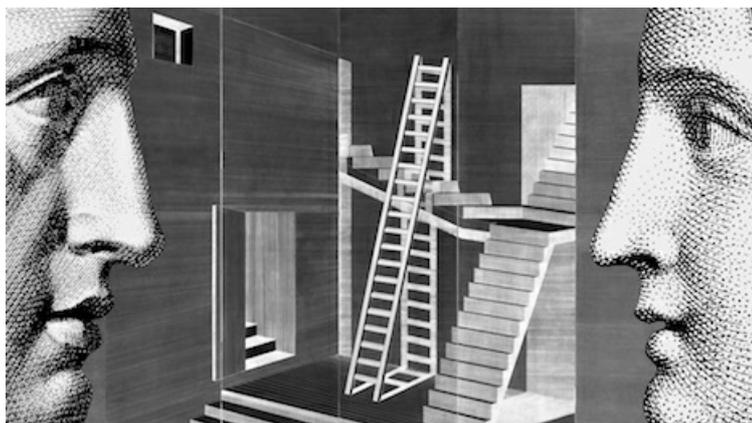


ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Fornasetti appeals to opera goers with historic rendition of Don Giovanni

October 10, 2016



Fornasetti set design for "Don Giovanni"

By SARAH JONES

Italian decorative arts brand Fornasetti is gathering together creative minds for a staging of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's "Il dissoluto punito ossia il Don Giovanni" in Milan and Florence.

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Presenting the opera 229 years after it was first performed in Prague, Fornasetti's production aims to recreate the original music heard centuries ago through the use of historic instruments and the original score rather than a second version composed for later Vienna enactments. While Don Giovanni is one of the most widely performed operas, taking this authentic approach may spur aficionados to buy tickets.

"[Barnaba Fornasetti decided to stage this production for] two reasons," said Al Ries, founder and chairman of **Ries & Ries**, a Roswell, GA-based marketing strategy consultancy.

"One, he wanted to generate publicity for the Fornasetti brand," he said. "And producing an opera, especially one using the original score, was found to create PR.

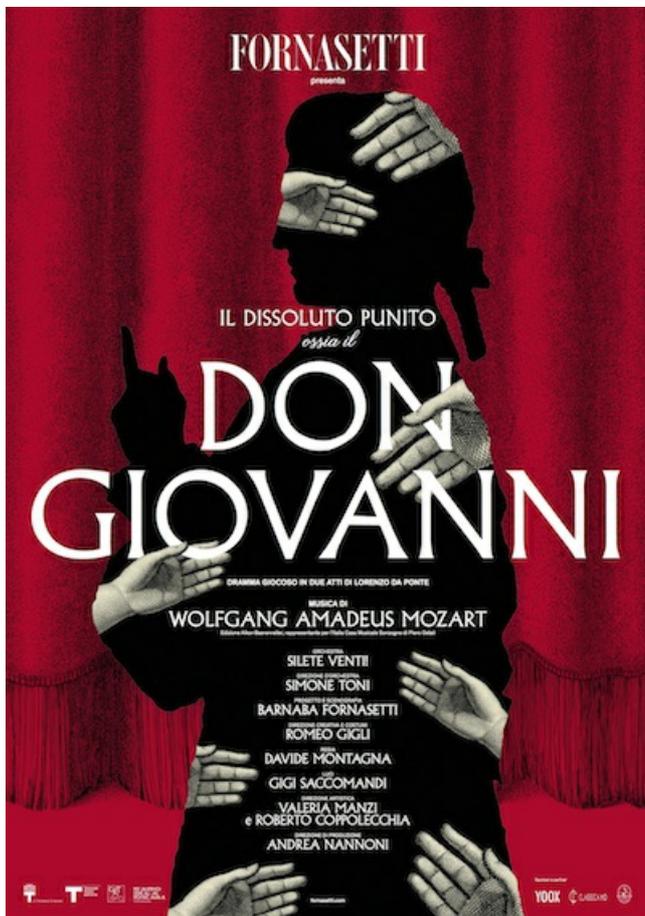
"And two, most opera lovers have already seen Don Giovanni, so why should they attend another production? The answer: To compare the original score with Mozart's revisions."

Mr. Ries is not affiliated with Fornasetti, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Fornasetti was unable to comment directly before press deadline.

On stage

Fornasetti's Don Giovanni will bow in Milan's Teatro dell'Arte from Dec. 1-3, with performances at the Teatro della Pergola in Florence on Jan. 10, 12 and 13.



Poster for Fornasetti's Don Giovanni

Don Giovanni is regarded as one of Mozart's masterpieces. The two-act opera, with a libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte, was written by Mozart at the age of 31.

The theatrical work is based on the legends of womanizer Don Juan, including both comedic and dramatic elements.

After an original performance in Prague in 1787, Mozart wrote a second version of the score, which was used for performances in Vienna and has been the traditional choice of directors since. Fornasetti looked to bring the authentic original intensions of Mozart to Italian audiences.



The creative team behind Don Giovanni

To accomplish this feat, the brand tapped conductor Simone Toni, the founder of antique instrument orchestra "Silete Venti!" For one of the group's recent projects, Fornasetti provided graphic design.

The 30-piece orchestra will be arranged as they would have been in Mozart's day, with strings positioned opposite the wind instruments.

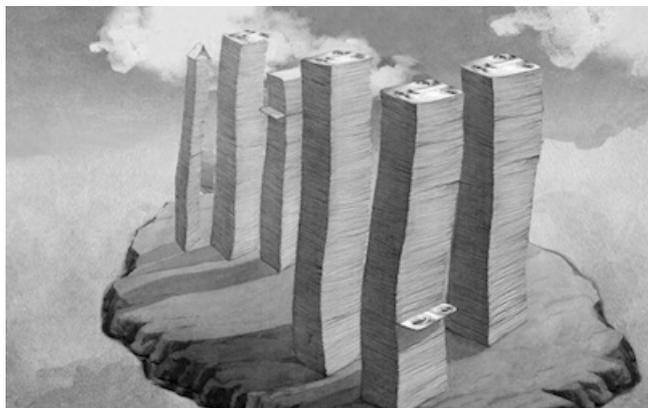
Davide Montagna, the director of the production, works with the Vienna State Opera, Teatro alla Scala's ballet school

and Piccolo Teatro of Milan.

Romeo Gigli, known for his collaborations with artists in various fields, including Tupac Shakur and Peter Gabriel, is responsible for costumes design and creative direction.

Barnaba Fornasetti, the son of the brand's founder, oversaw set design for this production.

The sets, which include moveable partitions, use classic Fornasetti motifs, such as playing cards and women's faces to create a surreal setting against which the plot can unfold.



Set design by Barnaba Fornasetti

Gigi Saccomandi's lighting design is intended to become a character of its own, hiding or revealing areas of the stage.

Frequent Fornasetti collaborators Valeria Manzi and Roberto Coppolechia serve as artistic directors.

Reflecting its own history, the brand invited its collaborators to Casa Fornasetti, the historic family home of Piero and Barnaba Fornasetti that used to serve as its atelier in the 1950s. Here, the many creative brains behind the project join their ideas together.

Among the sponsors of the project is online retailer Yoox.

Under the lights

Attending the opera is a pastime that attracts the affluent.

Brands such as Trump International Hotel & Tower and Herms were among the luxury advertisers spotted in the February issue of Opera News.

Opera News, the only national publication in the United States to cover opera globally, boasts an affluent and influential readership of more than 301,000 individuals. By tapping into a passion point, Opera News' content and advertising blend appeals to the publication's audience on an intimate and personal level that may not be achieved by a general lifestyle title ([see story](#)).

Along with Fornasetti, other creative types have entwined themselves with the world of opera, showcasing their creativity in another art form.

Fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld has added opera costume couturier to his extensive resume.

The designer, who splits his time as the creative director of Chanel, Fendi and his namesake label, in addition to numerous pet projects, was tapped by the Opra Bastille to create the costumes for an upcoming summer production. Mr. Lagerfeld's appointment was determined by Benjamin Millepied, who is leaving his position as Opra Bastille's director of dance, citing personal reasons ([see story](#)).

"The Fornasetti brand Piero, the father and Barnaba, the son has always been about versatility," Mr. Ries said.

"Furniture, ceramics, decorative arts and many other objects.

"Producing an opera is just another example of the versatility of Fornasetti," he said.