

PASSIONATE.
VENGEFUL.
MERCILESS.

DON GIOVANNI

MUSIC BY

Wolfgang Amadé Mozart

LIBRETTO BY

Lorenzo da Ponte

PRESENTED BY

THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS OPERA

APRIL 19 + 21



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS

Rudi E. Scheidt
School of Music

Il dissoluto punito
ossia
il Don Giovanni

music by Wolfgang Amadé Mozart
text by Lorenzo da Ponte

CAST OF CHARACTERS



DON GIOVANNI
A licentious aristocrat
Darius Taylor



LEPORELLO
Giovanni's servant and confidant
Carlos Romero



DONNA ANNA
A wealthy young debutante
Isabella Wallace
Friday
Diana Flores
Sunday



DONNA ELVIRA
A wealthy widow
Meghan Burroughs
Friday
Haena Jeong
Sunday



ZERLINA
A secretary
Ina Torres O'Ryan
Friday
Cayce Murphy
Sunday



DON OTTAVIO
Donna Anna's fiancé,
a former RAF pilot
Kevin Neace
Friday
Philip Himebook
Sunday



MASETTO
Zerlina's fiancé,
mechanic
Kevin Neace
Friday
Philip Himebook
Sunday



THE COMMENDATORE
Donna Anna's father,
Royal Navy (retired)
Dennis Ryan III

CREATIVE TEAM

Stage Director and Producer

Ben Smith

Music Director and Conductor

Stephen Karr

Lighting Designer and
Technical Director

Jeremy Fisher

Scenic and Projection Designer

Amy Healey

Costume Designer

Jennifer Ammons

Assistant Conductor

Fabian Schneider

Assistant Stage Director

Shannon Jongema

Stage Manager

Katrina Cole

Rehearsal Accompanist

Felix Jarrar

Scenic Charge Artist

Parker Chase

Supertitles Operator

Shannon Jongema

Assistant Lighting Designer

Micki McCormick

Carpenter

Andrew Glenn

Electricians & Spot Operators

IATSE Local 69

Stage Crew

Allison Carter

Serafina Cid Ross

Michael Briggs

Nathan Greene

Supertitles courtesy of Opera Memphis

ORCHESTRA

Flute

Catie Balsamo, principal
Mackenzie Saylor

Oboe

Joshua Ty Matthews, principal
Jesus Salazar

Clarinet

Fernando Martinez, principal
Ian Greer

Bassoon

Tina Hazell, principal
Jonathan Gomez

Horn

Jimmy Rhine, principal
Kelsey Pegues

Trumpet

Yiming Zhang, principal
Benjamin Shaffer

Trombone

Cassidy Shiflett-Cockrell, principal
Colin Woods
Caleb Elrod

Timpani

Mario Shaw, principal

Violin I

Sofia Alvarado, concertmaster
Keiber Utrera, associate concertmaster
Lindsay Keck
Sebastian Gaviria
Gabby Gregory

Violin II

Abby Webber, principal
Isabella Palmer
Sarah Enoch
Langston Suggs
Claude Spivey

Viola

Noel Medford, principal
Andrew McGuire
Dario Santos
Dane Perugini-Cripps

Violoncello

Ella Bondar, principal
Christine Sears
Bryan Edward Henderson
Jacob Saunders
Nazira Wali
Ava Ray

Double Bass

Aniyya Dent, principal
Joshua Sheperd

Mandolin

Keiber Utrera

Continuo Violoncello

Roberta dos Santos

ORCHESTRA

- BANDA -

Oboe

Isaac Ripple
Mikayla LeDuff

Clarinet

Maria Pia Luna Victoria Arteaga (Friday)
Kendall Howard (Sunday)
Emily Ward

Bassoon

Dr. Daryn Zubke
Jacob Bridges

Horn

Steven Groff
John Bass

ORCHESTRA I

Violin

Idil Belgin Kucukdogan
Emily Cooley

Viola

Andrew McGuire

Violoncello

Roberta dos Santos

ORCHESTRA II

Violin

Lindsay Keck

Violoncello

Nazira Wali

ORCHESTRA III

Violin

Isabella Palmer

Violoncello

Bryan Edward Henderson

MEET THE CAST



Darius Taylor (Don Giovanni)

Darius Taylor is a baritone based in west Tennessee. Darius was most recently seen as Stranger 2 (Roderich) in the University of Memphis's Fall 2023 production of *Der Vetter aus Dingsda*. Some of Darius's favorite roles include Henry Davis (*Street Scene*), Marco (*Gianni Schicchi*), and Alcindoro (*La bohème*). Darius received his Master's in opera performance from Arizona State University and his Bachelor's in vocal performance from the University of Tennessee at Martin. Darius is working towards his Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the University of Memphis and is a student of Matt Burns.



Carlos Romero (Leporello)

Mexican-American baritone Carlos Romero has been praised for his exceptional performance abilities in both the operatic and musical theater traditions. A graduate of the University of Memphis, Carlos has taken on various roles ranging from Schaunard in Puccini's *La bohème*, Pirate King in Gilbert & Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance*, Guglielmo in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, and Figaro in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*. Concert credits include Elijah in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Judas in J.S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with the Shreveport Symphony and scenes from Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. Carlos was named the NATS Southern Region winner and recipient of Spotlight on Opera's full scholarship two years in a row. Most recently, Carlos was a finalist in Opera Memphis's inaugural "Nuevas Canciones" vocal competition.



Isabella Wallace (Donna Anna, Friday cast)

Isabella Wallace, soprano, is currently studying for her Master of Music in Vocal Performance at the University of Memphis, building upon her Bachelor of Music in vocal performance from Georgia Southern University. Some of her most recent roles include Mrs. Lovett (*Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*), Mabel (*The Pirates of Penzance*), and the Blue Fairy (*La Bella Dormente nel Bosco*). Isabella will return to southern Germany this summer to participate in the International Performing Arts Institute. She looks forward to the opportunity to explore and further her musical growth. Isabella thanks her family and her boyfriend for their never-ending support of her musical career.



Diana Flores (Donna Anna, Sunday cast)

Diana Flores is a Mexican-Puerto Rican soprano based in Florida. Most recently, she performed Erste Dame from *Die Zauberflöte*, Lady Caroline in world-premiere operetta *Mondo Novo*, Suor Dolcina in *Suor Angelica* and covered the roles of Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* and *Suor Genovieffa* in *Suor Angelica* at the Vienna Summer Music Festival. At the Florida Gulf Coast University's Bower School of Music and Opera Naples, she performed as María in *El Cóndor Pasa*, First Lady in *The Magic Flute*, The Dew Fairy in *Hansel and Gretel*, Miss Silverpeal in *The Impresario*, and Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* as part of a scenes program. In 2023, she toured with the FGCU Chamber Choir as a soloist for the American Celebration of Music in Spain and France at La Sagrada Familia and Collégiale Notre Dame des Anges. She is a first-year graduate student pursuing her Master's in vocal performance at the University of Memphis.



Kevin Neace (Don Ottavio, Friday cast)

The child of singers, Kevin Neace, tenor, is originally from Alton, IL, and is well-versed in performing and producing multiple musical genres. Kevin completed his Bachelor of Music in vocal performance at Wheaton College in 2022 and is pursuing a Master of Music degree in vocal performance at the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music at the University of Memphis under the tutelage of Dr. Paulina Villareal. He has previously performed in the University of Memphis productions of *The Cousin From Nowhere*, *Trouble In Tahiti* and *La bohème*, ensembles such as Bach Society of St. Louis and Rhodes Mastersingers. He will perform in the chorus of Union Avenue Opera's upcoming production of *Aida*.



Philip Himebook (Don Ottavio, Sunday cast)

Philip Andrew Himebook is a DMA student at the University of Memphis. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Toccoa Falls College and a Master of Music in vocal performance from the University of Memphis. He has performed in multiple shows and operas in the Memphis area and serves as the full-time music director at Grace Community Church in Cordova, TN.



Meghan Burroughs (Donna Elvira, Friday cast)

Meghan Burroughs is a mezzo-soprano based in Memphis, Tennessee. She is pursuing a Master of Music in vocal performance. She has performed widely, specializing in operatic performance, oratorio, and art song.

Meghan performed her master's recital this April. She performed Symphony No. 2, "Voices" by James Stephenson, with the University of Memphis Wind Ensemble in February 2024. In the past, Meghan has been featured in roles such as Veronique from *Le docteur miracle*, Mary from *The Nefarious, Immoral, but Highly Profitable Acts of Mr. Burke and Mr. Hare*, and Coordinator from *Speed Dating Tonight!* Burroughs has been awarded third place in the Schubert Club, Bruce P. Carlson Scholarship Competition 2024, and selected as a finalist in competitions such as the Beethoven Club Savell Competition.

Burroughs holds two degrees from Lawrence University; a Bachelor of Music in vocal performance and a Bachelor of Arts in psychology. She studies under Paulina Villarreal.



Haena Jeong (Donna Elvira, Sunday cast)

Haena Jeong is a mezzo-soprano from Seoul, South Korea. Jeong's previous performances include the role of Madame Flora in the opera *The Medium* at the University of Memphis, Donna Elvira in Kenneth Merrill's production of *Don Giovanni* and the Witch in *Hansel and Gretel* with Manhattan School of Music's Opera Theater in 2015.

Jeong won the 2024 concerto soloist competition at the University of Memphis. She received the inaugural Ruth William Memorial Scholarship at Songfest in 2015, where she worked with Martin Katz, Margo Garrett and Jake Heggie.

She graduated from the Manhattan School of Music with a Master's of Music under the tutelage of Ruth Golden and Maitland Peters and from Dongduk Women's University with a Bachelor's of Music. Ms. Jeong is pursuing a Doctorate of Musical Arts at the University of Memphis with Dr. Paulina Villarreal.



Ina Torres O-Ryan (Zerlina, Friday cast)

Ina Torres O’Ryan, a Maryland native, is a freelance mezzo-soprano and cellist currently studying at the University of Memphis with Prof. Mary Wilson and Dr. Kimberly Patterson. Before moving to Tennessee, Ina lived in Minnesota, where she was a rostered cellist and chorus member of the Fargo-Moorhead Symphony and Opera while completing her Bachelor’s at Concordia College. She has performed in ensembles for conductors such as René Clausen, Edward Maclary, William Skoog, Kevin Sütterlin, and Marin Alsop. A passionate educator, Ina also maintains a private studio for voice and cello and has taught for several nonprofits in the Memphis area. She serves as Executive Director of Sinfonietta Memphis, an orchestra providing free music to the 901 area using historically informed performance practice. When Ina is not involved in music, she enjoys making ceramics and exploring local art in Memphis.



Cayce Murphy (Zerlina, Sunday cast)

Cayce Murphy, soprano, is an up-and-coming young Appalachian artist recognized for her versatility in multiple performance styles, captivating stage presence, and expressive sensibility.

This 2023/24 season, Murphy is overjoyed to bring the role of Zerlina in Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* to life. She most recently performed as a soprano soloist in Brubeck’s *To Hope: The Mass* with Rhodes MasterSingers Chorale. She will be in the chorus of Puccini’s *La bohème* with Opera Memphis. Murphy studies under Professor Mary Wilson and is set to graduate with her Master of Music in vocal performance this upcoming May. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in vocal performance and a Bachelor of Arts in music education (K-12) from Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia, where she studied with Dr. Alexander Lee. This is her second opera with the University of Memphis Opera, her first being Bizet’s *Le docteur Miracle* in the fall of 2022.



Jonathan Rhoades (Masetto)

Jonathan Rhoades is an aspiring operatic performer living and studying in Memphis, Tennessee. Interested in the entire musical process, from creation to performance, he hopes to inspire a new generation of musicians and fuel a passion for classical music and vocal performance. He previously studied with Steven Sanders at Oklahoma State University as an undergraduate music education major. He is now studying with Matt Burns as he pursues a Master of Music in vocal performance at the University of Memphis. Previously performed roles include Hans in *Der Vetter aus Dingsda* by Eduard Künneke, Mr. Gobineau in *The Medium* by Gian Carlo Menotti, Brack Weaver from *Down in the Valley* by Kurt Weill, the Bartender and Dater #15 in Michael Ching's *Speed Dating Tonight!*, and Lieutenant Sam in *The Pirates of Penzance* by Gilbert and Sullivan.



Dennis Ryan III (Commendatore)

Dennis is a native of Florida and received his Bachelor of Arts from Florida International University in 2015, a Master of Music in opera performance from The University of Kansas in 2018, an Artist Diploma from the Hartt School of Music in 2020, and is currently a Doctorate of Musical Arts graduate assistant at the University of Memphis. Recent engagements include Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*) with Lyric Opera Studio Weimar, Commendatore with the Vienna Opera Festival, Commendatore with Theater Rudolstadt, Colline (*La bohème*) with Opera Connecticut, and Dr. Grenvil (*La Traviata*) with Opera Naples. He has performed the Jailer in Tosca with the Florida Grand Opera and had solo engagements with the Master Chorale of South Florida and the Symphony of the Americas. Ryan is singing Commendatore in the University of Memphis' production of Mozart's Don Giovanni in the spring of 2024.

ABOUT THE DIRECTORS



Stephen Karr, Music Director and Conductor

Born in Greenville, South Carolina, Stephen Karr is a compelling interpreter of opera and orchestral works. He is in his second season as opera music director at the University of Memphis Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music, where he has led productions of Leonard Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti*, Georges Bizet's *Dr. Miracle*, Giacomo Puccini's *La bohème* and the mid-south premiere of Eduard Künneke's *Der Vetter aus Dingsda*. He made his debut last May with Opera Memphis and the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, conducting the season-closing production of *The Falling and the Rising* with music by Zach Redler and libretto by Jerre Dye, and has continued to work regularly with the MSO as an outreach and cover conductor. In fall 2024, he will lead the world premiere performance of Kamran Ince's oratorio *Jus Soli* at the University of Memphis.

In recent seasons, he has appeared with Anchorage Opera, the Sacramento Philharmonic and Opera, and the Parnassus Chamber Orchestra. As Associate Conductor and Artistic Administrator for Long Beach Opera, he was cover conductor and prompter for 2019's world premiere production of *The Central Park Five* by Anthony Davis and Richard Wesley, which went on to win the 2020 Pulitzer Prize in Music. He is a co-editor for the first critical performing edition of Joseph Bologne's *L'Amant Anonyme*, which, after its premiere at LA Opera in 2020, has seen many productions around the US and in Europe.

In 2011, he co-founded the Pacific Opera Project and was the music director until 2016. With POP, he led productions of *Trouble in Tahiti*, *Così fan tutte*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *La Calisto* (LA premiere), *Ariadne auf Naxos* and *The Rake's Progress* (LA professional premiere), among many other titles. The Los Angeles Times praised his performance of the Stravinsky as having kept orchestra, cast and chorus on a "well-articulated rhythmic track." He has also been on staff with the OPERA Iowa tour, the Glimmerglass Festival, Opera New Jersey and Palm Beach Opera.

Stephen Karr has taught at Chapman University, Michigan State University, USC and UCLA. His schooling includes degrees in organ performance (Mercer University and Westminster Choir College) and orchestral conducting (UCLA). He is a resident of Memphis, Tennessee.

ABOUT THE DIRECTORS



Ben Smith, Stage Director and Producer

Ben has directed for Opera Memphis, Indianapolis Opera, Seattle Opera's Young Artist Program, Intermountain Opera Bozeman, Mobile Opera, Tacoma Opera, Asheville Lyric Opera, Opera Theatre of Pittsburgh, the Young Artist Program at Pittsburgh Opera, the University of Cincinnati/CCM, Baldwin Wallace University and The Opera Theater of Lucca, Italy.

Since 2013, Ben has served as Artistic Director and acting faculty for the Accademia Vocale Lorenzo Malfatti, a summer training program for young singers in Lucca, Italy.

Ben joined the faculty at Baldwin Wallace University in 2010 as their first full-time Director of Opera. Since 2015, he has been the Opera Stage Director at the University of Memphis. He has taught master classes for singing actors in the U.S. and China.

He began his career as a singer in opera, performing twenty-one leading roles in opera, operetta, and musical theater. He has logged over 250 performances in the U.S. and Italy.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION TEAM



Jeremy Fisher

Lighting Designer and Technical Director

Jeremy Allen Fisher Resident Lighting Designer for Tennessee Shakespeare Company 2014-present, Opera Memphis Resident Lighting Designer 2013-present. Jeremy is a member of United Scenic Artists Local USA 829 and a graduate of Oklahoma City University. He has worked with Theatre Memphis, Youngblood Studios, Ballet Memphis, University of Memphis, Memphis's Orpheum Theatre, Seattle Opera, Desoto Family Theatre, New Day Children's Theatre, and New Ballet Ensemble. Some of his other credits include lighting Memphis's Broad Avenue Water Tower, Wisacre's downtown Taproom, and several works at Saint Jude's Research Hospital and LeBonheur Children's Hospital. Awards: 2017 Individual Artist Award, and 11 Ostrander Award nominations with four wins for Lighting Designs

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION TEAM

Amy Healey, Set Designer

Amy Healey comes to set design from a background in painting and opera performance. She designed recent productions of *The Cousin from Nowhere*, *La bohème*, *Trouble in Tahiti/Dr. Miracle* and *Ruddigore* for University of Memphis Opera. She lives, works, makes amazing lasagna and catches lots of Pokémon with her small daughter in Annapolis, Maryland. You can see her work at amyhealeyfineart.com.



Jennifer Ammons, Costume Designer

Jennifer Ammons is a costume designer currently residing in Asheville, NC. Some previous design credits include *El Sueño De La Razón Crea Monstros* (The Sleep of Reason Creates Monsters) choreographed by Rafael Estévez and Valeriano Paños and *Morrow*, choreographed by Vladimir Conde Reche (University of New Mexico Department of Theatre and Dance); *The Student Prince*, *The Devil's Rider*, *Cloclo*, *Pirates of Penzance*, and *Iolanthe* (Ohio Light Opera); *The Gondoliers* (Memphis Light Opera); *Albert Herring* (University of Memphis Opera). While completing her MFA at the University of Memphis, she also designed *The Servant of Two Masters*, *Nine*, *Measure for Measure*, and the world premiere of *Empires of Eternal Void*.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION TEAM



Katrina Cole, Stage Manager

Katrina Cole is pursuing her Master of Music degree, studying with Dr. Paulina Villarreal at the University of Memphis. Cole recently graduated from Penn State University, where she studied vocal performance with Dr. Rachel Copeland. Recently, Cole was Hannchen in *Der Vetter aus Dingsda* with the University of Memphis Opera, Second Spirit in *Die Zauberflöte* with the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival, Berta (formerly Bartolo) in *Le nozze di Figaro*, and Blanche de la Force (cover with performance) in *Dialogues of the Carmelites* with Penn State Opera Theatre.



Fabian Schneider, Assistant Conductor

Fabian Schneider grew up in Möhlin, Switzerland. Before starting his undergraduate studies in trumpet and conducting, he served for the Swiss Military Bands. Afterward, he studied with Professor Christoph Rehli at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (Switzerland), earning his master's degree in conducting. In 2022, Fabian moved to Memphis, TN, where he is working on his doctoral degree in orchestral conducting with Professor Harvey Felder. He served as assistant conductor in productions of *Le docteur Miracle*, *Trouble in Tahiti*, *La bohème*, and *The Cousin from Nowhere* at the University of Memphis. Schneider debuted in opera conducting in February with Menotti's *The Medium*. In the US, he was a conducting fellow at the Lutheran Summer Music Festival 2023 and had guest conducted Sinfonietta Memphis.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION TEAM



Shannon Jongema, Assistant Stage Director

Shannon is pursuing a Master of Music and Doctorate of Musical Arts degrees in vocal performance at the University of Memphis, studying voice with Professor Mary Wilson and Opera Directing with Professor Benjamin Smith. Shannon also holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music from Rollins College, where she studied under Dr. Caitlin Mohr and Professor Amy Gifford.

Onstage at the University of Memphis, Shannon has recently been seen as Julia in *Der Vetter aus Dingsda* and Mimì in *La bohème*. With Varna International Music Academy she toured through Bulgaria and Italy performing as Mme. Silberklang in *Der Schauspieldirektor*, Suor Dolcina/Suor Osmina in *Suor Angelica*, and the soprano soloist in Mozart's *Requiem*. Jongema's other operatic and concert credits include a soprano soloist in Elijah with Rhodes MasterSingers, a second soloist in Bach's *Mass in B Minor* with Bach Festival Society of Winter Park, and Lucy in *The Telephone*/Mrs. Gobineau in *The Medium* with Musical Traditions, Inc.



Felix Jarrar, Rehearsal Accompanist

Felix Jarrar is a composer/coach/pianist whose 254 works include 224 art songs, 13 operas, 2 string quartets, and a symphony. An in-demand collaborative artist, Jarrar has worked with The New School, Opera Naples, the University of Memphis, Opera Ithaca, Penn Square Opera, Hogfish, and Santa Fe Opera (in collaboration with Mannes). In 2022, he debuted The Jarrar and Brea Duo with soprano Maria Brea. Jarrar's song "Sun of the Sleepless" was featured on the 2024 GRAMMY-nominated album 40@40 by Laura Strickling and Daniel Schlosberg. This summer, he is the Resident Artist Pianist/Coach and study cover conductor for Rigoletto at Opera North.

SPECIAL THANKS

Bill Hardgrave

University of Memphis
President

Ryan Fisher

College of Communication and Fine Arts
Interim Dean

Kevin Sanders

Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music
Director

Matthew Burns

Assistant Professor of Voice

Carlos Santelli

Assistant Professor of Voice

Paulina Villareal

Assistant Professor of Voice

Mary Wilson

Associate Professor of Voice

Janet Page

Professor of Music History

Brian Ruggaber

Associate Professor of Scenic Design, Properties, Scenic Painting,
Visual History, AutoCAD, and Rendering

University of Memphis

Department of Theatre and Dance

Tennessee Shakespeare Company

Opera Memphis

Theatre Memphis



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