

Così fan tutte

Mozart / da Ponte

Opens 29 May 2009 (ten performances)

New co-production with **Festival International d'Art Lyrique d'Aix-en-Provence** and **Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg**

Award-winning Iranian film director **Abbas Kiarostami** makes his UK operatic directorial debut with *Così fan tutte*. Kiarostami's concept for this production has both simplicity and scale and his unique approach, incorporating film within a period setting, demonstrates his original eye for beauty. **Stefan Klingele**, a Mozart specialist and Music Director of the Bremer Theatre, makes his ENO conducting debut.

Written and composed at the suggestion of Emperor Joseph II, it was first performed in 1790. Mozart was at the peak of his creative powers and the score is full of richness and variety. The title is often translated as 'Women are like that' and 'fiancée swapping' provides the theme for an opera which is both comedy and tragedy all at once. While hilarious, it is also a profound and deeply human drama.

Commenting on the opera, Kiarostami says "We have to preserve the innocence of Mozart's art, which is capable of touching the sensitive, child-like part of the audience. *Così fan tutte* is everything except a farce. In witnessing its poetic, philosophic, emotive dimensions, the comic is a means, not an end".

The set and costume design is by **Malika Chauveau** with lighting designed by **Jean Kalman**. The cast includes **Susan Gritton** as Fiordiligi, **Fiona Murphy** as Dorabella, **Thomas Glenn** as Ferrando, **Liam Bonner** as Guglielmo, **Steven Page** as Don Alfonso and **Sophie Bevan** as Despina. The Associate Director is **Elaine Tyler-Hall**.

Kiarostami was one of the pioneering 'Iranian New Wave' film directors, a Persian cinema movement that started in the late 1960s whose techniques include poetic dialogue and allegorical storytelling dealing with political and philosophical issues. Kiarostami was among the few directors to remain in Iran when many others relocated to the West after the revolution of 1979. He believes that this base and his ethnicity are at the heart of his strong artistic identity, as evident in his poetic use of Iranian landscape. He has created over 40 films since the 1970's, many award-winning, including *Close-Up*, *Life*, and *Nothing More*, *The Taste of Cherry* and *The Wind Will Carry Us*. He has also been the deserving recipient of great acclaim for his poetry, photography and installations.

For further press information please contact

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Notes to Editors

- **Abbas Kiarostami** makes his UK operatic directorial debut with this production of *Così fan tutte*. He is an internationally renowned film director, screenwriter and producer, having directed such critically acclaimed works as *The Taste of Cherry* (1997) and *The Koker Trilogy* (1987-94)

He has directed over forty films and has won numerous awards, including the prestigious *Palme d'Or* at the Cannes Film Festival in 1997 for *The Taste of Cherry*. As well as a distinguished film career, Kiarostami is a poet, photographer and painter. Exhibitions of his work have been held at numerous international museums including MOMA, New York, Victoria & Albert Museum, London and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran

- This staging is a co-production with **Festival International d'Art Lyrique d'Aix-en-Provence** and **Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg**
- Press Night is **Friday 29th May 2009**
- *Così fan tutte* opens at the London Coliseum on 29 May for 10 performances - 29 May, 4, 11, 17 (signed), 19, 26 June and 2 July at 7pm; 6 and 13 June at 6pm and 5 July at 3pm
- Pre-performance talk by Nicholas Till on 6 June at 4pm, London Coliseum, £4
- **Box Office:** 0871 911 0200 or online www.eno.org
- **Abbas Kiarostami's** new film *SHIRIN* will be released by the BFI on 26 June, opening at BFI Southbank and selected cinemas nationwide www.bfi.org.uk/releases For further information please contact Sarah Harvey 020 7703 2253 / press@sarahharvey.info
- To coincide with ENO's staging of *Così fan tutte*, an exhibition of **Abbas Kiarostami's** recent photographic and film work will be on display at the Purdy Hicks Gallery, 65 Hopton St, Bankside, London SE1 9GZ from 26-30 May 2009. This exhibition is held in collaboration with the London based cultural consultancy, Candlestar. Further information www.purdyhicks.com.