

# Don Giovanni

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte

Conductor  
José Luis Dominguez

Stage Director/Producer  
Brandon McShaffrey

Principal Coach  
Ellen Rissinger

Scenic Designer  
Cory Steiger

Chorus Master  
Matthew Lista

Costume Designer  
Kit Longo

Continuo  
Andrea DeVito

Lighting Director  
Lauren Merrifield

Combat Director  
Ian Rose

Props Designer  
Amanda Hatch

Intimacy Director  
Eli Lynn

Assistant Director  
Abbi Hobbs

Stage Manager  
Sydney Taper

Makeup Designer  
Marielle Zakrzwski

Friday, April 11, 2025 • 7:30PM  
Sunday, April 13, 2025 • 3:00PM  
Tuesday, April 15, 2025 • 7:30PM

Tomlinson Theater | 1301 W. Norris St. | Philadelphia, PA 19122

Run time: approx. 2.5 hours plus one 15 minute intermission  
This production is sponsored in part by The Temple University General Activities Fund.  
Three hundred thirty-sixth, forty-first, and fifty-third performances of the 2024-2025 season.

## Cast

Leporello.....	Derek Renzelman
Don Giovanni (4/11, 4/13).....	John Drake
Don Giovanni (4/15).....	Benjamin Chen
Il Commendatore.....	Eric Delagrange
Donna Anna.....	Kaitlyn Gaughan
Don Ottavio.....	Henry Malueg
Donna Elvira.....	Evgeniya Khomutova
Zerlina.....	Toby Ichniowski
Masetto.....	Daniel Laverriere

## Chorus

Zachary G. Alvarado	Chelsea Haynes	Charles McNeil Jr.
Shurui Chen	Gabe Kutz	Sarah Petko
Jessica Corrigan	Dianhao Lou	Sofia Robinson
Shuyi Fang	Kyle McCurley	Noah Sickman

## Cover Cast

Donna Anna.....	Katrina Dignum
Don Ottavio.....	Roberto Guevara
Donna Elvira.....	Ashlee Terrill
Zerlina.....	Madelyn Owens
Masetto.....	Zachary G. Alvarado

# Music Staff

José Luis Domínguez (Conductor)

Ellen Rissinger (Principal Coach)

Matthew Lista (Assistant Conductor/Chorus Master)

Andrea DeVito (Assistant Coach/Continuo)

Sirapat Jittapirom (Assistant Coach/Pianist)

## Orchestra

### VIOLIN I

Yuan Tian

Veronika Sveshnikova

Zi Wang

Sofiya Solomyanskaya

Giorgi Vartanovi

Margaret Dziekonski

### VIOLIN II

Ruslan Dashdamirov

Phil Watts

Kyle Stevens

Hannah Emtage

### VIOLA

Kathleen Stevens

AJ Stacy

Aria Anderson

Madalyn Sadler

### CELLO

Alison Park

Nathan Lavender

Jace Cocola

Mauricio Gonzalez

### BASS

Daniel Virgen

Omar Martinez Sandoval

### FLUTE

Nicole Hom

Caterina Manfrin

### OBOE

Sarah Walsh

Kay Meyer

### CLARINET

Sarah Connors

Sarah Eom

### BASSOON

Noah Hall

Adam Kraynak

### HORN

Ethan Stanfield

Nicholas Welicky

### TRUMPET

Jacob Flaschen

Trey Serrano

### TROMBONE

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Dalton Hooper

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Jacob Treat

### HARPSICHORD

Andrea DeVito

### MANDOLIN

Gabriel Locati

## Land Acknowledgement

“The land upon which we gather is part of the traditional territory of the Lenni-Lenape, called “Lenapehoking.” The Lenape People lived in harmony with one another upon this territory for thousands of years. During the colonial era and early federal period, many were removed west and north, but some also remain among the continuing historical tribal communities of the region. We acknowledge the Lenni-Lenape as the original people of this land and their continuing relationship with their territory. In our acknowledgment of the continued presence of Lenape people in their homeland, we affirm the aspiration of the great Lenape Chief Tamanend, that there be harmony between the indigenous people of this land and the descendants of the immigrants to this land, “as long as the rivers and creeks flow, and the sun, moon, and stars shine.”

## Content Warning

**Content Notice:** depiction of sexual, gender-based, weapon, and physical violence, murder, paranormal activity, misogyny, and religion.

The exits of the theatre are marked with illuminated exit signs. Aisles and doors will remain lit and accessible throughout the performance. There are gender-inclusive restrooms located in Klein Hall. Water fountains are located in the theater lobby.

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**Tuttleman Counseling Services** are available **during business hours** at (215) 204-7276

**After-Hours Support** and Crisis Line is available when Counseling Services is closed: (215) 204-7276.

*(When calling after hours, please listen to the recording and press "1" when instructed.)*

**Crisis Line:** Text “HOME” to 741741

BIPOC individuals are invited to text “STEVE” to 741741 for support

Student Health Services Students may report confidentially at 215-204-7500.  
[temple.edu/studenthealth](http://temple.edu/studenthealth)

Psychological Services Center Report confidentially at 215-204-7100 or request an appointment at [psc@temple.edu](mailto:psc@temple.edu).



# Synopsis

## Act I

Outside the Commendatore's home, Leporello waits for his master, Don Giovanni, to return. A masked Giovanni is chased out of the house by the Commendatore's daughter, Donna Anna. The two struggle until the Commendatore comes to defend her. As she flees, the two men duel, and the Commendatore is slain. Giovanni and Leporello escape. Donna Anna returns with her fiancé, Don Ottavio, to find her father dead. Anna asks Ottavio to avenge her. He agrees.

Leporello berates Giovanni for his lifestyle, and they run into a heartbroken Donna Elvira, one of Giovanni's former lovers. She berates Giovanni, and he orders Leporello to distract her as he escapes. Leporello explains to her that she is not the first victim of Giovanni's conquests, and he shows her his homemade catalogue of Giovanni's previous affairs.

Giovanni finds himself within a group of peasants celebrating the marriage of Zerlina and Masetto. He becomes infatuated with Zerlina. Leporello arrives, and Giovanni orders him to distract Masetto as he attempts to seduce her. In doing so, Elvira arrives and warns Zerlina of Giovanni. He then runs into Anna and Ottavio. She asks for his help in avenging her father. Elvira reappears and warns them of Giovanni. He convinces the couple that she's mad and bids them farewell. Anna realizes that Giovanni is her father's murderer. She tells Ottavio everything and asks him once more to avenge her. Leporello reports to Giovanni that he and Elvira escorted Zerlina back to Masetto and that he has shaken Elvira off. Ecstatic, Giovanni invites the wedding party to his home to continue the celebration.

Outside Giovanni's home, Zerlina asks Masetto for his forgiveness. Not convinced, Masetto hides to watch the two interact. Giovanni finds Zerlina and tries once more to seduce her, but he stops when Masetto appears. He convinces Masetto that it was nothing, and the three go inside. Anna, Elvira, and Ottavio, all masked, arrive to the party to reveal the truth about Giovanni. Leporello is ordered to invite them inside. In the ballroom, the musicians play a minuet, and a dance ensues. Giovanni dances with Zerlina and takes her to an adjoining room. She cries for help, and Giovanni pins the blame on Leporello. Anna, Elvira, and Ottavio unmask themselves and join Zerlina and Masetto in revealing Giovanni's true self. Giovanni and Leporello escape.

## Act II

Outside Elvira's home, Leporello attempts to resign, but Giovanni gives him a pay raise and convinces him to stay. Giovanni, wanting to seduce Elvira's maid, switches clothes with Leporello. Leporello, as Giovanni, takes Elvira on a walk while Giovanni, as Leporello, attempts to seduce the maid. Masetto arrives with other peasants to ambush Giovanni. Giovanni, still disguised, joins them and sends the peasants off. Giovanni beats up Masetto and escapes. Zerlina appears and comforts Masetto.

Outside Anna's home, Leporello, still disguised, tries to flee from Elvira. Anna, Ottavio, Zerlina, and Masetto appear and ambush Leporello, believing that he is Giovanni. Elvira defends him, but Leporello reveals himself out of fear. He escapes, and Ottavio asks the others to look after Anna while he searches for Giovanni. Elvira realizes she still loves Giovanni despite everything about him.

Leporello finds Giovanni in a cemetery by a statue of the Commendatore. While switching clothes, Giovanni tells Leporello that he just had a rendezvous with woman who thought he was him. He laughs at the furious Leporello, and the statue warns Giovanni that his laughing will cease by dawn. Giovanni orders the terrified Leporello to invite the statue to dinner at his home. The statue accepts.

Ottavio asks Anna once more to marry him, but she tells him that she needs time to grieve.

Leporello and Giovanni prepare for the feast. Elvira arrives and tries once more to convince Giovanni to love her. Giovanni laughs and sends her away. A scream is heard from the halls. Leporello goes to inspect only to return terrified. The Commendatore's statue appears and offers Giovanni one last chance to repent. Giovanni refuses, and the Commendatore banishes him to the underworld. Elvira, Anna, Ottavio, Zerlina, and Masetto run in to ambush Giovanni. Leporello tells them that they'll never see him again. They all look ahead to the future and celebrate the fall of evil.

## Musicologist Note

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart called his *Don Giovanni* a *dramma giocoso*, or a humorous drama. Since its premiere in Prague in 1787, there has been little consensus as to whether this is a comedy with an unexpectedly serious detour at the end or a drama with some comic relief. Mozart and his librettist Lorenzo da Ponte's elegant, psychologically precise work, dramatic and full of rich details of character, has made the opera a staple of theaters nearly continually since its premiere. But each generation—and each production—has found its own answer as to who Don Giovanni is.

The story was, for Mozart's audiences, a familiar one. Don Juan, or Don Giovanni in the opera's Italian, was a legendary character who had already starred in numerous plays and operas since the 1600s. Inevitably set in Seville, the story concerns a seducer who eventually gets his comeuppance, elements Da Ponte preserved in tonight's rendition. As in most tales of this period, the characters are sharply defined by social class: the libertine aristocrat (Don Giovanni), his plain-speaking servant (here named Leporello), and the variety of women who catch his eye. Mozart's music makes this clear. Donna Anna's grand flourishes mark her as upper class, while Zerlina's simple tunefulness is the charm of a peasant girl.

Da Ponte borrowed from multiple earlier Don Juan tales to assemble his libretto. Arguably this contributed to its rather episodic quality. The plot contains multiple threads: Donna Anna's and Don Ottavio's search for revenge, the pursuit by the spurned Donna Elvira, and Don Giovanni's encounter with Zerlina at her wedding to Masetto. Like a sitcom with A, B, and C plots, we move between these situations as they intersect in unexpected ways. Da Ponte also drew on many of the conventions of the comic opera, such as the disguises and mistaken identities of Act 2.

Yet the thundering minor chords that open Mozart's overture promise more drama than *giocoso*. Similarly, the home invasion and assault of Donna Anna that immediately follow should not be written off as a comic misunderstanding. In the nineteenth century, it became common to doubt Donna Anna's account of her confrontation with Don Giovanni, rewriting her rape as a consensual act. This reflects a general failure to believe women, but also the Romantic impulse to represent Don Giovanni positively, as a nonconformist who lives life according to his own rules (“Viva la libertà,” he

says in the first act finale). But for modern directors, Don Giovanni more often seems like a bleak text, the frantic, manic flailing of a sex addict.

The text can accommodate both these readings, and more. One reason for this is that Don Giovanni never really explains himself. While he sings several arias, they are all brief and in none does he offer a real account of his interior thoughts, as all three women do repeatedly. Who he is and what he means is left to us to decide, making this opera a fascinating text for our own statements about sex and power.

It is notable how rarely Don Giovanni's plans succeed. Over the course of two acts, he fails again and again, foiled by those he considers his social inferiors. We see the purportedly legendary seducer's pickup artist game in action in Act 1's "La ci darem la mano," in which he entices Zerlina away from her own wedding, but this plot does not turn out as he planned. His own violence and excesses—his attempted assault of Anna, his desertion of Elvira—compound into increasing trouble rather than more entries on Leporello's list. Yet despite all this trouble, he still gets away with it. Ultimately, it takes a force greater than humankind to bring him down.

We meet those minor chords from the overture again in the opera's remarkable conclusion. Like the beginning of the opera, we are treated to the unusual sound of a trio of low voices. The statue of the Commendatore, Don Giovanni's victim from the beginning of the opera, has come to life. (You might ask how this grave monument was built so quickly, but this is not a plot hole; at this time aristocrats often supervised the design and construction of their own graves well before their demises.) Don Giovanni is dragged to hell, an unusually immediate punishment for his crimes and excess.

Yet this is not the end of the opera. Everyone else pops back in for a little epilogue. If the punishment was the drama, this is the *giocosso*, the "lieto fine" or happy ending expected of operas of this genre. The characters assure us that the moral order has been restored and that for them life will go on. This scene has been considered anticlimactic and sometimes is cut. Yet there is something appropriate about its blithe cheeriness. It fails to fully vanquish the disturbing rupture of the previous scene, and suggests that while we might be prepared for regular earthly events, who knows what could happen when the next demon comes along?

-Dr. Micaela Baranello

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## Biographies

Chilean conductor **JOSÉ LUIS DOMÍNGUEZ** is a prominent talent on international orchestral and El Mercurio operatic stages. His conducting is described as “unrivaled, magnificent and with exemplary gesturing”, and he frequents prominent stages across the globe. Domínguez currently serves as artistic director of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Youth Orchestras. He is a regular guest conductor with the Opéra Saint - Étienne and New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and is currently Artistic Director of the Musical Encounters International Music Festival in La Serena, Chile. Recent commissions as a composer include the new ballet titled, “La Casa de Los Espíritus (The House of Spirits)” based on the bestselling novel by Isabel Allende. Its premiere in September 2019 at the Municipal de Santiago Ópera Nacional de Chile with the Ballet de Santiago and the Orquesta Filarmónica de Santiago (which Domínguez also conducted) was hailed as an “absolute triumph.” In addition, Jason DePue, violinist of the Philadelphia Orchestra, commissioned Domínguez to write a piece for violin and piano titled “Aitona” that was included in DePue’s 2020 debut solo album. His Concerto for Oboe premiered in early 2020 with oboist Jorge Pinzón, and the Orquesta Filarmónica de Bogotá (Bogotá Philharmonic Orchestra), Colombia to critical acclaim.



Upcoming commissions include a violin concerto, a harp concerto and a cello concerto. Future conducting engagements include the Orquesta Filarmónica de Buenos Aires (Buenos Aires Philharmonic Orchestra), the Orquesta Sinfónica de Chile (Symphony Orchestra of Chile), the Orquesta Sinfónica Universidad de La Serena (University of La Serena Symphony Orchestra), the Orquesta de Cámara de Chile (Chamber Orchestra of Chile) and the world renowned Semanas Musicales de Frutillar (Frutillar Musical Weeks) held in Frutillar, Chile at Teatro del Lago.

Recent appearances have included the Houston Symphony, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Colombia (National Symphony Orchestra of Colombia), Orquesta Filarmónica de Santiago (Philharmonic Orchestra of Santiago), Symphony Orchestra of Saint - Étienne, Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Peru (Lima University y Orchestra in Peru), Staatsoper Orchester de Braunschweig in Germany, Orquesta Sinfónica UNCuyo (UNCuyo Symphony Orchestra) in Mendoza, Argentina, Orquesta Sinfónica del Principado de Asturias (Symphony Orchestra of the Principality of Asturias) in Spain, and Temple University Symphony Orchestra in Philadelphia.

Domínguez has collaborated with many noted artists including: Renée Fleming, Andrés Díaz, Ray Chen, Sergio Tiempo, Ai Nihira, Verónica Villarroel and Luciana D'Intino. He recently released two critically acclaimed Naxos recordings; one of his own compositions, the ballet "The Legend of Joaquín Murieta," and the other, the music of Enrique Soro with the Orquesta Sinfónica de Chile (Symphony Orchestra of Chile).

**Ellen Rissinger** (principal coach) came to European attention in December of 2008, when she accompanied a performance of Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* for the Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf on one hour's notice. She spent a great part of her career in Germany, including nine years on the music staff of the Sächsische Staatsoper (Semperoper) in Dresden, Germany, returning to the U.S. full-time in 2019. Rissinger joined the faculty of Temple University in the fall of 2024, after four years on the faculty of Carnegie Mellon University. She has worked in opera houses in both the United States (with Detroit Opera, Cincinnati Opera,



Pittsburgh Opera, Kentucky Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Baltimore Opera among others) and Germany (Semperoper, Bregenz Opera Festival, Oper Frankfurt, Deutsche Oper am Rhein among others), and has given master classes with several of the summer music programs in Europe, including: The International Performing Arts Institute (IPAI) in Kiefersfelden, Germany; The International Music Festival of the Adriatic in Duino, Italy; University of Miami's summer program in Salzburg, Austria; AIMS in Graz, Austria; as well as at many universities in the U.S. including: The Hartt School; Boston Conservatory; Oklahoma City University; Murray State University, and the Boston NATS Chapter among others. In recital, Rissinger has performed with such artists as Toni Marie Palmertree, Troy Cook, Jane Henschel, Kenneth Riegel, Mirko Roschkowski and Rachel Willis-Sørensen. As the founder of The Diction Police, she has led the way for classical singers and coaches from all over the world to hone their foreign language skills. Rissinger is fluent in German and English, is conversant in Italian, French, Spanish and Modern Greek, and continues to work on her conversational ability in Russian. Together with Toni Marie Palmertree, she also hosts the podcast *So Lit Song Lit*, to introduce lesser-known song repertoire and expand the art song canon.

**Brandon McShaffrey** (director of opera production) has been teaching at Temple University since 2009 where he is currently the Head of Opera Production at Temple University. With TU Opera Theater he has directed *Dark Sisters* (Muhly), *Le nozze di Figaro* (Mozart), *Turn of the Screw* (Britten), *L'elisir d'amore* (Donizetti), *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* (Monteverdi), *Der schauspieldirektor* (Mozart), *La Canterina* (Hadyn), *Trouble in Tahiti* (Bernstein), *Dido and Aeneas* (Purcell), *The Merry Widow* (Lehar), and *Hansel und Gretel* (Humperdink) and has directed and choreographed many plays and musicals in the theater department. He runs both graduate and Undergraduate Opera workshops and produces the annual Aria/Scenes program. Professionally he has directed over 20 productions at Maples Repertory Theater. Is an active member and on the board of directors of the National Opera Association. He is a founding member and Producing Director of Mauckingbird Theater Company.





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## Additional Staff for this Production

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Assistant Stage Manager .....	Abby Miller
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 Recording Engineers .....Anthony Aguilar, Abby Almas  
 Program Designers .....Daniel Laverriere, Henry Malueg

## **Boyer College of Music and Dance**

The Boyer College of Music and Dance offers over 500 events open to the public each year. Students have the unique opportunity to interact with leading performers, composers, conductors, educators, choreographers and guest artists while experiencing a challenging and diverse academic curriculum. The Boyer faculty are recognized globally as leaders in their respective fields. Boyer alumni are ambassadors of artistic leadership and perform with major orchestras, opera and dance companies, teach at schools and colleges and work as professional music therapists, choreographers and composers. Boyer's recording label, BCM&D records, has produced more than thirty recordings, five of which have received Grammy nominations.

[boyer.temple.edu](http://boyer.temple.edu)

## **The Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts**

The Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts consists of the Boyer College of Music and Dance, School of Theater, Film and Media Arts, the George and Joy Abbott Center for Musical Theater and the Temple Performing Arts Center. The School of Theater, Film and Media Arts engages gifted students with nationally and internationally recognized faculty scholars and professionals. A hallmark of the School of Theater, Film and Media Arts is the Los Angeles Study Away program, housed at historic Raleigh Studios. The George and Joy Abbott Center for Musical Theater engages visiting performers, guest artists, set designers, playwrights and other Broadway professionals. The Temple Performing Arts Center (TPAC), a historic landmark on campus, is home to a state-of-the-art 1,200 seat auditorium and 200 seat chapel. More than 500 concerts, classes, lectures and performances take place at TPAC each year.

[arts.temple.edu](http://arts.temple.edu)

## **Temple University**

Temple University's history begins in 1884, when a young working man asked Russell Conwell if he could tutor him at night. It wasn't long before he was teaching several dozen students—working people who could only attend class at night but had a strong desire to make something of themselves. Conwell recruited volunteer faculty to participate in the burgeoning night school, and in 1888 he received a charter of incorporation for “The Temple College.” His founding vision for the school was to provide superior educational opportunities for academically talented and highly motivated students, regardless of their backgrounds or means. The fledgling college continued to grow, adding programs and students throughout the following decades. Today, Temple's more than 35,000 students continue to follow the university's official motto—*Perseverantia Vincit*, or “Perseverance Conquers”—with their supreme dedication to excellence in academics, research, athletics, the arts and more.

## Temple University Opera Theater Past Productions

Fall 2024	<i>Cendrillon</i>	Jules Massenet
Spring 2024	<i>Ariodante</i>	George Frideric Handel
Fall 2023	<i>Lucretia</i>	Benjamin Britten
Spring 2023	<i>Hänsel und Gretel</i>	Engelbert Humperdinck
Fall 2022	<i>Dark Sisters</i>	Nico Muhly
Spring 2022	<i>Le nozze di Figaro</i>	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Fall 2021	<i>Impressions de Pelléas</i>	Claude Debussy /Constant
Spring 2021	<i>Die Fledermaus</i> (Virtual)	Johann Strauss
Fall 2020	<i>The Turn of the Screw</i> (Virtual)	Benjamin Britten
Fall 2019	<i>L'elisir d'amore</i>	Gaetano Donizetti
Spring 2019	<i>Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria</i>	Claudio Monteverdi
Fall 2018	<i>Le Pauvre Matelot</i>	Darius Milhaud
	<i>Suor Angelica</i>	Giacomo Puccini
Spring 2018	<i>Così fan tutte</i>	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Fall 2017	<i>Dido and Aeneas</i>	Henry Purcell
	<i>Trouble in Tahiti</i>	Leonard Bernstein
Spring 2017	<i>Werther</i>	Jules Massenet
Fall 2016	<i>Der Schauspieldirektor</i>	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
	<i>La Canterina</i>	Joseph Haydn
Spring 2016	<i>Lucio Silla</i>	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Fall 2015	<i>The Merry Widow</i>	Franz Lehár
Spring 2015	<i>La Finta Giardiniera</i>	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Fall 2014	<i>Hänsel und Gretel</i>	Engelbert Humperdinck
Spring 2014	<i>Ofreo ed Euridice</i>	Christoph Willibald Gluck
Fall 2013	<i>Albert Herring</i>	Benjamin Britten
Spring 2013	<i>Gianni Schicchi</i>	Giacomo Puccini
	<i>Suor Angelica</i>	Giacomo Puccini

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