

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN OPERA

Artistic Director: Oliver-John Ruthven

WWW.HGO.ORG.UK

CHARITY NO. 1092649

APR 27, 28, MAY 1 - 5: 7.30 PM

APR 29 & MAY 6: 4.00 PM

# COSÌ FAN TUTTE



THAT'S ALWAYS THE  
WAY WITH WOMEN!

OPERA BUFFA BY  
WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

LIBRETTO BY  
LORENZO DA PONTE

ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY  
MARTIN FITZPATRICK

Guest Music Director:

Production Director:

Set & Costume Designer:

Lighting Designer:

Dorian Komanoff Bandy

Daisy Evans

Katharine Heath

Natalie Lindiwe Jones

**UPSTAIRS AT THE  
GATEHOUSE**

## SOUVENIR PROGRAMME



## HAMPSTEAD GARDEN OPERA

'bringing operatic excellence to Highgate'\*

Hampstead Garden Opera (HGO) was founded in 1990 by the late Dr Roy Budden as an evening class at the Hampstead Garden Institute, and became a charitable trust in 2002 (regd. Charity no. 1092649). Its Trustees are Antonia Leach, Alastair MacGeorge, Martin Musgrave and Roger Sainsbury. The President is Penelope MacKay, AGSM, Hon. ARAM. The company strives to achieve professional standards within an amateur framework, and normally performs two fully-staged operas in English each year. 'Upstairs at the Gatehouse' has been its home since March 2001.

The original intention was to concentrate on the major operas of Mozart, but the repertoire rapidly expanded. Since arriving at 'Upstairs at the Gatehouse', HGO has produced Bizet's *Carmen*, Blow's *Venus & Adonis* (with Purcell's *Dido & Aeneas*), Donizetti's *Mary Stuart* and *Elixir of Love*, Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*, Handel's *Alcina* and *Semele*, Mozart's *Così Fan Tutte*, Figaro's *Wedding*, *The Magic Flute*, Don Giovanni, *Idomeneo* and *The Clemency of Titus*, Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* and *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Puccini's *Il Trittico* and *Madam Butterfly*, Tchaikovsky's *Yevgeny Onegin*, Verdi's *La Traviata* and Vaughan Williams' *Hugh The Drover*.

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If you would be interested in singing with the company, either as a Principal or as a member of the Chorus, please get in touch with Martin Musgrave  
e-mail: [martin.musgrave@hgo.org.uk](mailto:martin.musgrave@hgo.org.uk)

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If you would like to find out more about HGO, visit our website [www.hgo.org.uk](http://www.hgo.org.uk)

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## FRIENDS OF HGO

If you have been moved, amused or uplifted by today's performance, why not join the Friends of HGO? We rely heavily on the support and financial contribution of the Friends to be able to plan for the future with confidence, and to continue in our key objective of providing opportunities for young singers, music directors, production directors and répétiteurs that they cannot easily find early in their professional careers.

Full details from: Roger Sainsbury, Secretary to the Friends of HGO, 88 Dukes Avenue, Muswell Hill, London N10 2QA – e-mail: [rsainsbury@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:rsainsbury@blueyonder.co.uk)

## A VERY BIG THANK-YOU FROM HGO

to the Friends of HGO, to a number of key donors, who prefer to remain anonymous. It is thanks to their loyal and generous support that we are encouraged and enabled to plan with confidence, and to continue in our pursuit of excellence

Alastair MacGeorge, HGO Chairman

\* the citation of a HUGO award from Upstairs at the Gatehouse in 2010 to Alastair and Anne MacGeorge, who accepted it on behalf of HGO

## COSÌ FAN TUTTE

OR THE SCHOOL FOR LOVERS

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte  
English translation by Martin Fitzpatrick

Very little is known about the circumstances surrounding the commissioning and composition of *Così fan tutte*, the third and final collaboration between Mozart and Da Ponte. It is widely accepted that the Emperor Joseph II commissioned the work following the successful revival of *Figaro* in August 1789. It was written in the autumn of that year, and finished by Christmas. During December, Mozart wrote to his friend Michael Puchberg, to whom he was promising to repay money he owed as soon as he had been paid his fee for the new opera: "I am inviting you (and you alone) on Thursday at 10 o'clock in the morning to my place for a small opera rehearsal – I'm inviting only you and Haydn."

Da Ponte originally wrote the libretto for Salieri, who abandoned it after writing two numbers, complaining that it was 'unworthy of musical invention'. He tried it out on other (unidentified) composers, but only Mozart accepted, perhaps on the strength of their earlier joint successes.

Da Ponte's plot is based on a number of sources, combining two main themes, both of them widely used by earlier writers. The first, going back to the 13th century, concerns a man who is so confident that his wife is 'unseducable' that he lays a bet, allowing an admirer to test her fidelity, often with disastrous results. The prime source for this story is found in the second day of Boccaccio's *Decameron*. Shakespeare also takes up the theme in *Cymbeline*, where the distasteful idea of betting on a woman's chastity is made acceptable by shifting the context to mediaeval chivalry. The second theme is the use of disguise by a suspicious husband, posing as an amorous stranger to see if his wife can be trusted. This idea first appears in Ovid's story of *Cephalus*, newly married to the beautiful *Procris*, who is incited by *Aurora* to test her virtue by this device. It reappears in many guises throughout mediaeval literature. Ariosto, one of da Ponte's favourite poets, uses it in *Orlando furioso*. Da Ponte, however, was the first to combine the two themes, the 'bet' and the 'disguise', in an opera libretto. But he paid his respects to Ariosto by borrowing names for his characters from the poet: 'Fiordiligi' 'Doralice' and 'Fiordespina' are all to be found in *Orlando furioso*.

*Così* was first performed in Vienna on 26th January 1790, and was given five more performances before the theatres were closed following the Emperor's death. Thereafter it suffered a strange fate, part neglect, part bowdlerisation to disguise the unsavoury immorality of the text. It was first performed in London in 1811, but not thereafter for 100 years. Only in the second half of the 20th century did *Così* become core repertoire in British opera houses.



## NON-SYNOPSIS

This is a non-synopsis, because it sets the scene, describes the characters, but doesn't spoil the story by giving too much away. Let there be a few surprises even for those who know every line of the opera.

We are in World War II. The scene is a ruined castello near Palermo, Sicily, at the height of the Italian campaign in October 1943. The fighting has moved to the mainland, leaving an ambulance station, a rest camp for those on leave and an ENSA\* concert troupe to entertain the forces. The action takes place within the span of a single 24-hour day.

Two young British lieutenants, Ferrando and Guglielmo (Ferdie and Willie, but we haven't changed the names) are talking to 'Don' Alfonso, a donnish, disillusioned – and wounded – major. They are besotted with the stars of the ENSA Troupe, sisters Fiordiligi and Dorabella, young girls not long out of drama school, daughters of Italian aristos who left Mussolini's Italy in the 1930s. The feelings are mutual: the girls can hear wedding bells.

The experienced Alfonso warns Ferrando and Guglielmo that their fiancées can no more be relied on to be faithful than any other women – it's just the way they are. The officers are outraged, and as the mood darkens, Alfonso decides to put them to the test. They rise to the bait, and recklessly bet the huge sum of £500 that their lovers will remain true to them come what may. Alfonso sets the rules of the game, which they must follow on their honour as soldiers. Note that, as his cleverly flexible plan unfolds, Alfonso is smart enough never to tell his co-conspirators (including Despina) more than they need to know: thus he is always one jump ahead, right up to the end, and they have to obey unquestioningly.

The game begins. Alfonso shatters the sisters' dreams of bliss with the news that their lovers have been called back to the front with immediate effect. Alfonso looks on cynically while the girls sing their tearful farewells: the boys are smug – 'did you hear them', they whisper to Alfonso. 'Keep on playing', he warns them. Both pairs swear eternal love and faithfulness before the officers leave for Palermo harbour. As they depart, the girls and Alfonso sing the famous trio *Soave sia il vento*, bidding gentle winds to carry them safely on their way.

At this point we meet the feisty and streetwise ENSA Unit Manager, Despina, who is in charge of all the backstage arrangements for the shows – which include being bossed about by the sisters. Dorabella is hysterical: Fiordiligi, ostensibly the tougher and more determined of the two, verges on the suicidal. When Despina hears what has happened she is unsympathetic. If these two boys get killed in action, there are plenty more to choose from. Alfonso sneaks in and offers Despina a bribe to join the plot – ciggies in wartime are a valuable currency. He tells her that he has two friends, good-looking and well-heeled, who are longing to meet the sisters: she agrees to effect the introductions.

He doesn't tell her that they are Ferrando and Guglielmo in disguise – and the disguise is so effective that she doesn't spot it. Nor do the girls, who are appalled at this invasion of their grief – but at this point in the story, we begin to discover differences in the reactions of the two girls, Dorabella being the more biddable and Fiordiligi the more indomitable. From now on, it is the job of these two 'foreigners' (part of the allied forces serving in Italy) to lay siege to the hearts of the sisters, to prove, or disprove, their fidelity. This they do with help from Alfonso and Despina who create situations in which the girls' sympathies are engaged. It is a severe character-test of all four participants, full of twists and turns and emotional upheavals, by turns melodramatic, passionate, flirtatious, guilt-ridden and angry. The game goes far beyond its original boundaries, with Alfonso always having one more trick up his sleeve. There's a danger someone will be hurt, especially since each girl chose as her new partner the man who was not her lover when the game started.

Who will win the bet? Will the original relationships survive this severe test or will the new partnerships fare better? How will the perpetrator of the game and his sidekick feel when it's all over? You decide.

\* See Production Director's Note

Alastair Macgeorge – March 2012

## MUSIC DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Since its première in 1790 at Vienna's Burgtheater, critics have been troubled by *Così fan tutte* – not only because of the undertones of misogyny and cynicism that run through Da Ponte's text, but because of the unparalleled beauty of Mozart's score, and the fact that such exquisite sounds are deployed in the service of so base a plot. Literally hundreds of theorists over the last 200 years have offered explanations as to why this is the case – most commonly resembling the clichéd and unfair "Mozart uses beautiful music to rescue Da Ponte's bad text". I will attempt neither a trenchant summary of these views nor an analysis of the opera here, but I would like to offer my own observations about this marriage of music and libretto.

Most importantly, I would like to point out that to label Mozart's music as purely beautiful, and Da Ponte's text as purely cynical, is to ignore the fact that these two features of the opera always operate inversely: when the lovers are honest, they sing straightforward, seemingly-uninspired music. It is not until they begin their elaborate lie, in the farewell scene of Act I (two quintets and the sublime trio *Soave sia il vento* – O breezes be gentle), that the score becomes profoundly beautiful. This beauty, however, is never entirely pure: if Da Ponte may be accused of cynicism, Mozart himself is also guilty. He, too, occasionally mocks the characters when they are at their most sensitive. One particularly beguiling moment occurs in Fiordiligi's Act II aria (*Per pietà* – Dearest love forgive my error), when she begs her original lover to forgive her transgressions. Significantly, Mozart chooses to accompany her plea with an exposed solo for the French horn – an 18th-century musical symbol of cuckoldry – that simultaneously evokes her own infidelity while reminding us, the listeners, that her "faithful" lover is at that very moment seducing her sister. Da Ponte's text supplies only pathos; it is Mozart's music that cruelly taunts character and listeners.

Ultimately, *Così fan tutte* is about a loss of innocence, a fall from grace. Over the course of the opera the lovers are educated, exchanging their idealized optimism for experience and realism, and it is this shift that Mozart portrays so stunningly, and so hauntingly, through the charmed air of melancholy beauty that pervades the piece. It may lack the intrigues of a Figaro or the seductive power of a Don Giovanni, but *Così* is powerful precisely because the music is at odds with the libretto, the heavenly sounds linked to deception, pain and knowledge at the expense of happiness. If the music did not explore these darker reaches of human experience, the whole work would remain an exercise in parody and satire; similarly, if Da Ponte's libretto did not provide a setting that foregrounds this very aspect of Mozart's music, the beauty would not seem so strange – so disturbing but so pleasing.



Operatic performing styles have changed dramatically in the two centuries since Mozart's heyday, and my initial approach to *Così fan tutte* was to return to the practices of the late 18th Century. My goal was not to turn this production into a didactic display of historical information, but rather to conjure a lost sound-world, and realize the full expressive potential of Mozart's score.

When I first began my research on historical practices in Mozart's operas, I believed that my discoveries would involve new information about how singers used their voices – whether and how much they vibrated, for example, and other Early Music-type issues. I was surprised to learn, however, that the differences went far beyond the hows of singing, and instead involved what people sang.

Mozart's operas are products of a musical world that was obsessed with ornamentation and improvisation. No written text was sacred: performers were expected to leave their stamp on a work by adding notes to it, and throughout his operas Mozart consistently offers singers many opportunities to do just that, from pauses in arias where a cadenza can be inserted, to repeating phrases that can be embellished the second time.

In our production of *Così*, we see the musical text not as a finished document, but as a starting point. True to 18th-century practices, cadenzas will be fitted to the individual singers, and will vary with each performance. Ornamentation will likewise be mostly unpremeditated. Even my recitative continuo, which I will play on a fortepiano similar to Mozart's, will be active and pervasive, participating in the dramatic action rather than accompanying it. (Would Mozart, the great showman, have sat idly at the keyboard and strummed chords only at cadences?)

Audience members expecting the same notes they hear in conventional performances of *Così* may be shocked or unsettled by the liberties we take with Mozart's score, but in many ways it is this freedom that ultimately allows the beauty, balance, and variety of this music to shine through, and that shows off Mozart's genius for drama, pacing and characterization. Of course, these expressive additions, no matter how well-practised, can be dangerous, but the attendant risks are worthwhile: no work of Mozart's is as personal or fragile as *Così*. We hope that these performances will be as unique and moving as the opera itself.

Dorian Komanoff Bandy – April 2012

## PRODUCTION DIRECTOR'S NOTE

ENSA and World War II Italy

On the evening of the 9th July 1943, Allied troops invaded Sicily. After a successful campaign, they secured the island and carried on the invasion into mainland Italy. What followed was one of the most vicious and drawn out battles in World War II history. As one account remembers, "it was really a ridiculous situation. We were battle weary, depleted, depressed, outnumbered and generally mucked about." Troops would be given four days respite and sent to safe camps set up in Italian towns and villas. There they would rest with much craved distraction provided by the Entertainments National Service Association unit stationed there.

ENSA was set up by Basil Dean and the British Government in 1939 to entertain troops abroad and was a recognised unit within the Navy, Army and Air Force, consisting of actors, dancers, singers and musicians. They often found themselves within meters of the front line, especially in Italy. Famous alumni from ENSA include Tommy Cooper, Spike Milligan, Gracie Fields, Vera Lynn, George Formby and even a young Frank Sinatra. They would arrive at their billets and find a trail of destruction, often performing in the open air or wreckages of theatres. Basil Dean himself recalls, of an ENSA troop in Italy:

"The company 'Eve on Leave' arrived at Forlì immediately after the town had been heavily bombed. The artistes took over the two top floors of a hotel that had been burnt, and set to work with buckets and mops, scrubbing the floors and rigging up the two dormitories before giving a show that evening in the city square, the smoke of conflict still playing about them."

During the Italian Campaign, thousands of Allied lives were lost, so much so that troops began to merge to make up numbers. Therefore British and American troops started to find themselves within the same units. "What we have to remember about the war in Italy then is that on that front were the biggest proportion of the war's veterans, British and Americans alike." The American troops were better paid than the British, and brought with them things Europe had either never seen (nylon stockings) or hadn't seen for years; (chocolate and silk underwear). British men were also becoming thin on the ground. With US GIs making a striking impact on British girls, the marriage rate between them soared. The GIs quickly earned the catchphrase 'overpaid, oversexed and over here'.

When I came to devise a concept for this production of *Così Fan Tutte*, it was important to find the correct context for these definite characters to inhabit, and find a meaning behind their wild mood changes and attitudes. It seemed appropriate to give it a wartime setting with no idea of what the future might hold and in a micro society built far from home with people you'd never normally encounter, where motivation, morals and hope become plastic, changeable and precarious.

Therefore I welcome you to *Così* set in October 1943 in Sicily. Dorabella, Fiordiligi and Despina have arrived with their ENSA troupe to entertain Guglielmo, Ferrando and 'Don' Alfonso and their camp. It is important to understand the strain on them all – the lack of supplies (nylons, cigarettes and friendship), and what significance it was to be American. It is also important to understand that this society could be blown to smithereens in seconds. In a world so fragile and so charged with high tension and hope, what would you do for a few moments of happiness?

Daisy Evans – April 2012



## CAST

APR 27, 29 MAT,  
MAY 1,3,5

APR 28, MAY2,  
MAY 4, 6 MAT

Co-stars of the ENSA troupe  
**FIORDILIGI**

Maud Millar

Faustine de Monès

**DORABELLA**  
(her sister)

Sarah Denbee

Katie Slater

Young British officers on leave  
**FERRANDO**  
(in love with Dorabella)

Zachary Devin  
(also May 6, not May 5)

Nick Pritchard  
(also May 5, not May 6)

**GUGLIELMO**  
(in love with Fiordiligi)

Henry Manning

Jake Daichi Gill

**DESPINA**  
Unit Manager of the ENSA troupe

Marion Wyllie

Alice Rose Privett

**'DON' ALFONSO**  
A wounded Major in the British army

Daniel Roddick  
(also May 4, not Apr 29, May 5)

Barnaby Beer  
(also Apr 29, May 5, not May 4)

### MEMBERS OF THE ENSA TROUPE, SOLDIERS, ETC.

Claudia Conway, Jessica Eccleston, Milo Harries, Paul Ives, Claudia Myles,  
Delioma Oramas-Dorta, Brentan Schilling & Alice Usher

## PRODUCTION TEAM

PRODUCTION DIRECTOR Daisy Evans

SET & COSTUME DESIGNER Katherine Heath

LIGHTING DIRECTOR Natalie Lindiwe Jones

STAGE MANAGER Emily Collin

## MUSIC TEAM

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Oliver-John Ruthven

GUEST MUSIC DIRECTOR / CONDUCTOR Dorian Komanoff Bandy

RÉPÉTITEURS Yau Cheng & Emily Senturia

## MUSICA POETICA LONDON

VIOLIN I Anna Curzon (leader)

VIOLIN II Dominika Feher

VIOLA Claudia Norz  
Emily Senturia

CELLO Kate Conway

FLUTE I Renate Sokolovska

FLUTE II Samantha Pearce

OBOE I Hannah Porro

OBOE II Nicola Hands

CLARINET I Anna Hashimoto

CLARINET II Kimon Parry

BASSOON I Rhonwen Jones

BASSOON II Murray Richmond

HORN I Anna Douglas

HORN II Meredith Moore

FORTEPIANO Dorian Komanoff Bandy

## ARTISTS

### Dorian Komanoff Bandy (Guest Music Director & Conductor)

Chosen as one of the Los Angeles Times's "101 Remarkable Young People," Dorian has garnered acclaim for his "lighthearted mastery over gesture and dramatic development" in performances of 18th-century opera and orchestral music. His varied background includes baroque violin studies with Rachel Podger and fortepiano with Malcolm Bilson, and his operatic conducting credits with New York-based baroque orchestra Les Petits Violons range from Mozart's Don Giovanni to lesser-known works by Rousseau, Handel, Haydn, Lully, and Purcell. In addition to his performing activities, Dorian is equally committed to scholarly pursuits: he holds degrees summa cum laude in musicology and literature from Cornell University, and as a three-year Presidential Research Fellow he undertook extensive research on historical performance practices in Mozart's operas. He is 2010 recipient of the coveted Marshall Scholarship. For more information, visit [www.doriankomanoffbandy.com](http://www.doriankomanoffbandy.com).

**Barnaby Beer ('Don' Alfonso)** Barnaby has delved into the school of method acting; he actually does have a sore left shoulder. After his HGO début as the Showman/Sergeant in Hugh the Drover in November, Barnaby is delighted to be returning to sing 'Don' Alfonso, a role he first sang whilst studying Modern Languages at Bristol University. He has also been promoted, and is now a Major - and hopes that his costume fits more snugly! Other recent productions include Benoît (La Bohème) for Silent Opera and a Menotti double bill at the King's Head Theatre with Open Door Opera. Barnaby works in artist management.

**Yau Cheng (Répétiteur)** Hong Kong-born pianist Yau is an active piano duo sight-reader, page-turner, and orchestral reduction player. She earned her MMus and BMus in Piano from Indiana University Bloomington (USA) under the tutelage of Emile Naoumoff, and another MMus in Chamber Partner Recruitment with Caroline Palmer at Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Her favourite place has been the Académie Internationale de Musique at Château de Rangipont (France) where she could watch swans cross the Seine River while practising. Away from the piano, Yau makes pretty wavy slurs on music notation software Finale and says 'hi' to every animal that walks past her.

**Emily Collin (Stage Manager)** Emily is from Ontario, Canada, where she Stage Managed community theatre for the Theatre Ontario Festival and Apprentice Stage Managed for Equity while in Toronto. Prior to this she lived and taught Drama in Seoul, South Korea. She has a BA Hons in Theatre studying arts and stage management. While in the UK she has assisted at Live Nation events, and Stage Managed at the Brockley Jack Studio Theatre, the Arcola and recently Fairfield Halls' production of Lysistrata in the Ashcroft Theatre. Emily currently works at the National Theatre and is delighted to be returning to HGO for her second production.



**Claudia Conway (Ensemble)** Claudia's singing career most likely peaked aged 16, when she performed as 2nd Boy in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Royal Opera House. She has since enjoyed performing in a variety of contexts, including two choruses with HGO, opera cabaret (such as 'Madame Claudia Buchlerova Presents: Opera Death'), with the Haydn Budapest Baryton Trio at a music festival in Slovakia ([www.lb1festival.eu](http://www.lb1festival.eu)), and, most recently, performing as part of Jewish Book Week. She is otherwise an editor in educational publishing, though currently on leave, and mother to Esmé (nearly four) and Ziggy (nine months).

**Sarah Denbee (Dorabella)** Sarah is currently a postgraduate student at Trinity Laban Conservatoire, supported by the Kathleen Roberts scholarship, and studying with Ameral Gunson. She is a member of the Mentor Scheme partnership between Trinity and the Royal Opera House. As well as her love of opera, Sarah also has a busy oratorio and choral schedule. Upcoming performances include Marcellina and cover of Cherubino in *Weimar*, Germany, Tilly in McNeff's *The Secret Garden*, and performances of *Messiah*, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, and Mozart's *Requiem*. Some 'interesting' moments so far in her career have been singing Spem in *Alum* in an Australian canyon, appearing on the BBC's 'One Show' singing arrangements of viewers' complaints, and doing a Kylie dance routine in a Purcell opera!

**Faustine de Monès (Fiordiligi)** Faustine was born in France. At 15 she created the role of *Les Fables Enchantées* (Isabelle Aboulker) in the Grand Theatre of Limoges, and the Theatre XIII in Paris, where she also sang *Pamina* (*Die Zauberflöte*) and the *Fire* (*L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*). In London her repertoire includes *Zerlina* (*Don Giovanni*) with the Complete Singer, *Cobweb* (*Midsummer Night's Dream*) at the Barbican Theatre, the title role in *Semele* with Benslow Music festival, and *Burgundy White* at the Christies' world première of Peter Cowdrey's *Lovely Ladies*. She was awarded first prize in both the UFAM (Paris) and Leopold Bellan competitions and is a 2012 Britten-Pears young artist. Faustine is currently studying on the masters program at the GSMD studying with Robert Dean. Future engagements include *Susanna* with Woodhouse Opera Festival, and recitals in France and Canada. As a Parisian soprano, Faustine is strangely enough neither rude nor a diva. Living in England for five years she has really fallen in love with London, despite the endless search for a decent croissant!

**Zachary Devin (Ferrando)** American tenor Zachary hails from the small Midwestern town of Robinson, Illinois. After receiving degrees in music from Millikin University and the prestigious Rice University he travelled to London where he is currently studying at the Royal Academy of Music under the guidance of Phil Dohan. Zack made his London stage debut as *Jupiter* in HGO's production of Handel's *Semele*. In June he will be making his European début in Budapest as *Peter Quint* in Britten's *Turn of The Screw*. Other recent roles include, *Tamino* (Mozart: *The Magic Flute*), *Ralph Rackstraw* (Gilbert and Sullivan: *HMS Pinafore*), *Don Ottavio* (Mozart: *Don Giovanni*), *Satyavan* (Holst: *Savitri*), *Mr. Erlanson* (Sondheim: *A Little Night Music*), *The Witch* (Humperdinck: *Hansel and Gretel*), *Hugh* (Vaughan-Williams: *Hugh the Drover* with HGO), and *Tito* (Mozart: *La Clemenza di Tito*).

**Jessica Eccleston (Ensemble)** Jessica was a choral scholar at St Catherine's, Cambridge, and graduated with a 2:1 in Music. While there she gave many recitals at venues such as Kettle's Yard and in the professional Kellaway Series. She premiered new works by Jeremy Thurlow and Ewan Campbell among others, and took part in many operas and musicals, including *Acis and Galatea*, *Suor Angelica* and *L'Orfeo*. She played the lead part of *Louis* in the première of Jonathan Pease's new operetta *These Things Happen*. Since coming to London she has sung the role of "Suor Dolcina" in *Suor Angelica* with Fulham Opera and Queen's Opera. Jessica currently studies on the City Lit Opera course and has been cast as *Dido* in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* in this term's opera scenes. She has toured worldwide doing recordings, broadcasts and concerts with choirs and as a soloist, a highlight being on live national Hong Kong television. Last year she was stuck working in a boarding school; having perfected her skills at baking she can now make a mean banana bread.

**Daisy Evans (Production Director)** Daisy is topped with orange hair and has a penchant for breakfast cereals. She is the recipient of the Sky Arts Futures Fund for her work developing and directing 'Silent Opera'. Directing credits include, *La Bohème* (Silent Opera), *Savitri/Wandering Scholar* (Grimeborn), *Dido and Aeneas* (Silent Opera), *The Poison Garden* (Louis d'Heudieres - Grimeborn), *Yevgeny Onegin* (Oxford Opera), *The Garden Party* (Christopher Meux - Little Opera Company), and *A Dinner Engagement* (Berkeley - King's Opera). Theatre credits include *Orpheus* and *Eurydice* (King's Players), *Bacchae* (Waistcoat Theatre), *The Tempest* (Waistcoat Theatre) and *Our Country's Good* (King's Players). She looks forward to new and exciting things including *L'Orfeo* (Silent Opera), *The Turn of the Screw* (Budapest), *Gianni Schicchi* (RCM/London Youth Opera), and touring the tulip fields in Holland. As an assistant director she has worked at Glyndebourne, ROH and ENO. She will not accept invitations to dance or turn about the room, or indulge in swordplay.

**Jake Daichi Gill (Guglielmo)** Jake studied music at Royal Holloway, University of London, where he first began his vocal studies with Graham Titus, who remains his teacher. He has specialised in the hyper-sensitive romantic poetry of German *Lieder* on one hand (including Schubert's *Winterreise* and alternative settings of Schumann/Heine's *Dichterliebe*) and the laddish, insensitive baritone roles of Mozart - *Figaro*, *Masetto* (*Don Giovanni*), and now *Guglielmo* - on the other. He has performed pious choral works including *Bach Magnificat* and *Finzi In Terra Pax* and not-so-pious lute-songs by *Campion* and *Jones*. In September he will join the Guildhall postgraduate course. He is also a jazz guitarist, Andean multi-instrumentalist and author of a dissertation on R&B legend R. Kelly.

**Milo Harries (Ensemble)** Milo joined HGO almost directly from Cambridge, where, having given two recitals at Emmanuel College and performed (with permission) on Trinity College May Ball's main stage, he took a first class honours degree in English. His début with HGO last autumn was as a Gloucestershire lad in *Hugh the Drover*. Earlier dramatic paraphernalia includes a flying bike (in Glyndebourne Festival Opera's 2004 production of *Die Zauberflöte*), a pink sequined dress (as *Mabel* in a school production of *The Pirates of Penzance*), and a rather fetching gold bolero jacket that the London Children's Ballet wouldn't let him keep.



**Katharine Heath (Set & Costume Designer)** Katharine trained in theatre design at Wimbledon School of Art and Central Saint Martin's. Recent set and costume designs include: *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Two Worlds of Charlie F* (Theatre Royal Haymarket); *Savitri*, *The Wandering Scholar* (The Arcola); *La Bohème* Silent Opera, *Dido and Aeneas* Silent Opera, *Flocking*, *Edward Sharpe* (The Old Vic Tunnels); *A Doll's House*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Chaika* Casino (Theatre Delicatessen); *Free Run* (The Southbank Centre); *Othello* (The Secret Theatre, New York); *Lift & Separate* (V&A Museum); *'night, Mother*, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)* (Red Lion Theatres). Katharine is an associate artist of Theatre Delicatessen, is assistant director with dreamthinkspeak, and has an unhealthy addiction to online trivia games.

**Paul Ives (Ensemble)** Paul embarked on musical comedy at four, progressing later to Gilbert & Sullivan before developing an engineering career in naval and airborne command systems. In the 1980s and 1990s he was a founder member of the vocal ensemble *Musicale*, studying privately with Pamela Bowden. Stage roles at that time included *Antonio* (*The Marriage of Figaro*); *Count Cigarillos* (*La Périchole*) and *Maestro Spinellocchio* (*Gianni Schicchi*). He first sang with HGO in *Mary Stuart* (2004) and has appeared in eight subsequent HGO productions. Paul studies with Ryland Davies and has also sung with Opera South since 2005 (*Faust*).

**Natalie Lindiwe Jones (Lighting Director)** Natalie is a freelance lighting designer and technician. Her recent achievements include managing the critically acclaimed VAULT festival, where she designed *La Bohème* for Silent Opera. Trained at Wimbledon College of Art and in the production department at Laban Conservatoire for Contemporary Dance, she designs for site-sympathetic work, physical and dance theatre. Her other work includes several Punch-Drunk productions, at BAC, The Place and Watermans Arts Centre.

**Henry Manning (Guglielmo)** Henry read Economic History at Edinburgh before taking the natural step of studying post-graduate singing at the Royal Academy of Music. A pupil of Robert Dean, roles include *Schaunard* (*La Bohème*), *Sid* (*Albert Herring*), *Aeneas* (*Dido and Aeneas*), *Papageno* (*Die Zauberflöte*), and *Billy* (*Billy Budd*). Henry has sung with Garsington Opera since 2010 and in the 2012 season will return again to the company for Offenbach's *La Périchole*. Henry has taken part in master classes with eminent artists including Gerald Finley, Sir Thomas Allen, Graham Johnson, Dame Ann Murray, and the director David Pountney. Recent opera engagements have included *Schaunard* with Silent Opera in February, and in March fulfilling a life-long dream by performing the role of chorus member number 73 in Verdi's *Aida*, to widespread critical acclaim.

**Maud Millar (Fiordiligi)** Maud learnt early in life to sing for her supper as a regular on the Irish wedding and funeral scene of West London. Whilst she still enjoys the occasional rousing bout of "Danny Boy", she mainly avoids repertoire for which the principal method of accompaniment is the harmonica. Her recent concert engagements (aside from Auntie Kathleen's beautiful service in Kilburn) have included Berlioz's *Les Nuits d'Été* with the London-based orchestra *Sinfonia D'Amici* and Adès' *Five Eliot Landscapes* with the LSO and the composer at LSO St. Luke's. Operatic roles include *Tytania* (*A Midsummer Dream*) and *Susanna* (*Le Nozze di Figaro*). Plans for 2012 include *Elvira* (*Don Giovanni*) at the Orpheus and *Bacchus Festival* and *Nella* (*Gianni Schicchi*) for Opera Holland Park.

**Musica Poetica London (Orchestra)** Musica Poetica London was established in 2010 by violinist Dorian Komanoff Bandy and harpsichordist Oliver-John Ruthven. The group was initially conceived to explore the rich but neglected 17th century trio sonata repertoire, but has since expanded rapidly; it now performs in a variety of configurations, ranging from violin-harpsichord duo to chamber orchestra, and has met with particular success as the resident baroque orchestra for Hampstead Garden Opera Company. In May 2011, the ensemble was a finalist for the Nancy Nuttall Early Music Prize, and is a finalist in the same competition in May 2012. The founder members of MPL are excited to have been chosen as Young Artists on the forthcoming Brighton Early Music Scheme, starting in September 2012. For more information on their future concerts, visit [www.doriankomanoffbandy.com](http://www.doriankomanoffbandy.com).

**Claudia Myles (Ensemble)** Claudia, born in London, is studying with John Evans at the GSMD on their MMus Vocal Studies Programme after graduating with a BMus (hons) in 2010. She has been performing regularly in concerts and master classes at the Barbican, Guildhall School, Darwin College, Cambridge and St Peter's Eaton Square, and had the privilege of touring Italy with GSMD in Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*. She won 1st Prize in The Worshipful Company of Chartered Surveyors' Ensemble contest and did a season with British Youth Opera in *La Bohème*. This year she has done a series of Opera Scenes in nationwide concerts, as Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Leonora in *Fidelio*, Agathe in *Der Freischütz* and the title role in *Suor Angelica* with the GSMD Opera Ensemble. Claudia was chosen to sing the GSMD main Opera's *Dialogue des Carmélites* and *Iolanta*. In addition, she had her début at Wigmore Hall in May 2011. Claudia also has been known to indulge in ballet and karate in her spare time - she holds the silver medal in the BTKA Nationals for Karate Fighting!

**Delioma Oramas-Dorta (Ensemble)** Since moving from her native Spain to London a few years ago, Delioma has been able to pursue her life-long love for singing and for Opera by taking private lessons with some wonderful teachers in this Mecca of music. This is her first experience in an opera production, and she is absolutely delighted to have joined HGO as a member of the ensemble. Earlier, Delioma has been a member of choirs performing a mix of operatic, folk and religious music. She combines her interest in music with her day job as a University researcher, and with frequent hip-shaking in Salsa fans parties and gets-together.

**Nick Pritchard (Ferrando)** After three years at Oxford Nick will abandon the academic life to study with Russell Smythe at the RCM. Opera credits include *Count Almaviva* (*Barber of Seville*), *Prologue/Quint* (*Turn of the Screw*), *Alfred* (*Die Fledermaus*), *Tamino* (*Magic Flute*), and *Prince Hilarion* (*Princess Ida*), for which Nick won the award for Best Supporting Actor at the Buxton International G & S Festival in 2010. Concert appearances include Britten's *War Requiem*, and *Winter Words*, Handel's *Messiah*, *Israel in Egypt* and *Acis and Galatea*, Dvorak's *Stabat Mater*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solenne*, Monteverdi's *Vespers*, Finzi's *Dies Natalis*, Vaughan Williams' *On Wenlock Edge*, and Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* and *St John Matthew Passions* (Evangelist and arias). Nick sings with many of Britain's leading consorts and choirs, including The Sixteen, Gabrieli Consort, Ex Cathedral, Magnificat, Alamire, Polyphony and Monteverdi Choir. Nick has loved his first HGO show, and feels his acting has come on no end, not least because he now almost looks as if he enjoys dancing. Nick is an ardent Tottenham supporter, which has bred in him a healthy cynicism about life in general.



**Alice Rose Privett (Despina)** Alice graduated from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 2011 with a first class degree and the Concert Recital Diploma; she is currently studying on an MA course at the Royal Academy of Music with Lillian Watson, where she is the Jennifer Vyvyan scholar 2012. Next year she will go on to study on the Opera course at the RAM. She is the winner of the Susan Longfield Award and Royal Overseas League Ensemble Category with 'Cries of London' (2011), and the Joan Chisell Schumann Prize 2012. The high point of Alice's operatic career so far has been her role of Back End of a Cow in Brundibár (Hans Krása - Chethams School of Music). Since then she has moved onto slightly more distinguished roles, including Poppea (Longborough Festival Young Artists) and cover Susanna (Figaro - BYO). This summer she looks forward to singing Papagena/cover Pamina for Longborough. In her spare time Alice enjoys 'experimental' baking and swimming (not simultaneously).

**Daniel Roddick ('Don' Alfonso)** Daniel is delighted to return to sing with HGO once again, having sung the roles of Papageno and Publio in the 2010 productions of Magic Flute and La Clemenza di Tito. Daniel was born in Cardiff and studied Engineering, Economics & Management at Oxford University. He then worked in management consultancy and finance, becoming a Chartered Financial Analyst charterholder. In 2007 Daniel left the world of finance to study singing, first at Trinity College of Music and then at the Royal Academy of Music where he studied under the tutelage of Glenville Hargreaves and was awarded an MA. Accused of causing the financial crisis when he left the city, Daniel is now back trying to salvage the economy, working for a private equity firm.

**Oliver-John Ruthven (Artistic Director)** Oliver-John began his musical career as a chorister at Westminster Abbey. He graduated in 2006 with a first class honours in Music from the University of Manchester. He has been Music Director of HGO since 2008. He has recently completed a year as keyboards apprentice to the Monteverdi Choir under Sir John Eliot Gardiner and has performed at the Proms and across Europe as a member of the English Baroque Soloists. He has previously held positions as cover-conductor to the Royal Ballet and Acting Director of the Halle Youth Choir. Oliver-John is in demand as a continuo player, and is harpsichordist and co-director for Musica Poetica London. He is also busy as a freelance tenor, singing for Philharmonia Voices and as a tenor deputy for Stile Antico. O-J is also a keen rock climber and cyclist, and hopes one day to have time to play cricket!

**Brentan Schilling (Ensemble)** Brentan is a recent BMus Graduate from the University of Queensland (UQ) in Australia. He has a repertoire encompassing the genres of Music Theatre, Opera, Oratorio, Lieder & Pop/Rock Music. Brentan has performed as Lead singer for Juke Box Legends, a rock'n'roll band in Australia, and starred in various Musicals & Operas in London and Australia. He studied Voice for four years (2006 -2010) with James Christiansen (formerly Chorus Master of Opera Queensland) and consulted teachers Stewart Cameron (Founder of Operatiff) and Gregory Massingham (Head of Opera at Griffith University Conservatorium). He recently studied for 6 months with Ryland Davies (vocal teacher at the Royal Academy).

**Katie Slater (Dorabella)** Katie read English and French at Nottingham University before studying for a Masters at Trinity College of Music where she is the Cordelia Moses Scholar. Now in her final year, Katie learns with Ameral Gunson and Alastair Young and has participated in Master Classes with Robert Tear, Donald Maxwell and Susan Bullock. Operatic roles include Hansel (Hansel and Gretel), Laura (Iolanthe) and Olga (Yevgeny Onegin) with Kate Valentine. Particular highlights include playing a robot (Robot 1, had numbers been allocated) in Mumbai in the blockbuster Love Story: 2050. Katie has sung with Opera Holland Park and will return this season for Falstaff and Yevgeny Onegin. Still no call from Bollywood.

**Alice Usher (Ensemble)** This is Alice's first production with HGO. She also sings with Southgate Opera, having recently played Julie in La Vie Parisienne and performed in the chorus in last season's Elixir of Love. Alice is a member of the BBC Symphony Chorus, which is preparing to sing at this summer's BBC Proms. Currently managing education projects with the Philharmonia Orchestra, her interests include English literature, musical charities, international development and travelling to Africa as often as possible.

**Marion Wyllie (Despina)** Marion is under the tutelage of Yvonne Kenny at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. Currently on the Masters course, she gained her BMus from the school where she has studied roles such as Rosalinda Die Fledermaus, Cleopatra Cesare and Frasquita Carmen and two roles in a new opera by Peter Longworth – Pavan for an Invisible Princess. Marion also sang Pamina for Zezere Arts Festival, Portugal. Oratorio repertoire includes Messiah, Fauré and Mozart Requiems and The Armed Man Karl Jenkins. During her spare time, Marion likes to visit her baby niece and nephew, Finlay. She has been successful at sparking Finlay's interest in languages but was sad to tell him his Auntie can't speak every language in the world!

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