WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

COSÌ FAN TUTTE

CONDUCTOR
Harry Bicket

PRODUCTION
Phelim McDermott

SET DESIGNER
Tom Pye

COSTUME DESIGNER
Laura Hopkins

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Paule Constable

REVIVAL STAGE DIRECTOR
Sara Erde

Opera in two acts
Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte
Friday, February 21, 2020
7:30–11:05 PM

The production of Così fan tutte was made possible by generous gifts from William R. Miller, and John Sucich / Trust of Joseph Padula

Additional funding was received from the The Walter and Leonore Annenberg Endowment Fund, and the National Endowment for the Arts

Co-production of the Metropolitan Opera and English National Opera

In collaboration with Improbable

GENERAL MANAGER
Peter Gelb

JEANETTE LERMAN-NEUBAUER
MUSIC DIRECTOR
Yannick Nézet-Séguin
The Metropolitan Opera
2019–20 SEASON

The 201st Metropolitan Opera performance of
WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART’S
COSÌ FAN TUTTE

CONDUCTOR
Harry Bicket

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

FERRANDO
Ben Bliss*

GUGLIELMO
Luca Pisaroni

DON ALFONSO
Gerald Finley

FIORDILIGI
Jennifer Check*

DORABELLA
Carolyn Sproule

DESPINA
Heidi Stober

SKILLS ENSEMBLE
Leo the Human Gumby
Jonathan Nosan
Ray Valenz
Josh Walker
Betty Bloomerz
Anna Venizelos
Zoe Ziegfeld
Cristina Pitter
Sarah Folkins
Sage Sovereign
Arthur Lazalde
Radu Spinghel

CONTINUO
HARPSICHORD
Jonathan C. Kelly
CELLO  David Heiss

Friday, February 21, 2020, 7:30–11:05PM
Chorus Master  Donald Palumbo  
Musical Preparation  Joel Revzen, Liora Maurer,  
and Jonathan C. Kelly  
Assistant Stage Directors  Gregory Keller and  
Shawna Luccy  
Italian Coach Met  Hemdi Kfir  
Met Titles  Cori Ellison  
Scenery, properties, and electrical props constructed and  
painted by Bay Productions Ltd., Cardiff; English  
National Opera; and Metropolitan Opera Shops  
Costumes executed by English National Opera and  
Metropolitan Opera Costume Department  
Wigs and Makeup executed by Metropolitan Opera  
Wig and Makeup Department  
Animals supervised by All-Tame Animals  

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usher at intermission.
The Metropolitan Opera is pleased to salute Monteverdi Tuscany in recognition of its generous support during the 2019–20 season.
Synopsis

Act I
*The United States during the 1950s.* Two officers, Ferrando and Guglielmo, are taking a vacation with their fiancées, sisters Dorabella and Fiordiligi, at the Skyline Motel near the Pleasure Garden. At a nightclub, the boys’ new friend, the cynical Don Alfonso, tells them that he doubts the women will be faithful and offers them a wager: He will prove that their lovers will be unfaithful, like all other women. The boys defend their fiancées and accept the challenge.

The next morning, Fiordiligi and Dorabella daydream about their lovers while strolling along the boardwalk. Alfonso arrives and explains that the boys have been called away to war. After saying goodbye, the girls are inconsolable.

Despina, a maid at the motel, complains about how much work she has to do. When the sisters return heartbroken, she encourages them to enjoy their freedom and find new lovers, but Fiordiligi and Dorabella cannot fathom such a betrayal.

Don Alfonso bribes Despina to help him introduce the sisters to two “infatuated young friends” of his, who are in fact Guglielmo and Ferrando in disguise. When the new suitors make advances toward the sisters, the girls are outraged and refuse to listen to any declarations of love. The men are confident of winning the bet.

Alfonso has another plan: The young men pretend to take poison in order to gain the sisters’ sympathy. Despina and Alfonso go off to fetch help, leaving the two women to care for the strangers. Despina reappears disguised as “Doctor Magnetico” and pretends to heal the boys with her famous vibration machine. When Ferrando and Guglielmo request kisses in order to fully recover, the sisters again reject them, but it is clear that they’re beginning to show interest in the strangers.

*Intermission* (AT APPROXIMATELY 9:00PM)

Act II
Despina chastises Fiordiligi and Dorabella for not knowing how to deal with men. The sisters decide that perhaps Despina is right—there can be no harm in amusing themselves with the handsome strangers. They choose which man they’d like, each picking the other’s fiancée. Don Alfonso brings the girls into the Pleasure Garden to meet the boys again.
In the fairground, Dorabella responds quickly to the disguised Guglielmo’s advances. She accepts a gift and relinquishes her locket with Ferrando’s portrait.

Fiordiligi, however, refuses to yield to Ferrando, although she admits to herself that her heart has been won.

Ferrando is certain that they have won the wager. Guglielmo is happy to hear that Fiordiligi has been faithful to him, but when he shows his friend the portrait that he took from Dorabella, Ferrando is furious. Gugliemo asks Alfonso to pay him his half of the winnings, but Alfonso reminds him that the day is not yet over.

Fiordiligi condemns Dorabella for her betrayal and resolves to leave the Pleasure Garden and join her beloved at the front.

Ferrando suddenly appears and declares his love for Fiordiligi with renewed passion. While Guglielmo watches helplessly, she finally accepts. Guglielmo and Ferrando are distraught at their fiancées’ infidelity. Don Alfonso encourages the boys to forgive the women and marry them. After all, their behavior is only human nature.

The sisters have agreed to marry the young strangers, and Despina, impersonating a justice of the peace, does the honors. Alfonso suddenly announces that Guglielmo and Ferrando have returned from battle. In panic, the sisters hide their intended husbands, who return as their real selves and feign horror upon discovering the marriage contracts. Finally, the boys reveal the entire charade, and Fiordiligi and Dorabella ask forgiveness. Alfonso bids the lovers learn their lesson.

Synopsis reprinted by kind permission of English National Opera.
In Focus

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Così fan tutte

Premiere: Burgtheater, Vienna, 1790
The third and final collaboration between Mozart and librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte is a fascinating paradox: a frothy comedy of manners with a rather cynical take on human nature; an old story (it has antecedents in Boccaccio, Shakespeare, and Cervantes, among others) with a startlingly modern tone; and a beautiful score depicting questionable behavior. The premise is simple: Two friends brag that their fiancées, who happen to be sisters, are incapable of infidelity. An older, more philosophical man bets that he can prove them wrong in 24 hours and enlists the help of the sisters’ devious maid to help him in his practical joke. He coerces the young men to disguise themselves as strangers and attempt to seduce the women, which they do successfully. Although he has won the bet, the philosopher advises his friends to forgive their fiancées and to learn from the experience—after all, “all women act like that” (to paraphrase the opera’s title, which is famously difficult to translate).

The Setting
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) was the son of a Salzburg court musician and composer, Leopold, who was also his principal teacher and exhibited him as a musical prodigy throughout Europe. His works continue to enthrall audiences around the world, and his achievements in opera—in terms of beauty, vocal challenge, and dramatic insight—remain unsurpassed. The extraordinary Lorenzo Da Ponte (1749–1838) led an adventurous life in Venice and Vienna. He converted from Judaism as a youth and joined the Catholic Church, where he took Holy Orders. He supplied libretti for the prominent composers of his time, including Antonio Salieri, and also collaborated with Mozart on Le Nozze di Figaro and Don Giovanni. Da Ponte migrated to America and eventually settled in New York, where he served as the first professor of Italian at Columbia College (now University) and was instrumental in developing an audience for Italian opera.

The Creators
The opera was originally set in Naples—with its natural beauty and abundant sunshine, the city was a popular destination in the 18th century—and the preponderance of woodwinds in the score evokes the breezy atmosphere of the Mediterranean coast. The Met’s current production, by Phelim McDermott, updates the action to a seaside amusement park, inspired by New York’s Coney Island, in the 1950s.
The Music
The score of Così is elegant and refined on its surface and dramatically insightful on closer inspection. The Act I trio, “Soave sia il vento,” for example, is widely recognized as one of Mozart’s most ravishing creations, but the contrary shape of Don Alfonso’s and the two women’s vocal lines clearly depicts divergent thoughts. In fact, it is often possible in this opera to tell who is siding with whom, and to what degree, in the various ensembles. The characters’ development is apparent in the diversity of their solos: There is melodic simplicity in Guglielmo’s Act I aria, in which he describes his own physical charms. Dorabella’s self-pity in her Act I aria, “Smanie implacabili,” precedes the remarkably cheerful Act II number “È Amore un ladroncello,” in which she adapts to the new situation. Fiordiligi’s progress is even more extreme: Her Act I solo “Come scoglio” is highly dramatic, with leaps, drops, and runs up and down a two-octave range. It is both a supreme example of the show-stopping arias of 18th-century opera, and—in the context of the piece—a parody of the form. Unlike the more frivolous Dorabella, Fiordiligi’s heroic posturing gives way to the genuine human pathos of her extended Act II lament “Per pietà, ben mio, perdona.” Conversely, the maid Despina’s arias are intensely text-driven and less about noble melody, while the lack of extended solos for Don Alfonso is appropriate to the enigma of his motivations and personality.

Met History
The Met gave the opera’s U.S. premiere in 1922, in a production designed by Joseph Urban, with a cast including Florence Easton, Frances Peralta, and Giuseppe De Luca. An English-language production by Alfred Lunt, starring Eleanor Steber and Richard Tucker, opened in 1951. Among those who appeared in this staging over the following years were Teresa Stich-Randall (1961–62) and Leontyne Price (1965) as Fiordiligi, Blanche Thebom as Dorabella (1951–56), and Roberta Peters as Despina (28 performances from 1953 to 1965, and an additional two in 1975 to mark her 25th anniversary with the Met). This same production later moved to the Met’s new Lincoln Center home, where it played in Italian with artists such as Teresa Stratas as Despina and Walter Berry as Don Alfonso (1971–72). A new production, by Colin Graham, appeared in 1982 with Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Maria Ewing, Kathleen Battle, David Rendall, James Morris (as Guglielmo), and Donald Gramm. Revivals featured Pilar Lorengar, Hei-Kyung Hong, Ann Murray, Tatiana Troyanos, Håkan Hagegård, Thomas Hampson, and Cornell MacNeil. In 1996, a new production starred Carol Vaness, Susanne Mentzer, Jerry Hadley, Dwayne Croft, Thomas Allen, and Cecilia Bartoli in her Met debut as Despina. Other notable appearances in this production included Renée Fleming, Dawn Upshaw, Susan Graham, and Paul Groves. James Levine was on the podium for the premieres of the latter two productions, conducting a combined 60 performances of Così over the course of his career. The current staging, directed by Phelim McDermott, premiered in 2017, with Broadway veteran Kelli O’Hara as Despina, alongside Amanda Majeski, Serena Malfi, Ben Bliss, Adam Plachetka, ans Christopher Maltman, conducted by David Robertson.
In December 1789, while he was immersed in composing Così fan tutte, Mozart concluded a letter to his friend Michael Puchberg with an invitation to stop by his apartment for an upcoming private rehearsal of the opera-in-progress. “I’m inviting only you and Haydn,” he wrote. No doubt the composer hoped with this enticement to sweeten the letter’s main point—his latest request for another loan. Beginning in 1788 and continuing into 1790, Mozart was repeatedly compelled to entreat Puchberg, a wealthy Viennese merchant and fellow Freemason, for financial help (usually granted) to weather a series of personal crises.

Oblique though it is, this represents one of the precious few references to Così fan tutte from Mozart’s surviving correspondence. Overall, he was in the midst of an exceptionally difficult period following his initial years of success in Vienna. The composer’s wife, Constanze, had required expensive treatments while pregnant the previous summer, and their daughter (and fifth child) subsequently died within an hour of her birth.

Meanwhile, Emperor Joseph II, in alliance with Russia, had been waging war on the Ottoman Empire. The prospect of being called up suddenly for service, a plot device used in Così that can strike modern audiences as contrived, was in fact all too real when the opera was created. The war also devastated Vienna’s economy, and as a freelance artist, Mozart was especially vulnerable to the fallout. The emperor even contemplated shutting down the court theater to save money but was talked out of that measure.

A little more than a year before, Mozart had been given an official position as Imperial Court Composer, but this was a minor appointment—it merely required him to contribute dances for Carnival—and distinctly inferior to that of Antonio Salieri, who became Kapellmeister at the court in 1788. In fact, it was Salieri who initially began to set the latest text by the court librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte—the pair had collaborated on several previous operas—but he dropped it, for reasons unclear, after composing the first two trios. The resulting availability of the Così fan tutte libretto allowed Mozart to return to the art form he loved above all else, following a two-year hiatus since his most recent commission for the stage.

Also noteworthy in the letter to Puchberg is Mozart’s evident high regard for the new project—high enough for him to test it out on the composer whose opinion he valued most, Franz Joseph Haydn. Soon after, on January 26, 1790, Così premiered at the Burgtheater in Vienna, but Mozart’s streak of misfortunes continued: Emperor Joseph died on February 20, which led to a temporary closure of the theaters in accordance with public mourning protocol. The production had been off to a successful start, but this interruption broke its momentum. Only a handful of performances followed when Così’s run resumed later in the summer.
Otherwise, the genesis and initial reception of Così remain for the most part obscure. Even Da Ponte, looking back over his career decades later in his memoirs, had very little to say about his third and final collaboration with Mozart—in contrast to Le Nozze di Figaro and Don Giovanni. This baffling reticence, suggests musicologist Ian Woodfield, can be attributed to the fact that, by that point, Così’s premise had come to seem so out of tune with contemporary sensibilities that “there was little credit to be gained from the claim of authorship.”

The situation only deteriorated from there. Throughout the 19th century and into the 20th, Così was either ignored, regarded as an embarrassing lapse of taste on the part of Mozart, or, at best, performed using absurdly retrofitted alternate plots. Two extremes of Mozart idolatry predominated at the time—one focused on the “demonic” genius associated with Don Giovanni and another stuck on an image of angelic innocence, of Mozart as an eternal child. Neither could accommodate the problematic Così. The opera provoked charges of triviality and—more tellingly—of decadence. After all, its two young couples are tricked into experiencing an unsettling truth that was anathema to one of Romanticism’s core tenets. As an Enlightenment parable, Così attacks blind faith in passionate love—a faith that, after God had been proclaimed dead, was called on to fill the void. However suspect he seems to us as a cynical, embittered manipulator, Don Alfonso (portrayed as an “old philosopher”) essentially dramatizes a basic process of Enlightenment thinking: the questioning of conventional assumptions through lived experience—and the initial professions of unbreakable love and devotion on the part of both couples are pointedly conventional, as both Mozart and Da Ponte go to great lengths to illustrate.

The Romantic reaction to Così lives on, albeit in modified, updated form. Few other operas that are acknowledged to be masterpieces have had to contend with such enduring resistance—or, at the very least, apologies. One typical response, still frequently encountered, reserves praise for the glories of Mozart’s score but denounces Da Ponte’s libretto as stuck in a benighted era, the charge of “immorality” now replaced by disappointment with the misogyny codified by the title: “All Women Are Like That.” In fact, that choice of title bears Mozart’s stamp—just one instance of his characteristically active involvement in helping to shape the libretto—and was intended as an in-joke alluding to a line and a musical fragment from Le Nozze di Figaro (Don Basilio’s “Così fan tutte le belle!” in Act I). Mozart not only frames the action with this phrase but embeds its musical motto in the overture.

If we consider the behavior of the quartet of lovers, both genders prove themselves to fit the pattern, and the opera ends up demonstrating that, actually, “we’re all like that.” Da Ponte’s original title (Così’s subtitle) was the more conventional La Scuola degli Amanti (The School of the Lovers). It grounds
the opera in a tradition of stage comedy that has roots in the Renaissance and that was fervently seized on by Enlightenment thinkers as a didactic tool, a way of using the leavening agent of humor to provoke insight.

To treat Così as a case of Mozart “transcending” a trivial or even demoralizing text is to overlook the nature of his collaboration with Da Ponte. Indeed, far from supplying heart-rending music in spite of a story that on a superficial level appears nasty and offensive, the composer is thoroughly complicit in underscoring and intensifying the sentimental education Così traces—in all its facets, comic and painful. In her now-classic study Mozart’s Women, the conductor Jane Glover aptly refers to the “Pandora’s box of emotion” that the opera’s creators open up: “The emotional chaos that [the story’s] mischief engendered was potentially vast, and this was real grist to the combined mill of Mozart and Da Ponte.”

The result arguably represents Mozart’s most sophisticated achievement as a musical dramatist. Certainly, Così fan tutte stands apart even within the grand Da Ponte trilogy, the surface simplicity of its plot masking an intricacy of construction that, as David Cairns so memorably puts it, “gave Mozart the ironist and compassionate anatomist of the human heart a perfect field for his gifts.” The opera’s sextet of characters interlocks and recombinates with the provocative geometry of a Tom Stoppard play. We might sketch out the layers of artifice as follows: At the most immediate level, the two sisters, cocooned at first in their unchallenged belief in love; the two soldiers in disguise, observing their beloveds at one remove, caught between a desire to fail in their attempted seductions and their natural competitiveness; the collaborating Despina, another step back; and still another for Don Alfonso, who has set the whole machinery in motion. And behind all these layers, even behind Da Ponte, stands Mozart, providing an omniscient perspective through his music and allowing us to perceive contradictory emotions simultaneously.

Così’s score structures Da Ponte’s love experiment into a perfectly paced sequence of ensembles (from duets to sextet), while the arias pinpoint the degree of individual struggle that the lovers face. Mozart allies Shakespearean depth of characterization in his vocal writing with symphonic elaboration, using his complement of woodwinds in particular to tint and shade the story’s emotional implications. Take Fiordiligi’s moment of capitulation to Ferrando in their second-act duet, when the oboe’s poignant phrase signals that she has passed the point of no return. Here, just as the plot is pressing home Alfonso’s cruel insistence that “women are all like that,” Mozart’s music ensures that we hear her uniqueness, the unmistakably differentiated nature of Fiordiligi compared with Dorabella.

Fiordiligi’s great aria preceding this turn—a model for Beethoven’s Leonore, despite his predictable disdain for Così’s story—is an emblem of the rich ambiguity with which Mozart laces this score. The prominent horn
accompaniment broadcasts her heroic “masculine” resolve but is at the same time a sonic symbol of cuckolding. Parody of the tragic gestures from opera seria merges with the outright comedy, say, of Despina’s various disguises (holdovers from the commedia dell’arte tradition), but also runs up against sincere emotions. Mozart’s exquisitely wrought musical amalgam continually leaves us guessing as to where one tips into the other, and this slipperiness plays as much a part in the fascinating challenge that the opera presents for its interpreters as do its remarkable vocal demands.

_Cosi fan tutte_’s belated reassessment as a work of psychological insight with previously unappreciated contemporary resonance doesn’t remove the opera’s unsettling qualities. Indeed, if today’s audiences are more struck by the inherently monstrous aspects of _Don Giovanni_’s anti-hero, we are also more sensitive to the potential trauma inflicted by Alfonso’s mind games. In _Don Giovanni_, the fury of violent punishment allows at least some form of catharsis, while the balm of forgiveness relights a path out of the chaotic night at the end of _Nozze_. Forgiveness is on offer in _Cosi_, too, when all is revealed and Da Ponte’s final chorus intones the desired lesson, but it rings hollow, the heartbreak unhealed. “There is no doubt at all, from Mozart’s brittle, almost manic setting of these words,” observes Glover, “that he too has lost all faith in this Enlightenment philosophy.”

—Thomas May

_Thomas May is a writer, critic, educator, and translator. His books include Decoding Wagner and The John Adams Reader, and he blogs at memeteria.com._
Harry Bicket

CONDUCTOR (LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND)

**THIS SEASON**  Così fan tutte and Agrippina at the Met, Orphée et Euridice at English National Opera, Handel's Messiah with the New York Philharmonic, Die Zauberflöte and Rusalka at the Santa Fe Opera, and performances across the United States, Europe, and Asia with the English Concert, including concerts of Rodelinda and Samuel Adamson’s Gabriel.


**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS**  In 2007, he became artistic director of the English Concert, and, in 2018, he became music director at the Santa Fe Opera, where he had served as chief conductor since 2013. In Santa Fe, he has led Così fan tutte, Candide, Alcina, Roméo et Juliette, and Fidelio, among many other works. Other recent performances include Handel’s Semele, Rinaldo, Ariodante, Orlando, and Hercules with the English Concert; Ariodante, Orphée et Eurydice, and Carmen at Lyric Opera of Chicago; Dido and Aeneas at Lausanne’s Bach Festival; Rossini’s Maometto II at the Canadian Opera Company; and Rusalka and Le Nozze di Figaro at Houston Grand Opera. He has also led the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Prague Philharmonia, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, among others.

Jennifer Check

SOPRANO (WOODBRIDGE, NEW JERSEY)

**THIS SEASON**  Fiordiligi in Così fan tutte at the Met, the Governess in The Turn of the Screw with On Site Opera, Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 with the Virginia Symphony Orchestra, Verdi’s Requiem with the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra, and The Three Queens at Lyric Opera of Chicago.

**MET APPEARANCES**  Since her 2001 debut as Clotilde in Norma, she has sung more than 200 performances of 20 roles, including Donna Anna and Donna Elvira in Don Giovanni, Desdemona in Otello, Elena in Mefistofele, Marianne Leitmetzerin in Der Rosenkavalier, Berta in Il Barbiere di Siviglia, and Liù in Turandot.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS**  She has sung Abigaille in Nabucco in Montpellier, Lady Macbeth in Macbeth in Nancy, Elisabeth in Don Carlos in concert at Caramoor, the title role of Aida and Leonora in Il Trovatore at Utah Opera, the title role of Ariadne auf Naxos in Toulon, Iphigénie in Iphigénie en Tauride in Valencia, Chrysothemis in Elektra at Michigan Opera Theatre, the title role of Norma at Palm Beach Opera, and Almera in the world premiere of Nico Muhly’s Dark Sisters at Gotham Chamber Opera. She is a graduate of the Met’s Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.
THIS SEASON Dorabella in Così fan tutte at the Met, Olga in Eugene Onegin in Montreal, the title role of Carmen in Victoria, and Pauline in The Queen of Spades at Des Moines Metro Opera.


CAREER HIGHLIGHTS She is a graduate of San Francisco Opera’s Merola Opera Program and the Houston Grand Opera Studio, and she was a Filene Young Artist at Wolf Trap Opera. Recent performances include Emilia in Otello and Maddalena in Rigoletto at the Canadian Opera Company, Olga at Michigan Opera Theatre and in Vancouver, and Flosshilde in Das Rheingold and Maddalena in Montreal. She has also sung Ulrica in Un Ballo in Maschera in Cagliari, Erika in Barber’s Vanessa at Wexford Festival Opera, and Orlofsky in Die Fledermaus, Maddalena, Countess Charlotte in Stephen Sondheim’s A Little Night Music, Mercédès in Carmen, Zulma in L’Italiana in Algeri, the Third Lady in Die Zauberflöte, and Vlasta in Weinberg’s The Passenger at Houston Grand Opera.

Carolyn Sproule
MEZZO-SOPRANO (MONTREAL, CANADA)

Heidi Stober
SOPRANO (WAUKESHA, WISCONSIN)


MET APPEARANCES Oscar in Un Ballo in Maschera, the Celestial Voice in Don Carlo, Gretel (debut, 2011), and Pamina in The Magic Flute.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS In 2008, she became a member of the ensemble at Deutsche Oper Berlin, where her roles have included Donna Elvira in Don Giovanni, Micaëla in Carmen, Pamina in Die Zauberflöte, Oscar, Marguerite in Faust, Gretel, Susanna in Le Nozze di Figaro, Nannetta in Falstaff, and Liù in Turandot. Recent performances include Donna Elvira in concert at New Zealand Opera, Angelica in Handel’s Orlando and Zdenka in Arabella at San Francisco Opera, Dalinda in Handel’s Ariodante at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Antigone in Enescu’s Oedipe at Dutch National Opera, Adina in L’Elisir d’Amore in Dresden, and Miss Thompson / Helen Mills / Adelaide Mills in the world premiere of Ricky Ian Gordon’s The House Without a Christmas Tree at Houston Grand Opera.
Ben Bliss
TENOR (PRAIRIE VILLAGE, KANSAS)

THIS SEASON  Ferrando in Così fan tutte at the Met, Belmonte in Die Entführung aus dem Serail at Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Don Ottavio in Don Giovanni at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Tom Rakewell in The Rake’s Progress at the Glyndebourne Festival, the Steersman in Der Fliegende Holländer in concert with the San Francisco Symphony, Carmina Burana with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Beethoven’s Missa Solemnis with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Bernstein’s Songfest with the Seattle Symphony, and Handel’s Messiah with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra.


CAREER HIGHLIGHTS  Recent performances include Ferrando at the Santa Fe Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Seattle Opera, and in Frankfurt; Don Ottavio at Houston Grand Opera; Peter Quint in The Turn of the Screw at Seattle Opera; Robert Wilson in John Adams’s Doctor Atomic at the Santa Fe Opera; Tamino in Die Zauberflöte at Opera Philadelphia; and Camille de Rosillon in The Merry Widow in concert in Barcelona. He is a graduate of the Met’s Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.

Gerald Finley
BARITONE (MONTREAL, CANADA)

THIS SEASON  Don Alfonso in Così fan tutte at the Met, Iago in Otello in Tokyo, the Traveler / Elderly Fop / Old Gondolier / Hotel Manager / Hotel Barber / Leader of the Players / Voice of Dionysus in Death in Venice and Sharpless in Madama Butterfly at Covent Garden, the title role of Guillaume Tell at the Bavarian State Opera, Don Pizarro in Fidelio in concert in Paris, and Berlioz’s Roméo et Juliette with the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

MET APPEARANCES  Bluebeard in Bluebeard’s Castle, Athanaël in Thaïs, Guillaume Tell, Nick Shadow in The Rake’s Progress, the Count in Le Nozze di Figaro, the title role of Don Giovanni, Golaud in Pelléas et Mélisande, Marcello in La Bohème, J. Robert Oppenheimer in John Adams’s Doctor Atomic, and Papageno in Die Zauberflöte (debut, 1998).

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS  He has sung with many of the world’s leading opera companies, including the Vienna State Opera, Staatsoper Berlin, Canadian Opera Company, Salzburg Festival, and Glyndebourne Festival, among others. He has appeared in multiple world premieres, including in the title role of Tobias Picker’s The Fantastic Mr. Fox at LA Opera and as J. Robert Oppenheimer at San Francisco Opera.
Luca Pisaroni  
BASS-BARITONE (CIUDAD BOLÍVAR, VENEZUELA)

This Season Guglielmo in Così fan tutte and Figaro in Le Nozze di Figaro at the Met; the Four Villains in Les Contes d’Hoffmann at the Vienna State Opera; Don Pizarro in Fidelio in concert in Montreal; Zoroastro in Handel’s Orlando in concert with Il Pomo d’Oro; the title role of Don Giovanni at the Paris Opera, in Zurich, and in concert at Bucharest’s George Enescu Festival; Leporello in Don Giovanni at the Bavarian State Opera; and concert appearances throughout Europe, Asia, and North and South America.

Met Appearances The title role and Leporello in Don Giovanni, the Count and Figaro in Le Nozze di Figaro, Giorgio in I Puritani, Alidoro in La Cenerentola, Caliban in The Enchanted Island, and Publio in La Clemenza di Tito (debut, 2005).

Career Highlights Recent performances include Escamillo in Carmen at Covent Garden, Golaud in Pelléas et Mélisande at Staatsoper Berlin, Claudio in Agrippina in concert with Il Pomo d’Oro, Lorenzo Da Ponte, Jr. / Da Ponte as a Young Man in the world premiere of Tarik O’Regan’s The Phoenix at Houston Grand Opera, Mustafà in L’Italiana in Algeri in Barcelona, and the Four Villains in Baden-Baden.