



Media Release, 15 July 2008

David and David and Jonathan

Launch of Pinchgut Opera's *David and Jonathan* Box office opens Monday 21 July 2008

Pinchgut Opera has built its reputation presenting lesser-known opera masterpieces. Continuing with its adventurous programming, Pinchgut will give Australian audiences a three hundred and twenty year old work never before seen here.

Written by one of France's great Baroque composers, Marc-Antoine Charpentier, *David and Jonathan* will have its Australian premiere performance at City Recital Hall Angel Place, Sydney, opening 3 December 2008. The work was first performed in Paris in 1688 and was then forgotten for three hundred years.

David Parkin, winner of ABC TV's Operatunity Oz competition, joins Pinchgut Opera singing the role of the Ghost of Samuel. Since his rise to fame, David has been heard in concerts, but opera audiences haven't had a chance to see him until now.

"I was really excited when I heard that Pinchgut wanted to cast me in their 2008 production. This will be my first contracted operatic role since winning Operatunity Oz in 2006. Opera Australia has had me covering both Masetto and the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*, which has been fantastic experience for me, but this time I know from the beginning that I will actually get to sing, and not just be on standby," says David. "I'm really looking forward to getting into rehearsals and working with Antony Walker on this role. It will be my first experience with French Baroque music and I can't think of a better way to start."

Pinchgut's co-artistic director **Antony Walker** (also Music Director at Pittsburgh Opera and Artistic Director and Conductor of Washington Concert Opera in Washington DC) will return after a year's absence to conduct.

"My interest in French music goes back to my childhood, when I lived in Paris for two years. I have always been fascinated by the elegance, subtlety and restrained passion of French music. Our audience was captivated by Rameau's *Dardanus*, and I believe that Sydney will be similarly seduced by Marc-Antoine Charpentier's passionate and moving treatment of *David and Jonathan*."

Swedish tenor Anders Dahlin, a specialist in the French haute-contre style, will sing the role of David, and Australia's leading early music soprano Sara Macliver will sing Jonathan. The Orchestra of the Antipodes will perform on authentic French Baroque instruments and Cantillation will be the chorus. American Chas Rader-Shieber (New York City Opera, Glimmerglass, Pittsburgh Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago) will make his Australian debut to direct the production.

The opera, based on the bible story, deals with political intrigue, the love between two rivals, and the final battle between Saul and David. It is a masterpiece of the French Baroque, with some of the most heart-wrenching music ever written, and deals with issues that are as relevant today as they were three hundred years ago. Sydney audiences hear very little music from the French Baroque period and Pinchgut's production and recording of Rameau's *Dardanus* in 2005 was greeted with critical and popular acclaim.

Experience *David and Jonathan* at the City Recital Hall Angel Place, Sydney on 3, 6, 7 & 8 December. Bookings NOW OPEN on ph (02) 8256 2222 and online: www.cityrecitalhall.com

Pinchgut Opera presents Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *David and Jonathan*

City Recital Hall Angel Place, Sydney

4 performances:

3, 6, 8, December 2008 at 7.30pm & 7 December 2008 at 5pm

Soloists:

Anders Dahlin – David; Sara Macliver – Jonathan; Dean Robinson – Saul; Richard Anderson – Achis; Simon Lobelson – Joabel; Paul McMahon – La Pythonisse; David Parkin – Ghost of Samuel

Conductor: Antony Walker
Assistant Conductor & harpsichord Erin Helyard
Director: Chas Rader-Shieber
Lighting Designer: Bernie Tan-Hayes
Designers: Brad Clark, Alexandra Sommer
Chorus: Cantillation
Orchestra: Orchestra of the Antipodes
Bookings: **Box office opens Monday 21 July**
Tickets from City Recital Hall (02) 8256 2222 or cityrecitalhall.com

Tickets from \$45 to \$110

Sung in French with English surtitles (libretto by François Bretonneau)

David and Jonathan will be Pinchgut's seventh production since the company was set up in 2001.

Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *David et Jonathas* was first performed in Paris in 1688.

**For media enquires including interviews with David Parkin and Antony Walker contact:
Anna Cerneaz, Pinchgut Opera: Ph: 0412 093 063 E: acerneaz@pinchgutopera.com.au**

Recordings of Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *David and Jonathan*: there are no currently available recordings; however the CD of William Christie and Les Arts Florissants' performance on the Harmonia Mundi label (HMA 1901289.90) is held in some libraries. ABC Classics will be recording our production for release on CD in late 2009.

www.pinchgutopera.com.au

Background information:

David Parkin: Ghost of Samuel

David is the winner of Australia's first "Operatunity Oz" competition, a joint production between Opera Australia and the ABC which was televised late in 2006. Since winning Operatunity Oz, while continuing his role as a Senior Technical Analyst for a leading Sydney law firm, David has enjoyed a year of intensive vocal and language coachings and has recorded a CD with ABC Classics and performed the role of Sparafucile in Opera Australia's *Rigoletto*. David's recent engagements included a Verdi Gala in the Sidney Myer Music Bowl, *La Fanciulla del West*, the MSO's Classical Spectacular, Opera in the Vineyard, as well as understudying several roles for Opera Australia.

Antony Walker: Conductor, co-Artistic Director

Antony is Artistic Director and Conductor of Washington Concert Opera and the Music Director of Pittsburgh Opera. Since his conducting debut in 1991, the young Australian born Antony has led 52 operas, 47 large scale choral/orchestral works and numerous symphonic and chamber works with companies in Europe, the United States and Australia. He has led operas for Welsh National Opera, Opera Australia, Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Rome Opera, The Minnesota Opera, New York City Opera, Hawaii Opera Theater, and Cincinnati Opera and he has appeared with leading orchestras including Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of Welsh National Opera, Sydney Opera House Orchestra, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Adelaide Chamber Orchestra, Sinfonia Australis, Orchestra of the Antipodes and Chatham Baroque. Mr. Walker makes his operatic and orchestral debuts in upcoming seasons with Opera Theater of St. Louis, Glimmerglass Opera, Arizona Opera, Chautauqua Opera and Orchestre Colonne in Paris.

PINCHGUT OPERA

An Opera Company for the 21st Century

Pinchgut Opera began in 2001 to give audiences a different experience of opera and make opera accessible to a new audience. Its aim is to showcase Australian talent, performing fascinating lesser-known masterpieces in an intimate venue with an excellent acoustic. Previous productions have been Handel's *Semele*, (2002), Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* (2003), Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* (2004), Rameau's *Dardanus* (2005), Mozart's *Idomeneo* (2006) and Vivaldi's *Juditha Triumphans* (2007). ABC Classics recordings of all these operas are available, except *Juditha Triumphans* which will be released later in 2008. All productions have been broadcast live across Australia through ABC Classic FM.

People of Pinchgut

Artistic Directors	Erin Helyard & Antony Walker
Artistic Administrator	Alison Johnston
Marketing Manager	Anna Cerneaz
Production Manager	Andrew Johnston
Chair	Elizabeth Nielsen