



**Western  
Music**

Don Wright Faculty of Music

**OPERA AT WESTERN PRESENTS  
GAETANO DONIZETTI'S**

# **L'ELISIR D'AMORE**

**LIBRETTO BY FELICE ROMANI**

**Paul Davenport Theatre, Western University  
March 6 at 2 p.m. & March 7 at 7 p.m.**

**Simone Luti, *music director***

**Anna Theodosakis, *stage director***

## **CAST**

### **Sunday**

Nemorino: Seokho Park  
Adina: Angela Gjurichanin  
Giannetta: Felicia Wilson  
Belcore: Anthony Rodrigues  
Dulcamara: Chad Louwerse  
Dulcamara's assistant: Ottley Whitby

### **Monday**

Nemorino: Thiago Soares  
Adina: Michaela Chiste  
Giannetta: Siyuan Carter-Patkau  
Belcore: Nathan Dyck  
Dulcamara: Chad Louwerse  
Dulcamara's assistant: Ottley Whitby

Adina understudy: Chong Tan

Chorus: *Sop 1* Taylor Burns, Erin Johnston, Rachael Frankruyter, Sarah Hu-A-Kam

*Sop 2* Pamela Deacon, Sabrina Stewart, Mahima Akshinthala

*Tenors* Scott King, Carlo Rescigno, Tyrese Walters, Albert Xia, Joshua Sutherland

*Basses* Renato Araujo, Mitchell Kukura, Nicholas Gryniewski, Sidney Hiemstra

## **ORCHESTRA**

Music director, Simone Luti

Assistant conductor, Connor O'Kane

### **Flutes**

Yiwei Yang  
Katie Kirkpatrick

### **Oboes**

Mark Pinder  
Jessica Arenas

### **Clarinets**

Joel Robertson  
Alice Campbell

### **Bassoons**

Joseph Smith  
Andrea Ferencova

### **Horns**

Marianne Kitchen  
Ryan Duffy

### **Trumpets**

Olivia Callahan  
Christopher Reyes

### **Percussions**

Andrew Bush  
Meagan Foster

### **Harp**

Andrea Ferencova

### **Piano**

Connor O'Kane

### **Violini primi**

Menelaos Menelaou  
Ivan Li  
Patricio Flores  
Jeanny Jung

### **Violini Secondi**

Jillian Yang  
Frangel Lopez-Cesena  
Ellie Smallman  
David Chen

### **Viola**

Maria Gonzales  
Elizabeth van't Voort  
Cynthia Le

### **Celli**

Ethan Allers  
Heather White

### **Bass**

Jude Melanson

## PRODUCTION TEAM

Stage director: Anna Theodosakis  
Stage managers: Anthony Rodrigues,  
Mabel Wonnacott  
Assistant stage managers: Patricia  
Wrigglesworth, Isabelle Lauer, Madeline Berman  
Assistant director: Mabel Wonnacott  
Lighting design: Bryan Hart  
Props and scenery: Eric Bunnell

Costume designer and coordinator: Julie McGill  
Costume assistant: Mabel Wonnacott  
Surtitles: James Smith  
Music director: Simone Luti  
Theatre manager: Louis D'Alton  
  
Repetiteurs: Connor O'Kane, Tigran Saakyan,  
Jiazhi Sun, Megaria Halim, Catalina Teican

## PRODUCTION NOTE

The central theme of *L'elisir d'amore* has been described as "the triumph of sincerity." Indeed, I've always found this opera to be the most honest and human of the Bel Canto comedies. This is in great part due to our charmingly vulnerable protagonist Nemorino as well as composer Gaetano Donizetti's heartfelt and soaring melodies. The central conceit of the opera was inspired by the composer's true-life event. Like Nemorino, Donizetti's military service was bought by a rich woman so that he did not have to serve in the Austrian army.

*L'elisir d'amore* was originally set during the 18th century but our production is set in Southern Italy during World War II, specifically 1943 when the Allies occupied Italy. The action takes place on Adina's farm as the harvesters make an effort to find joy and strengthen community despite the ongoing war. In the late 1700s and the 1940s it was rare for women to be landowners. We interpret that Adina may have lost her father and brothers in the war and, like many women during WWII, she has assumed a traditionally male leadership role.

Our concept sees Belcore as an American Sergeant, bursting with bravado, looking to recruit villagers to the Allies supported Italian Co-belligerent Army. Dulcamara is a peddling salesman, a popular job amongst veterans at the time, trying his best to make a living town by town.

The backdrop of war serves to raise the stakes of this otherwise sparkling romantic comedy. In truth, we don't always realize how we feel about someone until there's the chance we might lose them. In this love story time is of the essence. Will Nemorino win over Adina before she marries another man? Will Adina admit her true feelings before Nemorino joins the army? Will Dulcamara's love potion really work?

- Anna Theodosakis, Stage Director

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Don Wright Faculty of Music fondly remembers the **Late Reverend Edward Jackman**. He was a generous supporter through the Jackman Foundation and regularly attended operas at Western Music. Reverend Jackman was kind and had a true passion for the arts. He is dearly missed.

We want to thank **Ilona Janoschek** for her ongoing leadership gifts to opera and also thank **The London Opera Guild** for their support of our opera students through scholarships.

Thanks to **Blyth Festival** for the loan of several props.

# SYNOPSIS

## ACT I

Nemorino, a young villager, is in love with the beautiful farm owner Adina, who he thinks is beyond his reach. Adina tells the gathered villagers about the book she is reading—the story of how Tristan won the heart of Queen Isolde by drinking a magic love potion.

A regiment of soldiers arrives, led by the pompous Sergeant Belcore, who immediately introduces himself to Adina and asks her to marry him. Adina declares that she is in no hurry to make up her mind but promises to think over the offer. Left alone with Nemorino, Adina tells him that his time would be better spent in town, looking after his sick uncle, than hoping to win her love. She suggests that he do as she does and change affections every single day. Nemorino reminds her that one can never forget one's first love.

Dr. Dulcamara, a traveling purveyor of patent medicines, arrives in the village advertising a potion capable of curing anything. Nemorino shyly asks him if he sells the elixir of love described in Adina's book. Dulcamara claims he does, slyly proffering a bottle of simple Bordeaux. He explains that Nemorino will have to wait until the next day—when the doctor will be gone—to see the results. Though it costs him his last coin, Nemorino buys and immediately drinks it. Nemorino begins to feel the effect of the “potion” and, convinced he will be irresistible to Adina the next day, feigns cheerful indifference towards her. Surprised and hurt, Adina flirts with Belcore. When orders arrive for the sergeant to return immediately to his garrison, Adina agrees to marry him at once. The shocked Nemorino begs her to wait one more day, but she dismisses him and invites the entire village to her wedding. Nemorino desperately calls for the doctor's help.

## ACT II

At the pre-wedding feast, Adina and Dulcamara entertain the guests with a song. Adina wonders why Nemorino isn't there. She doesn't want to sign the marriage contract until he appears. Meanwhile, Nemorino asks Dulcamara for another bottle of the elixir. Since he doesn't have any money left, the doctor agrees to wait so Nemorino can borrow the cash. Belcore is bewildered that Adina has postponed the wedding. When Nemorino tells him that he needs money right away, the sergeant persuades him to join the army and receive a volunteer bonus. Nemorino buys more elixir and suddenly finds himself besieged by a group of women. Unaware of the news that his uncle has died and left him a fortune, he believes the elixir is finally taking effect. Adina feels responsible for Nemorino's enlistment, but her concern turns to jealousy when she sees him with the other women. Dulcamara boasts about the power of his elixir and offers to sell Adina some, but she is determined to win Nemorino all on her own.

Nemorino now feels sure that Adina cares for him: He noticed a tear on her cheek when she saw him with the other women. Adina returns to tell Nemorino that she has bought back his enlistment papers. When he again feigns indifference, she finally confesses that she loves him. Belcore appears to find the two embracing and redirects his affections to Giannetta, declaring that thousands of women await him elsewhere. Dulcamara brags to the crowd that his miraculous potion can make people fall in love and even turn poor peasants into millionaires.

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