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## MINNESOTA OPERA BRINGS ITS 60TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON TO A CLOSE WITH MOZART'S *DON GIOVANNI*

### **Driven by a woman-led creative team, MN Opera brings new perspectives to the fore in Mozart's classic tale**

**MINNEAPOLIS (April 6, 2023)** – Minnesota Opera returns to the Ordway in May to present a new production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. This production, created by a woman-led creative team, was originally scheduled for May of 2020 before it was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, three years later, the cast and creative team return to present this blockbuster opera for the fifth time in Minnesota Opera's history and for the first time in nearly 20 years.

This production approaches the piece through a new lens, highlighting the feminine strength inherent in the story. The concept also nods to society's advances in gender and sexual politics while acknowledging the fact that this story about a smooth-talking harasser is just as relevant today as it was over 200 years ago.

The story revolves around Don Giovanni, an egotistical and infamous womanizer, brazen in his shameless seductions. But his betrayals soon catch up to him when divine retribution exacts the ultimate price. Set in the 1930s, this new production centers the women who cross paths with Don Giovanni and ultimately deliver his grim fate. Mozart's sharp and otherworldly opera seamlessly blends dark comedy with biting social commentary, all set to some of opera's most stirring music.

The opera's composer, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, is one of the most well-known composers in the classical tradition. Many are familiar with his operas, symphonies, and solo repertoire, and have likely heard his melodies through popular TV shows, movies, and everyday advertisements. He wrote over 20 operas in his short life (Mozart only lived to the age of 35), including *The Magic Flute*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* and *Così fan tutte*.

While Mozart called *Don Giovanni* an opera buffa, or comic opera, it was billed as a drama giocoso, indicating that it had elements of both comedy and drama. First performed on October 29, 1787, at what is now called the Estates Theatre in Prague, the opera has become one of Mozart's most popular works.

"After the world premieres of *Edward Tulane* and *The Song Poet* and the company premieres of Handel's *Rinaldo* and Donizetti's *The Daughter of the Regiment*, we're thrilled to end our 60th Anniversary Season with a true blockbuster, Mozart's *Don Giovanni*," says Minnesota Opera President and General Director Ryan Taylor. "Our company has performed this work five times in its six-decade history, but this production will offer something new to audiences, whether this is their first *Don Giovanni* or their fifth."

Stage Director Keturah Stickann says that in the opera's traditional interpretation, the women in *Don Giovanni* are often presented as archetypes. She adds, "To be sure, I have approached it this way in the past, and the more I explore the piece, the more I feel the need to fight these images." Stickann's concept for this production views these female characters through a different lens and ultimately places Don Giovanni's fate in their hands. "In the end, it's the three women that bury him, and who are there at every turn to knock him off his game."

The cast features bass-baritone Seth Carico (*Dead Man Walking*) in the title role. He is joined by Minnesota Opera Resident Artist alum and current Minnesota Opera Company Artist soprano Symone Harcum (*The Anonymous Lover, Carmen, Rinaldo*) as Donna Anna, soprano Sara Gartland as Donna Elvira in her Minnesota Opera debut and Resident Artist alumni including baritone Thomas Glass (*La bohème, Albert Herring*) as Leporello, soprano Leah Brzyski (*Albert Herring, The Anonymous Lover, Carmen*) as Zerlina and bass Allen Michael Jones (*Albert Herring, Carmen*) as the Commendatore. Current Minnesota Opera Resident Artists tenor Efraín Corralejo (*Rinaldo*) as Don Ottavio and baritone Charles H. Eaton (*Rinaldo, The Daughter of the Regiment, The Song Poet*) as Masetto round out the cast.

Karen Kamensek makes her Minnesota Opera debut conducting the Minnesota Opera Orchestra and the Minnesota Opera Chorus. Keturah Stickann makes her debut with the company directing this new production at the Ordway Music Theater.

Minnesota Opera will present an evening of thought-provoking conversation, drinks and music at its Offstage event, Mozart's *Don Giovanni*: "How We Do It." With our upcoming production of *Don Giovanni* as a backdrop, members of Minnesota Opera's staff and the *Don Giovanni* creative team will discuss the complex world behind the operatic rehearsal and staging process. Join the company at MetroNOME Brewery on Wednesday, April 19 from 6-7:30 p.m. Learn more in advance of the event at [mnoopera.org/offstage](https://mnoopera.org/offstage).

**What:** *Don Giovanni*  
Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte  
Sung in Italian with English captions projected above the stage

**Where:** Ordway Music Theater, 345 Washington St., St. Paul, MN 55102

**When:** Saturday, May 6, 2023 at 7:30 p.m.  
Thursday, May 11, 2023 at 7:30 p.m.  
Saturday, May 13, 2023 at 7:30 p.m.  
Sunday, May 14, 2023 at 2 p.m.  
Thursday, May 18, 2023 at 7:30 p.m.  
Saturday, May 20, 2023 at 7:30 p.m.  
Sunday, May 21, 2023 at 2 p.m.

**Tickets:** \$26-\$224. Call Minnesota Opera Patron Services at 612-333-6669, Monday–Friday, 10 a.m.– 5 p.m., or purchase online at [mnoopera.org/don-giovanni](https://mnoopera.org/don-giovanni).

**Media:** Digital assets are available on our [Online Press Room](#).



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### Creative Team

Conductor | Karen Kamensek  
Stage Director | Keturah Stickann  
Scenic Designer | Liliana Duque Piñeiro  
Costume Designer | Sarah Bahr  
Lighting Designer | Mary Shabatura  
Hair and Makeup Designer | Priscilla Bruce  
Intimacy and Fight Director | Doug Scholz-Carlson

### Cast

Don Giovanni | Seth Carico  
Leporello | Thomas Glass+  
Donna Anna | Symone Harcum †+  
Donna Elvira | Sara Gartland  
Don Ottavio | Efraín Corralejo\*  
Zerlina | Leah Brzyski+  
Masetto | Charles H. Eaton\*  
Commendatore | Allen Michael Jones+

\*MN Opera Resident Artist  
+MN Opera Resident Artist alum  
†MN Opera Company Artist

To learn more about *Don Giovanni*, please visit [mnopera.org/don-giovanni](http://mnopera.org/don-giovanni).

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Minnesota Opera changes lives by bringing together artists, audiences and community, advancing the art of opera for today and for future generations.