

A close-up photograph of an ornate opera mask, likely a Venetian-style mask. The mask is dark brown or black with intricate gold-colored lace and embroidery. It features several large, feathery gold fringe attachments on top and sides. The mask is adorned with numerous small, clear gemstones and a large, prominent pearl at the bottom center. The background is solid black.

# Haymarket *opera company*

Antonio Cesti

## L'Orontea

Saturday, June 2 – Tuesday, June 5, 2018

Studebaker Theater | Chicago, Illinois

## Dear Friends,

Thank you for joining us as we close out our 7th season with Antonio Cesti's sitcom opera *L'Oronthea*. We hope that our performances will help restore this witty masterpiece to its rightful place alongside the works of Monteverdi and Cavalli.

We are thrilled to have world famous countertenor Drew Minter join us both as a stage director and as Aristeia for this production. Sarah JHP Watkins joins our creative team as stage designer. It is our pleasure to welcome mezzo soprano Emily Fons in her Haymarket debut in the title role of *Oronthea*. New to HOC are also Kimberly Jones as Amore/Tibrino and Addie Hamilton as Filosofia/Giacinta. Dan Bubeck makes his Haymarket stage debut as Corindo after his beautiful performances as Stradella's St. John the Baptist in our first Lenten Oratorio concerts in 2016. As a repertory company, we are so fortunate to regularly feature such fine Chicago artists as Sarah Edgar, Scott Brunscheen, Nathalie Colas, Ryan de Ryke, and Dave Goversen. We extend a special welcome to virtuoso lutenist Nigel North who joins our Venetian-style orchestra.

The whirlwind of activity behind the scenes is almost as operatic as one of our productions. Haymarket is growing! We continue to receive generous financial support from the Angell Family Foundation, the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, the Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation, the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, and the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation. We are excited to announce a new two-year \$20,000 "Innovation Grant" from Opera America, generously funded by the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation. This gift will allow us to further develop our Low-Vision Initiative, improving the opera experience for those with vision impairments and disabilities. Through initiatives such as this, we are able to bring our repertoire of Enlightenment masterpieces to new audiences.

Please join us on June 16, 2018 for our Summer Opera Course performance at Roosevelt's Ganz Hall. This post-season event draws young vocalists from far and wide to study *Feldenkrais*, performance practice, Italian diction, and baroque stage movement. The week of intense study culminates in a public performance of Cavalli's 1641 opera *La Didone*.

Our 8th season opens on September 29, 2018 with Handel's comedic masterpiece *Serse* at the Studebaker Theater. Sarah Edgar will direct and HOC favorite Suzanne Lommler will sing the role of the Persian king Xerxes. We are thrilled to announce that our March 9, 2019 Lenten concert will feature superstar countertenor Iestyn Davies in a program of Bach and Handel.

Haymarket Opera Company is the most active early opera company in North America. Your individual gifts allow us to continue to create new productions. Without you we could not offer our unique and compelling programming. Please consider making a gift to HOC today.

—Craig Trompeter, *Artistic Director* and Dave Moss, *Executive Director*



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*Haymarket Opera Company enriches the musical community of Chicago and the Midwest with performances of 17th- and 18th-century operas and oratorios using period performance practices. HOC seeks to engage audiences of all ages with passionate performances of familiar as well as forgotten works, staged intimately and guided by close attention to details of the libretti and scores.*

# L'Oron tea

Music by Antonio Cesti (1623–69)  
Libretto by Giacinto Andrea Cicognini



## *Cast in order of vocal appearance*

<i>Filosofia</i>	Addie Hamilton
<i>Love</i>	Kimberly Jones
<i>Oron tea, Queen of Egypt</i>	Emily Fons*
<i>Creonte, a court philosopher</i>	Ryan deRyke
<i>Tibrino, Oron tea's page</i>	Kimberly Jones
<i>Alidoro, a painter</i>	Scott Brunscheen
<i>Aristea, his mother</i>	Drew Minter
<i>Gelone, Oron tea's servant</i>	David Govertsen
<i>Corindo, a courtier</i>	Daniel Bubeck
<i>Silandra, a lady of the court</i>	Nathalie Colas
<i>Giacinta, former lady of the court disguised as the brigand Ismero</i>	Addie Hamilton

<i>Stage Direction</i>	Drew Minter & Sarah Edgar
<i>Musical Direction</i>	Craig Trompeter
<i>Costume Designer &amp; Supervisor</i>	Meriem Bahri
<i>Costume Construction</i>	Chicago Custom Costumes and Meriem Bahri
<i>Wardrobe Mistress</i>	Victoria Carot
<i>Wigs &amp; Makeup</i>	Penny Lane Studios
<i>Dresser</i>	Lauren Crotty
<i>Wig &amp; Make-up artist</i>	Emily Young
<i>Wig &amp; Make-up runners</i>	Hailey Rakowiecki & Dyllan Miller

<i>Set Design</i>	Sarah JHP Watkins
<i>Lighting Designer</i>	Lindsey Lyddan
<i>Lighting Assistant</i>	Neal Javenkoski
<i>Supertitles Operator</i>	Johanna Moffitt
<i>Supertitle Preparation</i>	Alessandra Visconti and Craig Trompeter

*\*Sponsored by Suzanne L. Wagner, Patricia Kenny  
and Gregory O'Leary, and an anonymous donor.*

# Synopsis

BY DREW MINTER

## PROLOGUE

Philosophy and Love argue as to which of them matters more to mankind's happiness and success. Forswearing riches and pomp, Philosophy suggests a peaceful mind as the end goal of wisdom: "If the outside is poor, the inside is rich." Love prepares to rule the world, however, and sets about to triumph in the case of Orontea, Queen of Egypt.

N.B.: Cesti and Cicognini's opera is in three acts, but we have made them into two for this production.

## ACT I

Orontea renounces love. Her court philosopher, Creonte, insists she must marry for the good of the realm. "Liberty! Liberty!" Orontea cries wilfully. Her page Tibrino appears, having just dispatched a soldier whom he came upon attempting to murder a young man. The young man, Alidoro, enters with his old mother, Aristeia. They ask for the queen's protection. Unfolding the story, they tell Orontea the murderous attempt was on behalf of Princess Arnea of Phoenicia. Orontea agrees to have the young man attended, but she has been struck immediately by his beauty and finds herself unsettled.

Orontea's drunken servant Gelone appears, extolling the joys of wine. He overhears the courtier Corindo extolling the joys of love, which Gelone in turn mocks; in that moment, Orontea's lady-in-waiting Silandra takes up the same song herself, revealing her own love for Corindo and his golden locks. The two lovers sing a love duet in which Silandra calls him "my all."

Alidoro, feeling better, offers himself as a servant to Orontea and tells her his story: how his father was a pirate, and how he eventually wandered to Phoenecia, where he became painter to the royal court. There Princess Arnea fell in love with him, but Alidoro did not return her love and fled the country, whereupon Arnea had him followed to be killed. Calling her his goddess, Alidoro offers himself up to Orontea; conflicted, she reveals her attraction in so many words, but leaves before she can completely expose her emotions. Poor Alidoro has found himself in a new situation and begs Fate to have peace just for one day. His reverie is interrupted by Silandra, who has likewise been smitten by the beautiful newcomer to the court. Alidoro accuses Silandra of mockery, but she insists her sudden love is real, and Alidoro capitulates to the strength of her advances. Tibrino comes to fetch the ever-drunken Gelone to the Queen's bidding.

Orontea admits to herself and the world that she loves Alidoro. But her thoughts are interrupted by Silandra's announcement of a visitor. It is Giacinta, once one of Orontea's court ladies, long unseen. She was abducted during wartime by the King of Cyrene, who fell in love with her; however, she managed to escape and disguise herself as a man, taking refuge at the Phoenician court. She is "Ismero," and she/he was sent by Arnea to murder Alidoro. Orontea is furious at the revelation, but Creonte stops her from a reckless reaction. Creonte has guessed Orontea's affection for Alidoro and reminds her that her duty is toward a more worthy suitor. But Orontea repeats to herself and Creonte, and the world, that she loves Alidoro. To add complication, Love has conspired to make Aristeia fall in love with young "Ismero." Aristeia says she may be old, but she is still made of flesh, and so she pursues the attractive young man. Giacinta does her level best to put the old lady off, arguing that what she could offer would not be nearly sizable enough to satisfy Aristeia's appetites.

## INTERMISSION

## ACT II

Silandra sings of relinquishing her Corindo, beckoning Alidoro to come to her. Corindo, misinterpreting her cries, enters joyfully. But Silandra quickly squelches his joy with the adamancy of her changed affection. Corindo sulks.

Alidoro has decided to paint Silandra's portrait. Tibrino oversees the process with a jaundiced eye. But Orontea enters in a jealous rage, and Alidoro is left stunned and faints at the sudden change of events. Gelone comes upon the stricken young man and attempts to pick his pocket; but he is caught redhanded by Orontea, who dispatches him. Orontea has tempered her fury and falls once more in love with Alidoro when she sees him sleeping. She asks the winds to gently surround him and to bring him peace. She leaves a golden diadem, scepter, and a letter. When Alidoro awakes he realizes he is being offered a kingship. Silandra is forgotten in an instant.

Silandra longs for Alidoro on the heels of Orontea's outburst, but when he at last enters, she finds he has dropped her for kingly ambition. Tibrino and Gelone sing of how the court is topsy turvy; for Tibrino only his vocation as soldier gives sense to life, but for Gelone it is his beloved wine.



Creonte begs Orontea to curb her emotions, and Orontea submits, vowing she will banish him. When Alidoro comes to her with her letter, she rips it up and accuses him of arrogance in imagining he could ever rise so high. Shocked, Alidoro seeks consolation from Silandra, but she accuses him equally of arrogance and presumption.

Gelone consoles himself as usual with drink. When Corindo asks him for the news, Gelone tells him how sorry Silandra is that she slighted him. Tibrino still champions Alidoro, but the others are against him. And Giacinta has meanwhile fallen in love with him! Coming upon the downcast "Ismero," Aristeia offers him her gold and her love ("Oro ed amore") as consolation. She gives Ismero a precious medallion as a love token. When Giacinta encounters Alidoro, she explains his mother's infatuation, returning the medallion to him. When Gelone overhears and sees Alidoro with the medallion, he accuses him of having stolen it. Nobody is surprised.

Aristeia is called on to testify. She reveals that her husband Ipparco, a pirate, got it off the neck of a noble baby boy in wartime. It turns out the child abducted by the pirate was the son of the King of Phoenicia. Creonte unwinds the mystery: King Ptolemy had had three identical medallions made for his child, for Creonte, and for Orontea. Alidoro is Floridano, son of the King of Phoenicia! A royal wedding can go forward after all. The two love couples celebrate their newfound joy.

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# Program Notes: Understanding *Oronteia*

BY ROBERT L. KENDRICK

*For David Burrows, my dissertation advisor and a key figure in the rediscovery of Cesti.*

These performances by Haymarket of Antonio Cesti's (1623–69) *L'Oronteia* are probably only the second or third North American revival of this 1656 opera, composed for the satellite Habsburg court of Innsbruck. There are two commercial recordings, both stemming from European revivals (1982 and 2015), and the one moment from the piece that might be known to audiences is the title character's aria over her beloved sleeping Alidoro, "Intorno all'idol mio" (Act II, sc.17), which has made its way into the recital repertory.

Still, *L'Oronteia* was an enormous hit on Italian opera stages between 1657 and 1670, perhaps just behind Cesti's *La Dori* and Francesco Cavalli's *Il Giasone*, with which latter it shared its librettist, Giacinto Andrea Cicognini (1606–49). Some of our opera's success must have been due to the literary qualities of its libretto, in which Cicognini not only interwove multiple subplots and character registers, but also represented early modern ideas of characters' emotional changeability. For modern audiences, it is perhaps best to follow the ebb and flow of the dialogues and of the lyric moments; like Monteverdi's late operas, and Cavalli's whole output, this style is based not on extrovert spectacle, but on subtle psychological development, and the sudden changes in character types. In addition, it really is a singer's opera; the original orchestra probably consisted of a few strings and basso continuo only, a practice that we follow in this production.

In addition to Drew Minter's plot summary in this program book, some consideration of the text's origin, and of Cesti's musical strategies, is in order here. The Florentine Cicognini originally wrote the libretto for a Venetian public stage, probably quickly in late 1648; he would die there suddenly a year later. The original Venice score of 1649, which does not survive, was by the gifted Francesco Lucio, and another version was composed in 1654.

Why Innsbruck would have chosen this text in 1656, and have given it to its star composer and singer Cesti to set, can only be inferred. This court was passionately Italophile in its musical taste, due to both the reigning Archduke Ferdinand Karl and to his Florentine wife, Anna de' Medici, and had just inaugurated a new court opera theater in 1654 (this tradition, alas, would come to a sudden end in 1665 after the deaths of Ferdinand and his

successor, and the takeover of the court by the Viennese Habsburgs). The Tuscan Cesti formed part of a small group of virtuoso singers, all Italian, responsible for opera and secular chamber music, most of whom would wind up in Vienna; the composer then returned to Italy in 1668, where he died suddenly in 1669.

Surprisingly, there survive only indirect references to operas during their normal time for staging, Carnival, in 1656 at the Tyrolean court. The performance of *Oronteia* had been preceded, however, in autumn 1655 by the visit of Queen Christina of Sweden, en route to Rome after her conversion to Catholicism and her abdication. Christina had been feted with another opera by Cesti, *L'Argia*. Although she had already left Innsbruck, the themes of *L'Oronteia* partially recall the major (and expensive) visit of the Swedish sovereign: the beautiful (and hidden royal) wanderer Alidoro connected to the arts semi-recalled some of Christina's traits, as did the issues of female sovereignty facing *Oronteia*, under pressure to marry and produce heirs (always a problem also for the Habsburgs). In addition, Cesti himself probably sang the tenor role of Alidoro, and his own lifestyle—evidently not consistent with his nominal status as a Franciscan friar—might have added an extra frisson for the original audience.

For all that the Innsbruck performance might have been a major court event, the hidden sides of Cicognini's text point to more complex relationships. The librettist had seen his father commit suicide because of court intrigues in Florence, and is reported to have fled the city for Venice in 1645 due to mistreatment by a ruffian in the employ of the Medici. The poet would have had no fond memory of court culture, and thus there may be an element of satire in the portrayal of Alidoro, so attractive (and indecisive) that almost all the women in the cast throw themselves at him, not unlike Cicognini's figure of Jason in Cavalli's opera *Giasone*. Similarly, the presence of the "low-register" characters is entirely in line with Venetian opera, but here the standard drunkard Gelone and the page Tibrino actually close Act I, starting with Gelone's aria "Ah, scelerato." Overall Gelone has more arias than even *Oronteia*. In that sense, the comic element is essential to the piece.

Cesti also responded to Cicognini's balanced characterizations; even the roles of Tibrino and Giacinta/Ismero have eloquent music, the latter in her confrontations with her rival for Alidoro's affections, *Oronteia* (evident in Giacinta's aria "Mie pene" from Act 3). Meanwhile, the other nominally high-register figures

Corindo and Silandra, for all of Silandra's sudden passion for Alidoro, also veer between comic interchanges and such high-register moments as Silandra's lament aria on a standard four-note descending bass figure, "Vieni, Alidoro." The text of this latter was added in Innsbruck to Cicognini's original 1649 libretto.

As a singer himself, Cesti's vocal writing is more than idiomatic, but as an experienced composer, he was able to shift quickly from declamation to lyricism, following Cicognini's quicksilver poetic meters.

The bass Creonte, the court philosopher and unsuccessful political counselor of Orontea, insists throughout on the standard rhetoric of "mastery of one's emotions." Still, his ineffectiveness against the noble characters' enslavement to physical desire is reminiscent of the ultimate marginality of Monteverdi's Seneca in *Poppea*. Cicognini might also have meant this role as a satire on court intellectuals whom he had known in Florence. Creonte's earthy counterpart is the standard "lusty old woman" role of Aristeia, but her pleas in Act II, sc.7 to the cross-dressed Ismero are almost pathetic, another tribute to Cicognini's ability to mix emotional registers inside characters.

As noted, *L'Orontea* was a wide-ranging hit, with later performances in Naples, Germany, and France, and a total of some 21 surviving libretti for Cesti's version. The popularity of the score is also evident in the unusually high number of surviving sources, some four, of which three are relatively similar.

Since they stem from different performances, there are differences large and small among them, including some rewritten vocal tessituras for Alidoro and Orontea, and even more major changes in the role of Gelone. The issues of the original voice ranges and characters in the piece have been addressed in an important article by Jennifer Williams Brown (Cambridge Opera Journal, 2000; see the Bibliography). We use the 1973 edition prepared on the basis of Italian sources by William Holmes.

Its contemporary public would have appreciated both the comic—but quite human—characterizations of Cicognini and the melodic inventiveness of Cesti, combined with the composer's sense of dramatic pacing. For us, its musical portrayal of changing and inconsistent human affects still speaks, 350 years after its original production.

#### READING/LISTENING

There is not a lot of literature on Cesti in any language. The entry in The New Grove Dictionary is a good place to begin.

J.W. Brown, "Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen: Cesti, *Orontea*, and the Gelone Problem," *Cambridge Opera Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Nov., 2000), pp. 179–217, takes on casting and singers' ranges in the opera.

#### COMMERCIAL RECORDINGS ON CD/STREAMING

- 1982 (Innsbruck), cond. R. Jacobs; Harmonia Mundi, based on a source in Cambridge/UK, which casts Alidoro as an alto
- 2015 (Frankfurt), cond. I. Bolton; Oehms Classics, based on a new edition by A. Torrente

# Director's Note

BY DREW MINTER

The art of gesture is as old as public speaking and theatre itself. When utilizing historical gesture and movement in the service of a “period” production (I like to say “period-inspired,” since we cannot hope to perfectly replicate what audiences saw in the day), I like to draw as closely as possible from sources that might have been known to the creators of the time.

For the period we confront with *L'Orontea*, whose various incarnations date from the 1650s, I make use of two volumes of research. The first combines John Bulwer's two towering volumes from 1644, *Chirologia: or the Natural Language of the Hand*, and *Chironomia: of the Art of Manual Rhetoric*. These treatises themselves draw upon the ancients—Quintilian, Cicero, Seneca, Socrates, Aristotle—but also Saints like Augustine, Ambrose and many others. The debt of these orators to the actors Roscius and Aesop is acknowledged and evaluated. The great advantage of Bulwer's work is a large number of detailed pictures of actual gestures with Latin legends; Bulwer's illustrations range from simpler hand gestures, like “Ploro” (I weep), “Impedio” (I impede), or “Irascor” (I am angry), to highly specialized ones, such as “Effoeminate festino” (I hasten effeminately) and “Officiose duco” (I lead about in an official capacity). For the specificity of the pictures and how to carry out gestures in an elegant and articulate manner, no finer source can be imagined.

The second book I find enormously useful in working with singers is Francesca Gualandri's *Affetti Passioni Vizi e Virtù; La retorica del gesto nel teatro del '600*, a modern treatise which brings together the work of the most important theatre thinkers of the 17th century in Italy, as well as others closely related in time and genre. Among these are Bonifacio, Ripa, Perucci, and most importantly the particular treatise *Il Corago*, by an anonymous source in the 1630s.

But descriptions and directions bring us only part way to our goal, that of making an ancient theatre piece sensible to a modern audience, i.e., telling the story.

We have the obvious obstacles of language (even for Italians often antiquated) and musical idiom so different from ours today, so these must be intently studied and translated by the performers. But then there are the classical references, often to cities and peoples and myths largely unknown by a modern audience. Somehow these must be made vivid or at least lucid to today's theatre-goers. And here the quality of movement and the hierarchies of action can help a modern audience.

It bears mentioning that for the first couple of hundred years and beyond of Italian opera, a director's job in the baroque period was rather different from today's. Many times the director was the librettist (when available), and his job was largely to manage the wordbook and make the singers adhere to it. The singers themselves had studied gesture and attitude as part of their education, and so they needed little coaching to bring about the desired effect. Indeed, opera singers such as Anna Renzi (to name the most lauded example of the period) were valued for their uncanny ability as actors. Judging from contemporary libretti, a great deal of the director's job was to make sure people stood in the proper order onstage, so that their status in any given scene would be clear when interacting.

Fortunately, what we confront in *L'Orontea* is one of the most popular dramas of the time, a situation comedy. Cicognini is counted among the most important of Venetian playwrights and was expert at weaving serious drama and comedy into one playful tapestry. *L'Orontea* does not draw on sweeping historical or mythological themes; despite their clearly defined social differences, all the characters wander in the same sea of human emotions. The recurring theme of mistaken identity provides a delightful springboard for the characters' prides and prejudices. As is customary in Venetian opera of the mid-17th century, a prologue sets forth personifications of competing human paths, Love and Philosophy. They proclaim the strife we will witness in the forthcoming drama.



# Soloists

**KIMBERLY EILEEN JONES** is an alumna of Lyric Opera's Ryan Opera Center. There she performed in numerous operas including Menotti's *Old Maid and the Thief* and the world premiere of *Amistad*, which was released nationally on the New World recording label. She has performed with Houston Grand Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, among others.

**ADDIE HAMILTON** has been praised for her "velvety, clear voice" (*New York Times*). She completed her Masters in Music degree in vocal performance at the Manhattan School of Music under the tutelage of Marlena Malas. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of Georgia with a double degree in Music Education and German and was selected as a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

**EMILY FONS** has made several exciting role and company debuts in recent seasons that have set her apart as a versatile, powerful, and engaging performer. She was hailed by *Opera News* as one of opera's rising stars and one of the best singing actresses of her generation, and received a Grammy nomination for her work on Jennifer Higdon's *Cold Mountain*. In the past few seasons, Fons has sung with The Santa Fe Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, The International Händel Festspiele, the Cleveland Orchestra, Opéra de Lille, the Ongaku-Juku Festival, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis.

**DAVID GOVERTSEN** "handsomely replaced the ill Peter Rose as the producer La Roche" opposite Renée Fleming and Anne Sophie von Otter in *Capriccio* at Lyric Opera Chicago. He sang Arkel in *Pelléas et Mélisande* with the Chicago Symphony and as a soloist in James MacMillan's *Quickening* with the Grant Park Orchestra. He is an alumnus of both the Santa Fe Opera and Central City Opera apprentice programs and holds degrees from Northwestern University, Northern Illinois University, and the College of DuPage.

**DREW MINTER** has performed leading roles with the opera companies of Brussels, Toulouse, Boston, Washington, Santa Fe, Wolf Trap, Glimmerglass, and Nice, among others. He has performed frequently at the Handel festivals of Göttingen. He has sung with many of the world's leading baroque orchestras, including Les Arts Florissants, the Handel and Haydn Society, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, and Freiburger Barockorchester.

**SCOTT J. BRUNSCHEEN**'s "sweet and substantial lyric tenor" (*Chicago Tribune*) continues to gain recognition in a wide range of operatic and concert repertoire. Recent engagements include Haydn's *L'isola disabitata* and Marais's *Ariane et Bacchus* with Haymarket, Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, Stewart Copeland's *The Invention of Morel* with Chicago Opera Theater and Long Beach Opera, and Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* with Madison Opera.

**RYAN DE RYKE** has performed at the Aldeburgh Festival in the UK and the festival at Aix-en-Provence in France. The *Baltimore Sun* hailed him as "a talent that seems to defy labels, for without pretense or vocal tricks he delivers a naturally beautiful sound that penetrates to one's inner core in every conceivable range." He appears regularly as an oratorio soloist and has worked with the Orchestra of the 17th-century, the Baltimore Handel Choir, the Bach Sinfonia, and the American Opera Theater.

**DANIEL BUBECK** has earned an international reputation on both the opera and concert stage in repertoire ranging from Baroque masters such as Bach and Handel to modern composers such as Adams and Glass. A native of Delaware, Dr. Bubeck holds degrees in voice from Indiana University, Peabody Institute of Music and the University of Delaware.

Hailed for her "floating, silky soprano" and deemed "a standout in acting and voice" (*Chicago Classical Review*), **NATHALIE COLAS** was born and raised in Strasbourg, France. A graduate of DePaul University School of Music and of the Brussels Royal Conservatory, she completed her opera training at the Swiss Opera Studio/Hochschule der Kunst Bern.

To learn more about all our artists, please visit  
[haymarketopera.org/meet-the-artists](http://haymarketopera.org/meet-the-artists).

# Production

**MERIEM BAHRI** has been praised by the *Chicago Tribune* for her “sumptuous array of period-perfect costumes.” After completing a PhD in science, she turned to her great passion for costumes and art history. She collaborates regularly with two groups specializing in baroque opera: as costume designer for Haymarket and as assistant to the costume designer for the Boston Early Music Festival.

**SARAH EDGAR** began her professional career as a dancer with The New York Baroque Dance Company under Catherine Turocy, and since then she has voraciously studied and experimented with the stage conventions of the period. In Cologne she created new works with The Punk’s Delight, while pursuing her MA in Tanzwissenschaft (dance studies) from the Hochschule für Musik und Tanz Köln. She is associate director of The New York Baroque Dance Company.

**LINDSEY LYDDAN** has worked all over Chicago with Silk Road Rising, Roosevelt University, University of Illinois at Chicago, Drury Lane Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre, Steppenwolf, the Goodman, and Lyric Opera of Chicago. She received her MFA in lighting and scenic design from Northwestern University.

**CRAIG TROMPETER** has performed with Second City Musick, Music of the Baroque, the Chicago Symphony, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Chicago Opera Theater. He has performed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Glimmerglass Festival, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and the Valletta International Baroque Festival in Malta. He has appeared as soloist at the Ravinia Festival, the annual conference of the American Bach Society, with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and with Music of the Baroque.

**SARAH JHP WATKINS** is a scenic designer, photographer, and educator. She works as a design studio assistant for scenic designer Daniel Ostling, and has worked on *The Hounds of Baskerville*, *Hard Times*, *Title & Deed* to name a few. She is Assistant Professor of Theatre in Northeastern Illinois University’s Department of Communication, Media, and Theatre, where she is the Managing Artistic Director of The Stage Center Theatre and resident scenic designer.

# Orchestra

## VIOLIN

Jeri-Lou Zike

*Vernon and Cille Swaback*

*Endowed Chair*

Marty Davids

## BASS VIOLIN

Craig Trompeter

## THEORBO

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## Summer Opera Course Cavalli's *La Didone*

**June 16, 2018, 1 pm**

Vengeful gods, unrequited love, and a mad scene have been in the DNA of opera since the 1640s! Virgil's famous characters from *The Aeneid* come to life in one of the first operas written for public consumption. Come hear and watch the third annual Summer Opera Course young artists in this semi-staged performance in historic Ganz Hall at Roosevelt University. HOC advisory board member and world-famous countertenor Drew Minter directs.



## George Frideric Handel *Serse*

**September 29 - October 2, 2018**

An action-packed mix of tragedy and comedy that flopped at its 1738 premiere, this masterpiece has become one of Handel's most beloved staged operas. Xerxes, monarch of ancient Persia, pursues his brother's girlfriend Romilda while his fiancée Amastre schemes to win back his love. See what happens when he doesn't get what he wants. HOC favorite Suzanne Lommler stars and Sarah Edgar directs.



## Iestyn Davies Bach and Handel

**March 9, 2019**

Fresh from his stellar Broadway debut in *Farinelli and the King* and in Chicago for Lyric Opera's *Ariodante*, international countertenor sensation Iestyn Davies joins Haymarket Opera Orchestra for the annual Haymarket Lenten concert. Hear sumptuous Bach cantatas paired with orchestral works featuring HOC oboist Kathryn Montoya.

Tickets and details at [haymarketopera.org](http://haymarketopera.org)

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