



Sydney Conservatorium of Music Opera School

La finta giardiniera Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Saturday 19 October, 7.00pm

Tuesday 22 October, 7.00pm

Thursday 24 October, 11.00am

Saturday 26 October, 2.00pm

Music Workshop, Sydney Conservatorium of Music



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY



SYDNEY
CONSERVATORIUM
OF MUSIC

Sydney Conservatorium of Music Opera School presents

La Finta Giardiniera

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto by Giuseppe Petrosellini

Opera in two parts

Sung in Italian
with English surtitles

Approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes,
including 20 minute interval following Part
One.

Music Director Dr Stephen Mould

Director Elsie Edgerton-Till

Production Manager Thomas Wade

Designer Isabella Andronos

Lighting Designer Martin Kinnane

This performing edition (published by Bärenreiter/Alkor Kassel), has been supplied by Clear Music Australia as exclusive hire agents for Baerenreiter/Alkor.

The production on Thursday 24 October will be conducted by Kohki Iwaski and the continuo part will be performed by Dr Stephen Mould. All other performances will be conducted by Dr Stephen Mould.

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La Finta Giardiniera or 'The disguised gardener' is your typical opera: set in Italy with a confusing plot involving love triangles, cross-dressing, characters pretending to be others, characters believing that they are gods and many spurned suitors.

Confused? Join the cast: you will be as confused as the characters, most of whom don't know who's in disguise, who loves whom, or who is sane or mad.

Composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart at the tender age of 18 – well before our students usually start their undergraduate studies – this farcical opera is fabulous fun!

This 'opera buffa' was commissioned by Maximilian III for the Munich Carnival in 1775. In 1780 a Singspiel version with dialogue spoken in German was staged several times, notably in Salzburg. In 1978 the original Munich score, long considered lost, was rediscovered, returning its full opera buffa flavour to the work. The production you will be seeing tonight is in Italian and abridged from the original.

We acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional owners of the land on which we meet; the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. It is upon their ancestral lands that the University of Sydney is built.

As we share our own knowledge, teaching, learning and research practices within this university, may we also pay respect to the knowledge embedded forever within the Aboriginal Custodianship of Country.

Synopsis

Part One

The Marchesa Violante Onesti is stabbed by her lover Count Belfiore in a fit of love-induced madness. Convinced he has killed her, the Count flees. But Violante has survived, and goes searching for the Count disguised as Sandrina, a gardener. With her is her faithful servant Roberto, who poses as her cousin Nardo, another gardener.

A year passes. The two "gardeners" are now working at the up-market flower business of Don Anchise, the Mayor (Podestà) of Logarno. Preparations are afoot for the wedding of the Podestà's niece Arminda. But each of the characters privately admits to unhappiness. Ramiro, Arminda's ex-boyfriend, is depressed because she has dropped him for another. Nardo loves Serpetta, who also works at the shop, but she is in love with the Podestà and watches his every move with jealousy, for the Podestà has eyes only for Sandrina.

The strong-willed Arminda arrives to celebrate the forthcoming wedding. She is followed by her bridegroom. It is Count Belfiore, who is much besotted with her.

When Arminda later tells Sandrina the name of her bridegroom Sandrina becomes utterly confused and faints. Arminda runs off, calling for help. Belfiore rushes on to assist, and of course recognises Violante. She regains consciousness and denies her true identity. Arminda bumps into Ramiro, who is likewise running in to offer help. Everyone is speechless and bewildered, much to the astonishment of the Podestà.

Part Two

The general confusion continues. Arminda urges the Podestà to get on with the wedding. Ramiro is suicidal. Serpetta torments her would-be suitor Nardo, and Arminda is furious at Belfiore for deceiving her when they are not yet even married. Belfiore is afraid that the complications will drive him to the brink of madness.

Serpetta runs in to announce that Sandrina has fled. The Podestà urges everyone to search for her.

At the onset of night, a frightened and hallucinating Violante/Sandrina feels herself lost in the middle of nowhere. She hides when she hears voices. One by one the others enter, and chaos grows until Ramiro arrives with torchlight. People recognise their mistakes and shower accusations on each other. Violante/Sandrina and Belfiore are so overwhelmed by the confusion that they lose their minds and believe themselves to be figures from Greek mythology.

The next day Belfiore and Violante, exhausted by their attack of madness, are waking slowly from a deep sleep. They recognise each other and are finally re-united, full of joy after a brief squabble. Nardo announces to an astonished audience that they have rushed off and got married. The Podestà blesses the unions of Arminda with Ramiro and of Serpetta with Nardo, and plans to go looking for a new Sandrina. There is praise all round for the gardening-girl's fidelity to her true love.



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

(Source *Oxford Music Online*)



Music Director's Note

Mozart's *La finta giardiniera* is an extraordinary tale of love, passion run out of control, subterfuge, disguise, mistaken identity and finally, uneasy resolution. Assumed identities and concealed love triangles conjoin to create a work where no one can be certain of anything – the true feelings and motivations of the characters often remain obscure, even unto themselves.

For much of its performance history the true identity of the opera has also been hidden. Mozart composed *La finta* in Italian, for performances in Munich and thereafter recast it as a Singspiel, with German text replacing Italian recitative, and it was widely performed in this version in Germany for many decades. It was not until the 1970s that *La finta* gave up all its secrets, when the original Italian text was found, making possible performances of the work in the original version.

For emerging singers, *La finta* is the perfect operatic introduction to Mozart, with many premonitions of the musical language of the later da Ponte collaborations in evidence. It should not be thought, however that the roles in this opera are undemanding – they are virtuosic and require great skill – both dramatically and vocally.

In its complete, original version, *La finta* runs for a good three hours, with even more complex (and improbable) twists of fortune than will be seen in our performances. This version has been duly shortened, to make it suitable for student performance. Arias have been judiciously pruned, but the great ensembles – particularly the two finales – are performed complete.

Dr Stephen Mould, Artistic Director, Con Opera



Director and Designer's Note

Love is mad. When in the throws of love we behave in illogical and irrational ways. We may scorn the one we love, we may mourn love, hide from our love or even kill our beloved. True love, unrequited love, lingering love; all types of love are presented in Wolfgang Mozart's early comedic opera *La finta giardiniera*.

In approaching the design for *La finta giardiniera*, we knew we wanted to create a world that was stylised, camp and farcical to illuminate the actions of these love-fuelled characters. We wanted the design to be flexible and fluid.

The vibrant array of characters in *La finta giardiniera* provides the perfect means for exploring the actions of love-fuelled madness. Ramiro is lovesick for his beloved Arminda. Arminda is set on loving Il Contino. Il Contino is love-obsessed with Sandrina and tries to kill that true love with drastic measures. Sandrina escapes her true feelings for a man who has hurt her. Il Podesta lusts after Sandrina, who is in turn desired by Serpetta, who is in turn desired by Nardo. It is fitting that we are performing the work in its original language Italian; the language of love!

Our heroine, Marchesa Violante Onesti, disguises herself as Sandrina the gardener to hide from her beloved. In the opening ensemble piece we learn all but one of the characters are hiding their true feelings. The idea of a false identity is central to our design of the set; it has hidden doors, windows and transformative qualities. Much like the journey of Violante, the set is able to transform. Avoiding a naturalistic approach, the set is decisively 'false'. This meta-theatrical approach to design exposes the lights of the theatre, placing them on stands next to the set. In this world, everything is exposed as theatrical farce in the service of love's errands.

At the climax of the opera, the character's love drives them to true madness. In this love-induced madness, the characters believe themselves to be Greek gods. In approaching the design for this moment, we collaborated with lighting designer Martin Kinnane to create a gesture that embodied this altered state of being.

We would like to thank the Con Opera and our passionate and knowledgeable maestro Stephen Mould.

Our special thanks to the cast, capital creative and production teams for bringing this world to life. Thank you for embracing the madness of Mozart's lovesick world.

Isabella Andronos and Elsie Edgerton-Till



Biographies

Dr Stephen Mould, Artistic Director of Con Opera, Music Director

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

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

Dr Mould is currently Artistic Director of Con Opera and Senior Lecturer in Operatic

Studies at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music while continuing his freelance activities as a conductor and accompanist. Recent operatic engagements have included *The Mikado* and a new production of *Le nozze di Figaro* for Opera Australia and *Così fan tutte* for Opera Queensland.

sydney.edu.au/music/staff-profiles/stephen.mould.php

Elsie Edgerton-Till Director

Elsie Edgerton-Till is a director who works across opera, musicals and theatre. *La finta giardiniera* marks Elsie's return to the Sydney Conservatorium after directing *La Calisto* and *The Fairy Queen*. She holds a Postgraduate Diploma (Directing) from the National Institute of Dramatic Art and a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) from the University of Canterbury. In 2018, she was selected as a finalist for the Dutch National Touring Opera Challenge for *Eugene Onegin*, designed by Isabella Andronos. She was a 2018 recipient of the Glorias Fellowship.

Her extensive theatre experience includes directing engagements for Ensemble Theatre, Sydney Theatre Company, New Zealand Playhouse, The King's Collective, The National Institute of Dramatic Arts, The Court Theatre (NZ), NORPA, World Busker's Festival, The Forge (NZ) and the New Theatre. As assistant director she has worked for Opera Australia, Melbourne Theatre Company, Sydney Theatre Company, Auckland Theatre Company and Sydney Chamber Opera. Early next year she will direct Taylor Mac's *Hir* for The Court Theatre in New Zealand. She lectures for NIDA's MFA and BA programs.

www.elsieedgerton-till.com

Isabella Andronos Set and Costume Designer

Isabella Andronos is a set and costume designer who works across opera, film and theatre. She holds a Bachelor of Dramatic Art (Design) from the National Institute of Dramatic Art and a Bachelor of Visual Arts (Honours: Class I) from Sydney College of the Arts.

Isabella has been nominated for four Australian Production Design Guild (APDG) awards, and in 2014 won the APDG Award for

Emerging Live Performance Design for her set design for *The Greeks*. In 2018, she was selected as a finalist for the Dutch National Touring Opera Challenge for her set and costume designs for *Eugene Onegin*, directed by Elsie Edgerton-Till.

Her design credits include: *Don Giovanni* (Dir. Matthew Barclay), *La Calisto* (Dir. Elsie Edgerton-Till), *Il Tabarro* (Dir. Constantine Costi), *The Fairy Queen* (Dir. Elsie Edgerton-Till), *Billionaire Boy* (Dir. Susanna Dowling), *Betty Breaks Out* (Dir. Ellen FWiltschire), *Yarramadoon: The Musical* (Dir. Hannah and Eliza Reilly), *Strangers* (Dir. Jamieson Pearce), *Furlough* (Dir. Phoebe Tonkin) and *Halal Gurls* (Dir. Vonne Patiag). She also worked as a miniature maker on Agnes Peel-Macgregor's *Last Tree Standing*, which was created as part of a scholarship to study with David Lynch.

www.isabellaandronos.com

Martin Kinnane Lighting Designer

Martin has designed for theatre and events both nationally and internationally. Productions include *Love Loss and What I Wore* and *Celebrity Autobiography* at the Sydney Opera House, Shakespeare's *R&J* and *Just Macbeth* for the Bell Shakespeare Company, *Embers* and *The Wharf Review* 2017 for Sydney Theatre Company, *Russian Transport* and *I Love You Now* for the Darlinghurst Theatre Company, *Intersections 2019*, *Impending Everyone*, *Wonder Fly* and *Follow Me Home* for ATYP, *The Hatpin*, *Love Song*, *LoveBITES*, *Bang*, *Belongings*, *Unholy Ghosts*, *Blackrock*, *The Shifting Heart*, *Mercury Fur* and *Table for White Box Theatre*, *Fairy's Wings*, *Worry Worts*, *Bugalugs Bum Thief* and *Sprung* for Monkey Baa, *Next To Normal* and *Dogfight* for Doorstep Arts,

Satango and The House On The Lake for the Griffin Theatre Company, *Leopardskin*, *Are We Awake*, *Youth and Destination*, *Two Hearts* and *The Walworth Farce* for KXT, *The Astral Plane*, *Tuesday*, *Yarramadoon the Musical* and *The Maids* for Belvoir 25a, *Sunset Boulevard* and *Promises, Promises* for The Production Company and *Letter to Larry* for CheepUK in the Theatre Nesle, Paris. Martin is the lighting and video designer for the current *Dame Edna – My Gorgeous Life* tour.

Work beyond the theatre includes the Hamer Hall Opening Celebrations in 2012; East Timor's Independence Day Celebrations for the United Nations; Absinthe, Desir and Empire for Spiegelworld in New York, Las Vegas, Miami, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Japan, the Papal Ceremonies at World Youth Day 2008, White Night in Melbourne 2017 and lighting of the Sydney Harbour Bridge (the Bridge Effect) from 2000 to 2007 for New Years Eve.

www.martinkinnane.com

Rachel Dal Santo Hair and Makeup Designer

Rachel Dal Santo trained at the 3 Arts Make-up Centre from 1981 to 1982. Her early career focused in theatre before an opportunity to join the makeup department of ATN Channel 7 was to afford her 17 years in television. The last 10 of those years was spent as the Head of the Makeup Department. A freelance career followed working on such films as *The Matrix* and *Mao's Last Dancer*. Rachel's focus is now teaching her skills and has recently written a complete Makeup Artistry course for Online Education Pty Ltd. Working at the Conservatorium has given Rachel the opportunity to return to her first love – theatre and in particular opera.



Production Credits and Acknowledgments

Music Director Dr Stephen Mould

Director Elsie Edgerton-Till

Production Manager Thomas Wade

Designer Isabella Andronos

Lighting Designer Martin Kinnane

Hair and Makeup Design Rachel Dal Santo,
assisted by students from TAFE, North
Sydney

Stage Manager Kate Middleton-Olliver

Assistant Conductor Kohki Iwaski

Assistant Director Ellen Wiltshire

Costume Supervisor Alana Canceri

Costume Assistant Emily Saunders, Katrina
Gale

Head Electrician Sophie Parker

Scenic Painter Isabella Andronos, James
Needham

Surtitles David Lunn

Production Assistant Claudia Mackay

Continuo Dr Stephen Mould

Repetiteurs Julia De Plater, Ingrid Sakurovs

Italian Language Coach
Alan Hicks

Orchestral Management Scott Ryan,
Tom Westley, Thomas Wade

Score and Music Preparation
Stephen Yates

Program
Jacqui Smith

Publicity Jacqui Smith

Production Photography
Patrick Boland

SCM Library Assistance
John Wu, Nick Tesoriero,
Montserrat Vigo Montes

Thank you to:

Chris Vasilescu, Fabia Andronos, Melissa Laird, Perry Andronos, Peter Cozens, Dervnos Westachote, Corinne Laird, Mary Andronos, Andy Andronos, Théodore Perreau, Sofian Perreau, Rozemarijn Hooij, Kristina and Katherine Warton, Mick Stuart, Patrick Boland, Adrienne Sach, Dr David Kim-Boyle, Jarrad Salmon, Lee Edwards, Guy McEwan, Scott Ryan, Tom Westley, Thomas Wade, Rodney Boatwright, Jacqui Smith, Felicity Knibbs, Fiona Chan, Marylou Kay, Stephen Yates and all of our wonderful library staff.



Cast

Sandrina

Josi Ellem*

Gabrielle Penney†

Arminda

Jessica Blunt*

Georgia Melville†

Serpetta

Madeleine O'Dea*

Ellen McNeil†

Ramiro

Angelique Tot*

Sandra Liu (Xin Ze)†

Podesta

Joseph Raso

Il contino Belfiore

Gavin Brown

Nardo

Henry Wright

* Sat 19 and Thurs 24 October

† Tues 22 and Sat 26 October



Orchestra

Violin 1

Amanda Chen, concertmaster
Maxine Poon
David Carreon
Daisy Wong
Miranda Ilchef
Yuhan Xie
Yang Guan

Violin 2

Junjiang Liu*
Christophe Mirkes
Megan Yang
Felix Pascoe
Monty Guo
James Armstrong

Viola

Freyja Meany*
Sophie Nickel
Marlon Schroeder
Steve Koroknay

Cello

Christina Kim*
Noah Oshiro
Ruby Jeon
Amy Upton

Double Bass

Hayley Witmore*
Julia Magri

Flute

Hannah Cui*
Matthew Lee

Oboe

Ovania McClelland*
Caitlin Benz

Bassoon

Jack Cremer*
Ashleigh Jo

Trumpet

Indiana Williams*
Lachlan Mahoney

Horn

Lilly Cremer*
Tegan Berry

Timpani

Nicholas Lowe*

* Section leader



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Artistic Director, Con Opera

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Simon Lobelson

Maree Ryan OAM

Barry Ryan OAM

Robyn Wells

Dr Narelle Yeo

Opera Coaching

Dr Stephen Mould

Siro Battaglin

Julia de Plater

Kate Johnson

Ingrid Sakurovs

Robert Greene

Alan Hicks

Opera Language and Diction

Alan Hicks (Italian)

Anke Hoepfner-Ryan (German)

Simon Lobelson (French)

Dance and Movement

Olivia Ansell

Stagecraft

Dr Narelle Yeo

Acting

Felicity Jurd

Theatre Studies

Simon Lobelson

Andy Morton

Ensemble

Dr Stephen Mould

Opera Performance Class

Barry Ryan OAM

Opera History

Associate Professor Michael Halliwell

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Auditions and Further Information

Early round auditions are held each year in September, with later round audition in November 2019 for entry in 2020. Later auditions via video are possible. For more information about our opera and vocal studies programs, please visit: music.sydney.edu.au/opera

