

March 23, 2026

Chris Cox, Director of Marketing and Communications

Office: (412) 281-0912, ext. 217; ccox@pittsburghopera.org

Pittsburgh Opera finishes its season, and General Director Christopher Hahn's tenure, with Verdi's final opera *Falstaff* April 28th - May 3rd

Pittsburgh Opera's final production of the 2025–26 season, [Falstaff](#), will be performed at the Benedum Center in downtown Pittsburgh April 28th through May 3rd.

Fittingly, Christopher Hahn, who is retiring in June, has chosen Giuseppe Verdi's final opera for his final opera as Pittsburgh Opera General Director. "*Falstaff* was in many ways the culmination of Verdi's remarkable career," says Hahn. "Everything he'd learned in his life went into its gorgeous music. Plus, *Falstaff* is a comedy, and I wanted to finish my career with a smile, which seemed much more appropriate than a murder or suicide."

The cast's Pittsburgh connections run deep.

- [Marianne Cornetti](#) (Mistress Quickly), internationally recognized as one of the leading Verdi mezzo-sopranos of her generation, is the Artistic Director for Pittsburgh Festival Opera and on the Voice Faculty at Carnegie Mellon University.
- [Danielle Pastin](#) (Alice Ford), a long-time Northside resident, has been delighting Pittsburgh audiences for almost two decades
- [Michael Chioldi](#) (Sir John Falstaff) grew up in Avonmore, Westmoreland County, PA, where his father was a steelworker. One of the world's most sought-after Dramatic Baritones, he made his Pittsburgh Opera debut to great applause as Giorgio Germont in 2024's [La Traviata](#).

In addition, stage director [Crystal Manich](#), who stage directed and wrote the libretto for Pittsburgh Opera's most recent production, [Time to Act](#), grew up in Pittsburgh's South Hills and is an alumna of both Mt. Lebanon High School and Carnegie Mellon University.

The cast also showcases Pittsburgh Opera's strong Resident Artist program, a hallmark of Hahn's tenure. Both Cornetti and Pastin are highly acclaimed alumnae, and [Shannon Crowley](#) (Nannetta), [Audrey Welsh](#) (Meg Page), [Logan Wagner](#) (Fenton), and [Matthew Soibelman](#) (Pistola) are all current Resident Artists. For her part, Crowley was named a 2026 Laffont Competition [Grand Finals Winner](#) at the Metropolitan Opera in New York.

"It was important to me to have some of my favorite singers in my final production," says Hahn. "Some I've worked with for years, others I've met more recently, but they all are stellar and demonstrate the world-class talent Pittsburgh Opera puts on stage."

In addition to three public performances, Pittsburgh Opera will have a special bonus [Student Matinee](#) performance of *Falstaff* on Thursday, April 30, at 10:30 AM. Tickets are reserved through Pittsburgh Opera's Education Department. For more information, please see [Pittsburgh Opera's website](#) or contact Marilyn Egan, Ph.D., Director of Education [via email](#).

Falstaff Synopsis

Beloved buffoon Sir John Falstaff has fallen on hard times. But being a ladies' man (or so he'd like to think), he drunkenly schemes to cash in on his wit and charm by wooing the wealthy wives of Windsor, Alice Ford and Meg Page. However, when these women uncover that he has sent them both identical love letters, they hatch a plan of their own to teach Falstaff a lesson he won't soon forget!

The music matches the merriment and mischief of this madcap romp. See why Verdi's buoyant comedy, based on Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, is considered one of the best comedic operas of all time!

Performance Schedule

- Tuesday, April 28, 2026 * 7:00 PM - [audio commentary](#) available for patrons with visual impairments
- Thursday, April 30, 2026 * 10:30 AM [Student Matinee](#)
- Friday, May 1, 2026 * 7:00 PM
- Sunday, May 3, 2026 * 3:00 PM with [free childcare](#) for children ages 2-12

Other Details

- Location: Benedum Center, downtown Pittsburgh
- Run Time: Approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes
- Language: Sung in Italian with English supertitles projected above the stage
- Music by Giuseppe Verdi; Libretto adapted by Arrigo Boito from the play *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and scenes from *Henry IV*, Part 1 and Part 2, by William Shakespeare

Cast and Artistic Team

Sir John Falstaff, a knight	Michael Chioldi
Ford, a wealthy man	Blake Denson ⁺
Alice Ford, his wife	Danielle Pastin ^{**}
Nannetta, their daughter	Shannon Crowley [*]
Meg Page	Audrey Welsh [*]
Mistress Quickly	Marianne Cornetti ^{**}
Fenton, one of Nannetta's suitors	Logan Wagner [*]
Dr. Caius	Joseph Frank
Bardolfo, a follower of Falstaff	Rick Hale ⁺
Pistola, a follower of Falstaff	Matthew Soibelman [*]
Conductor	Antony Walker
Stage Director	Crystal Manich

Set Designer	Steven C. Kemp
Lighting Designer	Cindy Limauro
Wig & Make-up Designer	James Geier
Assistant Conductor	Glenn Lewis
Chorus Master	Mark Trawka
Associate Coach/Pianist	James Lesniak
Assistant Stage Director	Dana Kinney*
Stage Manager	Cindy Knight
Assistant Stage Managers	Bee Anderson, Tess Naval

Original production conceived and directed by [José Maria Condemi](#)
Production originally designed for and created by Opera San José
Costumes provided by Sarasota Opera Association, Inc.

+ Pittsburgh Opera Debut

* Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist

** Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist alumnae

RELATED EVENTS

[Pre-Opera Talks](#) (free)

Ticketholders are invited to attend a Pre-Opera Talk one hour before each performance's start time. Learn about the composer, the story, and some juicy details about the opera. These talks are free to all ticketholders.

Opening Night Toast (free)

After the Tuesday, April 28th performance of *Falstaff*, patrons are invited to mingle in the Benedum main lobby and salute the cast with a congratulatory toast. The lobby bars will remain open for this event.

[Meet the Artists](#) (free)

After the Friday, May 1st performance of *Falstaff*, patrons are invited to join [General Director Christopher Hahn](#) as he interviews the stars of the production.

***Falstaff* Preview Show on WQED-FM 89.3 and [wqed.org/fm](#)**

Saturday, April 18 at 12:30PM & Monday, April 27, at 7:00PM

This half-hour preview is broadcast twice before *Falstaff* opens, giving listeners an in-depth introduction to the opera's singers, story, and music. Host Anna Singer of WQED interviews members of the cast and artistic team for their insights into the production.

TICKETS

Single Tickets

Tickets for **Falstaff** start at just \$20. Tickets for kids and teens ages 6–18 are half price. For tickets, call (412) 456-6666, visit [www.pittsburghopera.org](#), or buy in-person at the Theater Square Box Office, 665 Penn Avenue, in the Cultural District.

Group Tickets

Pittsburgh Opera makes opera accessible to all groups in the Pittsburgh area by providing great discounts and special services to group ticketholders. A group at Pittsburgh Opera can be as few as 6 people! In addition, college and university students, faculty, and staff are eligible for our [Cheap Seats program](#) – see pittsburghopera.org/CheapSeats for details.

For more information about [group ticket services and discounts](#), contact Álvaro Muñoz at (412) 281-0912, ext. 213 or groups@pittsburghopera.org.

Opus Pass

Pittsburgh Opera's [Opus Pass](#) lets patrons see as many live opera performances as they want all season. For one low monthly price, passholders get a year's worth of unlimited admission to every performance of every opera, subject to availability.

SPONSORSHIPS

Pittsburgh Opera's season is made possible, onstage and off, by support from all corners of the community.

These performances are sponsored in part by The Barenfeld Charitable Fund and The Gailliot Fund.

Pittsburgh Opera is supported in part by the taxpayers of Allegheny County through a public grant from the [Allegheny Regional Asset District](#) (RAD). RAD works here.

Pittsburgh Opera offers a range of flexible gift options and potential tax benefits for individuals, local businesses, and corporations. Sponsorship opportunities include:

- **Production Sponsorships** – *Help bring a production to life while pulling back the curtain and entertaining clients or friends. Gifts begin at \$25,000.*
- **Resident Artist Sponsorships** – *Support future opera stars while building personal relationships with artists. Gifts begin at \$16,250.*
- **Family Day & Community Programs** – *Underwrite free or low-cost concerts, because everyone deserves access to opera. Gifts begin at \$5,000.*
- **Parties & Events** – *Sponsor Galas, networking events, parties, and happy hours. Gifts begin at \$1,000.*

To learn more about becoming a sponsor, contact Pittsburgh Opera at 412-281-0912 x226 or development@pittsburghopera.org.

###