

Spring 1991

# Cosi Fan Tutte

School of Theatre and Dance  
*Illinois State University*

School of Music  
*Illinois State University*

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Illinois State University  
College of Fine Arts  
Departments of Music and Theatre  
present

# Così fan tutte

music by  
**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

libretto by  
**Lorenzo Da Ponte**

Using the English translation by Ruth and Thomas  
Martin with rights secured through G. Schirmer, Inc.

**WESTHOFF THEATRE**

April 6, 9, 12, 13 at 8 pm

1991

Gala Opening  
April 5 at 8 pm

# Così fan tutte

CONNIE de VEER

Director

GLENN BLOCK

Musical Director/Conductor

Chorus Master

Vocal Coach

Set Designer

Costume Designer

Lighting Designer

Technical Director

Stage Manager

MICHAEL SCHWARTZKOPF

DONALD ARMSTRONG

KENT GOETZ

FRANK VYBIRAL

SETH T. HIBLE

DAN BROWDER

MICHAEL OSWALT\*

\*Master of Fine Arts Candidate

## Director's Notes

Così fan tutte was first produced on January 26, 1790 (the eve of Mozart's thirty-fourth birthday), in Vienna, Austria. In the two hundred years since, it has inspired widely divergent interpretations—from the opera's original setting in eighteenth century Naples to a 1920's flapper setting all the way to Peter Sellars' recent production set in Despina's Diner on Long Island circa 1991. It is a piece that lends itself to nearly any place and time, because at its heart are the universal themes of love, lust, loyalty and honor.

I have chosen to set this production in the American South at the start of the Civil War. The American South presents clearly recognizable images for a contemporary American audience. The image of soft breezes blowing off the Mississippi River, Spanish moss gracing massive magnolia trees and the grace and physical beauty of the South all seem to fit the playfulness, romance and sweetness of Mozart's music.

This setting also provides the stiflingly rigid social structure that helps convey the dilemma our lovers find themselves in. This is a world where people are not allowed to be real. They are bound to their honor at virtually any cost. Our sisters are forced to be perfect, never succumbing to any but the noblest and most chaste of feelings. These women are bored aristocratic ladies—proverbial “birds in gilded cages.” It is little wonder that they leap (after a while anyway, and Fiordiligi much less impulsively than Dorabella) at the chance to escape with their new passionate, exotic Latin lovers. Don Alfonso's assertion that women may fall prey to their passions, just as men do, is alarmingly inconsistent with the exalted position wherein these Southern gents place their ladies.

Finally, there is a certain theatricality inherent in the stereotype many of us hold of Southerners. The image of the distinguished Southern gentleman rising and literally taking stage to address a gathering of friends in a parlor on a hot afternoon in order to recount some humorous anecdote or regale the virtues or failings of some unsuspecting acquaintance (not in attendance, of course), is nothing short of operatic. Southerners love (and live) theatricality. It is both their charm and their curse. It is a characteristic that lends itself perfectly to this medium.

# CAST

April 5, 12

April 6, 9, 13

AMY KUCZIN *Fiordiligi* KIMBERLY S. PETERSON

RHONI PODSCHWEIT *Dorabella, sister to Fiordiligi* HOLLY WEINHEIMER

CLIFFORD DERIX *Guglielmo, Officer, betrothed to Fiordiligi* CLIFFORD DERIX

LAWRENCE BENCOMO *Ferrando, Officer, betrothed to Dorabella* TIMOTHY S. BYRNE

LORA LYN TROESKEN *Despina, Servant to the Ladies* LYDIA EASLEY

STEPHEN M. BEEBE *Don Alfonso, a cynical bachelor* STEPHEN M. BEEBE

*Chorus (all performances)*  
DEIDRE M. HESS, MATTHEW A. KASTOR, ROBERT W. KISER,  
JAMIE KRAMER, SUSAN LEWIS, JASON F. MORGAN,  
TINA PELINI, JOHN A. SCHULTZ, MARCELLE SELVAGGIO,  
ERIC WEAVER, GINTA ZVILIUS

## **ISU SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

Glenn Block, Music Director  
German Gutierrez, Asst. Conductor  
(conducting April 12)

*Violin*  
Nicholas Currie, *Concertmaster*  
Julie Novak, *Principal Second Violin*  
Carlene Easley  
Lilianna Klos  
Susan Laube  
Karen McCarthy

Linda Ungaro  
Kirsten Weingartner

*Viola*  
Heather Neaveill, *Principal*  
Barbara Bzdusek  
Dennis Luna

*Cello*  
Amy Wiegand, *Principal*  
Kyung Mi Lim  
Tom Townsend

*Bass*  
Brian Dollinger, *Co-Principal*  
Michael Govert, *Co-Principal*  
Mark Ruesink

*Flute*  
Kimberly McCoul, *Principal*  
Kimberly Barnett  
Valerie Crull

*Oboe*  
April Faires, *Principal*  
Mary Mutchler

*Clarinet*  
Pamela Kietzman, *Principal*  
Amy Rainer

*Bassoon*  
Robin Roessle, *Principal*  
Debbie Offerman

*Horn*  
Tim Mason, *Principal*  
Rachel Bettin

*Trumpet*  
Timothy McCoul, *Principal*  
Gerry Mallagan

*Timpani*  
Todd A. Sheehan, *Co-Principal*  
Terry P. Peeples, *Co-Principal*

*Cembalo*  
Sandor Benyus

## The Setting

The action takes place at the home of the sisters Fiordiligi and Dorabella,  
a Southern plantation along the Mississippi River, 1861.

### ACT I

Scene 1—A tavern

Scene 2—A riverfront garden

Scene 3—The ladies' breakfast room

Scene 4—Riverfront garden

— 15-minute intermission —

### ACT II

Scene 1—The ladies' boudoir

Scene 2—A sculpture garden

Scene 3—The ballroom

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Assistant Director ..... LISA MARIE C. MATTHEWS  
Assistant Stage Managers ..... TAMMY SMITH, JOE MELLEN  
Assistant Musical Director ..... GERMAN GUTIERREZ  
Assistant Set Designer ..... ANGELA WEBER  
Scenic Artist ..... KENT GOETZ  
Properties Master ..... GINA DIEHL  
Asst. Lighting Designer/Master Electrician .... ETHAN J. GOLDSPIEL  
Assistant Costume Designer ..... TONA SCHENCK\*  
Movement Coach ..... JOHN SIPES  
Repetiteurs. .... CSNAGY ILDIKÓ, BENYUS SÁNDOR,  
JULIE McDEVITT, SHARON BAKER  
Repetiteur Coordinators ..... RODNEY MILLER, GELLERT MODOS

## PRODUCTION CREWS

**Set Crew:** Justin Bitner, William Bresemann, Jennifer Bielema, Mark Cimarosti, Mark Daraskevich, Erin M. Gerace, Suzanne M. Howley, JoAnne Miner, Ako Miyaki, Shelley Reed, André Williams

**Light Crew:** Jason C. Bennett, Lawrence Brooks, David Durham, Traka J Ellens, Sean Jerding, Edna Kingsley, Pequette LaCasse, Michael Oswald\*, Jerry Swatek, Trent Wolfe

**Light Board Operator:** Laura Steib

**Sound Board Operator:** Steven Wojda

**Costume Crew:** Rose Boyer, Susan Hayes, Pat Healy, Amy Kessler, Randy Kirby, Carolyn Whitehead

**Costume Crew Head:** Kurt Reynolds

## Synopsis

**ACT I**—Don Alfonso, a cynical old philosopher, declares to his young friends Ferrando and Guglielmo that no women can be trusted, including their respective fiancées, the sisters Dorabella and Fiordiligi. Enraged at this slur, they accept his offer to wager (200 dollars) that he can prove his point in twenty-four hours if they will agree to follow his instructions unquestioningly. Don Alfonso then announces to the two sisters that their sweethearts have been ordered off to the war. There is a touching scene of farewell and the two officers ostensibly (leave for the front). Despina, maid to the sisters, finds them prostrated by their loss and pooh-poohs their lamentations, saying that one man is pretty much like another. To further his scheme Don Alfonso enlists Despina's aid and introduces to her two young and wealthy (Mexicans) who are enamored of her mistresses. She does not recognize Ferrando and Guglielmo in their disguise and supports their suit. Fiordiligi and Dorabella are outraged at this intrusion upon their sorrow and angrily order the two foreigners to leave. When the young men pretend to take poison in their despair, the sisters relent somewhat. Despina appears in the disguise of a (Medicine Show "doctor") and revives the (Mexicans) by means of a huge magnet. They renew their ardent attack on the young ladies' affections but are again repulsed.

**ACT II**—After Despina derides their constance, the sisters, especially Dorabella, weaken and decide a flirtation will do no harm. Dorabella chooses Guglielmo and Fiordiligi, Ferrando. As the couples stroll in the garden, Guglielmo wins Dorabella's love and gives her a golden locket in return for a picture of Ferrando. Fiordiligi, however, refuses to yield to Ferrando and decides to disguise herself as a man and join her betrothed at the front. But when Ferrando threatens to slay himself, she, too, gives in. Both Guglielmo and Ferrando are now utterly cast down by the clear evidence of their sweethearts' fickleness; but the triumphant Don Alfonso promises them that he will fix everything. He arranges a ceremony in which Ferrando is to marry Fiordiligi and her sister, Guglielmo. In the midst of the ceremony, which is conducted by Despina in the guise of an (itinerant preacher), the military music to which the two officers marched off to war is heard again and it is announced that they have returned. In the confusion Ferrando and Guglielmo leave the stage and come back without their disguises, explaining that they had received (official) permission to return to the arms of their loved ones. The officers pretend to fly into a rage when they find the marriage contract, the sisters blame Don Alfonso and Despina for leading them astray, their lovers reveal that they were the (Mexicans), Guglielmo returns Ferrando's picture to Dorabella and gets his locket back, the sisters are properly chastened, and all ends happily.

(Reprinted from Nathan Broder's synopsis and notes, Schirmer score. Parentheses refer to those particulars that have been changed to fit the concept and setting of this production.)

## Acknowledgements

Gwendolyn de Veer

Mark de Veer

Lori Snodgrass

John Stefano

Debra K. Stier

ISU Voice Faculty



## THEATRE STAFF

General Manager ..... Peter Guither  
Costume Shop Supervisor ..... Beverly Norcross  
Scene Shop Supervisor ..... Dennis Mays

**COSTUME SHOP — Graduate Personnel:** Lorraine Anderson\*, Amy Khongkhakul, Jennifer Noe\*, Teresa S. Pruitt\*, Tona Schenck\*, Missy Skelton\*; **Undergraduate TA:** Debra Kay Stier; **Undergraduate Personnel:** Karis Frenchak, Susan Hayes, Anne Latta, Kelly VanKirk, Jennifer Wilson, Larry Wisowaty

**SCENE SHOP — Carpenter:** Thomas Thompson; **Graduate Personnel:** Scott Cavin\*, Armella Nefzger\*, Angela Weber; **Undergraduate Personnel:** Kristi Batt, Gina Diehl, Ethan J. Goldspiel, Dianne Guariniello, Seth Hible, Timothy Mann, Laura Steib

**MANAGEMENT — Box Office Managers:** Kati Brazda\*, Mickey DiPiero, Troy Dunn\*, David C. Morgan; **Marketing Director:** Sarah Zwick-Tapley; **Asst. Marketing Director:** Daniel Cress; **House Managers:** Daniel Cress, Suki Schierholz; **Programs:** Jennifer D. Willhite; **Asst. to the General Manager:** Eric Weaver; **Photographer:** Max Gerwick

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