

# Opera stunning

by Lilli Ju

If you're looking for tickets to the Dalhousie music department's opera series opener *Don Giovanni*, you'll have to look pretty hard. Both the November 10 and 12 performances of this popular Mozart opera have sold out!

For those of you who have never been exposed to "opera" before, don't underestimate its entertainment value. Once you see this opera, you'll be hooked.

The music in *Don Giovanni* is incredible — beautiful arias, brilliant ensemble singing, lyrical recitatives. Whether it's Donna Anna's heart-wrenching lament over her father's murder, Leporello's comical account of the thousands of women who've fallen victim to master Don Giovanni's "amorous conquest," or Don Giovanni's smooth-singing seduction of an innocent bride-to-be, even the "amateur" ear will be impressed by how well Mozart has created works contrasting with such a wide variety and intensity of emotion. The fact that the opera is being presented in English (rather than Italian in its original version) is an added bonus to those not familiar with the texts.

The plot is thick with sword-yielding action, murder, lots of gaiety, ghostly spirits, comedy and revenge.

This "tragicomedy" opera centres around *Don Giovanni* (Gregory Servant) who is a nobleman on the surface, but a dishonest womanizer at heart. At the start of the story, Don Giovanni murders the Commendatore (Ray

Grant) who has come to the defense of his daughter, Donna Anna (Lorraine Lafontaine Johns). Don Ottavio (Shawn Henry), who's in love with Donna Anna, vows to avenge her father's murder. Meanwhile, there's Donna Elvira (Kathryn McDonald Servant), one of Don Giovanni's recent conquests, who vows to "expose" him. And how can you forget Leporello (Jason Parkhill) whose witty lines provide comic relief throughout the show.

Top notch performances by the lead characters are what truly makes this opera an enjoyable experience. The expressiveness and conviction of the singers masterfully convey the personalities and quirks of each character — so much so that you can't help feel for (or against) each one of them.

Wonderful music, witty dialogue, slapstick action, comedic romance plus a cast of talented faculty, students and alumni — make this production one worth not missing.

If the first dress rehearsal is any indication, audiences are bound to thoroughly enjoy the music department's presentation of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. For those of you who'll miss this treat, I suggest that you go out buy your tickets now for the rest of the Dalhousie Opera series before they sell out too!

Watch out for Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* in February and "opera scenes from Mozart" in March — both presented by the music department's Opera Workshop. For more information, call the department at 494-2418 or the box office at 494-2646.



Principal characters of *Don Giovanni*—kneeling: Jason Parkhill, left to right: Lorraine Lafontaine Johns, Kathryn McDonald Servant, Paul Moreau, Leslie Lake Searle, Shawn Henry, Ray Grant, Gregory Servant

PHOTO: MIKE DEVONPORT

# Uncensored eroticism at Dal

by Gazette staff

For those of you who missed the "Kiss and Tell" performance in the Grawood on Wednesday, October 26, you may have missed one of the most controversial events ever held in your local watering hole.

"Kiss and Tell," three lesbian artists from Vancouver, gave a multimedia presentation of their new book *Her Tongue on My Theory*. The trio

is constantly combating Canada Customs. If the book had been produced outside Canada, it is possible that we may never have been "allowed" to read it, nor "granted" the opportunity to be audience to women discussing female sexuality.

*Her Tongue on My Theory* is thought-provoking and challenges barriers that have dominated women's sexuality. With videos and slides, the three women brought their

book to life, passionately reading passages from the text. The presentation boldly discussed women's eroticism, leaving unsuspecting guests questioning the line between eroticism and pornography.

"Kiss and Tell" artists Susan Stewart, Lizard Jones, and Persimmon Blackbridge, question censorship, explore feminine sexuality, confront issues of homophobia and push the audience to free themselves and delve into a world of fantasies, sexual imagery and self-exploration. The book is a complex myriad of thought provoking idea(l)s of women's sexuality.

If you missed the "Kiss and Tell" performance, their book on censorship and women's sexual eroticism is ground breaking and an important read — if you can get your hands on a copy before it is censored out of the country.

The Local Artist Profile is on hiatus for this week. Look for it in the next issue.

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