

An opera by Monteverdi

# POPPEA

L'Incoronazione  
di Poppea

12-21 May 2017

 HGO

# An Evening with Jonathan Dove



August 5th 2017

**HGO Summer Concert**

St Michael's Church  
Highgate

Jonathon Dove will introduce excerpts from his operas *Flight*, *Mansfield Park*, *Pinocchio*, *The Little Green Swallow* and *The Enchanted Pig*.

[www.hgo.org.uk/order](http://www.hgo.org.uk/order)



## Synopsis

Malcolm Ruthven

The Coronation of Poppea is loosely based on historical events which occurred in Rome in 65 AD and which were documented in the Annals of Tacitus. Seven characters are locked in combat for love and power. Drusilla desires Ottone, who is obsessed with Poppea. She, in turn, plots with Arnalta to win the emperor Nerone from his empress Ottavia, at the cost of the death of Seneca. These dangerous but fallible humans are the playthings of the cynically callous gods, and Monteverdi doesn't scruple to show how lust and ambition triumph over reason.

### Prologue

Fortune, Virtue and Love vie with each other for supremacy.

### Part 1

Ottone, former lover of Poppea, longs to see her once again. However, he soon realises that Nerone is with Poppea and that she has betrayed him. After a night of love-making, Poppea and Nerone take leave of one another. Before he departs, Nerone promises Poppea that she will become Empress, displacing his wife Ottavia. With her old nurse, Arnalta, Poppea muses on her ambition for the throne. She boasts that with Love on her side nothing can stand in her way. Arnalta, however, warns her that she's playing a dangerous game.

Ottavia laments her situation: as she is being rejected by Nero, she faces losing both her husband and her position. The philosopher and elder statesman Seneca offers Ottavia his advice: she should exercise restraint and maintain her dignity. Her attendant Valletto stands up for Ottavia and ridicules Seneca. Seneca is joined by Nerone, who informs him that he intends to divorce Ottavia and marry Poppea. Seneca's remonstrations serve only to anger Nerone.

Poppea recognizes that Seneca represents the greatest obstacle in her path to the throne. She therefore preys on Nerone's weaknesses and insinuates that he is ruled by the old philosopher – that Seneca is the true power behind the throne. The emperor immediately sends the fateful order that Seneca must commit suicide. (Failure to comply would lead to a fearful death and the disinheritance of his heirs.)

Ottone reproaches Poppea for her infidelity, but she dismisses his entreaties and leaves. Drusilla, who is in love with Ottone, rebukes him for his pointless fidelity to Poppea. He decides to forget Poppea and offers Drusilla his heart; however, it is a promise he knows he cannot keep.

Seneca is alone in his garden when Lucano reluctantly delivers Nerone's decree. Seneca stoically prepares to commit suicide.

## PART 2

Valletto and Damigella, one of Ottavia's maids, make love. Nerone, elated by news of Seneca's death, joins Lucano and praises Poppea's beauty.

Ottavia, unable to bear the indignity of her situation any longer, commands Ottone to kill Poppea, and suggests that he will be less easily apprehended if he disguises himself as a woman. She threatens him with blackmail when at first he rejects her orders.

Ottone reveals to Drusilla that Ottavia has ordered him to kill Poppea and asks if he may borrow her clothes for his disguise. Drusilla, realising her opportunity to be rid of Poppea once and for all, readily agrees. In her garden, Poppea prays that Love will ensure her marriage to Nerone. Soothed by Arnalta's lullaby, she falls asleep. Love appears and will protect Poppea while she rests. Ottone, disguised as Drusilla, steals into the garden and is about to murder Poppea. However, Love stays his hand and the alarm is raised. Ottone manages to escape, but not before Poppea and Arnalta mistakenly identify the assassin as Drusilla. Love is jubilant at having saved Poppea's life.

Drusilla rejoices in the thought that her rival will soon be dead and Ottone will be hers alone. Arnalta and a littore (Imperial guard) seize Drusilla. Before Nerone, they accuse her of the attempted murder of Poppea. Although at first she denies the charge, when threatened with torture she pleads guilty rather than betray Ottone. Ottone steps forward and confesses to his crime, blaming Ottavia for instigating it.

Nerone shows mercy to Drusilla, but exiles Ottone. Drusilla begs to go into exile with Ottone, and Nerone grants her plea. The emperor now has the perfect excuse to repudiate Ottavia and he formally banishes her from Rome. He breaks the news to Poppea that she will be his new wife.

No longer empress, Ottavia takes leave of her homeland. In their famous duet, Nerone and Poppea celebrate their triumph.

### **L'incoronazione di Poppea tells the story of a quest for power and, in its pursuit, loss of all reason.**

We, as an audience, witness corruption of the highest level and a wilful abandonment of all care of consequence. Within the social and political framework of 17th Century Venetian society, this opera touched on the deep scepticism harboured towards Europe's rulers of the time. It was commonly believed that the public political world was driven by the exercise of power, and the corruption that ran through it. This opera spoke to audiences in a way that transcends time and political change; it is about self-preservation. What we as an audience witness in this opera is a series of snapshots. There is no definable timeline. The many plots and sub-plots intertwine with one another and allow us the opportunity to observe a fascinating range of characters: the nobility, the servants, the good, the evil and the misguided. It is almost as though Monteverdi aimed to cover all of the facets of the human conscience. Simon Luzzatto, a leading Venetian Rabbi, wrote:

"The internal image of our soul is like a mosaic, which seems to be a single shale and on closer inspection shows itself to be made of various fragments of small stones both cheap and precious, joined and assembled. Even more so is our soul made up of

various different and conflicting pieces, any one of which can appear distinctly at various times."

This is the premise upon which our production has been built. We discover that each individual character has a range of personalities and a depth of emotion that cannot be singled out as one trait. At times they behave with little to no moral compass. Virtue is punished, and greed is rewarded, reminding us that morality means little when the Gods are at play. With a combination of politics, sex and religion, we are set for the perfect opera.

Poppea is a woman who is completely aware of her own superficial beauty and sexual appeal. She knows exactly how to harness it in order to achieve her goals, but what makes her particularly intriguing as a character is that, at first glance, she does not seem to possess a conscience. She deviously and strategically moves the other characters around the stage like pawns on a chess board. It seems that the only moment we observe any truth in her character is when we see her love for the crown itself during her final duet. In the ancient narrative, Poppea is condemned to a particularly violent death by her husband Nerone, and one is forced to question Monteverdi's deci-

sion to end the opera with her coronation, stopping short of her unfortunate demise. But Monteverdi recognised the appeal of such a character, its resonance within the audience. Within the mythical stories that became so fashionable, we may observe the extremes of human character and revel in their deepest thoughts and fears – something that was not possible with the previous emphasis on sacred music. *Poppea* focuses her attention on the young Nerone, an impetuous, vicious, spoiled and indulgent man of great power. It is within this relationship that our world begins to shift into the surreal and unhinged.

At the opposite end of the moral spectrum is Seneca. This 1st Century moralist was seen as the model for the philosophical preparation of the individual. It is interesting to find such a man so troubled, desperately trying to live up to his ideals and beliefs whilst being utterly compromised in his position. In this opera he is a spectator to the game being played out in front of him, but cannot help becoming culpable as Nerone's adviser. The mere discussion and acknowledgment of the concept of suicide is what makes this particular

character so interesting to explore. It is perhaps only within Drusilla that we see some human decency, but even she is driven by her own selfish desires, again highlighting our ability to blind ourselves, sexually, emotionally and politically.

Such darkness is juxtaposed with the lively and light musical sequences allowing us a setting that is minimalist and sparse. Within this space there is a freedom to respond to the text and music in a very physical way. The emphasis of the music is always on the drama and Monteverdi expresses the emotions of our characters with astonishing accuracy and his colouring of this beautiful 17th Century poetry is playful, ironic and masterful. Dance sequences are so clearly present, but the musical units are rarely self-contained. They are woven into an expansive pattern, allowing a continual flow of movement, seamlessly feeding one dramatic sequence into the next.

### **We have created a new edition of *Poppea* for HGO ...this allowed us to delve deep into Monteverdi's compositional process.**

Before writing of the music, one must remember that this is a drama. The librettist, Busenello, was probably more famous than Monteverdi. The crowds went to see his drama as much as to hear Monteverdi's music.

Turning to that music, a number of hurdles always have to be crossed when embarking on any new opera production - assembling a cast of singers, choosing an edition from which to work, creating a schedule of rehearsals - and many more besides. With *Poppea*, as with anything by Monteverdi, these decisions are always multiplied.

Although this has been a challenge, it has also been wonderfully freeing. Monteverdi's written music is like a blueprint that requires realisation from its interpreters - it exists somewhere between the printed page and the minds and ears of the performers. Here is where we have found our freedom in working on this opera.

We have created a new edition of *Poppea* specifically for this production, and this allowed us to delve deep into Monteverdi's compositional process, whilst also picking and choosing exactly which elements of the two surviving manuscript sources we wanted

to incorporate. Once finished, we began music rehearsals, creating our interpretation with a primary emphasis on pulse and rhythm - Monteverdi's scores can look like endless acres of free recitative without these two touchstones.

One of the most exciting things about this music is that an interpreter can change what might appear to be integral elements of it - whether a chord is major or minor, for example - and yet it still manages to retain its essence. Monteverdi has left us with an opera whose music brilliantly serves its libretto through its flexibility of interpretation - for theatrical purposes, this is an absolute gift.

Finally, a note on the instruments we are using. We have decided to perform with a relatively small band, probably quite similar to the size of the band at the first performances, in fact, but within it we have plenty of colour from which to paint our instrumental textures. Once again, this has freed us to combine our imaginations with our understanding of the style to create as much variety as possible to underpin the text.

I hope you enjoy *Poppea* as much as we have enjoyed preparing it for you. Nearly 400 years after it was written, it is still strikingly fresh and youthful.

## Historical Note

Ryaan Ahmed

**The music for *L'incoronazione* was lost for two centuries ... until a manuscript score was found at the Biblioteca Marciana in the 1880s.**

A company of musicians led by theorist and composer Benedetto Ferrari brought musical theatre to Venice during the Carnival season of 1637, where the genre found fertile soil for a new phase of development. For the first time, composers, librettists, and impresarios worked together to produce works to entertain a paying public. Earlier experiments in the genre, including Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, were significant in their contribution to musical aesthetics, but limited in their cultural impact, being courtly entertainments commissioned for small, noble audiences. In Venice, opera grew into the popular art form that would spread throughout Europe.

Monteverdi was La Serenissima's most famous composer, having served as maestro di cappella at San Marco since 1613. He seems to have been reluctant to join the new world of public opera, but after three conspicuously silent seasons, he entered with a remarkable burst of creative energy. In his final years, Monteverdi composed three new musical dramas: *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*, *Le nozze d'Enea e Lavinia* (now lost), and *L'incoronazione di Poppea*. *L'incoronazione* was a huge success: after playing to packed houses in its first run, it was revived in Naples and

possibly in Venice and Paris.

The music for *L'incoronazione* was lost for two centuries following these productions, until a manuscript score was found at the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice in the 1880s, followed by a second at the Conservatorio S. Pietro a Majella in Naples in the 1920s. These sources leave today's performer many problems to solve: they are neither autograph manuscripts nor associated with the original Venetian production – they are likely from revivals, edited to fit the needs of these later productions. Their state is such that we cannot be sure of how much of the vocal music is by Monteverdi, and we can securely say that most of the instrumental music is not.

The notion that we should honour a composer's intentions is often considered central to the field of early music and historically informed performance, and is used as a guiding principle in many productions. But what does this mean for a piece in which the musical sources are only available in this state—a decade removed from the composer and transformed for new audiences? As performers, we must engage with this question, in order to understand how this music existed and evolved as an organic art. The score is a starting point for the collaborative, creative process necessary to bring *L'incoronazione* to life now, as it was then.

# Thank You

HGO warmly thanks the Hall family for their generous support in the provision of instruments and the facilities allowing the opera to be sung in its original language.



## L'Incoronazione di Poppea

Music by Claudio Monteverdi

Libretto by Giovanni Francesco Busenello

<b>La Fortuna</b>	Jessica Thayer	ALL PERFORMANCES
<b>La Virtu</b>	Angelica Conner	ALL PERFORMANCES
<b>Amore</b>	Charlotte Levesley	ALL PERFORMANCES
<b>Ottone</b>	Véronique Rapin Collin Shay	12/14/17/19/20 (7:30) 13/16/18/20(2:30)/21
<b>Lucano</b>	William Branston	ALL PERFORMANCES
<b>Poppea</b>	Grace Carter Clara Fournillier	12/14/17/19/20 (7:30) 13/16/18/20(2:30)/21
<b>Nerone</b>	Leslie Davis CN Lester	12/14/17/19/20 13/16/18/21
<b>Arnalta</b>	Emma Lewis Stephanie Wake-Edwards	12/14/17/19/20 (7:30) 13/16/18/20(2:30)/21
<b>Ottavia</b>	Béatrice de Larragoiti Eira Sjaastad-Huse	12/14/17/19/20 (7:30) 13/16/18/20(2:30)/21
<b>Seneca</b>	Rob O'Connell Benjamin Schilperoort	12/14/17/19/20 (7:30) 13/16/18/20(2:30)/21
<b>Valletto</b>	Helen May	ALL PERFORMANCES
<b>Drusilla</b>	Jenni Harper Elen Lloyd Roberts	12/14/17/19/20 (7:30) 13/16/18/20(2:30)/21

## Hampstead Garden Opera 2017 Performing Edition.

Adapted for HGO by Ryaan Ahmed with Oliver John Ruthven from an edition by Stephen Stubbs and Maxine Eilander.

<b>Production Director</b>	Simon Iorio
<b>Assistant Director/ Choreographer</b>	Caitlin Fretwell-Walsh
<b>Stage Manager</b>	Rosie Cassell
<b>Set and Costume Design</b>	Ele Slade
<b>Lighting Design</b>	Amy Clarke

<b>Principal Music Director</b>	Oliver John Ruthven
<b>Associate Music Director</b>	Ryaan Ahmed

## Musica Poetica

<b>Violin 1</b>	Claudia Norz/Dominika Féher
<b>Violin 2</b>	Alice Earll
<b>Viola da gamba</b>	Kate Conway
<b>Violone</b>	Jan Zahourek
<b>Theorbo 1</b>	Ryaan Ahmed
<b>Harp</b>	Aileen Henry
<b>Harpsichord 1 / Organ</b>	Simon Lloyd
<b>Harpsichord 2</b>	Oliver John Ruthven



**Véronique Rapin**  
**Ottone**

---

Master's Degree from Mannes College, New York. Recipient of the Migros Swiss scholarship. Opera credits: Lucretia (The Rape of Lucretia) and Donna Rosa (Il Postino), Mannes Opera; La Hältière (Cendrillon), Siena Music Festival; L'Enfant (L'Enfant et les Sortilèges), Bare Opera New York; Ruggiero (Alcina), Ouverture-Opéra; Viscardo (Bianca e Fernando), Opera St. Moritz; Dido (Dido and Aeneas), HEMU Lausanne.



**Grace Carter**  
**Poppea**

---

Grace began her musical training as a pianist at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. She continued her studies as a singer at Trinity Laban Conservatoire, followed by the Dutch National Opera Academy. Her recent engagements include covering the roles of Thérèse, Les Mamelles de Tirésias (Poulenc) and Ginevra, Ariodante (Handel) for Dutch National Opera, and a recording project with Deutsche Grammophon, France.



**Leslie Davis**  
**Nerone**

---

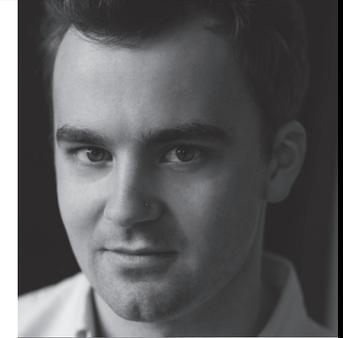
Canadian mezzo soprano Leslie Davis trained on the opera course at the Royal Academy of Music and is winner of the Adele Leigh Memorial Award at the Richard Tauber Prize at the Wigmore Hall. Recent engagements include covering Magdalene, Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, and Ramiro, La Finta Giardiniera, for The Glyndebourne Festival. Upcoming performances include Elgar's The Music Makers with the English Philharmonia and Chorus.



**Emma Lewis**  
**Amalta / Familiare 1**

---

Emma is a mezzo soprano performing a diverse range of opera and solo repertoire. She completed a Masters with distinction at Trinity Laban Conservatoire in 2015, supported by the Kathleen Roberts and Robinson Hearn scholarships and was a Gold Medal finalist. Plans include singing at Festival d'Aix en Provence and BBC Proms with the Monteverdi Choir. [www.emmalewisinger.com](http://www.emmalewisinger.com)



**Collin Shay**  
**Ottone**

---

Collin is a French-American counter-tenor based in London. Recent opera credits include Oberon in Britten's A Midsummer Night's Dream, the title role of Cavalli's Giasone, Silvio in Handel's Il Pastor Fido, and Tolomeo in Handel's Giulio Cesare. He is a post-graduate student at the Guildhall School of Music, under Janice Chapman and Marie Vassiliou, supported by the Sidney Perry Foundation and the Guildhall School Trust.



**Clara Fournillier**  
**Poppea**

---

Clara started singing in 2013, after a PhD in Comparative Literature and work as a Stage Director. Performed roles include Frasquita (Carmen), Sœur Constance (Dialogues des Carmélites), Rosmene (Idomeneo), Tina (Flight), Despina (Cosi fan tutte). She won the Gil-Rodriguez award for her contribution to the last season of Opéra de Bauge, in which she will return in August to sing Servillia (Clemenza di Tito).



**CN Lester**  
**Nerone**

---

Specialising in high-voiced male roles in early and contemporary music, CN Lester is a doctoral student of performance at the University of Huddersfield and a pupil of Alison Wells. Previous engagements include work with Tête à Tête Festival, Brighton Early Music, Rough for Opera, National Theatre Studio, Tate Modern, and ongoing partnership with the Barbican. CN is an author and critically acclaimed singer-songwriter.



**Stephanie Wake-Edwards**  
**Arnalta / Familiare 1**

---

Stephanie is a London born contralto, studying under Alex Ashworth since 2014. She will continue her studies at The Royal Academy of Music this September, where she has been awarded a scholarship for the Vocal Performance Masters. She graduated from The University of York in 2016 (BA Sociology with Social Psychology). Roles this summer: Florence Pike (Albert Herring, Aspect Opera) and Auntie (Peter Grimes, Dartington).



**Béatrice de Larragoiti**  
**Ottavia**

---

Béatrice covered Diana in Cavalli's La Calisto with E.T.O., and sang Berginella in Offenbach's La Périchole and Cis in Albert Herring at Opéra de Bauge; Winnie in Stephen McNeff's world premiere Banished; María in Astor Piazzola's María de Buenos-Aires for the Grimeborn Festival (Arcola Theatre). Future projects include recitals at the Festival International de Hammamet (Tunisia), Teatro del Ateneo (Madrid) and Carnegie Hall (New-York).



**Rob O'Connell**  
**Seneca**

---

Robert O'Connell is an experienced oratorio soloist, with recent performances including Messiah solos in Nick Drake's play All The Angels at the Globe Theatre. Operatic roles include Mitiukha and Chernikovsky (Boris Godunov), the Bosun (Billy Budd) and creating the lead role of Tony in Prison Letters, a new opera by Lyn Hagan and Agustín Fernández. Robert is currently a lay clerk at Southwark Cathedral.



**Jenni Harper**  
**Drusilla**

---

Jenni received a Masters from The Guildhall School in 2016 and studies with Kate Paterson. She sang Mabel in Gilbert and Sullivan's Pirates of Penzance for St Albans Chamber Opera in March, and will sing Euridice, La Musica and Speranza for Brighton Early Music Festival's performance of Monteverdi's Orfeo next November. She sings a solo recital with Martin Ford at The Guards Chapel in June.



**Jessica Thayer**  
**La Fortuna**

---

Soprano Jessica Thayer studies with Joan Rodgers and recently graduated from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance. Prior to this she studied at Chetham's School of Music. Operatic roles include Mercedes in Carmen for Blackheath Opera, Fiordiligi in Cosi Fan Tutte and Donna Elvira in Don Giovanni for Puzzle Piece Opera and Fairy in A Midsummer Night's Dream with Trinity Laban.

**Eira Sjaastad-Huse**  
**Ottavia**

---

Often praised for her unique timbre and expression, the young Norwegian mezzo-soprano Eira Huse divides her time equally between opera and lieder. She has performed together with Henning Kraggerud, Martin Fröst and Helge Kjekshus; her forthcoming engagements include Dido (Dido and Aeneas) at Ramme Gård Opera and Bianca (The Rape of Lucretia) at Lidal North. Eira participated in Wigmore Hall/Kohn Foundation International Song Competition 2015.

**Benjamin Schilperoort**  
**Seneca**

---

Benjamin is a postgraduate bass baritone at the Royal Academy of Music, studying with Glenville Hargreaves and Audrey Hyland. Since graduating in History from Trinity Hall, Cambridge, Benjamin has performed in masterclasses led by Chen Reiss and Sarah Fox, and worked with renowned conductors including Sir Jeffrey Tate, Vladimir Jurowski and Ton Koopman. Upcoming engagements include Masetto and Il Commendatore (cover) for British Youth Opera. [benjaminschilperoort.co.uk](http://benjaminschilperoort.co.uk)

**Elen Lloyd Roberts**  
**Drusilla**

---

Welsh soprano Elen is studying for a Master's in Vocal Performance at the Royal Academy of Music, with Mary Nelson and Christopher Glynn. In 2014 she graduated from Durham University with a degree in Music, and while there, was in the prestigious Samling Academy. Previous operatic roles include 1st Lady, Die Zauberflöte, Gretel, Hänsel und Gretel, Belinda, Dido and Aeneas and Valencienne, The Merry Widow.

**ALL PERFORMANCES**





## Angelica Conner Virtu – also singing Damigella

Mezzo-soprano Angelica Conner is a King's College London graduate and student of soprano Nelly Miricioiu. Recent engagements include Flora (La Traviata) and La Badessa (Suor Angelica) for the Mediterranean Opera Festival. She makes her debut with Hampstead Garden Opera this season. Future engagements include her debut with Brent Opera as Nancy (Martha) and return to the Mediterranean Opera Festival as Rosina (Il Barbiere di Siviglia)



## Charlotte Levesley Amore

Yorkshire-born Soprano, Charlotte Levesley, is a Postgraduate student at Trinity Laban Conservatoire studying with Joan Rodgers and Alistair Young. Recent roles include Belinda in Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, Gretel in Humperdinck's Hänsel und Gretel, Zerlina in Mozart's Don Giovanni and Esther in Stephen McNeff's world-premiere performance of Banished. Charlotte is delighted to be performing the role of Amore in her first HGO production.



## William Branston Lucano/Liberto/Littore/Famigliare 2

William, who hails from southwest Wales, is a Tenor on the post-graduate course at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, with his teacher Lynton Atkinson. Recent roles include Guitaueu in Sondheim's Assassins at the Edinburgh Fringe, Tamino (The Magic Flute); Don José (Carmen); Fester (The Adams Family) and Jesus (Jesus Christ Superstar). He has thoroughly enjoyed working on this production, his first with HGO.



## Helen May Valeto

Helen holds a DipABRSM and LRSM and currently trains under Jenny Miller. Previously she studied Music at Cardiff University, where she was awarded a David Lloyd Vocal Scholarship and the Geraint Evans Recital Prize. Helen's recent operatic roles include: Calisto (La Calisto, Woodhouse Opera, Barefoot Opera). When not bouncing around singing, Helen can be found fuelling her caffeine addiction with tea or coffee in hand.

## Ele Slade Set and Costume Designer

Ele designs for theatre, opera, exhibitions, and facilitates school / community projects, including: PUSH (Battle Festival & Glyndebourne); Layla's Room (Theatre Centre national tour); The Tempest (Southwark Playhouse); Usagi Yojimbo (Southwark Playhouse); The Vision (Woking Community Play Ass). Awards: Best Costume Designer, Best Opera Production, nominated Best Set Designer, 2015 Off West End Awards; Jean Benedetti, emerging leaders of theatre, award. [www.elesladedesign.com](http://www.elesladedesign.com)



## Amy Clarke Lighting Designer

Amy is a full time lighting technician and programmer at Glyndebourne Opera House, for the main house and on tour. With a degree in Theatre Studies and masters in Set Design, Amy also enjoys designing. Lighting design credits include Love, Sex, Magic (2014) and Snog, Marry, Avoid (2015) for Trinity Laban, and Play, The Lieutenant of Inishmore and Who's Dorian Grey? at the University of Kent.



## Rosie Cassell Stage Manager

Rosie is a Stage Manager and Hair & Makeup Artist based in London. She trained at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts. Her work includes The Royal Opera House (Carmen – Deloitte: Ignite Festival 2015), Surrey Opera, Opera Vera, Silent Opera, Fulham Opera at Grimeborne, Monteverdi Choir & Orchestra Beijing Music Festival, and more. This will be her ninth show for Hampstead Garden Opera



## Musica Poetica

Praised for its 'constantly upbeat brilliance and dynamics', Musica Poetica are quickly gaining a reputation for energetic and communicative interpretations of repertoire from Monteverdi to Mozart, performed on period instruments. Originally formed as a quartet at the Royal Academy of Music in 2010, the ensemble has given concerts in settings ranging from the Cadogan Hall to Upstairs at the Gatehouse, and have appeared at the Brighton Early Music Festival.





**Simon Iorio**  
**Director**

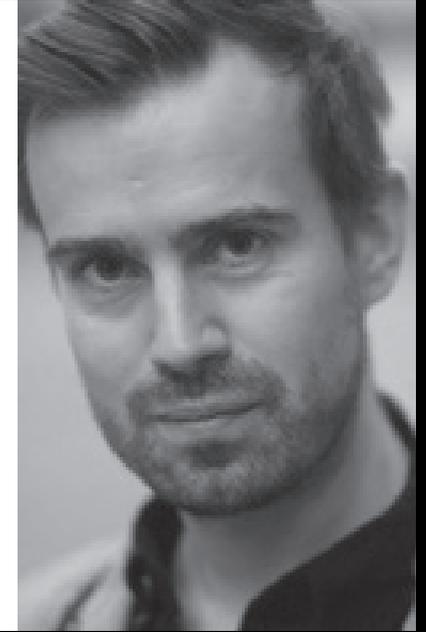
Simon, born in London, trained as a singer at Trinity College of Music, London. Directing credits include Push (Moody) for The Battle Festival/Glyndebourne, Orpheus in the Underworld (Offenbach) for Trinity Laban at Blackheath Halls, Trouble in Tahiti (Bernstein) and Susanna's Secret (Wolf Ferrari) for The Little Opera Company.

An assistant director at The Glyndebourne Festival/ Glyndebourne On Tour, The Royal Opera House, English Touring Opera and Opera Holland Park, he works regularly with young singers, directing opera scenes for The Royal Academy of Music, Trinity Laban Conservatoire and the Guildhall School, where he is currently a Professor of stagecraft and acting.

**Oliver John Ruthven**  
**Music Director**

Oliver John Ruthven is an early keyboards specialist and conductor based in London - equally at home at the harpsichord, chamber organ, or conducting, and with a growing reputation.

Principal Music Director of HGO from 2010 to 2016, he is returning for a final production with the company. He is a member of the English Baroque Soloists, performing and recording with John Eliot Gardiner. O J is a founder member of Musica Poetica, with whom he is performing a 2017 concert series of music by Franz Tunder. In Autumn he will return to English Touring Opera as Head of Music Staff.

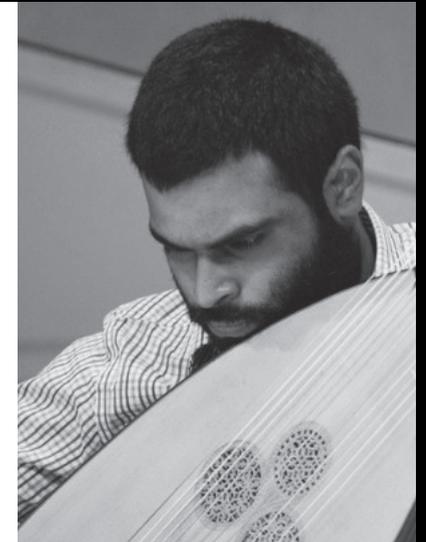


**Caitlin Fretwell Walsh**  
**Assistant Director/  
Choreographer**

Caitlin trained in Dance Theatre at Laban (grad. 2012), before becoming a movement director, performer and teacher at Guildhall School and Royal Academy of Music. Opera assistant/movement credits include: Jette Parker Summer Performance (ROH), Owen Wingrave and The Cunning Little Vixen (BYO), 8 Songs for a Mad King (Shadwell Opera), Simon Boccanegra (Fulham Opera), Le Nozze di Figaro, The Rake's Progress and scenes (RAM). As performer: Der Rosenkavalier (ROH) Rusalka (Scottish Opera), Der Rosenkavalier and The Rape of Lucretia (Glyndebourne).

**Ryaan Ahmed**  
**Associate  
Music Director**

Ryaan Ahmed is a lutenist, vocal coach, and music director specializing in historically informed performance. He holds an AB in Computer Science from Harvard University and an MM in Early Music from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied lute with Paul O'Dette. Highlights of Ryaan's 2017 work include this project with HGO and serving as Assistant to the Music Directors at the Boston Early Music Festival. You can follow Ryaan on Twitter @ryaanahmed or learn more about him at [www.ryaanahmed.com](http://www.ryaanahmed.com).





## We proudly support the Hampstead Garden Opera

We are your local funeral director in Hampstead

181 Haverstock Hill, London NW3 4QS

Phone: 020 7586 4221 | email: [kathryn@levertons.co.uk](mailto:kathryn@levertons.co.uk)

[www.levertons.co.uk](http://www.levertons.co.uk)

6 BRANCHES ACROSS NORTH LONDON



Golden Charter

	<p><b>The Opera Circle at the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution</b> <b>11 South Grove N6 6BS</b></p> <p>8340 3343 <a href="mailto:admin@HLSI.net">admin@HLSI.net</a></p>	
--	---	--

## The Highgate Opera Circle

If you enjoyed coming to see HGO in Highgate then why not come to the Highgate Opera Circle? <http://www.hlsi.net/whats-on/opera-circle/>

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month from October to June profiling a forthcoming opera relayed from the Met or Covent Garden, as well as HGO's new productions. We provide an introduction to each opera and compare the great artists and performances on video.

Our next evening is on 7 June with Verdi's Otello. We look forward to seeing you! Curtain up at 7.30, doors open at 7.00.

Geoff Hunt & Michael de Swiet, Joint chairs.

## Letter from our Chairman

Roger Sainsbury

### To our Audience

HGO was established in 1990, evolving into the highly regarded opera training company we see today.

Our two main aims are to:

- provide high quality opera at affordable prices to the people of north London, as a rich and vital part of communal life.
- offer to young singers the opportunity to perform in a fully staged opera. It is hard for young artists to gain a foothold without the chance to demonstrate their ability and passion.

Our long serving President, Penny Mackay, who established our charitable status in 2002 and brought HGO such a long way, has decided to step down. We would like to thank her.

HGO performs an exciting range of fully staged and orchestrated work. From Cavalli to Mozart to Jonathan Dove. This range is exemplified by our exciting programme for 2017. Our production of Monteverdi's great opera *Il Coroneazione di Poppea*, is notable for the new HGO performing edition created by our Music Directors, and as the first opera HGO is performing in its original Italian. By contrast, in November our opera will be Dove's *The Enchanted Pig*, written in 2006.

You have the chance to hear some of this entrancing opera early. Jonathan Dove has kindly undertaken to introduce extracts from several of his operas including *The Enchanted Pig*, at our Summer Concert, August 5th at St Michael's Church, Highgate.

We are already looking ahead to 2018: Verdi's *La Traviata* and Cimarosa's *The Secret Marriage*.

We look forward to welcoming you to many future events.

Best regards,

Roger Sainsbury



# Join Us



## Friends of HGO

### Our extremely generous supporters are at the heart of HGO.

Helping us in two ways: large individual donations help substantially with specific productions, while ongoing annual donations from Friends ensure that we keep going in the long term.

We are most grateful to all those named and to our many anonymous supporters.

### Heirarchs (£500 or more)

R Cassell & K Stein, O & J Hill, H Payne.

### Archangels (£200 or more)

M Ellerby, A Hallgarten, M & B Hoffbrand, A & B Kisiel, S & E Mcfadden, J Reed.

### Angels (£100 or more)

J Barnett, A Burgess, R Bowden, L Gollancz, G Hall, K & G Howles, R Johnson, T Katz & J Hulbert, D & V Lascelles, R & D Leigh, A & M Marmot, E Meek, C Moore, F Munro, J & J Rothenberg, M Safranek, K Sennett-Rogers, P Sand, R Solomon, E Sondheimer, J Sturmey, H Tindale, E Webb, C Wells.

### Seraphs (£50 or more)

G Baker, I Bermingham, C Boucher, P Brunner, J Gordon, G Fleetwood Walker, J Graham, B Hammersley, P Ives, E & R Jacobs, E & E Korn, A Land, P Mackay, R Morgan, M Nield, D & V Preest, G & S Rickard, M Sheppard, V Smith, M & J Stoll, D Tillet, M Twyman, P Zentner.

### Cherubs (£25 or more)

R Beattie, E Beck, D Causer, D Conway, S Critchlow, J Crouch, R Douglas, O Dresner, M Driver, D Farnworth, H Fisher, P Kafno, C Marlowe, K Martin, C Mellor, A Mulgan, D Riddle, T Stanier, L Thomson, R Wainwright, A Ward.

Trustees and Committee members not listed.

## Become a Friend

### If you support our aims, you will want to become a FRIEND.

In keeping our prices down and our standards up, there is a deficit on each production. Without support from our FRIENDS and other generous donors, we could not keep going.

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 opportunity to help them to build their careers.

But with your help we can!

[www.hgo.org.uk/join-us](http://www.hgo.org.uk/join-us)



Hampstead Garden Opera Trust  
Ltd (regd. charity 1168484)



next production

# The Enchanted Pig

Autumn 2017



An Opera by Jonathon Dove