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RAMEAU:
CASTOR
ET POLLUX

THE UK PREMIERE IN A NEW EDITION
BY **JONATHAN WILLIAMS**

(1737)

SUNDAY 15TH MAY 2022
6:00PM
SHELDONIAN THEATRE

This event is part of the Humanities Cultural Programme





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CASTOR ET POLLUX (1737)

BY **JEAN-PHILIPPE RAMEAU**

THE UK PREMIERE IN A NEW EDITION

BY **JONATHAN WILLIAMS**

PROGRAMME

PROLOGUE, ACTS 1 & 2

INTERVAL

ACTS 3, 4 & 5

CAST

CASTOR

POLLUX

TÉLAÏRE

PHÉBÉ

MINERVE

AMOUR, LE GRAND PRÊTRE

MARS, JUPITER

VÉNUS, UNE SUIVANTE D'HÉBÉ, UNE OMBRE

RORY CARVER

JACK LAWRENCE-JONES

HILARY CRONIN

GALINA AVERINA

EMILY GRAY

HARRY GRIGG

PETER HARVEY

JENNI HARPER

CONDUCTOR

DIRECTOR

JONATHAN WILLIAMS

GUIDO MARTIN-BRANDIS

RAMEAU PROJECT CHOIR

DESSUS 1	ANA BEARD FERNANDEZ, KIRSTY O'NEILL, IZZIE PALMER*, HELEN SOUTHERNWOOD* & DAISY WALFORD
DESSUS 2	AMY CARSON, RUTH KIANG, RACHEL SINGER* & AMY WOOD
HAUTES-CONTRES	MATTHEW BEALE, DAVID CLEGG & BEN VONBERG-CLARK
TAILLES	JOSHUA ADAMS*, JOHN BOWEN, SAM DRESSEL, TOM KELLY
BASSES	T.J. CALLAHAN*, MALACHY FRAME, HUGO HERMAN-WILSON, PHILIP TEBB

*denotes singers on the Master's in Solo Voice Ensemble Singing at the University of York.

RAMEAU PROJECT ORCHESTRA

VIOLONS 1 **SARAH BEALBY-WRIGHT, MARGUERITE WASSERMANN,
SIMONE PIRRI & SARAH MOFFATT**

VIOLONS 2 **HENRIETTA WAYNE, ELLEN BUNDY, ALICE POPPLETON
& JULIA BLACK**

**HAUTES-CONTRE
DE VIOLONS** **CLARE BARWICK, WENDI KELLY & ALICE POPPLETON**

TAILLES DE VIOLONS **DAN SHILLIDAY, NICHOLA BLAKEY & JULIA BLACK**

BASSES **JACOB GARSIDE, CAMILLA MORSE-GLOVER
& MIRIAM NOHL**

CONTREBASSE **JOHN-HENRY BAKER**

**FLÛTES ET PETITES
FLÛTES** **EVA CABALLERO, YU-WEI HU & MARTA GONÇALVES**

HAUTBOIS **JAMES EASTAWAY & MARK BAIGENT**

BASSONS **ZOE SHEVLIN & ANDY WATTS**

CLAVECIN **JULIAN PERKINS**

The harpsichord, a copy by Rubio of a beautiful eighteenth-century double-manual instrument by Pascal Taskin, has kindly been provided by Tony Cochrane (pitch A392).

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR **GUIDO MARTIN-BRANDIS**

Like Mahler, Janáček, Bruckner and Ives, Rameau is no longer a 'cause'; his works have been widely recorded, his importance and genius recognised and lauded and his operas are regularly performed, in France and Germany at least. Yet in Britain, we still lag behind. This rare performance of his masterpiece *Castor et Pollux* is a stepping-stone towards changing this.

When Jonathan and I started talking about putting on a Rameau opera before lockdowns struck in 2020, we discovered that not one person had mentioned Rameau to either of us during our very British musical educations. For me, discovering Rameau's music whilst at university felt like uncovering a secret world of sensuous delights – the endless originality and vitality of his melodic invention and harmonic exploration, the staggering ear for orchestral sonority, unmatched in his era, the luminous beauty of his choruses, the incredible modernity and psychological depth of his operatic characters. He inherits and reinvigorates all the by-then tired conventions of French opera, and finds in them endless freshness and opportunity for new means of dramatic expression.

Castor et Pollux is a case in point. The very fine libretto by Pierre-Joseph Bernard tells of the quest of the immortal Pollux to save his slain mortal twin brother Castor from Hades: this at the request of the princess Têlaïre, Castor's betrothed, with whom Pollux is of course also in love. So far, so predictable, you might think: typical Baroque fare – an ancient Greek myth with the Baroque obsession with love triangles, quadrangles, pasted on top. But as we've rehearsed, we've discovered that the characters are exceptionally strongly drawn, revealing a complex inner life, and in scene after scene we see their brilliant rhetorical abilities as they twist against the hand that fate has dealt them, manipulating and consoling one another in equal measure.

Rameau responded to his text with a score of incredible richness, subtlety and contrasts. T  laire's ravishingly bittersweet solo lament 'Tristes Appr  ts', with its nimbus of luminous string and bassoon writing surrounding the fragile vocal line, is all the more moving, for instance, for coming after the chromatic desolation of the chorus's funeral march for Castor 'Que tout g  misse'.



We've also found that with its base in a strongly declamatory style, Rameau's vocal writing invites gesture and movement in every phrase. This links it more seamlessly into the element of dance, which in this piece is brilliantly integrated into the work as a whole. In Act 2, Pollux's father (Jupiter) reminds his son of the pleasures of immortality with the help of H  b   and her beguiling entourage. Pollux's terse interjections keep the drama going, rather than everything grinding to a halt for a *divertissement*, as so often happens with operatic ballet sequences. Later, the dancers and chorus, now as demons, barring Pollux's entry to the gates of Hades. This demon music was enough to send at least one other composer mad – poor overlooked Jean-Joseph Mouret was heard singing this chorus in the madhouse before his death, at least according to legend.

Rameau was very much influenced by his conversations and collaborations with Voltaire, who had a vision for how to reform opera: clear action, simple stories, told in depth. Why did we choose to do the 1737 version, and not the much more commonly staged 1754 revision? For me, the earlier work is much more serious and moving than the later piece – the character motivations are more convincing, especially for Ph  b  , the fourth member of the love quadrangle. In the earlier version she loves Pollux who spurns her, and she rouses first the Spartan citizens, and then demons to block his entry to Hades. In the later version, her affection switches to Castor, which hugely vitiates the impact of this impressive scene. The many excisions that Bernard made for the later version speed up the action, but often at the cost of the drama's logic. We also lose much fine music in the pruning undertaken for the later version including the trio 'Je ne verrais plus' in Act 3.

THE CHARACTERS

Taking a cue from the very last line of the Prologue, Minerve can be seen as an interesting framing device. She briefly serves a metatheatrical function, introducing the opera proper after the allegorical Prologue (which charts a course from war to peace). She celebrates the possibility of art which can only happen in a time of peace, and sets up the broad thematic arc of the opera (from war to loving reconciliation) that is about to follow. It's a deft touch from Bernard which we've tried to emphasise here.

As we've rehearsed the piece, it became obvious to us that the Prologue has painful contemporary resonances with the current war in Ukraine. The Prologue's text makes allegorical reference to the Polish War of Succession which had concluded not long before the opera's premiere. Minerve is the goddess of defensive war, an embodiment of a concept deeply rooted in the European psyche for at least three millennia. NATO is certainly a late flowering (at least partly) of this same idea. Minerva however, is powerless to resist Mars's attacks, and calls on Vénus, goddess of beauty and love, to quell Mars.

In the opera proper we are no longer dealing with cyphers; we find characters of real flesh and blood, possessing astonishingly subtle intentions and feelings, however mythic the setting. Témaïre is a peculiarly modern eighteenth-century woman in a world of Spartan expectations. Hers is the strongest depiction of mourning that Rameau ever attempted, and her desire to escape this suffering sets off the entire plot. Quite different from her friend Phébé (or, for that matter Pollux, the Spartan hero), she finds no satisfaction in blood vengeance as an amelioration or cancellation of her injuries. She will not accept her fate, and instead, with terrifying single mindedness, follows through with a plan which leads others to sacrifice themselves entirely. Her music is exceptionally beautiful throughout the opera, and the libretto constantly reinforces this impression by showing us the effect on all who come into her presence. In the manner of an Ancient Greek tragedy, her unassailable rhetorical skill is both powerful and emotive.

Phébé, another woman of immense force of character, has entirely different qualities. She has not captivated the men in her life in the manner that Téléaire has, but has very potent compensations: not only is she able to convincingly command the Spartan people to the mouth of Hades to block Pollux's passage, she is also in contact with darker forces beyond the threshold, summoning demons to erupt forth and assail her recalcitrant lover. These events occur in Act 3. Near the end of Act 5, Pollux states rather matter of factly that her only crime was to love too much, which is perhaps true. Téléaire's love has trumped Phébé's however, and won the day.

The piece as a whole has an interesting dramatic construction. Each of the first four acts centres around a particular character, who sings the principal air near the beginning of it. Though Téléaire sets the drama going, it is Pollux's progress from vengeful brother to unrequited lover, to conflicted, self-sacrificing hero, to constellation in the heavens, which is the common dramatic and emotional thread through the piece. Though he is the immortal twin, he constantly finds himself buffeted by fate, choosing a course of action that is painful to him at every turn, torn as he is between filial and romantic love, most typified in Act 2. Castor is spotlighted in Act 4, located in the Elysian Fields, where despite being offered endless pleasure and play, he yearns still for a life with Téléaire. His quietly radiant aria is the mirror image of Téléaire's earlier lament.





The fifth act focusses on T  la  re and Castor's relationship finally restored, culminating in superb storm sequence (the fourth and best in the opera!), and then all are brought back for the final ensemble, a moment which depicts the cosmic dance of the universe.

Cupid (L'Amour), the main protagonist of the Prologue, remains a hidden force throughout – he is mentioned by both Castor and the Shade (Une Ombre) in the Elysian fields, his darts reaching even into the underworld. The spirit of love returns at the end as the uniting force of the world in the wonderful finale, newly completed by Jonathan and heard this evening for the first time in 285 years! The beautiful aria for V  nus, 'C'est assez regner par les armes', suffered a similar neglect, so we are delighted bring you both tonight.

A solid orange shape with a curved top edge, located in the top-left corner of the page.

Finally, a note on the structural element in the music and how it relates to the drama. The tense battling string lines of the overture (perhaps representing Mars's war), return at the end of Act V transfigured into major majesty, just as Minerve foretold. Such details which provide musico-dramatic continuity throughout the piece were very forward-looking and are yet one more thing to marvel at in this sublime masterpiece, which has been a joy to work on for all of us.





NOTE ON THE SYNOPSIS

While this evening's performance is the premiere of Jonathan's new edition, *Castor et Pollux* was actually performed by the Oxford University Opera Club, in English, in 1934! We are delighted therefore that our UK *professional* premiere, in French, has a link to Oxford's past enterprising operatic exploits (and with a group which Jonathan himself conducted whilst at Oxford). Following is the synopsis from the OUOC programme from 1934, kindly provided by the Archivist at Magdalen College, Dr Richard Allen.

SYNOPSIS

THE PROLOGUE

The celestial pleasures, aided by Minerve and L'Amour (Cupid), implore Vénus to use her charms to entice Mars from his warlike activities, thereby restoring peace to the world. Vénus appears in answer to their prayers with Mars at her feet, and there is general rejoicing at the reconciliation and at the return of peace and happiness.

THE TRAGEDY

ACT ONE SCENE: THE BURIAL PLACE OF THE KING OF SPARTA.

A group of Spartans are assembled around the funeral pyre of Castor who has been killed in combat with Lincé. Télaïre is distraught with grief. Phébé who loves Pollux, suggests that vengeance would be of more avail than regret. Télaïre finds no comfort in her words and remains to mourn Castor. Cries of triumph are heard behind the scenes and Pollux enters, followed by athletes and warriors, to announce that Lincé is dead and Castor is avenged. Pollux lays the spoils at Télaïre's feet in an act of homage and devotion.

Castor may be dead, but his love for Télaïre lives on in Pollux's heart. She requests him to show the worthiness of his devotion by imploring Jupiter to bring Castor back to life. Pollux consents.

ACT TWO SCENE: THE TEMPLE OF JUPITER.

Pollux, about to make a sacrifice to Jupiter to obtain the release of Castor, is torn between friendship for his brother and love for Télaira, who enters to encourage him once again to master his feelings. The high priest comes to herald the arrival of Jupiter, who is revealed seated on his throne. Pollux requests that he may be allowed to descend to the infernal regions to rescue his brother. Jupiter, to remind him of the joys he will forego forever, causes Hébé to appear, followed by celestial pleasures. They implore him to remain to taste the delights of heaven. Pollux resists the temptations and breaks through the garlands with which they attempt to entwine him.

ACT THREE SCENE: THE GATES OF HELL.

Phébé exhorts the Spartans to turn their King from his project, and to this end implores the Demons of Hell to make themselves and their abode doubly terrifying. Pollux appears full of confidence and resists her entreaties. Phébé threatens to follow him down to Hell. Télaira enters, and Pollux once more confesses his undying love for her. Phébé, enraged, calls on the demons to appear and bar the intruders' way. Pollux and Télaira exhort them to fall back. They dance in an attempt to frighten Pollux. Mercury appears, strikes the Demons with his caduceus and descends with Pollux into the cavern. Phébé, her heart filled with thoughts of vengeance, vows to follow him.

ACT FOUR SCENE: THE ELYSIAN FIELDS.

Castor appears. His mind still dwells on T  laire, in spite of his peaceful surroundings. Blessed spirits appear, anxious to share the heavenly joys with him. Pollux appears suddenly, to the consternation and delight of Castor, who refuses to allow his brother to sacrifice himself for him until he is assured of T  laire's continued love for him, and then only on the condition that he shall return after one day spent on Earth. Mercury appears, and at Apollo's command, leads Castor away.

ACT FIVE SCENE: A PLEASANT LANDSCAPE NEAR SPARTA.

Ph  b   enters with vengeance in her heart. She determines that if Jupiter will not relieve Pollux she herself will descend to Hell to hide her sorrows. When she has left the stage, T  laire and Castor enter. She is overjoyed at his return and cannot understand his reticence, until he warns her that he must soon go back for ever to the Elysian Fields. The members of the chorus enter to acclaim the lovers, ignorant of their unhappy position, and to their great surprise are asked to restrain their joy. They leave the stage. Not even the revelation that Pollux loves T  laire can persuade Castor to break his vow to return after one day spent on Earth.

At the height of their despair thunder is heard, and the earth trembles; the tumult dies away as Jupiter appears. To Pollux, who follows him, he announces that the fates are content that he should be restored to life. Castor, too is to be granted immortality. Pollux nobly renounces his love for T  laire. Hell, he reveals, will claim but one victim, for Ph  b   has carried out her intention to take her life and will not return. Jupiter commands the heavenly bodies to share in the apotheosis of Castor and Pollux.

T  laire also is to embellish the heavens. The *divertissement* culminates in a Chaconne in which all are invited to join in the festivities.

A NOTE FROM THE CONDUCTOR

Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683–1764) is an endlessly fascinating character. An organist who spent the first forty years of his life in provincial France, he became the most important theorist between Marin Mersenne (1588–1648) and Heinrich Schenker (1868–1935), and was rightly hailed during his lifetime as the ‘Newton of Music’. He codified many of the rudiments of music theory which young musicians first encounter: ‘tonic’, ‘dominant’, ‘first inversion’ are all terms he coined. This spirit of Enlightenment synthesis and innovation as a music theorist is evident in his operas too, both in his music (which took Lully’s model and increasingly assimilated modernising elements from Germany and Italy) and in the structure and subject matter of the librettos he set (which contain Enlightenment ideas on religion, love, duty, philosophy, society and politics). While Rameau is most often linked with Lully (1632–87), he is very much a man of the eighteenth century. That *Castor et Pollux* has so many elements in common with works by Mozart is telling – its themes of war, self-sacrifice, duty and illicit love are to be found in Mozart’s first great opera, *Idomeneo* (1781) and Pollux’s Trails by temptation, the coded references to masonic ritual and the importance of the number three become essential features part of Mozart’s last opera, *Die Zauberflöte* (1791).

Like Rameau’s three two other tragedies of the 1730s, *Hippolyte et Aricie* (1733) and *Dardanus* (1739), *Castor et Pollux* was extensively revised in the following decades, adapting to a public taste that Rameau himself played a major part in forming. It is the shorter revised version of 1754 which has been widely performed, notably (in English) by English National Opera in 2012.

On hearing *Castor et Pollux* for the first time, listeners might be surprised by how much it differs from Italian opera of the time as expounded by Handel. While the latter relies on a regular alternation of recitative and da capo aria, French da capos are seldom exact, usually shortened and often omitted entirely. They are often used when a character is in some way trapped either psychologically (by grief, fear or by an impossible choice) or physically (as Dardanus when imprisoned). What's more, *petits airs* (short unaccompanied songs), *ariettes* (the most virtuosic and Italianate solo numbers), duets, trios and choruses, orchestral battles and tempests, and numerous and varied dances – all each lasting no more than a minute or two – combine freely. The result is a heady mix which seems to flow spontaneously in ways that have more in common with later composers such as Puccini.

Despite his operas' obvious attractions, certain challenges have so far made UK opera houses hesitant to perform Rameau (or any other French Baroque music). Firstly, it is hard (or impossible) to find reliable vocal scores and orchestral parts for many of his works – even the masterpieces *Dardanus* (1744) and *Les Boréades* (1764) are yet to be published, while the alternative (the old *Oeuvres complètes* of 1894–1924) is notoriously misleading in terms of orchestration and ornamentation. (Happily this is being steadily rectified by the on-going publication of the *Opera Omnia Rameau*.) Second, his music was written to be performed a tone lower than modern pitch and needs specialist instruments and players to do so. The complexity of the music and its composer-specific performance practices (where nine different kinds of trill are employed) are not for the faint-hearted, and without the coffers of Louis XV it is not easy to amass Rameau's Paris Opéra forces – a chorus of 40 and a 50-strong orchestra revelling in quadruple wind (including piccolos and musettes) and brass and extra percussion.

Perhaps most problematic in modern times though – and thus perhaps most rewarding to explore – is Rameau's use of dance, an element we don't see used in quite the same way anywhere other than on Broadway. With a quarter of the score being dance music, a clear strategy has to be found to incorporate movement and dance in ways which not only provide spectacle but which advance the narrative and leaven the richness of the vocal music. None of the original finely syntaxed choreography survives, so fascinating choices present themselves: whether to employ new choreography in an eighteenth-century style, or new contemporary dance, or even to use no dance at all... (We hope to create new opportunities for research and explore this fascinating aspect more fully in our next production.)

Following hot on the heels of the much-performed *Hippolyte et Aricie* (1733) and *Les Indes galantes* (1735), the most compelling reason why *Castor et Pollux* (1737) been performed only rarely since is that the one surviving complete source from Rameau's time is a *partition réduite*, a 'short' score from which is missing *all* of the inner choral and orchestral parts. (This is in contrast with later works for which we have autograph scores and numerous manuscript parts and scores today housed in Parisian libraries). Dozens of movements are affected. Choruses are missing two inner parts – in Rameau's case these are two tenor parts rather than the usual alto and tenor – and many movements need the addition of extra viola parts of a complexity belied by the label *parties de remplissage* ('filling-in parts'). With some judicious poaching of the music from that retained in the better-known 1754 version, and by putting aside one's training in the compositional techniques of Bach, Handel and Vivaldi, the missing elements can be completed – hopefully without any repairs being obvious – and this masterpiece can once more be brought to life.

RAMEAU PROJECT

Founded and directed by Jonathan, the Oxford-based Rameau Project is a major multidisciplinary research project devoted to the operas of Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683–1764). The Project began in November 2012 when the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Jonathan gave the première of his Bärenreiter edition of Rameau's *Anacréon* (1754). From this auspicious start has grown a mission which has so far given rise to two conferences, the first UK studio recording of a Rameau opera since 1980, dance workshops in the UK and Paris, numerous radio broadcasts, and the performance with eighteenth-century choreography of three Rameau operas at London's South Bank, all with the OAE. Most recently, Jonathan has conducted fully staged productions of *Les fêtes d'Hébé* at the Opéra de Bastille and the Royal College of Music, and *Dardanus* with English Touring Opera. A new book on Rameau, *The Operas of Rameau, Genesis, Staging, Reception* coedited by Jonathan, Graham Sadler and Shirley Thompson has just been published by Routledge.

A concert such as this costs in the region of £45,000 to put on and would not take place without considerable assistance. We therefore offer special thanks to Mrs Aline Foriel-Destezet for her continued generous support of the Rameau Project; to the Humanities Cultural Programme at The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities (TORCH); to my colleagues at St Hilda's College and the Faculty of Music, Oxford; and to friends of the Rameau Project – Sheila Forbes, Stephen Barter, Robyn Caldicott, Helen Payne and James Watters. Thank you!

For more information and for ways in which to support our work, please visit the Rameau Project website therameauproject.org

RAMEAU'S RISING STARS

So seldom is Rameau performed in this country that many British singers are unfamiliar with the stylistic and technical challenges of his vocal style, so different from those of Handel and Bach. We have therefore created Rameau's Rising Stars, a scheme to offer the kinds of performance opportunities to young musicians which we hope in time will encourage further performances of these wonderful pieces.



RORY CARVER (CASTOR)



Rory Carver is gaining a reputation as a vivid interpreter of opera, oratorio and song repertoire. He was a member of Les Arts Florissants' young artist programme Le Jardin des Voix, a Garsington Opera Alvarez Young Artist, a competitor in the Wigmore Hall/Independent Opera International Song Competition and a finalist in the Oxford Lieder Young Artist Platform, following his postgraduate studies at the Royal College of Music as a Douglas and Hilda Simmonds scholar. As a

featured artist he has sung on some of Europe's finest stages including Theater an der Wien; L'Opéra Royal, Versailles; and Teatro Real, Madrid; and has worked closely with conductors William Christie, Paul Agnew, John Eliot Gardiner, and Lionel Meunier. With a particular interest in the early and middle Baroque periods after performing the title role in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* at the Brighton Early Music Festival, Rory set up the ensemble *Dramma per musica* with gambist Harry Buckoke and the orbist Jonatan Bough to further explore early 17th century Italian monody and English cavalier songs, and recently made his recording début as First Augur/Second Priest in John Eccles' *Semele* with Cambridge Handel Opera Company and the Academy of Ancient Music. Rory's recent and upcoming engagements include solo recitals programmes of Britten and Vaughan Williams songs; arias in Bach's *St John Passion* for Oxford Bach Soloists; performances of Purcell's *King Arthur* in Madrid, Barcelona, and Lyon with Vox Luminis; and Mozart's *Requiem* with the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Agnew. Having grown up in the city and spending his formative years at The Cherwell School, Rory is grateful for the generous support of Oxfordshire-based charity The Exuberant Trust.

JACK LAWRENCE-JONES (POLLUX)



Jack is a classically trained baritone, based in London. He is a Britten Pears Young Artist, a London Festival Opera Young Artist, a Garsington Alvarez Young Artist and a Live Music Now Artist. He studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Recent and upcoming roles include **Oman/Huascar** Rameau's *Les Indes galantes* (Ensemble OrQuesta), **Pollux/Rameau** Rameau's *Roots* (The Opera Company), **Conte** *Le nozze di Figaro* (St Paul's Opera, Ensemble OrQuesta), **Belcore** *L'elisir d'amore* (London Opera Productions), **Moralès** *Carmen* (Kentish Opera), **Groundhog** Mosley's *Aurora* (Bury Court Opera, Grimeborn Festival), **Graf** (cover) *Capriccio* (Garsington Festival) and the title role Dove's *The Enchanted Pig* (Hampstead Garden Opera).

Recent concert work includes Fauré and Brahms *Requiem* (The Cornerstone Choir and Orchestra), Fauré and Duruflé *Requiem* (Bromley Philharmonic Choir), Vaughan Williams *Dona nobis pacem* (New Sussex Singers), Mozart *Requiem* and *Coronation Mass*, Haydn *The Creation* (Maldon Choral Society), Vaughan Williams *Five Mystical Songs* (London Concert Choir), and Vaughan Williams *Serenade to Music* for the Grenfell Tower Benefit Concert at Cadogan Hall.

Recent recitals include a tour of England with Live Music Now, a solo recital at the Red House, Aldeburgh, and Aldeburgh Festival debut as part of a recital of Korngold and Schumann songs.

Jack's other projects include singing in Shards, a London based experimental vocal group. They recently released their first album, Find Sound, available on all main streaming services (Spotify, iTunes etc). Jack is also currently making an experimental mobile app to improve musicians' practice. In his spare time, Jack enjoys piano and squash, and plays hide and seek with his cats Mochi and Miso.

HILARY CRONIN (TÉLAÏRE)



Winner of both First Prize and the Audience Prize at the 2021 London Handel International Singing Competition, Hilary Cronin studied at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance and was a Robinson Hearn, Trinity College London, and Dame Susan Morden Scholar.

Prior to this, Hilary read music and was a choral scholar at Royal Holloway University of London, where she was awarded The Driver Prize and the Dame Felicity Lott Bursary. She also studied on British Youth Opera's 2020/2021 Serena Fenwick Programme.

Operatic engagements have included **Grilletta** *Lo Speciale* for Baroquestock Opera, **Mother** *Hansel and Gretel* for Silent Opera at Opera Holland Park, **Second Woman** *Dido and Aeneas* for the New Generation Festival, **Céphise** *Pygmalion* for the Dunedin Consort and **Mrs Waters** *The Boatswain's Mate* for Grimeborn Festival.

Hilary Cronin's current engagements include **Télaïre** *Castor et Pollux* with The Opera Company, J. S. Bach *B Minor Mass* with VOCES8, the *Christmas Oratorio* at London's Wigmore Hall, the *St Matthew Passion* with Bournemouth Symphony Chorus, *Messiah* with the English Chamber Orchestra, *Ode to Purcell* on tour with Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, a further Purcell programme with The English Concert and Telemann *Cantatas* on tour with Solomon's Knot. She will make her principal debut with English Touring Opera as **Poppea** *Agrippina* in Autumn 2022.

Hilary Cronin was selected by BBC Music Magazine as a Rising Star for 2022.



GALINA AVERINA (PHÉBÉ)



Born in Moscow, Galina Averina graduated from the Russian Academy of Theatre Arts and the International Opera School of the Royal College of Music, in London.

Galina made her international debuts in 2013 at the Dubrovnik Summer Festival (*Così fan tutte*) and the Les Azuriales Opera Festival in Nice, where she won the Haidee Saretski Prize at their Young Artists' Competition.

Roles include **Brigitta** *Iolanta*, **Frasquita** *Carmen*, **Kseniya** *Boris Godunov*, **Noemi** *Cendrillon*, **Ersilia** *Le astuzie femminili*, **Charmion** *Cleopatre*, **Atalanta** *Serse*, **Iphise** Rameau's *Dardanus*, **Ilia** *Idomeneo* and **Lauretta** *Gianni Schicchi* for English Touring Opera, the **title role** in *Partenope* for Iford Arts, **Pamina** *The Magic Flute*, **Susanna** *The Marriage of Figaro*, **Mimi** *La Bohème* for Mid Wales Opera, **Adele** *Die Fledermaus* for Diva Opera and West Green House Opera, and **Oscar** *Un ballo in maschera* also for West Green House.

In competition, she was a finalist in the prestigious Francisco Viñas Competition and was awarded the Audience Prize. She also won the 2015 Bampton Classical Opera Young Singers' Competition and 2nd Prize in the 2016 Handel Competition in London.

Galina is a member of the Samling Artist Programme, and acknowledges the generous support she has received from an Independent Opera Voice Scholarship, Les Azuriales Opera Trust and the Kiri te Kanawa UK Foundation.

In 2020, Galina sang **Marzelline** *Fidelio* in concert performances with Garsington Opera and the Philharmonia (broadcast on BBC Radio 3). In 2021 she sang her role debut as **Magda** *La Rondine* for West Green House Opera, where she returns later this year to sing **The Countess** *Le Nozze di Figaro*.

EMILY GRAY (MINERVE)



Described by Opera Magazine as a “charismatic singer-actress to watch”, Emily has performed as a soloist at the Royal Albert Hall, St. Paul’s, Kings Place, and the Purcell Room as well as giving frequent live performances on BBC Radio 3’s *In Tune*. She has taken leading roles in Dove’s *Mansfield Park*, Monteverdi’s *L’incoronazione di Poppea*, McNeff’s *Banished*, Britten’s *Turn of the Screw* and Haydn’s *Lo Speciale*, also joining The Sixteen for their Grange Park Festival fully staged

production of Handel’s *Belshazzar* under the baton of Harry Christophers.

Emily has extensive experience as a recitalist, specialising in English Song. Her research into English composers who have fallen into obscurity formed a substantive part of two BBC documentaries broadcast in 2021. During the pandemic Emily was commissioned to record an album of Michael Head and Eric Thiman songs, to be released in October 2022, and has now started her second album of English Song for 2023 release. Emily continues to perform as the mezzo soloist with the highly talented *Istante Collective* – a baroque chamber ensemble comprised of the UK’s foremost freelance baroque musicians. Upcoming performances include multiple recitals and oratorio across Europe and a four-month 2022 UK tour of Rebecca Meltzer’s 5 star production of Dove’s *Mansfield Park* in which Emily will take the role of

Lady Bertram.

Emily achieved success at an early age when she was named BBC Radio 2 Choir Girl of the Year 2000. She went on to record the album *Passiontide* for Naxos to critical acclaim, and has since released solo tracks under Chandos Movies and Divine Art Recordings Group and is a two-time nominee for Classical Brit Awards.

HARRY GRIGG (AMOUR, LE GRAND PRÊTRE)



Harry Grigg is from Cheviot, New Zealand and is the Kiri te Kanawa Scholar at the Royal College of Music. He is in the second year of his Masters of Performance, studying with Tim Evans-Jones. He is also supported by the Dame Malvina Major Foundation (DMMF), the Josephine Baker Trust Scheme and is a Kiwi Music Scholar. He was the winner of the 2021 Maureen Lehane Vocal Competition and was a Semifinalist in the Royal Overseas League 2022 Competition. Prior to his studies in London, Harry was a DMMF Studio Artist with New Zealand Opera.

Recent roles include **Monostatos** (RCM Opera Studio), **The Moon** and **King of The West** (*The Enchanted Pig*, Australasian premiere), **Scarramuccio** (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), and **Frederic** (*The Pirates of Penzance*).

PETER HARVEY (MARS, JUPITER)



An internationally acclaimed and versatile singer, Peter Harvey's varied career encompasses oratorio and song repertoire as well as opera engagements and a rich discography.

With the English Baroque Soloists and the Monteverdi Choir, directed by Sir John Eliot Gardiner, he was a key participant in the Bach Cantata Pilgrimage, recordings of which include the celebrated solo cantata *Ich habe genug*.

More recently he sang **Christus** *St John Passion* with them at the BBC Proms. A long-standing soloist with Paul McCreesh's Gabrieli Consort, he sang **Adam** in their recording of Haydn's *The Creation* (winner of a 'Grammy' Award) and has appeared in their recordings of *St Matthew Passion*, *Solomon* and *Monteverdi Vespers* (Deutsche Grammophon) as well as numerous concerts at major concert halls worldwide. Other groups he regularly performs and records with include The King's Consort, Purcell Quartet with Emma Kirkby (early Bach for Chandos) and London Baroque (Rameau for BIS), as well as appearances with The Sixteen, Retrospect Ensemble, Purcell Singers, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, BBC National Orchestra of Wales BBC Symphony Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra and Academy of Ancient Music.

He works and records with the Chapelle Royale and Collegium Vocale Ghent (Philippe Herreweghe), Les Talens Lyriques (Christophe Rousset), Le Concert Spirituel (Hervé Niquet), Arslys Bourgogne, Ensemble Vocal Lausanne and Jean-Claude Malgoire.

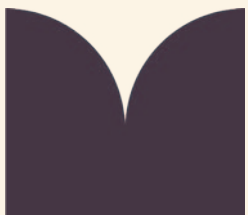
His long association with the conductor Michel Corboz, has taken him throughout France, Switzerland and Japan and produced various recordings, including two versions of the Fauré *Requiem*, the latest of which won a Choc de l'année. In Japan he also performed with Masaaki Suzuki.



For the Netherlands Bach Society he has recorded Mozart *Requiem*, Bach *Christmas Oratorio* and *B minor Mass*. With Ton Koopman he has performed Bach in the Musikverein Vienna, Théâtre des Champs Elysées Paris, in Verona and Rome. In Germany he sings with Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, La Stagione Frankfurt, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Bach Akademie Stuttgart, and with Frieder Bernius' Stuttgart Chamber Choir.

Recent releases include Bach Cantatas with Gächinger Cantorey and Hans-Christoph Rademann (Accentus), Bach's *St Matthew Passion* with the York Baroque Soloists (Signum) and Kammerchor Stuttgart (Carus), *Mass in B minor*, *Johannes Passion* and *Brocks Passion* with Concerto Copenhagen (CPO), Handel's *Israel in Egypt* with Le Concert Lorrain (Etcetera) and *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* with the Gabrieli Consort (Signum), a work which he performed on tour last season with Bach-Stiftung St. Gallen, and a disc "Bach Cantatas: Recreation for the Soul", with the Magdalena Consort, which Peter founded and directs and which focuses on the vocal music of J.S. Bach. They have given concerts in Spain, Germany and in the UK at the Cheltenham Festival.

Peter has recently added the operatic roles of **Sprecher** *Die Zauberflöte* (Budapest Festival Orchestra under Iván Fischer, where he has recently returned for *L'incoronazione di Poppea*) and **Papageno** Purcell's *Fairy Queen* at Royal Danish Opera. Further current collaborations include the Mozarteumorchester Salzburg, Oslo Philharmonic, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Wrocław Baroque, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Sinfonieorchester Basel, Concertgebouw Orkest, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Gulbenkian Orchestra, Israel Camerata, Capella Cracoviensis, Holland Baroque, Swedish Chamber Orchestra, Dunedin Consort, and, in North America, Tafelmusik Baroque Toronto, Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal, Early Music Vancouver, Oregon Bach Festival and The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra.



JENNI HARPER

(VÉNUS, UNE SUIVANTE D'HÉBÉ, UNE OMBRE)



Jenni Harper completed the Artist Masters course at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 2015, for which she was awarded a Distinction. She is a Britten-Pears Young Artist and studies singing with Kate Paterson.

Jenni recently performed the role of **Euridice** for I Fagiolini and Music and Theatre For All's production of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*. She also performed the roles of **Euridice**, **La Musica** and

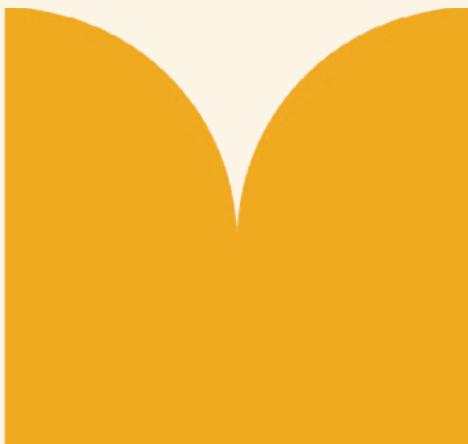
Speranza for Brighton Early Music Festival's production of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, directed by Thomas Guthrie.

Concert highlights include singing solos for Mozart's *Requiem* and *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore* with the London Mozart Players; Bach's *Magnificat* with the Academy of Ancient Music; Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* with Potters Bar Choral Society; Bach's *B Minor Mass* with East Grinstead Choral Society; Mozart's *Vesperae de Dominica* and Haydn's *Nelson Mass* with the London Pro Arte Choir and Bach's *Weinachts Oratorium* with the Croydon Bach Choir and Eclectic Voices.

She recorded a solo CD *The Mystery of Christmas: Greek Kalanda* with newly composed music by the Greek-Cypriot composer Cilia Petridou, which was released in November 2018. She is a soloist on the St Albans Cathedral Girls Choir CD of music by Michael Haydn, released in December 2020.

Jenni is a founder member of the ensemble Ceruleo, with whom she performs solos and duets interwoven with spoken texts to create innovative dramatic performances. Ceruleo were selected for the Young Artist Scheme at the Brighton Early Music Festival 2015-16 and have performed as part of the London Festival of Baroque Music at St John's Smith Square as well as singing live on BBC Radio 3's 'In Tune'. They created an immersive operatic experience, 'The Rival Queens' with Thomas Guthrie for Handel and Hendrix in London, which they premiered in July 2017. Their latest project is *Burying the Dead*, a newly commissioned show about the composer Henry Purcell, which toured around several UK festivals in 2018-20 including the Buxton International Festival and Baroque at the Edge at LSO St Luke's. Ceruleo have just recorded their first CD, 'Love Restor'd', featuring music by Purcell and his contemporaries, which will be released in Autumn 2022.

Jenni is very grateful for the support of the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers, the Katy Choules Memorial Trust and The Guildhall Trust.



JONATHAN WILLIAMS (CONDUCTOR)



Jonathan Williams enjoys working as a conductor, composer and musicologist. Equally at home performing live or in the studio, he has conducted such groups as the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, English Chamber Orchestra, London Mozart Players, Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra and BBC Concert Orchestra. His work at Abbey Road studios can be heard on NOVELLO and BAFTA award-winning soundtracks with sales of over 70 million copies, including his award-winning choral music for Sony's blockbuster video game, *Horizon Zero Dawn*. A professor at GSMD from 1994 to 2004, Jonathan is now Tutor and Examiner of Orchestration at Oxford University, and the Director of College Music at St Hilda's College, Oxford.

Jonathan's love of the operas of Jean-Philippe Rameau led him to undertake doctoral work at Oxford; his edition of Rameau's *Anacréon* (1754) was subsequently published by Bärenreiter and performed and recorded by Jonathan and the OAE. He subsequently founded the Rameau Project and was at the forefront of the UK celebrations during Rameau's anniversary year in 2014, performing three Rameau operas at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, again with the OAE.

Most recently, he conducted the *Missa Solemnis* at the Cadogan Hall, Rameau's *Les fêtes d'Hébé* in Paris and London, and *Dardanus* with English Touring Opera, composed choral arrangements for the CBSO, and reorchestrated Gershwin's *Who cares?* for music for Dutch National Ballet.

Future projects include writing a volume on performing Rameau, taking workshops at the Royal Academy of Music, and performances of his new edition of Rameau's *Castor et Pollux* (1737) as part of the exciting new Rameau's Rising Stars project.



GUIDO MARTIN-BRANDIS (DIRECTOR)



Guido Martin-Brandis is an opera director based in London. Alongside the operas of Rameau he is particularly passionate about the German and Slavic operatic repertoire, and formed The Opera Company in 2017 to put on productions of these works. His first two shows with the company, *Onegin* and *Tatiana*, and *The Cunning Little Vixen*, enjoyed sell out runs at the Arcola Theatre as part of the Grimeborn Festival. Future plans include, a double bill of Rameau's *Pigmalion* and *Nélée et Myrthis*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and *Der Rosenkavalier*. In 2021 he directed the UK premiere of the revised version of Strauss' *Die Ägyptische Helena* for Fulham Opera, a production which was critically acclaimed, a newly devised show called Rameau's *Roots*, also critically acclaimed, a Menotti double bill for Opera Diaspora, and a Lego stop motion animation of *Rusalka*.

In 2022 he will also direct *La Serva Padrona*, and *Bastien et Bastienne* (Opera de Baugé) as well as codirecting *Faust*, *Die Lustige Witwe* and *La Traviata* for the same company. Previously, he directed the world premiere of award winning composer Grace-Evangeline Mason's debut opera, *The Yellow Wallpaper* (Helios Collective, ENO Lilian Baylis House) and *Così fan Tutte* at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival (Opera Kipling). Other directing projects include *A Pinch of Salt* for Bards Theatre, *Vanessa* at the Brickhouse Theatre Company with lambe Opera, and semi stagings of acts from *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Walküre*, and *Parsifal* for Telescopera.

As Assistant, Associate, and Co-Director he has worked with Garsington Festival Opera (*Capriccio*), Opera de Baugé (*Rigoletto*, *Idomeneo*, *Il Trovatore*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Orphée aux Enfers*, *Alfonso und Estrella*), The Royal Academy of Music (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Guildhall School of Music and Drama (*Pedro Paramo*), Fulham Opera (*Don Carlo*), and Darker Purpose Theatre (*King Lear*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *La Bohème*, *The Four Note Opera*, *Boris Johnson the Musical*).

As a director he draws on this deep love and knowledge of music to integrate the musical and dramatic values in opera as fully as possible. Raised in a family of artists, he developed a love visual art and design, and a keen visual sense from a young age. He is a cellist and prolific musical arranger, and received praise in the press for his reduction for piano quintet of the full orchestral score of *The Cunning Little Vixen*. Having studied acting and theatre with veteran Meisner teacher Dominic Kelly, and Actor and Director Antonia Doggett, this year he will begin teaching classes on acting, performance and interpretation for opera singers. He also writes notably popular programme notes for classical concerts, some of which can be read on his blog.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Today's concert has been organised and promoted by Music at Oxford in collaboration with the Humanities Cultural Programme.

THE HUMANITIES CULTURAL PROGRAMME

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