



Sydney Conservatorium of Music Opera School

COSÌ FAN TUTTE Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

SATURDAY 8 OCTOBER, 2PM
TUESDAY 11 OCTOBER, 6.30PM
THURSDAY 13 OCTOBER, 6.30PM
SATURDAY 15 OCTOBER, 2PM

MUSIC WORKSHOP, SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY



SYDNEY
CONSERVATORIUM
OF MUSIC

Sydney Conservatorium of Music Opera School presents

COSÌ FAN TUTTE

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Opera in two acts

Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte

Sung in Italian with English surtitles

Approximately 3 hours, with one interval
of 20 minutes

Musical Director Stephen Mould

Director Narelle Yeo

Set and Lighting Designer Benjamin
Brockman

Costume Designer Brendan Hay

Score and Music Preparation
Stephen Yates

Assistant Conductors Harrison
Collins, Louis Sharpe

CHARACTERS

Fiordiligi – a young woman

Dorabella – another young
woman, Fiordiligi's sister

Despina – their maid

Ferrando – a soldier, engaged
to Dorabella

Guglielmo – a soldier, engaged
to Fiordiligi

Don Alfonso – an old philosopher

SYNOPSIS

Act One

A passing comment by the world-weary philosopher, Don Alfonso – *Così fan tutte* – ignites an argument with his younger friends Ferrando and Guglielmo. This threatens to be fought out in a duel, and eventually becomes merely a wager. Don Alfonso proposes to win his case by manipulating the apparently rock-solid relationships that Ferrando and Guglielmo enjoy with their sweethearts Dorabella and Fiordiligi.

By a sleight of hand, Alfonso has the men removed to fight in a distant war, sparking tragic and earth shattering reactions from their lovers. Their agonies are thrown into relief by their maid, Despina, who shares with Alfonso an attitude of realism and pragmatism

Cover image:

Kit Yoon, *Cool Columbus – Topiary
Garden*, 2010

[coolcolumbus.blogspot.com.au/
2010/09/topiary-garden.html](http://coolcolumbus.blogspot.com.au/2010/09/topiary-garden.html)

in affairs of the heart, while perhaps falling short of his bleak cynicism.

The young men reappear disguised as exotic Albanians, wearing ludicrous costumes that could be easily discerned by all but the most gullible. They begin wooing the ladies who are, at least initially, mourning their departed lovers. The men are not the only ones in disguise, as Despina, acting as a functionary of Don Alfonso, disguises herself as a learned doctor (Act 1) and a notary (Act 2).

Act Two

In the second act we witness the gradual wearing down of the two ladies, and their subsequent transformation. We learn who capitulates, and with what speed they do so. Gradually we realise that the lovers pair off in a different configuration to that established at the beginning of the opera.

Don Alfonso's wager and world-view is upheld, and faithfulness seems to be largely absent in the latter part of the opera. The couples enact a marriage – does it really matter in which couplings they are wed? It seems that Alfonso's comment (which is first heard in the overture) – *Così fan tutte* – has been upheld.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (27 Jan 1756, Salzburg – 5 Dec 1791, Vienna) was the son of Leopold Mozart. His style essentially represents a synthesis of many different elements, which coalesced in his Viennese years, from 1781 on, into an idiom now regarded as a peak of Viennese Classicism. The mature music, distinguished by its melodic beauty, its formal elegance and its richness of harmony and texture, is deeply coloured by Italian opera though also rooted in Austrian and south German instrumental traditions. Unlike Haydn, his senior by 24 years, and Beethoven, his junior by 15, he excelled in every medium current in his time. He may thus be regarded as the most universal composer in the history of Western music.

Così fan tutte is Mozart's third collaboration with librettist Lorenzo da Ponte (the other two being *Don Giovanni* and *The Marriage of Figaro*). *Così* is an opera buffa (comedy) and was commissioned by Emperor Joseph II, known as a great patron of the arts. It premiered on 26 January 1790 in Vienna.

(Source – *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians Online*)

Order of Music

ACT 1	Recitativo	No. 20 Duetto
Overture	No. 11 Aria	No. 21 Duetto
No. 1 Terzetto	Recitativo	Recitativo
Recitativo	No. 12 Aria	No. 22 Quartet
No. 2 Terzetto	Recitativo	Recitativo
Recitativo	No. 13 Sestetto	No. 23 Duetto
No. 3 Terzetto	Recitativo	Recitativo
No. 4 Duetto	No. 14 Aria	No. 25 Rondo
Recitativo	Recitativo	Recitativo
No. 5 Aria	No. 15 Aria	No. 26 Aria
Recitativo	16. Terzetto	Recitativo
No. 6 Quintetto	Recitativo	Recitativo
Recitativo	No. 17 Aria	No. 29 Duetto
No. 8 Coro	Finale	Recitativo
Recitativo		No. 30 Terzetto
No. 8a Quintetto	ACT II	No. 31 Finale
Coro	Recitativo	
Recitativo	No. 19 Aria	
No. 10. Terzettino	Recitativo	

Music Director's Note

The reception of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* is an illustration of an operatic success story after the fact. *Così* premiered in 1790, and had a respectable reception – it was neither a failure nor a huge success. Nineteenth century critical opinion was divided by the work that examined a code of morality out of keeping with the Romantic Zeitgeist. *Così* was widely considered an affront to mortality. The irony remained, however that the libretto inspired some of Mozart's finest music, and critics questioned how Mozart could waste his time and inspiration on such a subject. It was not until the twentieth century that *Così* emerged in a new light, and the prevailing morality of the first decades of the century aligned again with Da Ponte's creation. Since that time, *Così* has gone on to become one of the most popular operas in the repertoire, performed worldwide and often subject to searching and confronting directorial explorations on the human condition.

For Con Opera, *Così fan tutte* has been an exciting challenge: a cast of major roles, all of considerable complexity and virtuosity; a work rich in multilayered ensembles that require considered musicianship and attention to detail; all this embedded in some of the most inspired and taxing music that Mozart ever wrote. I welcome director Narelle Yeo and her team who have created a wonderful production for Con Opera.

Dr Stephen Mould, Chair of Opera Production

Director's Note

Così fan tutte is Mozart and Da Ponte's take on the 'partner-swapping' farce, popular since at least the thirteenth century, a subject of heavy examination during the Enlightenment. There are difficulties in translating fickleness and fecklessness to the modern stage. Many standard productions have juxtaposed Enlightenment ideas of increasing male wisdom and reason with increasing female transgression. This can result in either a mannered representation of human relations or the loss of some of Mozart's intended farce.

Rather than focusing on the moral ambiguities of partner swapping, this production examines artifice and truth, honesty and integrity in a manner that respects Mozart's original comedic intentions. It pays homage to the politics of class and gender with reference to a time past, where the structures of garments over bodies and the carving of ordered space reflects societal status and constrictions.

Mozart saved his biggest criticism in *Così fan tutte* for Dr Mesmer, a family acquaintance who had gained notoriety in Enlightenment Vienna for his use of quasi scientific methods, including magnet therapy, to claim to heal a range of conditions. By the time *Così* opened, *mesmerism* had been highly discredited and Dr Mesmer had fled to Paris. Notoriety for quackery exposed has easy comic parallels to our time. Rather than mocking Mesmer in the doctor's scene alone, the Don Alfonso of this production is the master puppeteer, spruiking his skills as manipulator of unsuspecting innocents. Like Freud, he studies his subjects, testing his theories and base judgements with human subjects in a highly unethical experiment on love and fidelity. Fiordiligi and Dorabella seek to understand themselves and their place in society, with the renowned expert Don Alfonso as their guide.

The metaphor of wind and constant references to movement and change in the libretto illustrate the fickleness of human relationships as Don Alfonso manipulates both sets of protagonists. Is he authentic? Is his advice believable? Is he a Freud or a fraud? The base quackery of Despina is juxtaposed against this, with her lightness and spirit of fun balancing his overt manipulation, as she encourages the women to seek their own fulfilment above societal constraints.

Guglielmo and Ferrando return in disguise, ready to plunder the pristine world the sisters inhabit. The sisters eagerly awake to their new reality of wealth, modern ideals and increased social status. Despina's admonishments to follow one's desires and Don Alfonso's brazen manipulations combine to legitimise this moral choice. The moral high ground is not maintained by Guglielmo and Ferrando, with their own history of deception and manipulation, yet fortune smiles on all six characters in the end, as they adjust to their altered moral universe.

Many thanks to the passionate and talented students of the Con Opera for making the rehearsal period a voyage of hilarious mutual discovery, true to Mozart's comedic design. Thanks also to the creative genius of designers Ben Brockman (set, lighting) and Brendan Hay (costume) who have so quirkily and beautifully realised the vision for this production.

Narelle Yeo

Biographies

STEPHEN MOULD

CHAIR OF OPERA PRODUCTION, MUSICAL DIRECTOR

Sydney-born Stephen Mould is a graduate of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. In 1985, he moved to London to continue his studies at the Royal Academy of Music. During this time, he was active as an orchestral and choral conductor and as a freelance répétiteur. In 1988, he was appointed Head of Music at the Lyric Opera of Queensland, in Brisbane and, in addition to conducting several productions for that company, was also engaged for concerts with the Queensland Philharmonic Orchestra, the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, and conducted opera productions with the Queensland Conservatorium of Music. In 1990, Dr Mould returned to Europe and was engaged as a conductor and musical assistant by a number of opera houses and festivals in Germany, Belgium, Norway and Italy. In 1990, he was engaged as an assistant at the Théâtre de la Monnaie, Brussels and in 1992 was appointed to the staff of Opera Frankfurt as assistant to the Music Director. During this time, he was also engaged as a teacher at the music conservatorium in Frankfurt. In 1996, he joined the music staff of Opera Australia.

Subsequently, Dr Mould has undertaken engagements for the Sydney Festival, the Melbourne Festival, Symphony Australia and the Sydney Philharmonic Choirs. He was also engaged for State Opera of South Australia's productions of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (1998 and 2004) and *Parsifal* (2002). Stephen Mould was Head of Music at Opera Australia between 2004 and 2008 and, since 1998, has regularly appeared as conductor for the Company. His repertoire has included: *La Bohème*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *La Voix Humaine*, *Rusalka*, *Carmen* and *The Makropulos Secret*. In addition, he has appeared with the Sydney and Queensland Symphony Orchestras, the SBS Youth Orchestra, and is a regular guest with Willoughby Symphony Orchestra. In 2006, he conducted *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* for the Macau International Music Festival and, in 2008, made his American debut for Baltimore Opera conducting *Madama Butterfly*. He also appeared in New Zealand with the Auckland Philharmonia.

Dr Mould is currently Chair of Opera Production and Senior Lecturer in Operatic Studies at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music while continuing his freelance activities as a conductor and accompanist. Recent operatic engagements have included *The Mikado* and a new production of *Le nozze di Figaro* for Opera Australia and *Così fan tutte* for Opera Queensland. 2014/2015 performances included concerts with the Queensland, Canberra and Willoughby Symphony Orchestras, *Messiah* for New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and Assistant Conductor for *Elektra* with the Sydney Symphony.

NARELLE YEO DIRECTOR

Narelle Yeo is one of very few directors in Australia who specifically trained in the unique art of opera direction while living in the USA. With graduate degrees from the prestigious Shepherd School, Rice University and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Narelle Yeo began her career as a spinto soprano, achieving considerable performing success performing numerous professional roles in opera, musical theatre and theatre, ranging from CioCioSan in *Madama Butterfly* to the soprano in Terence McNally's *Masterclass* for professional companies across western USA. On the concert stage, she also performed solo with the San Francisco Symphony, Berkeley Symphony and at the Goshen Bach Festival. A 'singing actor' and champion of new music, Narelle also premiered a number of new works in both the USA and Australia, including her recent portrayal of Catherine in the new Australian opera *The Long Ride Home* by Thomas Rimes. Narelle was previously engaged as a Director in the Opera Program at the San Francisco Conservatory.

Since her return to our shores, Narelle has directed countless operas and musicals ranging from *Die Fledermaus* to *Le Nozze di Figaro* to *Beauty and the Beast* for both professional companies, the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and also for schools due to her strong belief in the value of building community through exposure to all kinds of music theatre.

Known for her sympathetic approach to working with singers in a highly demanding profession, Narelle's dual professional career has led to a unique perspective on opera direction. Last year she directed over 400 students and staff in the Conservatorium's Centenary sold-out performance of Bernstein's *MASS* in the Sydney Opera House to great acclaim.

BENJAMIN BROCKMAN **SET AND LIGHTING DESIGNER**

Ben's lighting design credits include: *Tribes* (Ensemble Theatre 2016), *The Big Dry* (Ensemble Theatre 2016), *Straight* (Kings Cross Theatre 2016), *Leaves* (Kings Cross Theatre 2016), *Replay* (Griffin Theatre 2016), *Away* (Sport for Jove 2016), *Macbeth* (Sport for Jove 2016), *Cherry Orchard* (New Theatre 2016), *Belleville* (Mad March Hare), *Through a Distant Lens* (Performance 4a Riverside), *Space Cats* (Brevity Theatre Company), *That Eye The Sky* (New Theatre 2016), NSW Senior Citizens Regional Concert (Venarubles 2015), *Grey Gardens The Musical* (Squabbalagic 2015), *The Aliens* (Outhouse Theatre Company 2015), *Space Cats* (Brevity Theatre Company 2015), *Detroit* (Darlinghurst Theatre Company), *Animal/People* (TRS 2015), *Shivered* (Mad March Hare 2015), *When the Rain Stops Falling* (New Theatre 2015), *Man of La Mancha* (Squabbalagic 2015), *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom* (Brevity Theatre 2015), *Smurfs Live on Stage World Tour* (MEI Entertainment 2015).

Ben's production design credits include: *Space Cats* (Brevity Theatre Company 2016), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (sly Rat Theatre Company), *Those who fall in love like anchors dropped on the ocean floor* (Loudmouth Theatre Company 2015), *Dark Vanilla Jungle* (Mad March Hare Theatre Company 2015), *Blue Italian and Nil By Sea* (Peter Fray Presents 2015), *Shivered* (Mad March Hare Theatre Company 2015), *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom* (Brevity Theatre 2015), *November Spawned a monster* (Fly on the Wall Theatre), *Awkward Conversations* (Unhappen 2014).

www.benbrockman.com

BRENDAN HAY **COSTUME DESIGNER**

Having trained as a musical theatre performer (Australian Institute of Music), toured as an award winning cabaret artist (Australia's Got Talent, International Cabaret Contest, Short+Sweet Cabaret), Brendan is also an award nominated designer (2016 Sydney Theatre Awards, Best Costume Design) and his most recent works include: *Wonderful Town* (Design, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs/Sydney Opera House), *Risqué Revue* (Costume, Slide Sydney), *Into the Woods* (Costume, Australian Institute of Music), *Victoriana!* (Design, St Paul's College), *Little Black Dress Exhibition* (Stylist, Sydney Fair), *Rodeo Queen* (Prop Stylist, Peter Alexander), *The Original Grease* (Costume, Squabbalagic), *Vaudevillea* (Song & Dance Man, Rocks Village Bizarre), *Grey Gardens* (Costume, Squabbalagic) *The Fantasticks* (Design, Exclaim Theatre Company), *Of Thee I Sing* (Design, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs/Sydney Opera House), *El Circo Blanc* (Costume, Slide Sydney), *Hair: The American Tribal Love Rock Musical* (Design, Exclaim Theatre Company), *Man of La Mancha* (Costume, Squabbalagic).

Production Credits

Musical Director Dr Stephen Mould

Director Narelle Yeo

Production Manager Marrienne Carter

Set and Lighting Designer Benjamin Brockman

Costume Designer Brendan Hay

Score and Music Preparation Stephen Yates

Assistant Conductors Harrison Collins, Louis Sharpe

Choreographer Olivia Ansell

Stage Manager Olivia Benson

Repetiteurs Jasmine Wei, Josephine Flores Tam, Julie de Plater, Alan Hicks

Italian Language Coach Tanith Bryce

Production Assistants Nathan Bryon, Stella Haddock, Georgia Melville, Ellen McNeil, **Production Assistants** Guangzhi Niu, Chloe Robbins, Phoebe Clarke, Sarah Levins

Hair and Make-up Rachel Dal Santo, assisted by students from The Australasian College

Costume Volunteer Hanna Smith

Lighting Programmer Peter Ruble

Lighting Operator Geoffrey Bellingham

Carpenters and Staging Technicians Alex Pringle, Anthony Arnold, Simon Ridgeon

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Surtitles Operators Harrison Collins, Louis Sharpe

Orchestral Management Scott Ryan, Tom Westley

Production Photography Ian Barry

Publicity Jacqui Smith, Nathan Bryon

Acknowledgments

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Vocal and Opera Studies Unit

Chair of Opera Production

Dr Stephen Mould

Chair of Vocal and Opera Studies Unit

Maree Ryan AM

Opera Coordinator

Marrienne Carter

Dr Rowena Cowley

Andrew Dalton

Associate Professor Michael Halliwell

Anke Hoepfner-Ryan

Barry Ryan OAM

Robyn Wells

Stephen Yalouris

Narelle Yeo

Coaching Staff

Dr Stephen Mould

Siro Battaglin

Julia de Plater

Kate Johnson

Ingrid Sakurovs

Robert Greene

Alan Hicks

Languages

Tanith Bryce (Italian)

Simon Lobelson (French)

Andrea Catzel (German)

Dance and Movement

Olivia Ansell and Jo Ansell

Stagecraft

Narelle Yeo

Acting

Paige Gardiner

Theatre Studies

Simon Lobelson and Andy Morton

Ensemble

Stephen Mould and Julia de Plater

Performance

Barry Ryan OAM

Opera History

Associate Professor Michael Halliwell

music.sydney.edu.au/opera



The Music Café, with new management by Dan Wilson and team, are pleased to offer a wide variety of refreshments. Enjoy a selection of cold and hot drinks one hour prior to the concert and at the interval. There is also a range of delicious dishes including the pre-concert canapé pack (rice paper rolls and sushi) and arguably the best pies in Sydney!

Cast

Fiordiligi (soprano)

Jessie Wilson*
Livia Brash†

Dorabella (soprano/ mezzo soprano)

Sarah Kemeny*
Barbara Jin†

Despina (soprano/ mezzo soprano)

Deepka Ratra*
Ashlee Woodgate†

Ferrando (tenor)

Chris Bryg

Guglielmo (baritone)

Tristan Entwistle

Don Alfonso (bass)

Associate Professor
Michael Halliwell

Chorus

Viktoria Bolonina
Jeremy Dube
Jaekwon Kim
Jing Li
Imogen Malfitano
Ellen McNeil
Jia Yao Sun
Paul Sutton
Camilla Wright
Henry Wright
Michaela Zhang

* Performing 8 and 13 October

† Performing 11 and 15 October

Orchestra

Violin 1

Amanda Chen,
concertmaster
Annabelle Swainston
Wendy Kong
Marrienne Liu
Nicole Kim
Brian Hong

Violin 2

Grace Kim*
Alexander Chiu
Kohki Iwasaki
Noam Yaffe

Viola

Seola Lee*
Joseph Cohen
Maria Fedotov

Cello

Miles Mullin-Chivers*
Vicky Zhang
Emma Rayner

Double Bass

Jaan Pallandi*
David Barlow

Flute

Kathryn Ramsay*
Harriet D'arcy

Clarinet

Rachel Thompson*
Gillian Yu

Oboe

Katherine Mostert*
Ovania McClelland

Bassoon

Jordy Meulenbroeks*
Alison Wormell

Horn

Sarah Morris*
Lilly Cremer

Trumpet

Robbie Adams*
Rachel Drubetsky

Percussion

Nancy Zheng*

Harpsichord

Jasmine Wei

* section leader

VOCAL AND OPERA STUDIES AT THE CONSERVATORIUM

Join the fast track to the operatic stage with the Master in Music Studies (Opera Performance) at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

The Sydney Conservatorium of Music has a long tradition of producing opera productions of exceptional quality, which have been an important stepping stone into the operatic profession for a large number of graduates who have gone on to become leading singers, conductors, coaches and opera administrators.

The Vocal and Opera Unit provides a number of graduate courses that provide operatic training for singers and répétiteurs, facilitating their development in the areas of singing, languages, role preparation, stagecraft, ensemble skills and further focusing upon how they can use the skills they acquire to establish careers both in Australia and overseas. Partnerships with major institutions, such as Opera Australia, provide invaluable contact with industry and opportunities to connect with the international opera community.

Con Opera, the performance branch of the Vocal and Opera Studies Unit, currently presents two fully staged operas with orchestra each year and features the work of up and coming directors. These are ideal opportunities for students to immerse themselves in all aspects of the craft of staging an opera, and to acquire experience singing entire character roles.

2017 will include a fully staged production of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute)* sung in German. Auditions for entry in Semester 1 2017 will be conducted in October and a second round in late November of 2016.

For more information about our opera and vocal studies programs, please email con.info@sydney.edu.au, call +61 2 9351 1222 or say hello during our Semester Two production of *Così fan tutte*.

music.sydney.edu.au/opera

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