

Phelim McDermott's iconic production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* returns to ENO

6 – 21 February 2026 at the London Coliseum (7 Performances)



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ENO's witty and whimsical production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* returns to the London Coliseum this February with an exciting new cast. Director Phelim McDermott's entertaining staging transports the action from 18th century Naples to 1950s Coney Island, with fairground rides and circus acts forming the backdrop to the opera's rollercoaster of romantic twists and turns.

When the production premiered in 2014, *The Stage* praised it as 'elegant and fleet' and the *Daily Express* called it 'a great evening's entertainment'. Most recently revived in 2022, it is a co-production with New York's Metropolitan Opera, produced in collaboration with Improbable, an improvisation-based theatre company of which McDermott is co-founder and Artistic Director.

Written at the height of Mozart's musical prowess and premiered in 1790 just a year before his



premature death, *Così fan tutte* remains a testament to the skill of one of history's greatest composers. Initially successful but cut short by Emperor Joseph II's death, the opera faced a century of neglect due to its perceived immorality, only gaining widespread acclaim in the 20th century, as audiences appreciated its psychological depth and satire on love, lust and loyalty.

Critics' Circle Award and Olivier Award-winner **Phelim McDermott** has been directing and performing internationally since 1984. As well as *Così fan tutte*, he is the director of several previous ENO productions, including Verdi's *Aida* and three Philip Glass *operas*: *The Perfect American*, *Akhmaten* and *Satyagraha* (the latter of which the *Guardian* called 'a masterclass' and Bachtrack 'mesmerising').

Portuguese conductor **Dinis Sousa** is Music Director of the Royal Northern Sinfonia (RNS) and Founder and Artistic Director of Orquestra XXI, an award-winning orchestra that brings together some of the finest young Portuguese musicians from around the world. He is the winner of the Critics' Circle Young Talent Award for 2023.

Starring as sisters Fiordiligi and Dorabella are soprano Lucy Crowe and mezzo-soprano Taylor Raven respectively.

A globally renowned performer, **Lucy Crowe OBE** has recently performed at the Royal Opera House as Pamina in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, a role she has previously sung for ENO. A prolific recording artist, in 2021 she received a Grammy nomination for Best Opera Recording for Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen* with the LSO and Sir Simon Rattle.

Praised by the *Washington Classical Review* as a 'vocal sensation', American mezzo **Taylor Raven** makes her ENO debut. She has quickly established herself on the opera, concert and recital circuit. Last season she made her debut with New York's Metropolitan Opera in the company premiere of John Adams' new opera *Antony and Cleopatra*.

Joining them in the cast as Ferrando and Guglielmo, the sisters' fiancés, are British-American tenor Joshua Blue and Indian baritone Darwin Prakash respectively.

Award-winning **Joshua Blue** returns to ENO following his acclaimed performance in last season's *La bohème*, for which the *Guardian* praised the 'emotional intensity' of his 'heartfelt flow'. In recent years he made his Houston Grand Opera debut creating the role of Wilson in the world premiere of *Intelligence*, a new work by composer Jake Heggie (2023/24 season).

Mumbai-born **Darwin Prakash** is fast becoming known for his rich baritone and compelling stage



presence. He is the recipient of the Queen's Commendation for Excellence Award at the Royal Academy of Music and the Gus Christie Award at Glyndebourne, and has been an ensemble member of the Staatsoper Hannover since 2022.

Singing the role of the cunning Don Alfonso, who schemes to test the lovers in his own playful game, is bass baritone **Andrew Foster-Williams**. Praised by critics for his 'sensational vocal ability' (*Opéra*), his versatility has seen him play roles in Bach, Handel and Mozart through to Wagner, Britten and Debussy.

Completing the cast as the maid Despina is Irish soprano **Ailish Tynan**. She was a Vilar Young Artist at the Royal Opera House and a BBC New Generation Artist. She has previously appeared in ENO productions of Handel's *Radamisto* (2010) and Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* (2024). *The i Paper* said of her performance as the Governess in the latter: 'Soprano Ailish Tynan carries the show in a real tour de force... her performance is generous, detailed and sung with ideal sympathy and warmth.'

Joining the cast of singers and the ENO Chorus is a 12-strong skills ensemble who will become the circus acts and assist Don Alfonso in his deceit. They perform a number of roles while showcasing a variety of unique talents, including sword-swallowing, acrobatics, contortion and fire-eating.

The Associate Director of *Così fan tutte* is **Peter Relton**. Set design is by **Tom Pye** and costume design is by **Laura Hopkins**. **Paule Constable** is the production's Lighting Designer, and **Gary James** is its Revival Lighting Designer. The translation is by **Jeremy Sams**.

A new, semi-staged concert performance by **Ruth Knight**, featuring the same cast, will have two performances at **The Bridgewater Hall** in Manchester on **27-28 February 2026**, featuring the Chorus of ENO, with Alexander Joel conducting the Orchestra of ENO.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Così fan tutte

by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791)

Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte

Translation by Jeremy Sams

Director: Phelim McDermott

Conductor: Dinis Sousa



Così fan tutte opens on Friday 6 February for 7 performances at the London Coliseum: 6, 10, 11, 17 & 19 February at 19.00; 14 February at 15.00 and 21 February at 13.00.

BSL Interpreted Performance: Tuesday 17 February at 19.00.

Performed in English, with surtitles projected above the stage.

Tickets start from £15 (including all fees).

This is a co-production with New York's Metropolitan Opera, produced in collaboration with Improbable.

Season artwork: <https://englishnationalopera.smugmug.com/202526-Season-/202526-Season-Artwork>

Password: 2526

Past Production Images (2022): <https://englishnationalopera.smugmug.com/Così-fan-tutte-2022/>

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We create opera that feels different, theatrical and creatively daring and have been doing this to an internationally recognised standard since being founded in 1931 as Sadler's Wells Opera. In November 2024, following an agreement with Arts Council England, ENO and Greater Manchester announced details of a new partnership to bring the company's globally renowned cultural offering to the city-region, whilst continuing its substantial opera season every year at

PRESS RELEASE



the London Coliseum.

We are passionate about making opera more inclusive and representative of the society in which we live, and believe that positive change for the industry comes from removing barriers to access.

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