



**Mozart's COSÌ FAN TUTTE**

**Friday, June 14, 2024 – 7pm**  
**Sunday, June 16, 2024 – 4pm**  
**Tuesday, June 18, 2024 – 7pm**

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The Princeton Festival  
Performance Pavilion  
Morven Museum & Garden

## Mozart's COSÌ FAN TUTTE

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte  
*Sung in Italian with English titles.*

Rossen Milanov, Conductor  
James Marvel, Stage Director  
Blair Mielnik, Scenic Designer  
Marie Miller, Costume Designer/Costume Shop Manager  
Paul Kilsdonk, Lighting Designer  
Carissa Thorlakson, Wig and Makeup Designer  
Cassie Goldbach, Production Stage Manager  
José Meléndez, Répétiteur/Coach

### CAST

Aubry Ballarò, Fiordiligi  
Alexis Peart, Dorabella  
David Walton, Ferrando  
Benjamin Taylor, Guglielmo  
Jeremy Harr, Don Alfonso  
Zulimar López-Hernández, Despina

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**These performances are made possible in part through  
the generosity of Yvonne Marcuse.**

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Large print programs and assistive listening devices are available. No audio or video recording or photography is permitted. Dates, times, artists, and programs are subject to change.



Made possible by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.



# SYNOPSIS

## ACT I

Don Alfonso and his young friends Ferrando and Guglielmo are arguing over the fidelity of women. Alfonso insists that all women are fickle, while Ferrando and Guglielmo refuse to believe that their fiancées, the sisters Fiordiligi and Dorabella, could ever be unfaithful. Don Alfonso wagers that by the end of that very day their fiancées will have betrayed them. He instructs Ferrando and Guglielmo to pretend that they have received orders to go off to war.

Fiordiligi and Dorabella are singing the praises of Guglielmo and Ferrando when Don Alfonso arrives to tell them that their betrothed must immediately depart for the battlefield. The young men arrive and the two couples bid each other a tearful farewell. Despina, the sisters' maid, is preparing their breakfast when Fiordiligi and Dorabella enter lamenting the departure. She counsels them to amuse themselves while their lovers are away, advice that horrifies them. After the sisters leave, Don Alfonso, who has overheard their conversation, recruits Despina to aid him in his plot, asking her to admit two suitors (the disguised Guglielmo and Ferrando) into the house. Fiordiligi and Dorabella are alarmed to find two strange men in their home, and become ever more alarmed when the two men begin courting them. Don Alfonso pretends the men are old friends of his and begs the sisters to accept them. But Fiordiligi staunchly swears fidelity to her absent Guglielmo.

The sisters are lamenting the departure of their fiancés when the two 'strangers' barge in and swallow what seems to be poison. When they collapse, Despina and Don Alfonso go in search of a doctor, leaving Fiordiligi and Dorabella to tend to the apparently dying strangers. A doctor (Despina in disguise) arrives to revive the two afflicted suitors. As they recover, they vow their love to the vexed sisters with even greater passion, while Don Alfonso and Despina try to hide their amusement.

## ACT I

Fiordiligi and Dorabella are persuaded by Despina that there would be no harm in a bit of innocent flirtation. Dorabella chooses the disguised Guglielmo while Fiordiligi chooses Ferrando.

The suitors serenade the two sisters. Fiordiligi goes off for a stroll with Ferrando while Guglielmo courts Dorabella. To his amazement, Dorabella surrenders rather easily. As

they go off together, Ferrando returns with Fiordiligi, who continues to resist him and leaves. When the two young men exchange news of their progress, Ferrando is stricken to learn that his faithless Dorabella has yielded to Guglielmo.

While Don Alfonso and Guglielmo covertly look on, Ferrando makes another attempt to break Fiordiligi's tenacity. To Guglielmo's distress, she too finally yields. Don Alfonso has now won his wager. He tries to console the two young men with his motto: 'così fan tutte' ('all women are like that').

The sisters' weddings to their two suitors are proceeding when a military chorus in the distance signals the 'return' of Ferrando and Guglielmo from battle. The suitors and the notary (again Despina in disguise) hide. A moment later Ferrando and Guglielmo appear in uniform, feigning surprise at the cool reception they receive. When they discover the marriage contract and the notary, they swear vengeance on their faithless fiancées and their suitors. Finally, they reveal their ruse and the two pairs of lovers are reconciled. Or are they?

*~Courtesy of Glyndebourne Productions Ltd.*

*Program continued...*

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS



**Rossen Milanov**, conductor  
*Edward T. Cone Music Director*

Internationally renowned conductor and Princeton Symphony Orchestra (PSO) Edward T. Cone Music Director **Rossen Milanov** looks forward to helping the PSO's popular June performing arts celebration – The Princeton Festival, and collaborating in 2024-25 with established and emerging artists of the orchestral world.

Respected and admired by audiences and musicians alike, he has established himself as a conductor with considerable national and international presence. In addition to leading the PSO, Mr. Milanov is the music director of the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, and chief conductor of the RTV Slovenia Symphony Orchestra in Ljubljana. During his eleven-year tenure with The Philadelphia Orchestra, he conducted more than 200 performances. In 2015, he completed a 15-year tenure as music director of the nationally recognized training orchestra Symphony in C in New Jersey and in 2013 a 17-year tenure with the New Symphony Orchestra in his native city of Sofia, Bulgaria.

Mr. Milanov's programming at the PSO embraces the standard repertoire, rarities, and premieres, performed by superb soloists and featuring celebrated American composers. His exuberant and acclaimed performances are characterized by sharp musical intellect, poetic eloquence, and artistic ingenuity.

Noted for his versatility, Mr. Milanov is also a welcomed presence in the worlds of opera and ballet. He has collaborated with Komische Oper Berlin (Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*), Opera Oviedo with the Spanish premiere of Tchaikovsky's *Mazepa* and Bartok's *Bluebeard's Castle* (awarded best Spanish production for 2015), and Opera Columbus (Verdi's *La Traviata*). He has been seen at New York City Ballet and collaborated with some of the best-known choreographers of our time such as Mats Ek, Benjamin Millepied, and most recently Alexei Ratmansky in the critically acclaimed revival of *Swan Lake* in Zurich with Zurich Ballet and in Paris with La Scala Ballet.

Mr. Milanov is deeply committed to music education, presenting Link Up education projects with Carnegie Hall and the Orchestra of St. Luke's and leading the PSO's annual BRAVO! concerts for thousands of school children. He was named Bulgaria's

Musician of the Year in 2005; he won a 2011 ASCAP award for adventurous programming of contemporary music at the PSO; and he was selected as one of the top 100 most influential people in New Jersey in 2014. In 2017, he was recipient of a Columbus Performing Arts Prize awarded by The Columbus Foundation. He is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and The Juilliard School.

*Photo by Stephen Pariser*



**Aubry Ballarò, soprano**

Quickly gaining attention as a lyric coloratura soprano with exceptional bel canto technique, Aubry Ballarò made her European debut as Lucia in *Lucia di Lammermoor* in 2022 with State Opera Stara Zagora in Bulgaria, and later that season sang the role of Madame Herz in Mozart's *The Impresario* with the Princeton Festival. In 2023, Ms. Ballarò returned to State Opera Stara Zagora for her debut as Violetta Valéry in *La Traviata*. Soon after, she joined Opera Columbus to debut the role of Gilda in *Rigoletto*, and reprised the role in August of 2023 with Opera in the Park, Portland. In 2024, she will return to Columbus for Mozart's Great Mass in C Minor with the Columbus Symphony, make a house and role debut with Opera Grand Rapids as Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, return to perform the role of Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* with the Princeton Festival, and will debut various concert works internationally.

*Photo by Patrick Wilhelm*



**Alexis Peart, mezzo soprano**

Boston-based mezzo-soprano **Alexis Peart** has been praised for her "plush yet robust voice" and "incredible clarity" in roles ranging from baroque operas to world premiere performances. She is a 2023 Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition New England Region Encouragement Award Winner, Boston District Winner, and a 2023/2024 Jane & Steven Akin Emerging Artist with Boston Lyric Opera. Featured performances include Tisbe in *La Cenerentola*, Big Stone in *Eurydice*, and Dorothee (cover)

in *L'Amant Anonyme* with Boston Lyric Opera, world premiere performances as Ada Lovelace in Elena Ruehr's *The Thrilling Adventures of Lovelace and Babbage* with Guerilla Opera, and frequent concert and oratorio performances with ensembles including the Rochester Oratorio Society, Assabet Valley Chorale, Castle of Our Skins, Seaglass Theater Company, and Jubilate Chorale. Alexis is a two-time alumna of the Wolf Trap Opera Studio (2020/2021) and a 2023 Young Artist alumna of Chautauqua Opera. For more information and upcoming performances, visit [alexispeart.com](http://alexispeart.com).

*Photo by Stephen Laschever*



**David Walton, tenor**

Praised for his “clean, clear voice,” **David Walton** dazzles stages across the country to critical acclaim as a versatile lyric tenor to watch. He recently sang Frederic in *The Pirates of Penzance* with “charismatic presence and a sweet pleasing tenor” (Cincinnati Business Courier) and Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* with “an elegant beautifully sung ‘Un aura amorosa’” (Broad Street Review). Performances for the current season include Ramiro in *La Cenerentola* with Toledo Opera, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* with Annapolis Opera, Count Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with North Carolina Opera, Filippo in Haydn’s *L’infedeltà delusa* with Sarasota Opera, Frederic in *The Pirates of Penzance* with Opera San Antonio, and the tenor soloist in Handel’s *Messiah* with Boise Philharmonic and in Mozart’s *Mass in C Minor* with the Columbus Symphony.

As a favorite tenor of bel canto, Mr. Walton has frequented such roles as Ernesto in Donizetti’s *Don Pasquale*, Tonio in *La fille du régiment*, Ramiro in Rossini’s *La Cenerentola*, and Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*.

*Photo by Gillian Riesen*

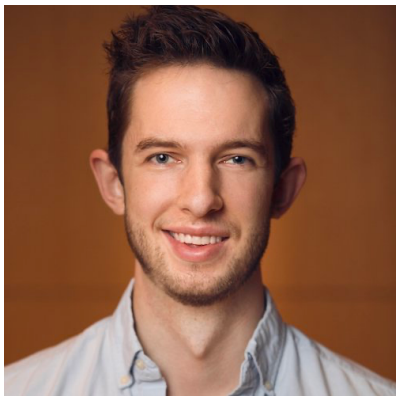
*Program continued...*



### **Benjamin Taylor**, baritone

Baritone **Benjamin Taylor** began the 23/24 season with a return to Opera Philadelphia for *Simon Boccanegra* (Paolo). Other season engagements include debuts with Austin Opera for *Pagliacci* (Silvio), The Princeton Festival for *Così fan tutte* (Guglielmo), and returns to The Metropolitan Opera for *Carmen* (Moralès), Detroit Opera for *Breaking the Waves* (Jan), and Bayerische Staatsoper for *La fanciulla del West* (Bello). He also debuted with Symphoria and Northwest Florida Symphony in *Carmina Burana*. Last season he debuted at Boston Lyric Opera in *La bohème* (Schaunard) followed by debuts with Bayerische Staatsoper for *La fanciulla del West* (Bello), OperaDelaware/Opera Baltimore for *La traviata* (Germont), and Opera Philadelphia for *La bohème* (Schaunard). He returned to The Metropolitan Opera for *The Magic Flute* (Papageno) and *Dialogues des Carmélites* and Berkshire Opera Festival for *La bohème* (Marcello). On the concert stage he made his debut with The Cleveland Orchestra in *La fanciulla del West* (Bello).

*Photo by Jessi Rogers*



### **Jeremy Har**, bass

Praised by Opera News for his “warm, smoothly produced bass” and “knack for animating a line,” bass **Jeremy Harr** is emerging as an exciting young talent to watch. In the summer of 2023, he debuted with Des Moines Metro Opera, performing the Herald and covering Tcheilo in *The Love for Three Oranges*. In the 2023-2024 season, Mr. Harr joined the Metropolitan Opera for their workshop of Jeanine Tesori’s *Grounded*, Salt Marsh Opera as Pistola in *Falstaff*, Bel Cantanti Opera as the Old Man in *Aleko* and the title role in *Gianni Schicchi*, and collaborated with The Why Collective for a Heggie/Handel project entitled *Transport*. He also appeared with Falmouth Chorale as the Bass Soloist in *Messiah*, and he returned to Pacific Northwest Opera, where he sang the title role in *Le nozze di Figaro* and Osmin in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*.

*Photo by Daniel Welch Media*





**Zulimar López-Hernández**, soprano

A native of Puerto Rico, soprano **Zulimar López-Hernández** has been seen on the stages of Royal Albert Hall in London, Utah Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Nashville Opera, Virginia Opera, and Opera de Puerto Rico, among others. She was a National Semifinalist in the Metropolitan Opera Vocal Competition, Third Place winner in the Palm Beach Opera Vocal Competition and was awarded Radio Choice Audience Favorite in the Giargiari Bel Canto Competition.

The 2023-2024 season will feature an anticipated role debut for Ms. López-Hernández as Diana in the mariachi opera *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*, in her return to Minnesota Opera. She also returns to the Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera, reprising the role of Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*.

Operatic highlights include multiple performances with Des Moines Metro Opera including *Tina in Flight*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, and Norina in *Don Pasquale*; and Musetta in *La bohème* with Royal Albert Hall in London.

*Photo by Arielle Doneson*

## PRODUCTION TEAM



**James Marvel**, Stage Director

Internationally acclaimed stage director James Marvel was born and raised in New Orleans and made his Lincoln Center debut in 2008 for the Juilliard Opera Center. Since his professional directing debut in 1996, James has directed over 150 productions and was named *Classical Singer Magazine's* "2008 – Stage Director of the Year." Career highlights include groundbreaking new productions for the Kimmel Center in Philadelphia, Opera Carolina, Opera Boston, Opera Santa Barbara, San Antonio Opera, Kentucky Opera, Virginia Opera, Sacramento Opera, Utah Festival Opera, Aspen Music Festival, Wolf Trap Opera,

Santa Fe Opera, and San Francisco Opera's Merola Program among them. International credits include a new production of *Carmen* for Opera Africa and *Die Zauberflöte* for the Seoul International Opera as well as work in Canada, Scotland, England, Poland, The Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary. James is thrilled to return to Princeton. His maternal forebears were all born in Princeton, and his parents met and married in Princeton before moving to New Orleans.



**Blair Mielnick**, Scenic Designer

*Così fan tutte*, Clarence Brown Theater, *The Consul*, Bijou Theater, with Director James Marvel, scenic associate for Punchdrunk's *The Drowned Man* (London), *Sleep No More* (ongoing, New York), and *Crash of the Elysium* at the Manchester International Festival. *Tribes*, *Slowgirl*, *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, *Venus in Fur*, and *Time Stands Still* at Vermont Stage. *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Aliens*, and *Ella* at Weston Playhouse. *A Home Across the Ocean* and *The Oath* with MTWorks. *To Barcelona!* with Ignited States, *Henry IV 1&2*: La Mama ETC, *Le Dispute*: Primary Stages. Scenic associate for numerous productions at York Theatre. Also Designer for Preston Bailey Design for international events and installations.



**Marie Miller**, Costume Designer/Costume Shop Manager

As resident costumer Marie Miller has kept the Festival in stitches since its inception in 2005, including the designs for last season's *The Barber of Seville*. Other opera-tunities include 15 years with the Opera Festival of NJ, and the Curtis Institute of Music. Among her favorite fabrications: *The Boys Next Door* (McCarter world premiere) and the creation/construction of the 90-ft. long "70-pede" for the Princeton University Alumni P-rade.



**Paul Kilsdonk, Lighting Designer**

Paul Kilsdonk (Lighting Design) is excited to return to Princeton Festival for another fantastic summer season. Paul has also designed many productions with Passage Theater; *White Guy on the Bus*, *Song for the Disappeared*, *The Goldilocks Zone* to note a few. He designed lighting for *The Language Archive* with Bristol Riverside Theatre and *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* at Langhorne Players. Design for McCarter Theatre includes *The Tony Morrison Project*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Eclipsed*, *Coming Home*, *Lucky Girl*. In his staff position as Lighting Supervisor with McCarter Theatre, Paul has been responsible for creating the lighting for hundreds of events, including soloist musicians, jazz trios, rock bands, orchestras, and festive lighting for annual galas.



**Carissa Thorlakson, Wig and Makeup Designer**

Carissa Thorlakson is a New Jersey-based wig and makeup designer. She has created designs for Off-Broadway productions of *Grand Hotel* and *Little Rock*. She has also designed for The Old Globe, A.R.T., Walnut Street Theatre, McCarter Theatre Center, Lookingglass Theatre Company, Hudson Stage Company, Temple University, Olney Theatre Center, the University of Delaware Resident Ensemble Players, The Princeton Festival, and American Repertory Ballet. She has served as a wig and makeup artist at Santa Fe Opera, Sarasota Opera, Washington National Opera at The Kennedy Center, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Signature Theatre, and Round House Theatre.



**Cassie Goldbach, Production Stage Manager**

Cassie Goldbach is a stage manager specializing in music-driven performance. Tours: Blue Man Group's *How to Be A Megastar Tour*, *STOMP!*, Mannheim Steamroller, Apollo's Fire Baroque Orchestra, Donny & Marie Osmond, Tape Face, *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus, Live!*, *The Clairvoyants*, *A Nat King Cole Christmas*, *The Male Intellect: An Oxymoron*, and countertenor Phillippe

Jaroussky. International & National: Teatro Signorelli (Italy), Icastica Arezzo (Italy), Casino Lisboa (Portugal), New World Stages (NYC), Town Hall (NYC), Pershing Signature Center (NYC), Barrow Street Theater (NYC), Artist Lounge Live (Chicago), Columbus Symphony, Cleveland Opera Theatre, Broadway in Chicago, Opera Per Tutti. She currently holds production & stage management residencies with Cleveland Institute of Music Opera Theater and the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival.



**José Meléndez, Répétiteur/Coach**

Pianist José Meléndez is in demand as a vocal coach, conductor, and collaborative artist. He holds a full-time position at the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia, where he is assistant to the music director, vocal coach. He has held professional positions with Glimmerglass Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Opera New Jersey, Hawaii Opera Theatre, Ocean City (NJ) Pops Orchestra, Connecticut

Grand Opera, Bay Area Summer Opera Theater (Conductor), Westminster Opera Theater (Music Director), Indianapolis Opera, and Opera de Puerto Rico. He has worked with the Castleton Music Festival, Curtis Institute of Music, L'Académie Internationale d'Été de Nice (France), Casals Festival, Francisco Viñas International Voice Competition, and Operalia. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance from the Conservatorio de Música de Puerto Rico and a Master of Music degree in Piano Accompanying and Coaching from Westminster Choir College of Rider University, where he studied with Dalton Baldwin, José Ramos Santana, and J.J. Penna.

*Program continued...*

# MUSICIAN ROSTER

## Princeton Symphony Orchestra

**Rossen Milanov**, Edward T. Cone Music Director, ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY

**Kenneth Bean**, Georg and Joyce Albers-Schonberg Assistant Conductor, ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY

June 14, 2024

June 16, 2024

June 18, 2024

### VIOLIN I

Basia Danilow\*

*Concertmaster*

***The George W. Pitcher Chair,***

ENDOWED IN PERPETUITY

Margaret Banks

***The Yvonne Marcuse Chair,***

*in memory of Mark M. Rutzky*

Ruotao Mao

Cheng-Chih Kevin Tsai

### VIOLIN II

Tara Pagano-Toub\*\*

***The B. Sue Howard Chair***

Michelle Brazier

Cheng-Hsun David Tsai

Linda Howard

### VIOLA

Michael Davis\*\*

***The Harriet & Jay Vawter Chair***

Jacqueline Watson

Hannah Burnett

### CELLO

Sofia Nowik\*\*

***The Julian Grant & Peter Lighte***

***Family Chair***

Elizabeth Thompson

### BASS

John Grillo\*

***The Stephanie & Robert Wedeking Chair***

### FLUTE

Scott Kemsley\*\*

***The Lunder/Ezekowitz Family Chair***

Hilary Jones

### OBOE

Kemp Jernigan\*\*

***The Cynthia & Rob Hillas Chair***

Rita Mitsel

### CLARINET

Nuno Antunes\*\*

***The Richard J. & Neil Ann S. Levine Chair***

Gi Lee

### BASSOON

Brad Balliett\*

***The Cynthia & Rob Hillas Chair***

Zach Feingold

### HORN

Steven Harmon\*

***The Dr. Michael L. Barnett Chair***

Jonathan Clark

### TRUMPET

Jerry Bryant\*

***The Donna & Donald Deieso Chair***

Thomas Cook

### TIMPANI

Ian Sullivan\*\*

***The Anne VanLent Chair***

The Princeton Symphony Orchestra is a member of the League of American Orchestras. Named musician chairs are made possible through meaningful gifts to the Orchestra's endowment and innovation funds.

\* Principal player

\*\* Guest principal player