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Partenope

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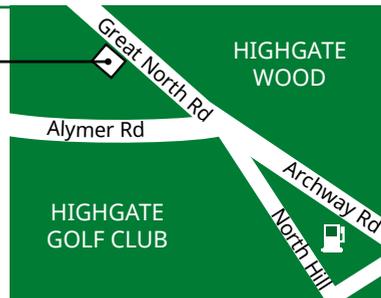
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Our next meeting is 5 June 2019 on Boris Godunov, with Robert Lloyd introducing the opera and his St Petersburg performance. Curtain up at 7.30, doors open at 7.00.

We very much look forward to
welcoming you for a wonderful evening!

Synopsis

Act 1

Partenope and her followers praise the sun and beach. Rosmira, disguised as a man, tries to inconspicuously observe the group, but they notice her. She introduces herself as Eurimene, and despite her disguise, Arsace notes the resemblance between Eurimene and his former love, Rosmira. Partenope welcomes Eurimene to her band of followers. Ormonte announces that Emilio plans to challenge Partenope and she asserts that she has nothing to fear from him.

Armindo confides in Eurimene that he is in love with Partenope. She, however, is in love with Arsace. He also confirms that Arsace returns Partenope's affections. Rosmira encourages Armindo to reveal his feelings to Partenope.

Rosmira reproaches Arsace for abandoning her, and forces him to swear he will not reveal her true identity. Meanwhile, Ormonte encourages Partenope to see the lighter side of love, and to enjoy what life has in store for her.

Partenope asserts her affection for Arsace in front of Eurimene, and Arsace prevaricates between his former and new love.

Emilio attempts to win over Partenope with a display of joyous machismo, and when this fails, he prepares for

combat. Partenope declares Arsace will lead her team, but quickly rescinds the declaration, choosing instead to lead them herself.

Armindo is betrayed when Eurimene reveals his own feelings for Partenope, but he assures him that his true affections lie elsewhere.

Partenope and Emilio prepare for the games, picking teams for the upcoming battle. Partenope chooses Arsace and Eurimene, while Emilio chooses Ormonte and Armindo — who almost immediately deserts and returns to Partenope's side, heroically saving her from the clutches of the enemy.

Eurimene takes credit for Emilio's capture, and Partenope's team celebrates victory. Emilio bemoans fate and fantasizes about what might have been.

INTERVAL

Act 2

Partenope celebrates her victory over Emilio as Eurimene questions Arsace's valour, challenging him to a duel. This displeases Partenope, who reaffirms her feelings for Arsace. Arsace begs Eurimene to stop mocking him and Armindo admits his feelings to Partenope.

Eurimene reveals that he has challenged Arsace on behalf of a lady - Rosmira - whom Arsace promised to marry and subsequently abandoned. Hearing this, Partenope grants Eurimene permission to duel Arsace, and vows to forget her own love for him, giving hope to Armindo. Arsace asks for Rosmira's forgiveness. When Partenope discovers them together, Rosmira manages to maintain her disguise. Arsace rails against love after both women scorn him.

Emilio joins the defence of Arsace as his second for the duel, while Armindo acts as Eurimene's second. Arsace is entirely unwilling to face Eurimene in battle and cunningly traps Rosmira into confessing her true identity.

Partenope reaffirms her new love for Armindo, returns Arsace to Rosmira and offers friendship to Emilio.



From the Director

Ashley Pearson

A cast of genuinely flawed characters who are preoccupied with the pursuit of romance, and utterly embroiled in the neuroticism of love.

Handel's fantastical tale about the mythical founding ruler of Naples, Queen Partenope, and her cast of suitors takes us on a journey of love, war and forgiveness on an imagined battlefield as real to the characters as a kingdom of children's sand castles is real for an afternoon of games.

We have repositioned these characters and their battlefield in the world of a Victorian era seaside resort, a time and place when the British middle classes began to enjoy holiday life and leisure time away from their 'real' lives. Visiting the seaside offered a chance to, for the day, forget the monotony of work and be transported to a fleeting life of leisure. Holiday goers eschewed social conventions and yet even in their rebellion were still bound by them.

The changing nature of work meant that many people suddenly had a day off and evenings of relaxation – time to fill. Our modern conception of play, of games and of make believe arises from this new necessity to stave off boredom. It became acceptable, even admirable, to do something just because it was fun rather than because it achieved an end or furthered a tradition.

Victoria and Albert's romance had popularized the idea of a 'Love Match,'

and at the height of Victoria's reign, marrying for love was becoming a mainstream social phenomenon. It was an era when strong social norms and taboos contrasted with the sense of boundless opportunity resulting from the might of the British Empire and the birth of consumerism. Of salacious note, after it was first printed in English in 1883, the *Kamasutra* (which remained illegal to publish in the UK until 1962) swiftly became one of the most pirated books in the English language. The clash between social morality and a desire to be free, to laugh at absurdity, to marry for love, to throw mud and ride donkeys all came to a head at Britain's seaside pleasure palaces.

What better setting for a cast of genuinely flawed characters who are preoccupied with the pursuit of romance, and are utterly embroiled in the neuroticism of love?

There is a sense right from the start that we have arrived somewhere off-kilter, where destiny holds sway, dreams might become reality and Cupid is a force to be reckoned with. In her first aria, Partenope proclaims, 'Love and fate will fight for me,' kicking off a whirlwind where love and destiny certainly do seem to be at war.



Rosmira, the opera's anti-hero, does not exemplify the archetypal 'spurned woman.' She is neither weak nor meek, and far from being a feminine romantic ideal, she is quick tempered, unreasonable, vindictive and resentful. She refuses, in the face of reason, to abandon her plan for revenge. Yet, we see that her pursuit of revenge is justified and we empathize with her inner struggle. We can't help but root for her success.

The opera's only other female character, Partenope, is in many ways the antithesis of Rosmira. She seeks attention, she teases and she takes all things lightly. But neither woman will let themselves be ruled by men. Indeed, both female characters show greater depth, complexity and wit than their male counterparts. The men who have turned up to court Partenope— Arsace, Armindo and Emilio are each flawed – their weaknesses uniquely exposed by Handel's music.

In the Victorian era, the spheres of the feminine and masculine were keenly defined, separate and unequal. However, with a powerful women on the throne of the most prosperous empire the world had ever known and the growing debauchery of men associated with increasing urbanisation, calls for women's suffrage were rising to the forefront of British consciousness.

Arsace, having abandoned his previous love (the spurned Rosmira), is over-

come the moment he sees her again and is thrown into a pit of indecision which consumes him for the rest of the opera. Armindo is paralysed by the fear of revealing his feelings to Partenope and he only does so after she essentially tricks him into declaring his love (it turns out she has known all along). Emilio is a hothead who firmly believes that challenging Partenope's authority is the way to her heart – a hopelessly flawed and ultimately futile effort.

The clash between public persona and private desire, a preoccupation of the Victorians, is at the root of the opera's drama. Armindo hides his secret love for Partenope, who in turn must weigh her personal feelings for Arsace against her responsibility as a ruler. Arsace in turn hides his past with Rosmira, who literally disguises herself as another of Partenope's suitors.

These characters are not at home in ancient Naples, or in Handel's Georgian England, or in the present, or in the Victorian era – they exist in their own world of battle and romance, where dreams can appear real and fantasy can become reality.

From the Music Director

Bertie Baigent

Handel's music allows us deeper understanding of the opera's characters beyond the standard opera seria conventions.

Partenope is one of Handel's most remarkable operas. Composed in 1730, it appears to be an opera seria ('serious' as opposed to 'comic' opera) like the majority of Handel's other operas from this time. Yet its form seems in many ways at odds with its content; indeed, the libretto was deemed too frivolous and vulgar when Handel first proposed it in 1726. Though not a true opera seria, Partenope is hardly a comic opera either. Despite undeniably humorous, lighter moments, we find no buffoonery or the more down-to-earth, vernacular characters of real opera buffa. Instead, the comedic elements of Partenope occur through the awkward mismatches of the tropes of opera seria and their manifestations in this work. For example Emilio, according to opera seria conventions, ought to be a tragic-heroic figure, prosecuting a just campaign to prove his valour and win Partenope's heart; instead he is a pathetic but lovable character who constantly overreaches himself and has his ego rapidly deflated. Armino should be gallant and courageous, winning Partenope's hand through his virtue and constancy; instead he is a whining, self-pitying wimp who ends up marrying Partenope by (happy) accident. And Rosmira, in many ways the

most complex and real character, is far from the noble soul striving to right a historical injustice that she purports to be; rather, she is cruel, vindictive, and spiteful, prolonging Arsace's suffering far longer than necessary, and in the process hurting herself too.

Handel's music, though normally consistent with our expectations of opera seria, allows us deeper understanding of the opera's characters beyond standard conventions. For example, in his Act 1 aria 'Barbaro fato' Emilio swears retribution on Fate for his defeat in battle and in love, but then fails to do anything to effect this for the rest of the opera. Accordingly, Handel provides Emilio with only a short aria and small orchestral forces (only strings) to make his case. What should be a dramatic, vengeful aria becomes something of a storm in a teacup.

Partenope is notable for its varied musical structure. Compared to many other Handel operas, the arias in Partenope, are relatively short, there are several ensembles for more than one singer, and numerous, dramatic orchestral sinfonias are inserted between vocal numbers. The standard format for Handel was the da capo aria: one line of text repeated many times in the first

musical section; a contrasting musical section with new text (usually repeated fewer times); and a reprise of the first section (where singers would decorate their vocal lines). This ABA structure is certainly the norm in Partenope but there are several important exceptions, and it is often in these deviations that we find Handel at his most ingenious and engaging. After the battle scene in Act 2, Partenope returns home and sings her wonderful, almost dream-like 'Care mura'. Here she symbolically attributes her victory in battle to the beauty of her city's walls shining in the sun. Eschewing da capo form, Handel opts instead for a kind of through-composed, gentle fanfare, connecting Partenope's success to her more tender, loving side which is revealed in the following aria. In 'Ma quai note' (Act 3) Arsace, wracked with grief, sings that 'the sound of painful lamentations invites me to sleep' accordingly Handel composes a tragic dirge (including a flute, an instrument traditionally associated with sleep in baroque opera) which peters out at the end of the 'first' section, too exhausted and forlorn to continue.

Ensembles are used to great effect. The opera opens with the crowd showering praises on their queen (chorus, 'Viva, Partenope!'); two choruses before the battle prepare the way for the ensuing confrontation; Act 3 opens with an ingenious quartet in which Partenope,

Armino, and Emilio offer well-meaning but absurd advice to the terrified Arsace; and later in the same act Partenope and Rosmira take turns to scold Arsace for his faithlessness.

The opera begins with an imposing sinfonia which references the French overture manner. Here, a slow introduction with grand dotted rhythms is succeeded by a faster, imitative section, and Handel closes the sinfonia with a rapid, scurrying dance. The numerous sinfonias and marches at the beginning of Act 2 are all military in character. By combining them with two choruses and some recitative, Handel, creates a wonderfully varied and evocative musical sequence for the preparation, the battle itself, and Emilio's surrender. By reusing musical material from the act's opening sinfonia in the subsequent chorus, and casting all of this music in D major, Handel is able to employ the trumpet (that quintessentially military instrument) throughout and give this passage real orchestrational colour and vitality.

The core of Handel's orchestra was the string section, but Partenope calls for considerable variety of wind instruments: flute, oboes, bassoon, and trumpet. Handel's normal practice was to use two harpsichords (one throughout, and another for Handel who could also direct the singers and orchestra in complex passages) and we have followed that convention.

Historical note

David Conway

... the 'Opera Register' for 1715 recorded "No opera performed since ye 23 July, ye Rebellion of ye Tories and ye Papists being ye cause".

When Handel initially suggested Partenope as a possible opera subject in 1726, he was met with a brusque rebuff from the opera company manager Owen Swiney: '(It) is the very worst book (excepting one) that I ever read in my whole life. Signor Stampiglia (the librettist) endeavours to be both humorous and witty in it: if he succeeded in his attempt on any stage in Italy, 'twas merely from a depravity of taste in the audience; for I am very sure it will be received with contempt in England'.

As Swiney's first encounter with Handel, some 15 years previously, had been when he fled overnight with the takings of the composer's Teseo, we must credit Swiney with chutzpah as well as lack of humour (and Handel with astonishing tolerance).

But eccentric as the storyline of Partenope appears, its contemporary audiences may have been able to relate to it. When Stampiglia wrote the original libretto in 1699, much of Europe (and notably Stampiglia's Italy and Handel's Germany) was a patchwork of tiny states continually squabbling with their neighbours, often under the protection of some more powerful ally. Within a year the War of the Spanish Succession had inaugurated fourteen years of

assorted conflicts from the West Indies to Hungary and involving many or most of these statelets. These included battles in Italy during the period of Handel's stay in Italy (1706-1710), where he visited Florence, Rome, Venice and Naples. The rivalries to obtain Partenope's crown and person in Stampiglia's libretto therefore had real world parallels.

And rivalries and jealousies, political as well as artistic, beset Handel's early career in England. Handel arrived in London in 1712, in the last years of Queen Anne, as a protégé of the Elector of Hanover (after 1714 George I). In the year of the Jacobite rebellion, the 'Opera Register' for 1715 recorded 'No opera performed since ye 23 July, ye Rebellion of ye Tories and ye Papists being ye cause' - interrupting the run of Handel's Amadigi.

In the field of opera there developed two factions not in Handel's favour. One was his rivalry with Giovanni Bononcini (1670-1747). Both composers wrote for the aristocratic opera company the Royal Academy of Music (nothing to do with today's RAM). Their partisans often reflected rivalries in the Hanoverian court, with Frederick, Prince of Wales, sometimes favouring one, sometimes the other. Hence the epigram attributed



to John Byrom -

Some say, compar'd to Bononcini
That Mynheer Handel's but a Ninny
Others aver, that he to Handel
Is scarcely fit to hold a Candle
Strange all this Difference should be
'Twixt Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dee!

Another challenge reflected a reaction against both composers, and an assertion of the merits of opera in English against Italian. 1728 saw the premiere of John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*, with music by Johann Pepusch based on popular ballads. It was also an effective dig against the 'robinocracy' of Prime Minister Robert Walpole. 'The Beggar's Opera', wrote the Handel enthusiast Mrs. Pendarves, 'entirely triumphs over the Italian one'.

Yet it was in these equivocal circumstances, following the financial failure of the Academy, that Handel and the theatre manager John Jacob Heidegger boldly undertook a five year contract at the King's Theatre. In 1729 Handel went to Italy to find star singers, and returned with, among others, Anna Maria Strada who was to sing Partenope, the castrato Antonio Bernacchi (Arsace), the tenor Annibale Pio Fabre (Emilio), and Antonia Merighi (Rosmira/Eurimene). Handel introduced them to the family of George II: Princess Amelia wrote 'We have heard now all the Singers and are mighty happy sat-

isfied it is the compleatest troop one could have expected'. Heidegger clearly took a more commercial view of the libretto than had Swiney: after all, many other composers had set it with success, including Bononcini, Antonio Caldara, and Manuel de Zumaya who in 1711 had used it in Mexico to create one of the first operas ever performed in the New World (his music is now unfortunately lost).

Partenope was presented in the first season of the new company alongside a revival of *Giulio Cesare* and another new opera, *Lotario*; the failure of the latter was excused by the loyal Mrs. Pendarves on the grounds that 'it is too good for the vile taste of the town'. Partenope, Handel's first non-serious (if not exactly comic) opera since *Agrippina* (1709), had a run of seven performances. The malicious Paolo Rolli, Handel's sometime librettist and a Secretary of the failed Academy gloated '(these) worthless operas... succeed no better than they deserve. The musicians will be paid and that is all that can be done. I perceive besides that either there will be no operas in the new season, or there will be the same Company, which is most certainly going from bad to worse'. He had not, of course, reckoned on Handel's indefatigable genius, many great proofs of which were still to come, and of which Partenope is a shining example.

Partenope

Opera **George Frideric Handel**

Libretto **Silvio Stampiglia**

PARTENOPE	Kali Hardwick Jennifer Begley	17/21/23/25/26 18/19/20/22/24
ARSACE	Hamish McLaren Francis Gush	17/19/21/23/25 18/20/22/24/26
ARMINDO	Erik Kallo Alexander Pullinger	17/19/21/23/25 18/20/22/24/26
ROSMIRA/ EURIMENE	Rachael Cox Anne-Sofie Sjøby Jensen	17/19/21/23/25 18/20/22/24/26
EMILIO	Peter Martin James Rhoads	17/19/21/23/25 18/20/22/24/26
ORMONTE	Saran Suebsantl Wongse Will Pate	17/19/21/23/25 18/20/22/24/26

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HARPSICHORD	Bertie Baigent Richard Gowers



Ashley Pearson DIRECTOR

A Canadian writer and director based in London, Ashley Pearson's directing work includes Don Giovanni (Opera On Location); Così Fan Tutte, Orphée aux Enfers, Die Zauberflöte (St. Paul's Opera); Nerves of the Heart (Quest). Her work as a writer/librettist includes Carmen (King's Head Theatre); Music Off Hath Such a Charm (OperaUpClose); Coverage (Riot Act); Mary, Mary (Theatre Mensch).

She was Associate Director of the 2017 Opera Works programme at the ENO. Her work as Assistant Director includes Macbeth, Berenice (Royal Opera House); Don Giovanni, Die Fledermaus (Lyric Opera Studio Weimar); Les Mamelles de Tirésias, Une Education Manquée (Royal College of Music); Carmen, La Traviata (OperaUpClose).

Ashley holds an MFA in Theatre Directing from East 15 Acting School.



Laura Fontana DESIGNER

Laura is a stage designer based in London. She graduated from Goldsmiths University of London with a BA (Hons) in Design in 2016.

Her recent work includes 'DNA' by Dennis Kelly at the Southwark Playhouse and workshop performances of 'Function' by Sophie Ellerby at the Criterion Theatre for the National Youth Theatre, 'Twelfth Night' at the London College of Music and 'Dispatches' for the ENO Baylis Opera Works Workshop.

Outside of theatre, Laura is a member of diverse organisations working towards creating and promoting a more sustainable and fairer Fashion Industry through social projects and political campaigns. www.laurafontana.co.uk

Bertie Baigent MUSIC DIRECTOR

Bertie Baigent is rapidly building an international reputation as a conductor-composer. Music director of Waterperry Opera Festival and assistant conductor of the Colorado Symphony, Bertie has recently worked with ensembles including the Dallas Symphony, WDR-Sinfonieorchester, and Britten Sinfonia. Forthcoming engagements include The Magic Flute at Waterperry, and an all-Mozart tour with the Colorado Symphony; opera work includes projects with Shadwell Opera, Helios Opera, and Opera-in-the-City. In 2018 Bertie was the youngest semi-finalist in the LSO Donatella Flick Conducting Competition.

As a composer Bertie has been awarded commissions and prizes by institutions including the BBC, Royal Philharmonic Society and St Paul's Cathedral, and his works have been widely performed and broadcast internationally. Bertie graduated from the University of Cambridge in 2016 before completing his master's in conducting and composition at the Royal Academy of Music. www.bertiebaigent.com



Richard Gowers REPETITEUR / ASSISTANT MUSIC DIRECTOR

Richard Gowers read music at King's College, Cambridge, where he was organ scholar, and is currently taking an MA in Piano Accompaniment at the Royal Academy of Music. He has recently répétiteur-ed for Kepler's Trial (Kepler Productions at the V&A Museum), Hänsel & Gretel (directed by the esteemed mezzo-soprano Sarah Walker), Don Giovanni (Waterperry Opera) and Carmen (Royal Opera House). As a song accompanist, recent performances include Wigmore Hall and the Leeds Lieder Young Artist Programme. As an orchestral keyboard player he has performed with a number of the country's leading ensembles, including the Aurora Orchestra, CBSO, LPO, Philharmonia and RPO.





Kali Hardwick PARTENOPE

American soprano Kali studies at Royal Academy of Music with Elizabeth Ritchie and Ingrid Surgenor. She has performed Sophie (Der Rosenkavalier) in postgraduate scenes, Leïla (Pearl Fishers) in RAO Scenes, and Contessa (Le nozze di Figaro) at Dartington International Summer Festival. Other performances include Adina (L'elisir d'amore), L'Ensoleillad (Chérubin/Massenet), and Fioriligi (Cosi fan tutte). Kali will join OperAvenir Studio in Basel for their 2019-2020 season.



Hamish McLaren ARSACE

Hamish was born in London and grew up there and near the sleepy village of Eglwysbach in North Wales. In the summer of 2016 Hamish graduated from St. John's College, Cambridge with a BA and an MPhil in early modern history, and has since completed a MMus with distinction at the Royal Academy of Music. Hamish is taught by Alexander Ashworth and Richard Shaw. www.hamish-mclaren.com



Erik Kallo ARMINDO

Erik currently studies at the Royal College of Music with Sally Burgess and Stephen Varcoe. At RCM Erik has performed Medoro from Handel's Orlando, Ottone from Monteverdi's L'Incoronazione di Poppea, and Rinaldo from Handel's Rinaldo for Opera Scenes. Erik is an RCM Award holder and is generously supported by the Drake Calleja Trust Fund and the Dien East Scholarship.



Rachael Cox ROSMIRA/EURIMENE

Rachael graduated from the Royal College of Music. Highlights this season: world premiere of 'Aurora' (Bury Court Opera), Fidalma (The Secret Marriage, HGO) and cover Zweite Dame (Die Zauberflöte, Garsington Opera). Other roles: Dido (Dido & Aeneas), Nancy (Albert Herring), Dorabella (Cosi fan tutte), Hänsel (Hänsel und Gretel). Concert highlights include premiering a re-orchestrated edition of Havergal Brian's The Vision of Cleopatra. www.rachaelcox.co.uk

Jennifer Begley PARTENOPE

Jennifer studied at Goldsmith's College, the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama and continues her studies with Janice Chapman. Roles include Peep Bo/The Mikado, Papagena & First Lady/The Magic Flute (Charles Court Opera), Najade/Ariadne auf Naxos (New Palace Opera), Adele/Die Fledermaus (Fulham Opera). Future engagements include Königen der Nacht/Die Zauberflöte (Berlin Opera Academy) & Workshop Leader/Papagena for Opera Dots (Royal Opera House, Covent Garden).



Francis Gush ARSACE

Francis is an English countertenor and graduate of the Royal College of Music under the tutelage of Lawrence Zazzo and Dinah Harris. He recently completed a season as a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company, being fortunate to perform as a soloist alongside Judi Dench, Patrick Stewart, and Ian McKellen. Upcoming engagements include Purcell's 'The Indian Queen', under Emmanuelle Haim at the Opéra de Lille.



Alexander Pullinger ARMINDO

Alexander is a freelance countertenor, based in London. Productions include: Purcell, Dido and Aeneas (Sorceress); Handel, Giulio Cesare (title role); Jommelli, La Didone, London Handel Festival (Selene); Mozart, La clemenza di Tito (Annio); Monteverdi, L'Incoronazione di Poppea (Ottone); Cavalli, Xerse, Grimeborn (Arsamene, cover). He looks forward to appearing as Despina in Mozart's Cosi fan Tutte at Drayton Arms Theatre in July. www.alexanderpullinger.com



Anne-Sofie Søby Jensen ROSMIRA/EURIMENE

Danish mezzo-soprano Anne-Sofie is a Royal Academy of Music Scholar on the Prep Opera Master course. A keen concert soloist, she has performed major baroque oratorios with Trevor Pinnock, Tim Vennell and Iain Ledingham, and regularly appears in lieder recitals in Denmark. Operatic roles include title roles in 'Carmen' and 'The Rape of Lucretia'. Anne-Sofie is supported by the trusts of Josephine Baker and Leverhulme.





Peter Martin EMILIO

Peter studies with Russell Smythe at the Royal College of Music. Roles include Frederic (Pirates of Penzance); Alfredo (Fledermaus); Damon (Acis and Galatea); Filch (The Beggar’s Opera); Spolletto (Tosca) Rinnuccio (Gianni Schicchi) and Beppe (I Pagliacci). Peter has premiered many new works including Todd’s If I Had Wings at the Royal Albert Hall and Frankenstein: The Modern Prometheus at the Royal College of Music. www.petermartintenor.com



Saran Suebsantl Wongse ORMONTE

Thai baritone Saran graduated from Manhattan School of Music and was a Chevening scholar at the RCM, teacher Russell Smythe. He was supported by the ‘Young Thai Musician Fund’ of HRH Princess Galyani Vadhana. Concert repertoire includes Mozart’s Requiem, Haydn’s Paukenmesse, Charpentier’s Te Deum, Pergolese’s Stabat Mater and Orff’s Carmina Burana. Opera experience: Il Campanello (Donizetti), Threepenny Opera (Weill), Dido & Aeneas (Purcell), Sakontala (Schubert).



Daniel Carter-Brennan LIGHTING DESIGNER

Daniel Carter-Brennan works as a Lighting Designer, starting at Middlesex University with an honours degree in Theatre Arts Design. Daniel continued his work at The National Theatre of Rome where, by hybridising modern and traditional lighting techniques, he has been able to create a style that bridges the classic with the contemporary, creating work that is driven both by beauty and purpose.



Courtney Larkin ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Courtney holds an MA in Theatre Directing from East 15 Acting school and has studied directing at GITIS (Russian University of Theatre Arts). She has attended Springboard director training (Young Vic) and the Young Directors programme (RSC). Upcoming productions include Macbeth at The Pendley Shakespeare Festival this summer.

James Rhoads EMILIO

James is an Australian-born tenor who studied at the Royal Academy of Music He received 2nd prize in the Joan Chissell Schumann Lieder Prize and sang for the Academy/Kohn Foundation Bach Cantata series. Roles include Tamino and Monostatos (Die Zauberflöte), Ferrando (Così fan tutte) and Prunier (La Rondine). Oratorio solos include: Bach, Johannes Passion; Haydn, Stabat Mater; Handel, Messiah; Monteverdi, Vespers and Mozart’s Requiem. www.jamesrhoads.com



Will Pate ORMONTE

Will is a baritone in the final year of the Masters in Vocal Performance course at Royal Academy of Music where he studies with Alex Ashworth and Joseph Middleton. He is a member of the Academy’s prestigious Song Circle, and sang Le Fauteuil and L’Arbre for Royal Academy Opera’s performances of Ravel’s L’Enfant et les Sortilèges in March 2019. www.wilp.co.uk



Matthew Coulton FIGHT DIRECTOR

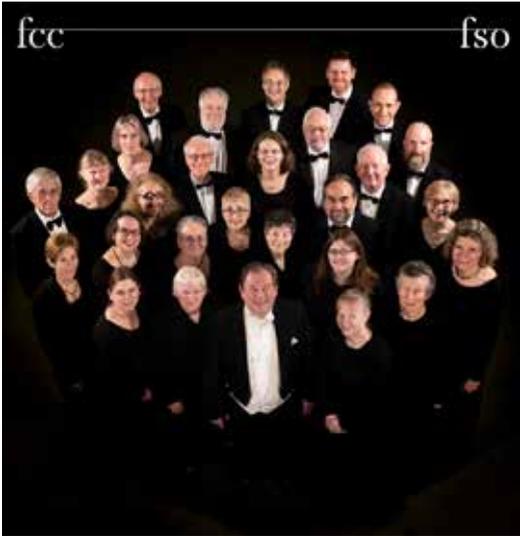
Matthew, an actor, movement director & theatre-maker, trained on Central’s Complicité-associated BA (Hons) Acting: Collaborative and Devised Theatre course. His work includes Leicester Curve, Lyric Hammersmith, BBC TV/Radio and Theatre By The Lake, and movement direction for So It Goes and Pendley Shakespeare Festival. He is currently reviving Complicité/ENO’s The Magic Flute, and has co-founded Artistic Rebellion, working on Fertility Festival at The Barbican.



Bethany Barrington-Davis STAGE MANAGER

Bethany studied a BA in Theatre Arts, specialising in Design and Technical Theatre at Middlesex University and graduated in July 2018. She works with a passion and determination to support productions in reaching their full potential. Her recent credits and experiences within the arts cover a wide range of performance types and genres including plays, musicals, children and youth theatre and performance art.





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Hitting the Right Note

Our thanks to all of those below, and to anonymous supporters, who have given over £2,500 of financial support for the harpsichords in this production.

Averil Burgess, Georgina Blair, Bob Clarke, Peter Dunscombe, Julia Fabricius, James Hemsley, Kate Howles, James Hulbert, Tamara Katz, Keith Martin, Arthur Moore, Catherine Mulgan, Helen Payne, John Pearson, Gordon Rickard, Melissa Scott, Richard Szczepanski, David Tilleff, David Ure, Catherine Wells.

We are extremely grateful to Dr Hugh Senior and OJ Ruthven who very generously responded by lending us their harpsichords. This has allowed us to allocate some of the donated money towards launching our schools outreach project.

HGO schools outreach project

HGO's first interactive workshop, at the Latymer School Edmonton, enabled pupils to stage, direct (and even conduct!) a scene from 'The Magic Flute' and engage with HGO 'alumni'. The format, devised by Scott Wilson, proved very successful in engaging the interest and imagination of pupils.

We will be developing this innovative model to enable more children to encounter the magic of opera and to help create it themselves.

Not only advancing young singers, but enabling young audiences... If you would like to learn more, do contact us at hgopera1@gmail.com.



Welcome to HGO's spring production, Partenope! You are in for a sparkling evening, and once again HGO is grateful for the wonderful inspiration and talents of our singers and our production team – and not least, on this occasion, to George Frideric Handel; 260 years after his death, his magic is as engaging as ever. It's one of the most rewarding aspects of our mission to bring gems like Partenope alive and enable modern audiences to relish its delights.

Our special remit however is 'advancing young singers' and we are expanding our activities to give increasing opportunities to tomorrow's opera stars by enabling them to take part in a wide range of activities that go beyond the opera stage. Amongst these are the development of workshops for schools, our regular Summer Concert at St. Michael's, Highgate (this year on 3rd August), and 'pop-up' activities such as our charity concert for MacMillan Nurses earlier this year with Howard Williams and the London International Orchestra and our forthcoming Midsummers Day Concert (21st June) at the Omved Centre as part of the Highgate Festival.

We are committed to continue to develop our work both for young singers and for the community and you too of course play a vital part in this – if you are not already a Friend of HGO, joining us enables you to make real change! We'd love to talk with you and hear your ideas and comments – do chat to us in the intermission or after the performance – you'll spot us by our badges!

And most importantly of all – enjoy the show!

David Conway

david.conway@hgo.org.uk

Thank you

Friends of HGO

Our Friends, by their annual donations, are at the heart of HGO. We are most grateful to all those named and to those who have chosen to remain anonymous.

Heirarchs (\$500 or more)

O & J Hill, H Payne.

Archangels (\$200 or more)

C Davies, M Ellerby, R Hall & S Cass, M & B Hoffbrand, A Hallgarten, A Judes, A & B Kisiel, S & E McFadden, R Morgan, J Reed.

Angels (\$100 or more)

R Arthur, R Avery, J Barnett, R Bowden, C Budgett-Meakin, A Burgess, C Clemente, A Darwin, J Fabricius, H Ferid, G Hall, R Hall, K & G Howles, R Johnson, H M Jones, T Katz & J Hulbert, D & V Lascelles, R & D Leigh, A & M Marmot, E Meek, P Moggach, A Moore, C Moore, F Munro, C Roberts, I Raphael, J & J Rothenberg,

M Safranek, K Sennett-Rogers, S Saffer, P Sand, M Smits, R Solomon, E Sondheimer, J Sturmey, H Tindale, E Webb, C Wells.

Seraphs (\$50 or more)

G Baker, S Barker, I Bermingham, C Boucher, P Brunner, A Davies, M & J de Swiet, S Ellam, J Gordon, J Graham, P Hallgarten, B Hammersley, A Howden, P Ives, E Jacobs, D Keech, E & E Korn, A Land, P Mackay, T Meade, M Nield, D & V Preest, C & B Reece, J Rufino, G & S Rickard, P Sewell, M Sheppard, M Shurman, V Smith, J Smyth, A Stewart, M & J Stoll, R Szczepanski, A Thorman, D Tillett, G Walker, P Zentner.

Trustees and Committee members are not listed.

Join us

Become a Friend and make it happen!

We're committed to keeping our standards up and our prices down.

Without the support of our Friends we could not bring high quality opera to the community of north London at reasonable ticket prices. We could not give experience and training to our wonderful young singers who need such an opportunity to help them to build their careers.

But with your help we can!

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Autumn 2019

