

# Die Zauberflöte | The Magic Flute

*Don Wright Faculty of Music, Western University | March 6-9, 2025*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend our deepest thanks to the many donors who give to Opera at Western. Your generous support is part of what makes these incredible productions possible. We fondly remember the late **Ilona Janoschek** who passed away last year. Ilona impacted countless students during her lifetime and has chosen to continue doing so as part of her legacy at Western. We also acknowledge the late **Reverend Edward Jackman** and the **Jackman Foundation**, for their passionate support of the arts and Opera at Western. For information on how to create your own impact, contact Allison Price at [allison.price@uwo.ca](mailto:allison.price@uwo.ca)

## PLOT SYNOPSIS

### Act I

Having been chased by a serpent until he faints, young Tamino wakes to find himself in an unknown land. He is approached by a peculiar specimen named Papageno who is employed by the Queen of the Night as a supplier of “magic stimulants.”

He then encounters Three Ladies – also servants of the Queen - and realizes that he himself is also of royal blood.

The Ladies give Tamino a portrait of the Queen of Night’s daughter Pamina, who has been kidnapped by the evil Sarastro. Tamino is instantly smitten and the Queen of Night arrives to secure his promise that he will do everything in his power to rescue Pamina from Sarastro’s stronghold. The Prince is given a magic flute and Papageno a set of magic chimes as protection; the instruments have a way of charming both man and beast. Additionally, Three Spirits, acting as guardians and advisors, are assigned to lead the way.

One of Sarastro’s most evil minions, Monostatos, lasciviously pursues Pamina but is frightened away by Papageno, who tells Pamina that he and Tamino have come to rescue her.

Meanwhile the Three Spirits have led Prince Tamino to Sarastro’s Temple. There, he meets another of Sarastro’s minions who explains to him that it is the Queen of Night who is evil, not Sarastro. Heartened by the news that Pamina is alive, Tamino begins playing his flute; it reveals its magical properties by bringing the forest to life. Pamina and Papageno hear Tamino’s flute and hasten to find him. But they are intercepted and detained by Monostatos. Papageno’s chimes come to their aid, allowing the Papageno and Pamina to escape.

Pamina and Tamino see one another for the first time, and fall into a passionate embrace.

## Act II

Sarastro sees Tamino as a future leader of his Brotherhood, who are in the midst of a grave crisis. But in order to prove himself worthy of the role, and of Pamina, Tamino must first undergo several rigorous trials.

Papageno does not share Tamino's audacity and is only prepared to accompany him after the promise of a wife as his reward. The Queen of Night's Ladies arrive and try to seduce the two men into abandoning their allegiance to Sarastro, but Tamino and Papageno hold their nerve and pass their first ordeal.

Monostatos tries to kiss the sleeping Pamina, but is frustrated by the entrance of the Queen of Night. Set on revenge, she charges Pamina with the task of murdering Sarastro. Torn by her devotion to her mother and her love for Tamino, Pamina is at a loss. Sarastro enters, reassuring Pamina that he is not out for vengeance, but that women must fall in line with the wisdom and rules of men.

The second ordeal has begun for Tamino and Papageno: a vow of silence. Papageno heartily ignores this, chattering cheerfully with his companion. Pamina finds them, but believes herself betrayed when Tamino refuses to speak to her. Her happiness dashed, she leaves in despair, but Tamino passes the second test. Papageno, on the other hand, is at his wits' end. He encounters a mysteriously shrouded young person who, once he has sworn lifelong fidelity to them, is revealed as Papagena – the perfect match for Papageno. But as he has disobeyed the vow of silence, Papagena is driven away from him. Papageno's life now seems futile.

Beside herself with grief, Pamina contemplates suicide, but the Three Spirits intervene, bringing her and Tamino together for the final trials. Protected by the magic flute, Tamino and Pamina successfully undergo fire and water ordeals. The three spirits also manage to prevent Papageno from killing himself, and is reunited with Papagena for good.

The Queen of Night and her Ladies, led by Monostatos, once again try to storm the Temple, but the intruders are caught unawares by Sarastro. At the last moment, in the light of the rising sun, the Three Spirits appear and bring Sarastro and The Queen of the night together for reconciliation. As dawn breaks, Tamino and Pamina are hailed for enduring all the ordeals with beauty and wisdom.