

FORTHCOMING DATES & TICKET INFORMATION



Calendar Listing

Those events marked with an asterisk * are University events

Recitals

April

26 - Lucy Cox, *soprano*

May

3 - James Carter, *countertenor*

10 - Alex Brett, *bass*

19 - Domnhall Talbot, *tenor*

24 - Amrit Gosal, *soprano*

31 - Daniel Tate, *bass*

Alessandro Scarlatti: *La Giuditta*

Musical Director: Edmund Whitehead

5 June 2013

New College Chapel, 8.00pm

June

7 - Wilfrid Jones, *countertenor*

14 - Jake Barlow, *countertenor*

Summer Opera: Handel *Tamerlano*

3 (Preview), 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14 July 2013

The Warden's Garden, New College

New Chamber Opera - New Chamber Opera Ensemble
The Band of Instruments - Phoenix - Cutting Edge

Singing Patron James Bowman

Director of Productions Michael Burden

Director, the Summer Opera Steven Devine

Director, The Band of Instruments Roger Hamilton · *Director, Opera Studio* Harry Sever

Repetiteurs Harry Sever, Edmund Whitehead · *Company Secretary* Clare Atkinson

Comptroller Graham Midgley · *Wardrobe* Diana Lintott, Fiona Hodges

Recitals Administrator Wilfrid Jones

New Chamber Opera · 4 Mansfield Road · Oxford OX1 3TA

Tel: 01865 281 966 · Fax: 01865 279 590 · Email: info@newchamberopera.co.uk

Web pages: <http://www.newchamberopera.co.uk>

Company No 3502769 · Charity No 1095069

TICKET DETAILS

**Lunchtime Vocal
Recitals
1.15pm**

**New College Antechapel
£2/£1 concessions
on the door**

Scarlatti *La Giuditta*

**5 June 2013
8.00pm
New College Chapel**

**Tickets
£10 / £5 concessions
on the door**

Summer Opera

Wednesday 3 (Preview)

Sunday 7 & Tuesday 9

New Chamber Opera

Please download forms from

<http://www.newchamberopera.co.uk>

Saturday 6 & Friday 12

New College Development Office

(01865) 279 337

Tuesday 9

OXPIP (01865) 778 034

Wednesday 10

Friends of the Oxford Botanic Garden

(07722) 605 787

Saturday 13 & Sunday 14

Friends of WNO (01865) 408 045



Summer Opera

Handel: Tamerlano

Conductor - Steven Devine; Director - Michael Burden

Asteria: Kate Semmens; **Irene:** Joanne Edworthy; **Andronico:** Joseph Bolger; **Tamerlano:** Andrew Radley;
Bajazet: Daniel Auchincloss; **Leone:** Giles Davies

3 (Preview), 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14 July 2013
The Warden's Garden, New College



Handel's *Tamerlano* was written for London's Royal Academy of Music, and premiered there on 31 October 1724. This premiere was close to the annual performance at Drury Lane of Nicholas Rowe's *Tambrlane*, a tradition that lasted into the 19th century. The opera was successful; there were twelve performances that season, and more, when it was re-staged for the 1731-32 season. It came from one of the most productive periods in Handel's opera career; not only was it composed in the astonishingly short time of 20 days, but it was also the year in which he wrote both *Giulio Cesare*, and *Rodelinda*.

The libretto, which exploits the then-contemporary fashion for *turquerie*, was by Nicola Francesco Haym, who adapted the story from Agostin Piovene's *Tamerlano*; he also



drew on the libretto of *Bajazet*, a text after Nicolas Pradon's *Tamerlan, ou La Mort de Bajazet*.

The opera's story revolves round the Ottoman Emperor, Bajazet, one of the first major tenor roles in opera. He has just been defeated by Tamerlano. The central tension is provided by Tamerlano's love for Bajazet's daughter, Asteria. Asteria appears to agree to Tamerlano's desires, but is, in truth, plotting to murder him. Tamerlano himself is engaged to Irene, who now finds herself betrothed to Andronico. After a wild tale of revenge, attempted revenge, and betrayal, Bajazet takes poison, and Asteria asks Tamerlano for death. Tamerlano, having been affected by the human emotions revealed by these events, pardons Asteria, Andronico, and Bajazet. The penultimate number of the opera is a love duet between Irene and Tamerlano.



Mailing List

Mailing Lists. Each hard copy and electronic mailing returns out of date addresses; it would be helpful if members of both mailing lists could keep their address up to date. Anyone who would like to join the electronic mailing list - used for reminders of forthcoming events - please let us know?

Gerard Mortier ... Humanitas Professor of Opera

*Oxford University's
Humanitas Visiting Chair of Opera*

***Events are free and
open to the public***

To register, go to:

<http://www.humanities.ox.ac.uk/humanitas/>

Thursday, 6th June 2013, 5.00pm

Merton College

T. S. Eliot Lecture Theatre, Merton College

Inaugural Address:

'The Salzburg Festival:

circa 100 years after Hofmannsthal's idea about the festival'

to be followed by an opening reception, 6.00pm

Saturday, 8th June 2013

Merton College

T. S. Eliot Lecture Theatre, Merton College

3.00pm Conversation 1 Mozart, our contemporary

*Gerard Mortier in discussion with Adeline Mueller, Junior
Research Fellow and Mozart scholar, New College*

***4.30pm Tea, T. S. Eliot Lecture Theatre, Merton
College***

***5.00pm Conversation 2 Music theatre between opera
and drama - Contemporary opera, modern staging, bad
or good public.***

*Gerard Mortier in conversation with Ashutosh Khandekar, editor
of Opera Now magazine*

***5.30pm Round table Chaired by Ashutosh Khandekar,
with Gerard Mortier***

to be followed by a closing reception, 6.30pm



Gerard Mortier was born on 25 November 1943 in Ghent (Belgium). He attended a Jesuit school, and after his secondary education, continued to study law and communication. He chose a career in the arts and became Director of the Flanders Festival. Gerard Mortier spent most of the seventies in Germany. In chronological order, he was Artistic Director at the opera in Düsseldorf, Hamburg and Frankfurt. After that, he worked for a short time as a technical adviser in setting up the programme of the Paris Opera. In 1981, Gerard Mortier was appointed General Manager at the Monnaie Opera House in Brussels. He reformed the opera house with innovative adaptations of the repertoire, and the introduction of new works, as well as recruiting new performers. After his second term, in 1992, Mortier took over the running of the Salzburger Festspiele. He received heavy criticism as well as praise for his radical and sometimes provocative transformation of the once so traditional opera festival. In 2001, Mortier was invited to develop and lead the Ruhrtriennale 2002-2004, which brought to North Rhine Westphalia an effervescent mixture of dance, opera, symphonies and theatre. At the end of 2001, he became the General Director of the Paris Opera. He is the General Director of the Teatro Real de Madrid since 2010.

Gerard Mortier holds two honorary Doctorates from the universities of Antwerp and Salzburg and was invited as "fellow" of the Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin in 2001-2002. He teaches political and social history of theatre in Ghent (Belgium) and Leiden (Netherlands).

Upcoming ... *La Giuditta*

Edmund Whitehead introduces *La Giuditta*

Set in the 7th Century BC, The Book of Judith is perhaps one of the most tragic books in the Old Testament, and features only in Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Bibles. Its dramatic text did not inspire just Scarlatti, but countless other Italian composers from the same period such as Lotti, Marcello, Almeida, and Metastasio. Judith (Giuditta) is the protagonist, a beautiful and heroic Hebrew widow. Her city, Bethulia, is invaded by Holofernes (tenor), a general of King Nebuchadnezzar II. Angry at what has happened, Judith travels, with her maid Nutrice (mezzo-soprano), to the camp of Holofernes. She flirts with him, and gains his favour. One night, when he is asleep in his tent after an evening of heavy drinking, Judith sneaks in and decapitates him. She returns to her countrymen with Holofernes' head, and his army disperse, leaving Israel in relative peace. This plot would have been incredibly empowering to women in 17th Century Italy, and Scarlatti's innovative setting plays heavily off Judith's seductive attitude towards Holofernes, painting her as a sassy, and often very witty, heroine.

Scarlatti composed two settings of *La Giuditta*: the first, written in 1693, is scored for 5 voices and large orchestra, to a libretto by Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni, and is often referred to as the "Rome Giuditta". The second version, written in 1697, which we shall be



5th June 2013
8.00 pm
New College Chapel

performing, is scored for 3 voices only, accompanied by a string quartet with basso continuo. This version is often called the "Cambridge Giuditta", as its manuscript is kept in the Rowe Music Library at King's College, Cambridge. This version is very rarely performed, and New Chamber Opera's performance will be a landmark in the piece's history, as we will be working from a brand new performing edition, compiled by conductor Ed Whitehead. The small instrumental forces Scarlatti uses in this version do not stand in the way of his innovative approach to musical texture, and throughout the oratorio there is a fluctuation between full-bodied tutti sections, with all 5 instruments playing, and lighter writing for only the two violins and viola, such as in Giuditta's aria *Chi m'addita, per pietà*. This aria is a gem, and its lack of basso continuo emphasises Giuditta's mock fear, as she pretends to be just a vulnerable widow upon meeting Holofernes. The final few numbers, depicting Giuditta's murder of Holofernes, and triumph of Israel, make the entire piece, and a particular highlight is Nutrice's lullaby, *Dormi, o fulmine di guerra*, in which she sends Holofernes to sleep before his death. The ironic sweetness of this melody reminds us of Scarlatti's insightful consideration of psychology.

This undiscovered gem of an oratorio, interpreted by exciting and talented young musicians, makes for a performance not to be missed.

Glass: Galileo Galilei

Conductor - Harry Sever;
Repetiteur - Edmund Whitehead;
Director - Michael Burden

New Chamber Opera Studio's production for February, Philip Glass's *Galileo Galilei*, took place in the Ante-chapel of New College, fitting surroundings for an opera dealing with Papal antagonism to science. The opera's libretto is based on excerpts of letters of Galileo and his family, including his daughter, Maria Celesta, and is constructed as a one act set of scenes. Dramatically, the opera works backwards. It opens with Galileo as an old, blind, man, under house arrest, and works in reverse order to the young Galileo watching an opera composed by his father, Vincenzo, who was a member



of the Florentine Camerata. The subject of his father's opera is the motions of celestial bodies, a theme which completes the cyclic nature of the opera already established by the backwards-moving plot.

The opera was staged on a circular stage, which represented the world, flat, as seen by the church, and the action, taking its cue from the rather ritualistic score, was presented in a stylised manner. As might be expected, one of the few essential props was the telescope, wielded with panache by Aileen Thomson.

Photo credit: Steve Pyke

Milo Commerford, Edward Edgcumbe, Ashley Francis-Roy, Johanna Harrison, Andrew Hayman, Michael Hickman, Jessica Howarth, David Le Provost, Esther Mallett, Tara Mansfield, William Pate, Samuel Poppleton, Nick Pritchard, Rose Rands, Daniel Tate, Aileen Thomson