

PITTSBURGH OPERA

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Pittsburgh Opera to have live, in-person audiences for production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* later this month

Pittsburgh, PA...

Pittsburgh Opera's first production of its modified 2020-21 season, Mozart's [Così fan tutte](#), opens Saturday, October 17th for six performances in front of small, live, socially-distant audiences at its headquarters at 2425 Liberty Avenue in Pittsburgh's Strip District.

In response to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, Pittsburgh Opera has made a litany of modifications to the production, the rehearsal process, and building and audience protocols in order to produce these performances. Some of these modifications include:

- The seating capacity of the George R. White Opera Studio ("the GRW") at Pittsburgh Opera's headquarters has been drastically reduced to no more than 52.
- The singers will all wear masks during the performances, including while they're singing.
- Stage Director [Crystal Manich](#) has set the production during the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic, when universal mask-wearing applied.
- The program has been compressed into 90 minutes, with no intermission. This is to prevent patrons milling about and interacting with each other during an intermission or waiting in line for the bathroom.
- The orchestra has been reduced to 17 players, which will allow for proper distancing between musicians in the performance space.
- The cast are all Pittsburgh Opera's [Resident Artists](#), who quarantined for 14 days upon arriving in Pittsburgh last month.
- All audience members will undergo health screenings on arrival, and will be required to wear a mask at all times while in the building.
- Implementing robust building, personnel, and audience [safety protocols](#), created in consultation with a leading healthcare provider and a consulting epidemiologist

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All six performances are currently sold out, indicating a pent-up demand for experiencing live opera. A very limited number of spaces are still available on the Waiting List. People can register for the Waiting List at pittsburghopera.org/waitinglist.

The Friday, October 23rd performance at 7:30PM will be livestreamed free of charge on both Pittsburgh Opera's [YouTube channel](#) and [Facebook page](#). The livestream is sponsored by [UPMC](#).

- Patrons may sign up at pittsburghopera.org/livestreamRSVP to receive a reminder email one hour before the broadcast which will contain links to view the livestream.
- Patrons also have the option of unlocking premium content, including the official program book and the Pre-Opera talk podcast, by making a gift at pittsburghopera.org/unlock.

Performance Schedule

- Saturday, October 17, 8:00PM
- Tuesday, October 20, 7:00PM
- Friday, October 23, 7:30PM
- Sunday, October 25, 2:00PM matinee
- Tuesday, October 27, 7:00PM
- Thursday, October 29, 7:30PM

Cast and Artistic Team

Don Alfonso
Fiordiligi
Dorabella
Guglielmo
Ferrando
Despina

[Jeremy Harr](#)*+
[Madeline Ehlinger](#)*+
[Maire Carmack](#)*+
[Yazid Gray](#)*
[Angel Romero](#)*
[Veronique Filloux](#)*+

Conductor
Stage Director
Set Designer
Costume Designer
Lighting Designer
Wig & Make-up Designer
Stage Manager
Assistant Conductor
Director of Musical Studies

[Antony Walker](#)
[Crystal Manich](#)
BinhAn Nguyen
Jason Bray
Cindy Limauro
Nicole Pagano
Cindy Knight
[Glenn Lewis](#)
[Mark Trawka](#)

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Associate Coach/Pianist
Assistant Stage Director
Lighting Coordinator
Assistant Stage Manager

[James Lesniak](#)
[Kaley Karis Smith](#)
Todd Nonn
Alex Seidel

* [Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist](#)
+ Pittsburgh Opera debut

The story, in brief

Act I

Two young officers, Ferrando and Guglielmo, boast about the beauty and virtue of their girlfriends, the sisters Fiordiligi and Dorabella. Their older friend, the cynical Don Alfonso, declares that a woman's constancy is like the phoenix—everyone talks about it but no one has ever seen it. He proposes a wager: if they'll give him one day and do everything he asks, he will prove to them that the sisters are unfaithful, like all other women. Amused, the young men agree.

Fiordiligi and Dorabella think of their lovers, imagining that they will soon be married. Alfonso's plot begins when he arrives with terrible news: the young officers have been called away to their regiment. Ferrando and Guglielmo appear, apparently heartbroken, and the four make tearful farewells.

The sisters' maid Despina complains about how much work she has to do around the house. Dorabella vents her despair at her lover's absence. Despina refuses to take her seriously: they should simply find new lovers, since men are unworthy of a woman's fidelity. Fiordiligi and Dorabella are shocked. Alfonso bribes Despina to assist him, without revealing his plot. Ferrando and Guglielmo enter in disguise as foreigners, and declare their admiration for the ladies, each addressing the other's girlfriend. The sisters reject their advances, Fiordiligi comparing her constancy to a rock in a storm. The men are confident of winning the bet. Ferrando expresses his love for Dorabella, and the two friends leave.

As the sisters continue to lament the absence of their lovers, the "foreigners" return, pretending to have poisoned themselves in despair over their rejection. Despina and Alfonso go off to fetch help, leaving the two girls to care for the strangers. Despina reappears, disguised as a doctor, and pretends to treat the patients. When Ferrando and Guglielmo request kisses in order to fully recover, the sisters again reject them, but it is clear they're beginning to show interest in the strangers.

Act II

Despina lectures her mistresses on how to handle men and the sisters agree that there can be no harm in a little flirtation. They decide on their partners, each picking the other's suitor. Guglielmo, flirting with Dorabella, succeeds, but Ferrando has less luck with Fiordiligi. When he leaves, though, she struggles with her emotions.

Ferrando is certain that they have won the wager. Guglielmo is happy to hear that Fiordiligi

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has been faithful to him, but when he shows his friend the portrait that Dorabella gave him, Ferrando is furious. Guglielmo, adopting Alfonso's philosophy, blames it on the women. He asks Alfonso to pay him his half of the winnings, but Alfonso reminds him that the day is not yet over.

Fiordiligi reproaches her sister for her behavior, but Dorabella replies that love is a thief who rewards those who obey him. Alone, Fiordiligi decides to join Guglielmo at the front, when suddenly Ferrando appears. He tries one last time to seduce her and succeeds.

Guglielmo is furious, but Alfonso again declares that this is the way women are. A man who has been deceived can blame only himself.

The sisters have agreed to marry the "foreigners." Everything is ready and Alfonso arrives with the notary—Despina in another disguise. As Fiordiligi and Dorabella sign the contract, military music announces the return of their former lovers. In panic, they hide their intended husbands, who return as their real selves, first pretending surprise at their reception, then, when they discover the marriage contract, blaming the girls and threatening revenge. Finally, the men reveal their disguised identities and Fiordiligi and Dorabella ask forgiveness. Alfonso bids the lovers learn their lesson.

- Courtesy of Opera News, *unabridged*

Sponsors

- [PNC](#) is the 2020-21 Pittsburgh Opera Season Sponsor.
- [UMPC](#) is the Livestream Sponsor
- [Ambridge Regional Distribution and Manufacturing Center](#) is the Tuesday performance sponsor
- [WQED-FM](#) is Pittsburgh Opera's Media Sponsor

Other Information

- The performances will be sung in Italian, with English supertitles projected both above the stage and on-screen during the livestream
- Pittsburgh Opera's popular [Audio Commentary](#) program for hearing-impaired patrons is available at the Tuesday, October 27th performance.