



10th Anniversary Season

*Artistic Director, D. Blake Smith
Music Director, James Allen Anderson*

**University of Delaware Opera Theatre
and the
University of Delaware Chamber Orchestra**

present

Così fan tutte

Performed in Italian with English supertitles

**Music by W.A. Mozart
Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte**

**Conducted by David Leibowitz
Produced and Directed by D. Blake Smith**

Director's Letter

Welcome, friends, thank you for sharing a piece of your life with us this weekend and celebrating the **10th Anniversary** of *UD Opera Theatre*! It has been a simply CRAZY year for *UDOT* and I know there are those among you who have shared every chapter of this adventure with us. I like to think we try and do something new and different every year, but this year has been absolutely replete with “firsts,” including our first world premiere, our first foray into Baroque opera with period instruments, and, finally, we end this monumental season with a new production of the first complete work *UDOT* ever performed, Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. The piece is not new to the company, but this will be the first time *UDOT* has mounted a second production of a particular work and the first time we have performed this work in the original Italian. Moreover, it is always new and exciting for our students to share the stage with distinguished guest artists, and we are so very fortunate to have guest conductor David Leibowitz and operatic soprano and University of Delaware alumna Jessica Beebe join us for this production!

Così fan tutte essentially translates to “they are all like that,” an observation about women espoused by the cynical old bachelor Don Alfonso as he challenges the notion of fidelity held so closely by the confident, naïve young lovers. It's a difficult and controversial notion to many modern audiences, as the libretto, by Mozart's celebrated collaborator Lorenzo Da Ponte, is not particularly kind in its analysis of feminine constancy. However, I am convinced that the immediate ramifications of the story are not the only conclusions one may draw from a more nuanced approach to the characters.

A quick synopsis of the events might give one the impression that Don Alfonso is fundamentally correct about the fickle nature of women, but, in truth, each of the two sisters remain faithful, if not slightly curious, in the face ardent advances by their mysterious suitors before they succumb. It takes a veritable onslaught of maneuvering, and the help of one of opera's coolest maids, in order to make the women falter and, ultimately, neither the women nor the men wind up feeling particularly proud of their actions.

Da Ponte's libretto is set in Naples in the late 18th century, but I have chosen to move it to Brooklyn in the early 1950's. Anyone familiar with *UDOT*'s work is aware that I am a big fan of theatrical deconstruction, particularly when it places events whose historical contexts are not tied to a particular era in a more recognizable, relatable setting to our audience, which is largely made up of college students and families without a lot of experience with opera. I am confident you will enjoy the visual adaptation and appreciate the timeless characterization of young love and the frequent battle between youthful optimism and wise experience.

I wish that I had the time in this letter to thank **every** single person who has been a part of *UDOT*'s profound success over the last ten years. There are patrons who haven't known a single person on stage or in the pit, but love the magic of musical storytelling. There are many parents, some of whom have absolutely no idea from which side of the family their music major's talent comes, who have made the trip to Newark after a day of work, or given up their weekend, to see their child do something truly astounding, like give life, breath, and movement to a character sculpted entirely with paper and pen more than 100 years ago. Finally, there are more than a thousand of young people who have spent countless hours in practice rooms over the last ten years, often preparing six or nine months for a particular production, working tirelessly just to spend ONE NIGHT in front of you. I wish there was something I could do to adequately thank all of those people who created the magical memories that I hold because of *UD Opera Theatre*, but the best I can do is hope tonight makes new memories for all of us. Thank you and enjoy!

D. Blake Smith, D.M.A.
Artistic Director, *UD Opera Theatre*

UD OPERA THEATRE

Così fan tutte

Music by W.A. Mozart

Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte

Conducted by David Leibowitz

Produced and Directed by D. Blake Smith

Time: early 1950's (during the Korean War)

Location: Brooklyn, New York City

Cast of Characters (in order of vocal appearance)

	<u>Friday, May 12</u>	<u>Sunday, May 14</u>
Ferrando, <i>Dorabella's lover</i>	Ethan Udovich	Hunter Torggler
Guglielmo, <i>Fiordiligi's lover</i>	Benjamin Dutton	Benjamin Dutton
Don Alfonso, <i>a confirmed bachelor</i>	Travis Lucas	Travis Lucas
Fiordiligi, <i>the older sister</i>	Cara Ferro	Shoshana Lieberman
Dorabella, <i>the younger sister</i>	Kaitlyn Tierney [^]	Nicole Boysen
Despina, <i>the sisters' maid</i>	Maegan Miciotta	Jessica Beebe*

[^]*University of Delaware Young Artist-in-Residence*

**Guest Artist*

Chorus of townspeople and caterers

Kathryn Barnwell Nicholas Calabrese
Greta Colman Christopher Jentzsch
Cassidy Dixon Daniel McGinley
Emily Malafrenti Thomas Schreck
Ella Perry Michael Willis*

**Don Alfonso understudy*

There will be an intermission between Acts 1 and 2

SYNOPSIS

The story begins with a wily old cynic and experimental philosopher, **Don Alfonso**, who determines to overturn the perfect, formulaic worlds of two young men, named **Ferrando** and **Guglielmo**. He bets them that their respective fiancées would not stay faithful for a moment if put to the test, and the challenge is accepted.

Before long, fiancées (and sisters) **Fiordiligi** and **Dorabella** discover that their lovers are leaving to ‘go to war’, and two handsome strangers (Ferrando and Guglielmo in disguise) arrive on a mission of seduction...

As Don Alfonso ups the ante and throws increasingly extreme situations at all four lovers, they begin to react emotionally and each character cannot help but reveal, and discover, who they really are.

Production Staff:

Producer/Stage Director: D. Blake Smith*

Production Manager: Brian Fenderson^

Stage Manager: Kimberly Albanowski^

Assistant Directors: Sophia DiLeo^, Anushka Kulkarni^, and Brett Izsa^

Assistant Stage Manager: Abigail Kramer^ & Julia McBride^

Costume Coordinator: Shoshana Lieberman^

Hair and Makeup: Lynne Claire Morse^

Rehearsal Pianist: Julie Nishimura*

**University of Delaware Faculty/Staff*

^University of Delaware Student

University of Delaware Voice Faculty:

Noël Archambeault, D.M.A.

Brian B. Carter, D.M.A.

Melanie Dement, D.M.A.

Isai Jess Muñoz, D.M.A.

Sara Seglem-Hocking, M.M., A.D.

D. Blake Smith, D.M.A.

Kaitlyn Tierney, M.M.

Cara Ferro, Teaching Assistant

Shoshana Lieberman, Teaching Assistant

Paul Patinka, Teaching Assistant

Brian Fenderson, Graduate Assistant

Travis Lucas, Graduate Assistant

David Leibowitz, Guest Conductor

Celebrated for his innovative programming and exciting performances, conductor David Leibowitz has achieved international acclaim for his work on the concert, opera, and ballet stage.

Mr. Leibowitz is the Music Director/Conductor and founder of the award-winning New York Repertory Orchestra. Some recent highlights of his tenure there have been a fully staged production of Mozart's *Abduction from the Seraglio* and a landmark performance of Mahler's epic *Symphony No. 3*. As an avid fan and champion of today's music he has commissioned, worked with, and performed local and world premieres by some of today's most important composers; such as Paul Moravec, Lowell Liebermann, Harold Farberman, Stephen Dembski, John Schwabe, Salvador Brotons, Michael Shapiro, and Steven Rosenhaus.

From 2003-2013, Mr. Leibowitz held the post of Principal Conductor with the Massapequa Philharmonic Orchestra and has recently been guest conductor of the New York Opera Exchange, conducting performances of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*, Verdi's *La Traviata*, and Strauss' *Die Fledermaus*. He is currently on the conducting faculty of the Westchester Summer Vocal Institute and the International Opera Institute at the Maud Powell Music Festival.

For many years, Mr. Leibowitz was on the conducting staff of the Rome Festival Opera (Italy), leading opera, ballet, and concert performances, and was the Orchestra Director of the Siena (Italy) Summer Music Festival. In 2012 he led the Weill Cornell Music and Medicine Orchestra and Chorus in a critically acclaimed performance of the Mozart Requiem.

Throughout the United States and Europe, he has directed such ensembles as the Pleven Philharmonic (Bulgaria), the Orchester Pro Arte (Vienna), Illinois Valley Symphony Orchestra, the Bach Festival Orchestra (Princeton, NJ), and the University of Wyoming (Laramie) Symphony Orchestra.

In the New York City area, he has conducted the Astoria Symphony, Manhattan Chamber Orchestra, Greenwich Village Orchestra, Brooklyn Symphony Orchestra, Centre Symphony Orchestra, New York Festival Singers, Litha Orchestra, and the Music at St. Paul's Series at Columbia University. He has also worked with the Dance Theater of Harlem.

A dedicated music educator, Mr. Leibowitz conducted the Third Street Philharmonia at the Third Street Music School Settlement in New York City from 2003-2006 and from 2009-2012 he was the Orchestra Director at the City College of New York. He has worked as a conductor and coach with many other student and youth orchestras, including the the orchestras of Brooklyn College, the InterSchools Orchestra of New York, and the Gemini Youth Orchestra.

In 2011, Mr. Leibowitz was an award-winner of the American Prize in Orchestral Conducting and the American Prize in Orchestral Programming. He was given the "Gift to New York City" award from the Omega Ensemble of New York for his ongoing contributions to the musical life of New York City and is on the Board of Directors of the Conductors Guild, an international service organization of over 2,000 members, devoted to the advancement of the art of conducting and to serving the artistic and professional needs of conductors.

Mr. Leibowitz received his Master of Arts degree in Performance Practice, Summa Cum Laude, from the City University of New York's Conservatory of Music at Brooklyn College. His main studies were in performance, musicology, and composition. He was awarded a teaching fellowship and was named a Presidential Scholar of the University.

Jessica Beebe, *Despina* (Sunday, May 14)

Lauded as an “expressive, rich soprano who performs with heart-rending passion”, “a bright, young operatic star with a great talent”, and having a “honey-colored tone” by Opera News, Soprano Jessica Beebe enjoys an active performing career worldwide. Ms. Beebe recently made her solo debut at Carnegie Hall with The New York Chamber Orchestra in Mozart's Coronation Mass.

As a concert soloist, she has appeared in the *Requiems* of Brahms, Mozart, Fauré, Rutter and Delius, Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, Bach's *St. John* and *Matthew Passions*, *Christmas Oratorio*, *Magnificat* and *Mass in B Minor*, Monteverdi's *Vespro della beata Vergine*, Handel's *Dixit Dominus*, *Jepthe* and *Judas Maccabaeus*, Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass*, *Die Schöpfung* and *The Seasons*, Mozart's *Mass in C minor*, and *Coronation Mass*, Vivaldi's *In furore Iustissimae Irae* and *Gloria*, and Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, with some of the world's leading orchestras and baroque ensembles, including the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra with Raymond Leppard, Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra, Royal College of Music Orchestra London with Laurence Cummings, The Princeton Festival Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra with Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Piffaro, and the Philadelphia Bach Collegium. Ms. Beebe has also performed leading roles in such operas as *Dido and Aeneas*, *Così fan tutte*, *Don Giovanni*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Peter Grimes*, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, covered Lila in the Opera Philadelphia premiere of Jennifer Higdon's Grammy-nominated opera, *Cold Mountain*, and a new production of *Messiah* with Bergen National Opera, Norway.

Ms. Beebe is a native of Philadelphia, earning degrees from University of Delaware, Indiana University and a performance certificate from The Royal College of Music in London.

University of Delaware Chamber Orchestra

James Allen Anderson, *Music Director*

David Leibowitz, *Guest Conductor*

Personnel

First Violin

Nicole Fassold, *concertmaster*

Joel Alarcon

Ziqian Ye

Gabriela Stout

Clarinet

Sarah Greendonner

Eli Daniels

Second Violin

Caterina Yetto

Mary Lyle

Deng Phua

Kristin Young

Bassoon

Collin Walter

Drew Tyman

Viola

Maria Rusu

April Beard

Horn

Alex Sallade

Nathen Wade

Cello

Yeliza Aleman-Gaetan

Jasmine Lee

Kimia Arsani

Horn

Allyson Schuler

Michael Fries

Double Bass

Jacob Moore

Trumpet

Brandon Hess

Lucas Schurman

Flute

Elisabeth Porter

Courtney Lyons

Timpani

Steven Dinsmore

Oboe

Laura Yawney

Emily Petokas

Keyboard

Alex Bi



**THE GIFT OF YOUR PRESENCE IS THE VERY
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BUT IT IS YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT
THAT GUARDS THE FUTURE AND QUALITY OF OUR PROGRAM.**

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