



Media Release

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Come Back to Mischief with Pacific Opera Victoria's *Così fan tutte*

Victoria, BC – Opening on April 12 at Victoria's Royal Theatre, Pacific Opera Victoria presents Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's, *Così fan tutte*, a coproduction with Théâtre des Champs Elysées in Paris, Théâtre de Caen, and Tokyo Nikkai Opera, for four performances, April 12, 14 and 18 at 7:30 pm, and April 16 at 2:30 pm.

The third opera of the 2022/23 season, *Così fan tutte*, is being presented on the Pacific Opera stage for the first time since 2010, the performance is set in mid- twentieth century at the famed recording studio, *Funkhaus Berlin*. The production features an outstanding artistic team with famed French Stage Director and Costume Designer, Laurent Pelly and Associate Director, Christian Râth from Hamburg, Germany, showcasing some of Canada's most renowned singers.

Così fan tutte is a quirky comedy about two men as naughty as Mozart himself... and the women who teach them a lesson. The follies and foibles of young love are on full display in this timeless comedy of (bad) manners. Encouraged by a cynical old bachelor, a simple bet becomes hilariously complex when young lovers don disguises, aiming to trick their fiancées into infidelity. This gloriously passionate romp brims with some of the sweetest music Mozart ever wrote, as clumsy romancers get cozy with catastrophe.

Pacific Opera Founding Artistic Director, Timothy Vernon says of the work, "Miraculous music didn't prevent the 19th century from finding *Così* trivial and contrived. In the 20th, gradually the sense that this may be the most profound of Mozart's Italian comedies gained the upper hand. There are certainly many deeply insightful moments throughout, including the pain of personal betrayal; the character development of soprano and tenor is as humanly real as anything in Mozart, and the conundrum of the finale, unresolved in either text or music, makes a cliched *lieto fine* (happy ending) unthinkable. Strauss loved *Così* more than anything in the world of music. Not hard to understand why."

Italian-Canadian soprano Lucia Cesaroni returns to Pacific Opera in the role of Fiordiligi. Victoria audiences will remember her acclaimed role debuts, as Violetta and Mimì at Pacific Opera Victoria's productions of *La traviata* and *La bohème*. Canadian Opera wrote of her Violetta, "Cesaroni has a bright, beautiful and full top register. Her voice was uniformly lovely and expressive in later scenes."

Mezzo-soprano Hongni Wu makes her Canadian debut in the role of Dorabella. Of Hongni Wu's sensational debut as Der Komponist in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at Opéra National de Montpellier last season, *Forum Opéra* wrote "the timbre of the voice is fresh, radiant and assured."

Remembered for his Pacific Opera roles as Arturo in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Don Ottavio in 2022's *Don Giovanni*, popular Canadian Tenor Owen McCausland returns to take on the role of Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*. Adrian Chamberlain wrote in the Victoria Times Colonist, "Tenor Owen McCausland, playing Donna Anna's long-suffering fiancé Don Ottavio, impressed with *Dalla sua pace*, notable for his lovely legato lines and nuanced phrasing."

Baritone Christopher Dunham, a native of Niagara Falls, takes on the role of Guglielmo. Victoria audiences will remember him from Pacific Opera's *Rinaldo* in 2018. Opera Canada wrote of his performance, "Baritone Christopher Dunham fortunately demonstrated that command in spades as Argante, King of Jerusalem, filling the stage with energy, as well as an alert, warm, expressive voice."

Also included in the cast is Phillip Addis making his role debut as Don Alfonso. The baritone previously appeared Count Almaviva in Pacific Opera's 2014 production of *The Marriage of Figaro*, Elizabeth Paterson of Review Vancouver wrote of his performance, "Graceful in voice and person, Philip Addis gave a subtle, nuanced account of Count Almaviva, both as a selfish philanderer and as a husband who has lost his wife's attention".

Soprano Cécile Muhire portrays Despina, returning after her recent company debut as Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*. The production features 16 members of the Pacific Opera Chorus, as well as the Victoria Symphony under the baton of Maestro Timothy Vernon.

Tickets for single performances start at \$29, including fees and taxes. To keep Pacific Opera accessible to students, families and community organizations, Community Preview tickets are available for \$15. For more information including tickets, visit: [Tickets and Information](#)

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