



Sydney Conservatorium of Music Opera School

THE FAIRY QUEEN Henry Purcell

SATURDAY 14 MAY, 2PM
TUESDAY 17 MAY, 6.30PM
THURSDAY 19 MAY, 6.30PM
SATURDAY 21 MAY, 2PM

MUSIC WORKSHOP, SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY



SYDNEY
CONSERVATORIUM
OF MUSIC

Sydney Conservatorium of Music Opera School presents:

THE FAIRY QUEEN

Henry Purcell

SCM Early Music Ensemble

Pitch: A = 415 Herz

Temperament: 1/4 comma meantone.

Sung in English

Approximately 90 minutes, without interval

Chair of Opera Production Stephen Mould

Director Elsie Edgerton-Till

Musical Director Neal Peres Da Costa

Set and Costume Designer Isabella Andronos

Lighting Designer Karen Norris

Score and Music Preparation Stephen Yates

Assistant Conductors Rachelle Anne Elliot,
Josephine Flores Tam

Cover image:

Willem van Aelst, *Flower Still Life with a Watch*, 1663

Synopsis

Pivoting out from the Fairy Queen's desire, love and loss, we follow three pairs of lovers into a world of magic and mystery. As the sun sets, drunken poets, Fairy Kings and Queens even Night and Day become entangled by the sweet torment of Love.

Symphony

Act One – Day

The Herald of Dawn welcomes a new day, the birthday of King Oberon. The Herald of Dawn and her Attendants gather to welcome Phoebus, the God of Sun, however, the faithful partnership of Oberon and the Fairy Queen is under strain.

The seasons all pay homage to Phoebus, anointing him the Great Parent of us all.

Act Two – Night

The Drunken Poet tries to woo his heart's desire Mopsa. Unable to keep pace with what his mortal flesh lusts after, he loses himself in drink then in the darkening forest.

Oberon and his fairies welcome dusk's chorus and the magic of the coming night.

The Fairy Queen appears with her entourage. Oberon and his men quickly conceal themselves. The Queen's fairies prepare her bower and lulls their Queen to sleep. Oberon discloses his undying love for his Queen.

The Drunken Poet crashes into this scene, waking the fairies and eventually revealing the hiding heartbroken Oberon. Full of rage, the Fairy Queen seduces the amorous Drunk Poet and draws him into her bower.

Night appears to favour the Fairy Queen's desire, followed by her attendants – Mystery, Secrecy and Sleep – who bestow the charms necessary for the Fairy Queen to fulfill her passion.

Night reveals her longing for Phoebus. These star-crossed lovers sing of the torment and pleasure of a love that can never be acknowledged.

The Fairy Queen awakes in the small hours of night to discover the Drunken Poet asleep in her arms. She realises her actions have driven away her one true love, Oberon. Unable to imagine

a world in which her partner would return to her, she sings of love and meaning lost.

Oberon appears and the two forgive each other. The Fairy Queen and Oberon restore their faith in each other and their shared future.

Act Three – Day

The Herald of Dawn appears and announces the start of a new day.

The Queen's attendants call on Hymen, the God of Marriage, who reluctantly appears. Hymen has lost all faith in marriage and true love. On seeing the Fairy Queen and Oberon's absolute mature love, his faith in love is restored and he marries all the happy couples.

SCM Historical Performance Unit

Supporting this performance of *The Fairy Queen* are students in and affiliated with arguably the most vibrant centre for the study of early music and historical performance in Australia. Our students learn from musicians who regularly perform with leading national and international ensembles that foster historically informed performance (HIP) such as Ironwood, Australian Chamber Orchestra, Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, Orchestra of the Antipodes, Pinchgut Opera, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Salut! Baroque and English Baroque Soloists.

The Historical Performance Unit offers undergraduate or postgraduate tuition in a wide range of historical instruments

including clavichord, harpsichord, fortepiano, lute, guitar, viola da gamba, trumpet, cornetto, sackbut, historical violin, viola, cello and bass, recorder, flute, oboe and bassoon

Chamber music and orchestral studies programs complement academic studies and students gain experience in the SCM Early Music Ensemble, performing four programs each year. Masterclasses from local and international artists supplement the student's experience, and the Historical Performance Workshop provides hands-on feedback from teachers and peers.

music.sydney.edu.au/study/areas-of-study/historical-performance/

Order of Music + Henry Purcell

1. Symphony
 2. Now the Night
 3. Let the Fifes and Clarions
 4. Entry of Phoebus
 5. When a cruel Winter /
Hail! Great Parent
 6. Thus the ever grateful Spring
 7. Here's the Summer, sprightly, gay
 8. See, see my many coloured fields
 9. Now the Winter comes slowly /
Hail! Great Parent
 10. Hornpipe
 11. Dialogue between Coridon and Mopsa
 12. Jig
 13. Come All Ye Songsters
 14. Instrumental
 15. May the God of Wit inspire
 16. Echo
 17. Now join your warbling voices /
Sing while we trip It
 18. Rondeau
 19. Scene of the Drunken Poet
 20. Dance for the Followers of Night
 21. Yes, Daphne in your looks I find
 22. See, see even Night herself
 23. I am come to lock all fast
 24. One charming Night gives more
 25. Hush, no more, be silent
 26. If's Love's a sweet passion
 27. Symphony 'While the Swans comes
forward'
 28. The Plaint / O let me weep
 29. Dance of the Hay Makers
 30. A Thousand, Thousand Ways
- Tuning Pause*
31. Symphony
 32. Hark! The echoing air
 33. Sure of the Dull God
 34. See, I Obey
 35. Turn thine Eyes
 36. My Torch Indeed!
 37. They shall be as Happy
 38. Chaconne
 39. They shall be as Happy

Henry Purcell (1659–1695) one of England's finest and most original composers, composed music covering a wide field: the church, the stage, the court and private entertainment most remembered for his songs and his operas, such as *Dido and Aeneas* and *The Fairy Queen*. Through his short life he was able to enjoy and make full use of the renewed flowering of music after the Restoration of the Monarchy. As the son of a Court musician, a chorister at the Chapel Royal, and the holder of continuing royal appointments until his death, Purcell worked in Westminster for three different Kings over 25 years.

Purcell's genius as a composer for the stage was hampered by there being no public opera in London during his lifetime. Most of his theatre music consists simply of instrumental music and songs interpolated into spoken drama, though occasionally there were opportunities for more extended musical scenes. Purcell showed not only a lively sense of comedy but also a gift of passionate musical expression. The tendency to identify himself still more closely with the Italian style is very noticeable in the later dramatic works, which often demand considerable agility from the soloists.

Chair of Opera Production's Note

This Con Opera production of Henry Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* marks a further collaboration that we have enjoyed for several years with Neal Peres Da Costa and the Early Music Ensemble, whom we welcome back to the opera pit. The production also marks the Con Opera debut of our inspiring director, Elsie Edgerton-Till, who has brought with her a wonderful creative team to realise this extraordinary work.

Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* of 1692 falls into the genre of 'semi-opera' – fundamentally it is a series of masques that were composed for performance between the acts of a reworked version of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The connection between Shakespeare's play and Purcell's masques is a tenuous one – Purcell does not set any of Shakespeare's text to music, and Purcell's work deals exclusively with the fantastical, fairy elements of the play.

In early performances, Purcell's 'semi-opera' functioned as a series of interludes between the play – a self contained world which had a life of its own, providing musical entertainment and alternative to the spoken word. Purcell's score was lost in the early eighteenth century, and was not rediscovered until 1903. Since that time, the genius of Purcell's music has not been in question – a more complex problem has surfaced in finding an appropriate form to present the work. Juxtaposing the play and the *Fairy Queen* has rarely been seen as a viable option. More usually the work has been presented in concert, particularly in England, where it has often acquired the form of an *oratorio* – suggesting a work considered to be fundamentally unstageable, a relic of the distant past, but with music of exceptional power.

For this current production, I have worked with Elsie to select and re-order Purcell's music to create a sense of narrative and drama, creating a story that reflects the origins of this work, but with an individual twist. This reworking reflects the vision of Elsie Edgerton-Till, and has been tailor-made to the resources and vocal talents of Con Opera.

Dr Stephen Mould, Chair of Opera Production

Director's Note

Love is a second hand emotion: well worn, told and retold countless times. Yet when we experience heartbreak, desire, paternal love and the first fitful sighs of longing, we feel it anew. Love pulls us away from our everyday. Love transports us from our domestic reality into an intoxicating midnight forest.

Our arrangement of *The Fairy Queen* engages purely with matters of the heart. A gentle narrative inspired loosely by Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* threads the otherwise story-less semi-opera together. With the setting of the sun, the natural order of love gives way. As night falls, the turmoil and longing of the gods and mortals in the woods are laid bare. Here, two of the most well known arias of the semi-opera are sung: *If Love's a Sweet Passion* and *The Complaint*. Composed in honour of King William III and Queen Mary II's 15th wedding anniversary, Purcell's music and the anonymous libretto explore the torments and sweet pleasures of love, while reasserting marriage as the crowning glory in love's crown.

I would like to thank the Con Opera, the Early Music Ensemble. My special thanks to the cast, capital creative and production teams for bringing this world to life - I feel nothing but that glorious second-hand emotion for them all.

Elsie Edgerton-Till



Costume design by Isabella Andronos

Biographies

ELSIE EDGERTON-TILL DIRECTOR

Elsie Edgerton-Till has worked in Australia and New Zealand as a director and actor. Her extensive theatre experience includes professional directing engagements for New Zealand Playhouse, National Institute of Dramatic Arts, The Court Theatre and the New Theatre. As assistant director she has worked for Opera Australia, Sydney Theatre Company, Auckland Theatre Company and Sydney Chamber Opera. Directing credits include a national tour of *Phone A Friend* [New Zealand Playhouse], *Book of Days* [The New Theatre], *Lashings of Whipped Cream* [The Forge], Moira MacKenzie's *Wheel of Fortune* [The World Busker's Festival], *The Great Piratical Rumbustification, Antarctic Adventure, Goldilocks, The Elves and the Shoemaker*, [The Court Theatre], *Boys, The Red Shoes* [National Institute of Dramatic Arts] *A Midsummer Night's Dream* [The Canterbury Young Shakespeare Company], co-directing a devised work *L.O.V.E.* [The Court Jesters], and *Who's Afraid Of Virginia Woolf* [Canterbury Repertory Society]. She has worked in Australia and New Zealand as a script assessor and a dramaturge on new work. In 2014 she was an affiliate director with Griffin Theatre, Sydney. In her time spent working in professional theatre as an actor, Elsie has appeared in productions of new New Zealand works, contemporary comedy, musicals and classics. For many years she was a member of The Court Theatre's 'Court Jesters', the longest running professional improvisational theatre troupe in Australasia.

NEAL PERES DA COSTA MUSICAL DIRECTOR

Dr Neal Peres Da Costa is a graduate of the University of Sydney, the Guildhall School of Music, and the University of Leeds. He is Associate Professor and Chair of Historical Performance at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. A performing scholar and world-recognised authority on 19th-century piano performing practice, his monograph *Off the Record: Performing Practices in Romantic Piano Playing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) is hailed as a book 'no serious pianist should be without' (*Limelight*, 2012) and honoured as 'a notable book' on Alex Ross's 2012 Apex List. Other influential publications include a 9-volume set of Urtext/performing editions of Brahms' Sonatas for solo instrument and piano published by Bärenreiter-Verlag (2015/16) of which he was a chief editor.

Neal regularly appears with the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Pinchgut Opera, Australian Haydn Ensemble, and the Song Company. With Ironwood, he is involved in cutting-edge creative research. November 2006 will see the release of Ironwood's latest CD (ABC Classics) of Brahms' Piano Quintet Op. 34 and Piano Quartet Op. 25 in late nineteenth-century style. Winner of the 2008 Fine Arts ARIA for Bach's Sonatas for violin and obbligato harpsichord (ABC

Classics, 2007) with Richard Tognetti and Daniel Yeadon, Neal's discography also includes: Bach's *Complete Sonatas for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord* with Daniel Yeadon (ABC Classics, 2009), *The Baroque Trombone* with Christian Lindberg and the ACO (BIS, 2009); *The Galant Bassoon* with Matthew Wilke and Kees Boersma (Melba, 2009); *Baroque Duets* (Vexations 840, 2011) with Fiona Campbell, David Walker and Ironwood; *Music for a While* with Ironwood and Miriam Allan (2012); *3* with Genevieve Lacey and Daniel Yeadon (ABC Classics, 2012) and *Stolen Beauties* with Anneke Scott and Ironwood (ABC Classics, 2015).

ISABELLA ANDRONOS SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER

Isabella Andronos is a set and costume designer who works across film, opera and theatre. She holds a Bachelor of Dramatic Arts (Design) from the National Institute of Dramatic Arts and a Bachelor of Visual Arts (Hons: Class 1) from Sydney College of the Arts. In 2014 Isabella won the Australian Production Design Guild Award for Emerging Live Performance Design for her set design for *The Greeks* (dir. John Sheedy, NIDA). She was also nominated in this category for her design of *Fewer Emergencies* (dir. Susanna Dowling, NIDA). In 2015 Isabella was nominated for the APDG Award for Costume Design for Stage for her work on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (dir. Susanna Dowling, *Sport For Jove*) and *Blood Wedding* (dir. Kristine Landon-Smith, NIDA).
www.isabellaandronos.com

KAREN NORRIS LIGHTING DESIGNER

Karen has extensive experience as lighting designer for Theatre/Dance and Music throughout Australia and Europe. Based in London and Nice from 1998 to 2008. Since returning to Australia to name a few: Narelle Bengamin *Inglass*, *Hiding In Plain Sight*, *Forseen*, Frances Rings Bangarra Dance Theatre *Terrain*, 'Sheoak' LORE, Deb Brown and Waangenga Blanco Bangarra 'Ibis' LORE, Julie-Anne Long *Something in the Way She Moves*, Campbelltown Arts Centre, KAAL, CSIRO Dance Science Festival, Liz Lea Dance *Seeking Biloela*, Kathrada *50/25*, Kapture, Martin del Amo *Songs not to dance to*, Sue Healey *On View*, NAISDA *Your Skin my Skin* & KAMU, NIDA *The Boys*, ATYP *Sugarland*. Karen teaches Design/Lighting at Wollongong University and Eora Tafe.

Production Credits

Chair of Opera Production Stephen Mould

Director Elsie Edgerton-Till

Musical Director Neal Peres Da Costa

Set and Costume Designer Isabella Andronos

Lighting Designer Karen Norris

Costume Supervisor Hannah Lobelson

Choreographer Daniella Lacob

Stage Manager Grace Benn

Stage Assistants and Follow Spot Operators Ellen McNeil and Nathan Bryon

Set Assistants Perry Andronos and Laura Anna Lucas

Lighting Board Operator Alisha Carpenter

Set Supervisor Perry Andronos

Design Assistant Laura Anna Lucas

Score and Music Preparation Stephen Yates

Costume Assistants Alexis McCaughtrie, Olivia Barnett

Hair and Make-up Rachel Dal Santo, assisted by students from The Australasian College

Assistant Conductors Rachelle Anne Elliot, Josephine Flores Tam

Chorus Preparation Josephine Flores Tam

Repetiteurs Josephine Flores Tam, Jasmine Wei, Julia de Plater

Orchestral Management Scott Ryan, Tom Westley

Production Photography Prudence Upton

Publicity Jacqui Smith, Mandy Campbell, Marylou Kay

Acknowledgments

Thank you to: Christopher Vasilescu, Perry Andronos, Melissa Laird, Fabia Andronos, David Parissi-Smyth, Laura Lucas, Jessica Allison, Shannon Handran-Smith, Bee Bone, Mary Andronos, Andy Andronos, Corrine Laird, Peter Cozens, Wendy and Mark Vasilescu, Anne Phibian, Opera Australia, National Institute of Dramatic Art, Nathan Cox for keyboard preparation, maintenance and tuning, Annie Gard, Peter Petocz, Nicole Forsyth, Daniel Yeadon and Leanne Sullivan.

Vocal and Opera Studies Unit

Chair of Opera Production

Dr Stephen Mould

Opera Coordinator Marrienne Carter

Chair of Vocal and Opera Studies Unit

Maree Ryan

Dr Rowena Cowley

Andrew Dalton

Associate Professor Michael Halliwell

Anke Hoepfner-Ryan

Barry Ryan

Robyn Wells

Stephen Yalouris

Narelle Yeo

Coaching Staff

Dr Stephen Mould

Siro Battaglin

Julia de Plater

Kate Johnson

Ingrid Sakurovs

Robert Greene

Alan Hicks

Languages

Tanith Bryce (Italian)

Simon Lobelson (French)

Anke Hoepfner-Ryan (German)

Dance and Movement

Olivia Ansell and Jo Ansell

Stagecraft

Narelle Yeo

Acting

Paige Gardiner

Theatre Studies

Simon Lobelson and Andy Morton

Ensemble

Stephen Mould and Julia de Plater

Performance

Barry Ryan

Opera History

Associate Professor Michael Halliwell

Historical Performance Unit

Chair of Historical Performance Unit

Associate Professor Neal Peres Da Costa

Historical Viola

Nicole Forsyth

Baroque and Classical Flute

Megan Lang

Cornetto

Matthew Manchester

Historical Violin and Viola

Dr Marina Robinson, Rachael Beesley

Baroque Cello and Viola da Gamba

Dr Daniel Yeadon

Lute

Tommie Andersson

Baroque Oboe

Owen Watkins

Recorder/Flute

Hans Dieter-Michatz

Trumpet

Leanne Sullivan

Early Keyboards

Joanne Tondys

Anthony Abouhamad

Esther Kim

Cast

Titiana (soprano)

Imogen Malfitano*

Livia Brash†

Night (soprano)

Jessie Wilson

Herald of Dawn (soprano)

Deepka Ratra*

Ashlee Woodgate†

Autumn/Love's Herald
(soprano)

Camilla Wright*

Michaela Ye Zhang†

Spring/Love's Herald
(soprano)

Jing Li

Summer/Mystery
(mezzo soprano)

Sarah Kemeny*

Jia Yao Sun†

Mopsa/Secrecy
(mezzo soprano)

Barbara Jin*

Viktoria Bolonina†

Phoebus (tenor)

Thomas Marshall

Oberon (tenor)

Chris Bryg

Drunk Poet (baritone)

Tristan Entwistle

Sleep (baritone)

Lewis Barber

Hymen (baritone)

Jeremy Dubé

* Performing 14 & 19 May

† Performing 17 & 21 May

Early Music Ensemble

Violin 1

Annie Gard, *leader*

Levana Limoa

Annastasia Milwain

Rachel Williams

Violin 2

Holly Smith

Sinead Border

Kathryn Parker

Viola

Thea Turnbull

Eleanore Vuong

Maria Fedetov

Cello/Viola da Gamba

Jemma Thrussell

Daniel Yeadon (tutor)

Professor Anna Reid

Violone

Theo Small

Bass

Lauren White

Serena Lim

Recorder

Aimee Brown

Isabelle Palmer

Tim Payne

Ingrid Fitler

Peter Petocz

Oboe

Hamish Spicer

Owen Watkins (tutor)

Trumpet

Sam Thomson

Rainer Saville (tutor)#

Leanne Sullivan (tutor)^

Timpani

Louis Sharpe

Harpsichord/
Chamber Organ

Nathan Cox

Josephine Flores Tam

Performing 14 & 17 May

^ Performing 19 & 21 May

VOCAL AND OPERA STUDIES AT THE CONSERVATORIUM

Join the fast track to the operatic stage with the Master in Music Studies (Opera Performance) at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

The Sydney Conservatorium of Music has a long tradition of producing opera productions of exceptional quality, which have been an important stepping stone into the operatic profession for a large number of graduates who have gone on to become leading singers, conductors, coaches and opera administrators.

The Vocal and Opera Unit provides a number of graduate courses that provide operatic training for singers and répétiteurs, facilitating their development in the areas of singing, languages, role preparation, stagecraft, ensemble skills and further focusing upon how they can use the skills they acquire to establish careers both in Australia and overseas. Partnerships with major institutions, such as Opera Australia, provide invaluable contact with industry and opportunities to connect with the international opera community.

Con Opera, the performance branch of the Vocal and Opera Studies Unit, currently presents two fully staged operas with orchestra each year and features the work of up and coming directors. These are ideal opportunities for students to immerse themselves in all aspects of the craft of staging an opera, and to acquire experience singing entire character roles.

2017 will include a fully staged production of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute)* sung in German. Auditions for entry in Semester 1 2017 will be conducted in October of 2016.

For more information about our opera and vocal studies programs, please email con.info@sydney.edu.au, call +61 2 9351 1222 or visit us on Open Day at the Con - Saturday 27 August. music.sydney.edu.au/study/open-day.

music.sydney.edu.au/study/areas-of-study/vocal-opera-studies

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