La finta giardiniera

USU Opera Theatre

Sergio Bernal
Utah State University

Daniel Helfgot

USU Symphony Orchestra

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La finta giardiniera (The pretend gardener-girl), K. 196, premiered on January 13, 1775 in Munich. Mozart was only 18 years old at the time of this premiere but already had eight earlier operas to his credit. Called by the composer a *dramma giocoso* (playful drama), this relatively-rare operatic subgenre is characterized by a mostly-comic plot and two larger acts with a shorter third act. Mozart's only other contributions to this genre came years later with his much better-known operas *Così fan tutte* and *Don Giovanni*. Five years after its premiere, *La finta giardiniera* was revived and converted into another operatic subgenre, that of *Singspiel*. This genre primarily differs by having most of the dialogue spoken instead of sung (like a modern musical) and required a translation of the libretto to German. Our production merges both traditions, taking the sung Italian of the original *dramma giocoso* for the opera's arias, finales, and a few recitatives and then speaking the rest of the *Singspiel* dialogue in English.

**Guest Director Bio:**
Daniel Helfgot's credits include over 210 productions of over 100 operas. International: Albania, Argentina, Austria, Canada, Costa Rica, Finland, Germany, Mexico, Sweden, Israel, France, and Italy. In the US: from Guam to Maine and from Montana to Florida including the opera companies of Baltimore, Chattanooga, Eugene, Knoxville, Memphis, Shreveport, Orlando, and Sacramento; the Festival Opera companies of California, Pennsylvania, and Utah; Virginia Opera, Spring Opera and Western Opera Theater, San Francisco; and Utah Opera, among others.

**About USU Opera Theatre**
The USU Opera Theatre is the Caine College of the Art's performing dramatic musical ensemble. Under the direction of Prof. Dallas Heaton, the ensemble produces full shows and scenes of opera, operetta, and musical theater, providing developing singers the opportunity to acquire and refine the skills that singing actors need to be successful, versatile performers and multi-faceted pedagogues. Our upcoming productions include: Opera Scenes (Mar. 24-25), Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (December 2017), and Purcell's *Dido & Aeneas* (April 2018). Follow us on social media (@USUOpera) or find more details online: http://opera.usu.edu!
USU Opera Theatre presents

La finta giardiniera
Dramma giocoso in three acts

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Libretto by Giuseppe Petrosellini

SYNOPSIS

Setting
The Mayor’s estate in Lagonero, Italy – 18th century

Act I
A summer’s day in the ornamental garden of the mayor’s estate.
The Mayor oversees Sandrina and Nardo working in his estate garden as he prepares to receive his niece Arminda and her fiancé Count Belfiore. The guests arrive and unwittingly thrust the estate into tumult. Sandrina finds out that Arminda’s fiancé is her estranged lover and faints. Belfiore recognizes in Sandrina his fiancée who had run away after he stabbed her in a jealous rage one year prior. All are confused as Sandrina continues to keep up her deceit.

~15-minute Intermission~

Act II
Scene 1: The following morning in the atrium of the Mayor’s estate
The various lovers try diverse methods to attain their conquests but none work. Ramiro enters with the news that the Count is wanted for murder of the Marchioness Violante. Brought before an impromptu court the Count narrowly escapes a conviction of his own doings. Later Sandrina is found to have gone missing, quietly abducted by Arminda. The estate sets out to find her immediately.

Scene 2: Later that same day in a remote mountain location at night
Alone and distraught, Sandrina begins to lose her mind as the search parties near her. After many mistaken identities, Belfiore and Sandrina find each other and completely lose touch with reality, believing that they are Greek gods.

Act III
Scene 1: The following day in the courtyard and garden of the Mayor’s estate
Sandrina and Belfiore, still out of their minds, are back at the Mayor’s estate. Everyone else is also at their wits’ end.

Scene 2: Later that day in the estate garden
After waking from a nap, all pretense is set aside as Sandrina reveals herself to be the Count’s former fiancée, the Marchioness Violante. After unsuccessfully parting they fall into each other’s arms. The other couples fall into line shortly after, with Arminda reluctantly taking Ramiro back and Serpetta yielding to Nardo. The Mayor remains hopeful for another day and another Sandrina.

CREDITS

Cast
Il Podestà (The Mayor)  Benjamin Krutsch  Ramiro  Emily Cottam
Sandrina  Rebecca Soelberg  Serpetta  Amanda Glancy
Il Contino (The Count)  Andrew Taylor  Nardo  Brad Summers
Arminda  Nicole Vander Does

Production Team
Producer: USU Opera Theatre under the direction of Dallas K Heaton
Stage Director: Daniel Helfgot
Music (Vocal) Director: Dallas K Heaton
Music (Orchestra) Director/Conductor: Sergio Bernal
Scenic/Costume Design: Dennis Hassan
Wig/Makeup Design: Sara Shouse
Wardrobe/Makeup Assistant: Daniel Carter
Stitcher: Michelle Bradford
Technical Director: Keith Carson
Lighting/Designer: Keith Carson
Light Board Operator: Hannah Mefford
Fly Operator: Michael Palmer
Stage Manager: Camille Harmer
Assistant Stage Manager: Abby Welch, Karley Garrett
Prop Master: Demetria Torowus
Shop Crew: Trevor Flocco, Dwight Camillucci, USU Opera Theatre students
Additional Musical Preparation: Cindy Dewey, Errik Hood, Brianna Kraus
Supertitle Operation: Kiah Spjute
Translation: Dallas K Heaton
Poster Design: Aimee Brunson
Program Layout: Whitney Schulte

USU Symphony Orchestra
Flute: Rachel Frandsen, Allie Patton
Oboe: Samantha Fry, Jessica Rice
Bassoon: Carolyn Bodily, Dallas Heaton
Horn: Jacob Wheelwright, Robert Jones
Trumpet: Megan Walker, Mary Anne Gema
Timpani: Dallas Heaton
Violin 1: Rebecca Ostermiller*, Olivia Abbott, Laurana Wheeler, Chandra Harvey, Calli Barton
Violin 2: Reagan Call, Michael Hilton, Kirsten Barker, Amy Thacker, Abby Wuehler
Viola: Alexandra Cook, Patrik Rodeler, Sophie Carter
Cello: Josiah Cordes, Audrey Hudgens, Erin Gordon
Bass: Emmalee Winter, Whitney Eliason
Harpischord: Dallas Heaton
*Concertmaster

This production of La finta giardiniera was made possible by a generous gift from the USU University Inn & Conference Center.

USU Opera Theatre also gratefully acknowledges the generous contribution of time and resources given by the USU Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Dr. Sergio Bernal, USU Production Services, Utah Festival Opera, and the USU Department of Theatre Arts. The USU Opera Theatre is proudly housed in the USU Caine College of the Arts.

This production of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s LA FINTA GIARDINIERA uses orchestral parts edited for the Neue Mozart-Ausgabe by Rudolph Angermüller and Dietrich Berke. Used by arrangement with European American Music Distributors Company, U.S. and Canadian agent for Bärenreiter-Verlag, publisher and copyright owner.

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