WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

COSÌ FAN TUTTE

PRESS KIT
PRESENTS

COSÌ FAN TUTTE

Opera in two acts
Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte
First performed January 26, 1790 at the Burgtheater in Vienna, Austria.
Sung in Italian with English supertitles.

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PRESS CONTACT
Bryan Ferraro
Communications Manager
Office (408) 437-2229
Mobile (408) 316-2008
ferraro@operasj.org
operasj.org

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IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

FERRANDO
David Blalock

GUGLIELMO
Colin Ramsey

DON ALFONSO
Malcolm MacKenzie

FIORDILIGI
Amanda Kingston

DORABELLA
Cassandra Zoé Velasco

DESPINA
Maria Valdes
Maya Kherani 9/24
ARTISTIC TEAM

CONDUCTOR
Peter Grunberg

STAGE DIRECTOR
Brad Dalton

SET DESIGNER
Steven C. Kemp

COSTUME DESIGNER
Elizabeth Poindexter

LIGHTING DESIGNER
David Lee Cuthbert

WIG AND MAKEUP DESIGNER
Christina Martin

PROPERTIES MASTER
Lori Scheper-Kesel

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
John Driginoff

ASSISTANT STAGE DIRECTOR
Audrey Chait

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER
Kourtni Dale Noll

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR
Andrew Whitfield

MUSIC STAFF
Veronika Agronov-Dafoe
Victoria Lington

SUPERTITLE CUEING
Victoria Lington
ORCHESTRA

1ST VIOLIN
Cynthia Baehr, **Concertmaster**
Alice Talbot, **Asst. Concertmaster**
Matthew Szemela
Valerie Tisdel
Chinh Le
Virginia Smedberg
Rochelle Nguyen

2ND VIOLIN
Claudia Bloom, **Principal**
Susan Stein, **Assistant Principal**
Sue-Mi Shin
Elizabeth Corner
Sergi Goldman-Hull
Carol Kutsch

VIOLA
Chad Kaltinger, **Principal**
Janet Doughty, **Assistant Principal**
Melinda Rayne
Alex Volonts

CELLO
Lucinda Breed Lenicheck, **Principal**
Paul Hale, **Assistant Principal**
Nancy Kim
Michelle Kwon

BASS
Andrew Butler, **Principal**
William Everett, **Assistant Principal**

FLUTE/PICCOLO
Isabelle Chapuis, **Principal**
Mary Hargrove

OBOE
Patricia Mitchell, **Principal**
Pamela Hakl

CLARINET
Mark Brandenburg, **Principal**
Mara Plotkin

BASSOON
Deborah Kramer, **Principal**
Carolyn Lockhart

FRENCH HORN
Deborah McCracken, **Principal**
Meredith Brown

TRUMPET
William B. Harvey, **Principal**
John Freeman

TIMPANI
Mark Verege, **Principal**

FORTEPIANO
Veronika Agranov-Dafoe

ORCHESTRA MANAGER
Mark Verege
ACT I

SCENE 1: A MILITARY FENCING GYM
Two young soldiers, Ferrando and Guglielmo, are arguing about women with their friend Don Alfonso. The soldiers insist that their girlfriends, sisters Fiordiligi and Dorabella, are beyond temptation and would never stray from virtue. Alfonso, a realist, remarks that women are not the angels the men believe them to be and suggests a wager: if Ferrando and Guglielmo participate in a charade under his direction for 24 hours, he will prove his point. With great confidence in their sweethearts’ devotion, the young men accept his challenge.

SCENE 2: THE GARDEN OF THE GIRLS’ VILLA
The sisters revel in their love for Ferrando and Guglielmo. Alfonso arrives with the sad news that their lovers have been recalled to their regiment and are being sent to the frontline of the battlefield. The young men appear and the lovers engage in elaborate farewells. Alone, Alfonso delivers one last jeer at women’s fidelity.

SCENE 3: THE GIRLS’ SITTING ROOM
Despina, a maid, prepares breakfast for the sisters and offers them some advice about forgetting old lovers by taking new ones. Inconsolable, her mistresses are affronted by this capricious philosophy and leave the room. After they have gone, Alfonso arrives to enlist Despina in his deception. He bribes her to help introduce two “foreign friends” of his to the ladies. The foreigners arrive and enthusiastically declare great admiration for Fiordiligi and Dorabella, but the girls are outraged at the intrusion. They do not recognize their lovers in disguise. In a tirade, Fiordiligi likens her fidelity to an immovable ocean reef. The sisters leave the room. The young men are delighted that Alfonso’s plot doesn’t seem to be working, but he warns them that the bet isn’t won yet. Alone, Ferrando blissfully reiterates his passion for Dorabella.

SCENE 3: THE GARDEN
The sisters once again lament the absence of their lovers. Suddenly, the two foreigners stagger in, pretending to take deadly poison. Alfonso and Despina run for help. While attending to the ailing young men, the girls begin to waiver. Despina returns disguised as a doctor. Using Mesmer’s popular new invention, the magnet, the “doctor” draws out the poison. The young men revive and begin to woo the girls even more ardently, but ultimately, the sisters refuse to submit to their advances.
SYNOPSIS

Intermission (20 minutes)

ACT II

SCENE 1: THE GIRLS’ SITTING ROOM

Despina urges her mistresses to relent and give in to their foreign suitors. After she leaves, the girls debate whether a flirtation might be fun while their lovers are away. Dorabella thinks it would, and reluctantly, Fiordiligi agrees. They decide who will pair off with whom. Fiordiligi chooses the disguised Ferrando, and Dorabella picks the disguised Guglielmo.

SCENE 2: THE GARDEN

The young foreigners have arranged an entertainment. Still playing their roles in the wager, Guglielmo pairs off with Dorabella and eventually succeeds in swaying her. Ferrando continues to woo Fiordiligi, though she seems to have no interest in pursuing the courtship. However, once alone, Fiordiligi admits that Ferrando has touched her heart and she hopes her absent lover will forgive her faithless thoughts. When the men compare notes, Guglielmo is glad that Fiordiligi is so unyielding. Ferrando, however, is distraught by the news that Dorabella has been seduced by his friend. His anger amuses Guglielmo, who comments on the waywardness of the fairer sex.

SCENE 3: FIORDILIGI’S ANTECHAMBER

Alone, the troubled Fiordiligi decides she must not act upon her new feelings. She decides to assume the disguise of a soldier and join her lover (Guglielmo) on the battlefield. Ferrando is determined to avenge himself on Guglielmo and Dorabella. Still playing his role, he responds to Fiordiligi’s continued refusals by threatening suicide. Her good intentions vanish and she capitulates. When Guglielmo hears of this he is furious, but Alfonso counsels forgiveness, saying “Così fan tutte” (“That’s the way all women behave”) and urging the men to marry their original girlfriends.
David Blalock
TENOR

HOMETOWN:
BURLINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA

**Ferrando.** David Blalock makes his company debut during the 2017-18 season, appearing as Ferrando in Mozart’s *Cosi fan tutte*. Recent engagements for Mr. Blalock include an appearance with Skylark Opera Theatre for their performances of Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*, and a return to the Minnesota Orchestra as the Second Jew in *Salome*.

Upcoming engagements include a return to Virginia Opera as Lysander in Britten’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, and Handel’s *Messiah* with Fairbanks Symphony Orchestra. He recently made his debut with Washington National Opera, performing the Ring Announcer in Blanchard’s *Champion*.

Other performances in the 2016-17 season included Roderigo in Verdi’s *Otello* with the Minnesota Orchestra, Nikolaus Sprink in Puts and Campbell’s *Silent Night* with Atlanta Opera, Rodolfo in Puccini’s *La bohème* with the Greater Bridgeport Symphony, and Count Almaviva in the North American premiere of Portugal’s *The Marriage of Figaro* with On Site Opera.

Mr. Blalock received his undergraduate degree from UNC Greensboro in 2009.
Maya Kherani
SOPRANO

HOMETOWN:
THE WOODLANDS, TEXAS

Despina. Maya Kherani makes her company debut during the 2017-18 season, appearing as Despina in Mozart’s *Cosi fan tutte*. Recent engagements for Ms. Kherani include covering the role of Madame White Snake in the world premiere of Paola Prestini’s *Gilgamesh* with Beth Morrison Projects, appearances as Marie (Donizetti’s *The Daughter of the Regiment*) and Gilda (Verdi’s *Rigoletto*) with Pocket Opera; Gretel in Boston Lyric Opera’s outreach performances of Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel*; and Tytania in Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* with the BU Opera Institute, where she recently concluded her fellowship. She also sang Susanna in West Bay Opera’s recent production of Mozart’s *The Marriage of Figaro*.

Awards received include First Place and Audience Favorite Award (Tier II), and the Masterworks Award at the James Toland Vocal Arts Competition, 2nd Place at the Peter Elvins Vocal Competition (Opera Division), the Kalvelage award at West Bay Opera’s Holt Competition, two Encouragement Awards from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions (District level), and the Barlow Award at the San Francisco Bay Area NATS competition, where she also won first place in both the Professional Art Song and Aria categories.

Ms. Kherani holds a B.S.E. in Mechanical Engineering and minor in Music Performance from Princeton University, where she graduated summa cum laude and received the Isidore and Helen Sacks Award for excellence in Music Performance. She holds a Master of Music degree from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.
Amanda Kingston  
SOPRANO  

HOMETOWN:  
MADISON, WISCONSIN  

Fiordiligi. Amanda Kingston joins the resident company in the 2017-18 season, appearing as Fiordiligi in Mozart’s *Cosi fan tutte*, Magda in Puccini’s *La rondine*, and Violetta in Verdi’s *La traviata*. Recent performances for Ms. Kingston include her professional debut as Josephine in Gilbert and Sullivan’s *HMS Pinafore* with Nevada Opera, Mimi in Puccini’s *La bohème*, Helena in Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Gilda in Verdi’s *Rigoletto*, Lucia in Donizetti’s *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Violetta in *La traviata*, Donna Elvira in Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*, Rosalba in Catan’s *Florencia en el Amazonas*, Hannah in *The Merry Widow*, and Despina in *Cosi fan tutte*. She has performed roles with Opera Columbus, Opera in the Heights, The Lakes Area Music Festival, Candid Concert Opera, The Ohio Light Opera, and Lone Star Lyric Theater Festival. Later this season, Amanda will make her debut with Madison Opera as First Lady in Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*.

On the concert stage, highlights include Handel’s *Messiah* with Houston Ars Lyrica, Rossini’s *Stabat Mater* with the Houston Camerata, and the role of the Countess in excerpts from *The Marriage of Figaro* with the Ann Arbor Symphony. She performed the role of Katharina Cavalieri in *Amadeus* with the prestigious Alley Theatre in Houston, and also frequently travels to sing the work of composer Eric Genuis.

Awards include First Place in the Lois Alba Aria Competition, the Lucy Morgan Award at the Shreveport Singer of the Year Competition, Finalist in the McCammon Competition and Dallas Opera Competition, and District Winner and Regional Finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.
Malcolm MacKenzie
BARITONE

HOMETOWN:
DAVIS, CALIFORNIA

Don Alfonso. Malcolm MacKenzie makes his company debut during the 2017-18 season, appearing as Don Alfonso in Mozart’s *Così fan tutte* and Germont in Verdi’s *La traviata*. Roles performed recently include Tonio in Leoncavallo’s *Pagliacci* with Dayton Opera; creating the role of Roger Chillingworth in Colorado Opera’s world premiere of *The Scarlet Letter* by Lori Laitman; returning to LA Opera as Stubb in Jake Heggie’s *Moby-Dick*; Enrico in Donizetti’s *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Eugene Opera; Giorgio Germont in Verdi’s *La traviata* with Virginia Opera; Schaunard in Puccini’s *La bohème* with San Diego Opera; a return to the Metropolitan Opera as Dancaïre in Bizet’s *Carmen*; the title role in Verdi’s *Simon Boccanegra* with Kentucky Opera; Belcore in Donizetti’s *L’Elisir d’amore* with San Diego Opera; Iago in Verdi’s *Otello* with Nashville Opera; Count di Luna in Verdi’s *Il trovatore* with Arizona Opera; Alfio/Tonio in Mascagni and Leoncavallo’s *Cavalleria rusticana/I pagliacci* with Arizona Opera; and Jack Rance in Puccini’s *La fanciulla del West* with Nashville Opera.

On the concert stage, Mr. MacKenzie has performed frequently as the baritone soloist for Carl Orff’s *Carmina Burana*, most recently with Los Angeles’ New West Symphony, the Symphony Orchestra of the University of California, Davis and the Savannah Symphony. He has also appeared with the Los Angeles Master Chorale, the Pacific Chorale, the Los Angeles Mozart Orchestra, and the Madison Symphony.
Colin Ramsey
BASS-BARITONE

HOMETOWN:
GREENWICH, CONNECTICUT

Guglielmo. Former resident company member Colin Ramsey returns in the 2017-18 season as Guglielmo in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. Mr. Ramsey joined OSJ’s resident company as a principal artist in the 2016-17 season, appearing as Raimondo (Donizetti’s *Lucia di Lammermoor*), Basilio (Rossini’s *The Barber of Seville*), Father Palmer (Kevin Put’s *Silent Night*), and Colline (Puccini’s *La bohème*). Mr. Ramsey has performed with many companies including Seattle Opera, Austin Lyric Opera, Sarasota Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Opera Santa Barbara, Des Moines Metro Opera, The Green Mountain Opera Festival, Pacific Music Works, and The St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. The 2014-15 season featured his debut as a soloist in Handel’s *Messiah* with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra with conductor Paul Agnew of Les Artes Florissants, and a return to the Pacific Northwest’s premier early music orchestra, Pacific Musicworks, for his role debut as Sarastro in Mozart’s *The Magic Flute* with Grammy Winner Stephen Stubbs conducting.

Other recent engagements include Menotti’s *The Consul* with Seattle Opera and Opera Santa Barbara, Collatinus (Britten’s *The Rape of Lucretia*) with Vespertine Opera, Somnus/Cadmus in Handel’s *Semele* with Pacific Musicworks, and a debut with Austin Lyric Opera as Il Frate in Verdi’s *Don Carlo*, as well as his debut with Green Mountain Opera Festival reprising Alidoro in Rossini’s *La Cenerentola*.

Mr. Ramsey recently took 3rd Prize in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions in the Rocky Mountain Region and an Encouragement Award in the Western Region in 2011. He has won prizes from the Pasadena Opera Guild, a grant from the Opera Buffs and is the 2011 Hugh Ross Award recipient at Manhattan School of Music, an award which is given every year to a graduating singer of ‘unusual promise.’
Maria Valdes
SOPRANO

MARIETTA, GEORGIA

Despina. Maria Valdes makes her company debut during the 2017-18 season, appearing as Despina in Mozart’s *Così fan tutte* and Lisette in Puccini’s *La rondine*. Recent engagements for Ms. Valdes include Musetta in Puccini’s *La bohème*, Papagena in Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*, Clorinda in Rossini’s *La Cenerentola*, and Barbarina in Mozart’s *The Marriage of Figaro*, all while an Adler Fellow with San Francisco Opera. As a member of SFO’s Merola Program, she performed the role of Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro*.

After finishing her tenure at San Francisco Opera, Ms. Valdes covered the role of Juliette in Gounod’s *Roméo et Juliette* for her debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago and made her New York recital debut with the New York Festival of Song in *Compositora*, a recital of female Latin American composers.

On the concert stage, Ms. Valdes has appeared in concert with Martin Katz, as well as world-renowned flamenco guitarist Pepe Romero. Most recently, she made her Los Angeles debut at Thayer Hall in a distinguished alumni recital with SongFest. She also attended the Steans Institute at the Ravinia Festival which included several concert appearances. She was also featured singing Mendelssohn’s “Hear my prayer” on the album *Evening Hymn* recently released by Gothic Records.

An award-winner in the regional Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions, Ms. Valdes is also the winner of the top prize at the Corbett Opera Scholarship Competition at Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and is the recipient of a Shoshana Foundation Grant.
Cassandra Zoé Velasco
MEZZO-SOPRANO

HOMETOWN: MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

Dorabella. Cassandra Zoé Velasco makes her company debut in the 2017-18 season, appearing as Dorabella in Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*. Recent engagements include a return to the Metropolitan Opera for productions of Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly* and Verdi’s *Simon Boccanegra*. For Mexico’s Teatro Degollado she made her debut as Suzuki in Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly* and appeared as Dorabella in Mozart’s *Così fan tutte* at Ash Law Festival. Ms. Velasco has starred in productions in Mexico City since the age of 22, including *La Scala di Seta*, and *L’Oca ssione fa il Ladro* with ProOpera, Angelina in Rossini’s *La Cenerentola* and Isolier in *Le Comte Ory* with Mexico National Opera Company, and Charlotte in Massenet’s *Werther* with Festival Frances. She made her *Opera de Bellas Artes* debut as Lola in Mascagni’s *Cavalleria Rusticana*, followed by Rosina in Rossini’s *The Barber of Seville*.

In the United States, her performances include Second Flower in Catan’s *La Hija de Rappaccini* with Gotham Chamber Opera, Myrtale in Massenet’s *Thaïs*, sharing the stage with Plácido Domingo, Mercedes in Bizet’s *Carmen* conducted by Plácido Domingo, 2nd Lady in Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*, and the world premiere of *Jonah and the Whale*, all with Los Angeles Opera.

A recent graduate of the Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist Program at the Los Angeles Opera, Ms. Velasco was a semi-finalist of the 2012 edition of Operalia. She represented Mexico at the Monserrat Caballé Competition (Spain), the Competizione dell ‘Opera (Germany) and the Teatro Colón Competition (Argentina). She received the Encouragement Award at the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions (2013), an Encouragement Prize from the Loren Zachary Competition (2014), the Therese Anne McCarthy Memorial Prize at Opera San Miguel (2014), and she received a grant from Opera Buffs (2014).
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