American composer Seymour Barab was born in Chicago, Illinois on January 21, 1921, and began his professional career as a church organist at the age of thirteen. As a young boy growing up in Chicago, music was an important part of the Barab family life. “We were music lovers and culture lovers.” A self-taught composer, Barab’s first published work (Boosey and Hawkes, 1955) was a small set of songs entitled, *Four Songs*. Although he has composed many works (ballet, stage, symphony works) Mr. Barab is best known for his wonderfully popular children’s opera, *Little Red Riding Hood*. In fact, although Barab made his career as a cellist, performing with several prominent symphony orchestras, he will always be tied to operas for young audiences. To date, Barab has composed well over fifty works for the stage and most of these are for young audiences or as he likes to call them, *Family Operas*. Even more amazing is that he also has written the libretti for most of his operas.

When asked what he thought might be his most significant contribution to American music Barab modestly replied, “Oh, I don’t think I’ve made any significant contribution.” After some thought he continued, “Maybe my most significant contribution will be to have demonstrated that it’s possible to have laughter in opera. Like a stand-up comedian, I live for laughs, and people laugh at my operas, I’m very happy to say.”

**A Partial List of Seymour Barab’s Operas for Young Audiences**

- Little Red Riding Hood (1962)
- Who Am I? (1966)
- The Toy Shop (1978)
- The Maker of Illusions (1984)
- Only a Miracle (1985)
- Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (1988)
- Sleeping Beauty (1992)
- Androcles and the Lion (1996)
- The Pied Piper of Hamelin (1997)
- Cinderella (1990)

Mr. Barab died on June 28, 2014 in Manhattan, New York.