)



- It is in this Plaza de la Alianza where some still try to locate the house of Doña Ana de Pantoja, the future wife of Don Luis Mejía —a character with whom Tenorio competes—. She is a character that does not appear in Mozart's opera, which deviates in many aspects from the plot of José de Zorrilla's play. In fact, unlike Tirso de Molina and Mozart-Da Ponte, José Zorrilla transforms the incredulous braggart character into a hero with whom we come to sympathize on many occasions, and who against all odds ends up saving his soul thanks to the love of Doña Agnes. Precisely in the scene that takes

place in this enclave, the gallant tries to snatch his beloved from Don Luis.

- The Plaza de la Alianza is part of the busiest area for tourists who visit Seville and its location at the entrance to the Barrio de Santa Cruz, next to the walls of the Alcázar and a short distance from the Plaza del Triunfo, make it an obligatory step for all those who want to get lost and enjoy what was the Sevillian Jewish quarter.
- The square, throughout history, has undergone various transformations and its current appearance has its origin in the redevelopment of the Santa Cruz neighborhood carried out in the first decades of the 20th century. The name of the square has also undergone changes over time, being known in the fifteenth century as Plaza del Consuelo; in the 16th century it was called Plaza del Pozo Seco and in 1830 (fourteen years before the premiere of the Zorrillan drama) it took the name of Plaza de la Alianza for a popular tavern that was located in the place.
- The center of the square is adorned with an 18th century fountain. In front of the walls of the Alcázar stands a magnificent ceramic altarpiece dedicated to the Christ of Mercy, placed in 1975. The place can be considered one of the most beautiful in the entire Santa Cruz neighborhood. The view that the Giralda has from there is hypnotic and we could describe it as a beautiful woman looking out at the Terrestrial Paradise.

OPERA: DON GIOVANNI

ESCENA: "Là ci darem la mano..." ("There we will give each other our hands...") duet by D. Giovanni and Zerlina

- After fleeing from Doña Elvira, once Leporello has shown the lady how her master spends it singing the aria from the "catalogue", both the libertine and his servant meet a group of peasants who celebrate him with songs and dance the next link of two of them, Zerlina and Masetto. For a change, D. Giovanni feels like conquering the young woman as soon as he sees her. To accomplish this, he tells Leporello to take the group to his palace to entertain him, but to get rid of Masetto. He states that his fiancée does not want to be separated

from him, but Leporello and her mistress throw him out with intemperate boxes telling him that the girl is left in the hands of a gentleman and that, therefore, she has nothing to fear. Leporello finally manages to get him away from the place. Don Giovanni unabashedly flirts with Zerlina, unfolds her love arts and promises to marry her. The girl is tempted, but at the same time she is suspicious. When it seems that he has convinced her of her "good" intentions and they are going to leave her, she stops them, Doña Elvira, who decides to defend Zerlina, while the dissolute looks for reasons that will excuse him before both women.

- It is rather a duettino and not a duet, since there is little of a duet, if we understand by that the simultaneous singing. Indeed, the two voices only come together at the end, after Zerlina sings Andiam!. Previously, Giovanni has intoned his text to seduce, Zerlina hers showing her embarrassment.
- We will see how Don Giovanni seduces Zerlina, not because of what she tells him, but because of how she tells him. The words "There, in that little house, we will shake hands... we will get married, etc, etc" he says them with the music of the nobles: a minuet. With this, what Mozart tells us is that Don Giovanni promises Zerlina to turn her into a lady. She resists "I feel sorry for Masetto"..."You can make fun of me", but he insists. When Zerlina, exhausted, she says "Andiam!" (Come on!) the music changes. The minuet disappears and what is heard are the notes of a popular dance, becoming more bouncy, typical of the lower classes. And it is that Zerlina is not going to ascend in social class, she will continue to be a peasant and also mocked by Don Giovanni. This duo defines Don Giovanni as the great unscrupulous libertine that he is.

Duet 5: "Là ci darem la mano..."

[Don Giovanni]

There we will give each other our hands

There you'll say "yes"

See, it's not far

Let's leave this place, my dear.

[Zerlina]

I would, and I wouldn't

My heart trembles a bit

I'd be happy, indeed

But it may be making fun of me once more!

[Don Giovanni] Come, my joy!

[Zerlina] Poor Masetto...

[Don Giovanni] I'll change your fate

[Zerlina] Quick, I can't resist anymore

[Don Giovanni] Let's go!

[Zerlina] Let's go!

[Duet]

Let's go, let's go, my dear

To recover from the sufferings¹⁹

Of an innocent love

STAGE 6: HOUSE OF FIGARO

PLACE: ALCÁZAR, CATEDRAL, ARCHIVO DE INDIAS
SURROUNDING



- The populace, legend and time have caused the fictional character, Figaro, to interfere in the real world, locating his 17th century business between the current streets of Santo Tomás and Santander.
- *Largo al factotum della città* ("Passage to the factotum of the city"), this is how Figaro, the protagonist of "The Barber of Seville", introduces himself. The character wants to be noticed, aware of his importance and his abilities, he is not a hero, nor a noble, nor a victim, he is an ordinary man, a simple barber with enough ingenuity to do and undo things as he pleases, without bowing down to anyone. A character as resolute and diligent, as cunning and as free as the rogues of yore, he could only have his roots in the Seville of the time. And it is in this city where his creator, the French writer Beaumarchais, set his adventures. This is one of the unique places in Seville, which for the French playwright could have been the scene of the adventures of Figaro. This is the old square where Figaro could have had his establishment that would also serve as his residence.
- This small square is located in the monumental setting of the city, next to the Puerta de Jerez, in front of the old Casa de la Moneda, very close to the river and the Cathedral, the Archivo de Indias and

the Alcázar. But above all it is a place of passage that in the 18th century was traveled by Sevillians of all classes and conditions, servants and lords, the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the nobility, urchins and beggars, a place in constant ferment. Something of that world is perceived in the comedy that Beaumarchais wrote in 1775, "The Barber of Seville". Beaumarchais never set foot in Seville, but the history of his barber required a city like this, the mythical, exotic and passionate places of that Seville full of oriental and medieval art, ancient customs, noblemen and gypsies that flooded art and the literature of a time.

OPERA: THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

ESCENA: "Largo al factotum" ("Make way for the handyman")
Figaro's presentation aria.

- Recall that at the beginning of the opera, the count and his servant Fiorello lead a small orchestra to serenade him under the balcony of his beloved Rosina. As she does not appear, the Count dismisses the musicians and is left alone with Fiorello. His discouragement for not having called the girl's attention is interrupted by the arrival of Figaro, whom they do not recognize and from whom they hide. The barber arrives radiant and happy, and introduces himself to the public with the most popular page of the work, the aria for baritone "Largo al factotum". It is not an aria proper, but a cavatina with three parts that vary the same theme, until giving rise to a passage in the form of a short scene, in which Figaro imitates his clients, doing different voices, to finish off with a very fast tongue twister and a tralalá from the words "Ah bravo Figaro, bravo bravissimo". The sections are always resolved in small crescendi, which describe the playful animosity of the character, who boasts of the importance he has in the city and enumerates his various skills: barber, hairdresser, bleeder, matchmaker, entertainer...

Aria 6: "LARGO AL FACTOTUM"

Make way for the handyman of the city.
Hurrying to his shop now that it is already dawn.

Ah, what a fine life, what a fine pleasure
For a barber of quality! Of quality!

Ah, well done Figaro!

Well done, very good!

Very fortunate indeed!

Ready to do everything,
Night and day
He is always on the move
A more plentiful fate for a barber,
A more noble life, no, it cannot be had.

Razors and combs
Lancets and scissors,
At my command
Everything is here.
There are the tools,
Then, of the trade
With the ladies... with the gentlemen...

Everyone asks for me, everyone wants me,

Ladies, children, elders, young girls;

Here is the wig... The beard is ready...

Here is the blood...

The ticket is ready...

Here is the wig, the beard is ready,

The ticket is ready, hey!

Figaro! Figaro! Figaro!, etc.

Alas, what a fury!

Alas, what a crowd!

One at a time, please!

Hey, Figaro! I am here.

Figaro here, Figaro there,

Figaro up, Figaro down,

Quicker and quicker I am like lightning:

I am the handyman of the city.

Ah, well done Figaro! Well done, very good;

You will never lack for luck!