



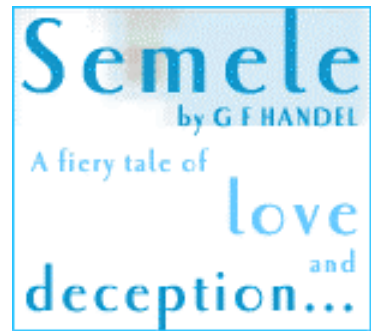
August 2002

Dear Friends,

Major sponsor Credit Suisse First Boston



We are delighted to announce that Credit Suisse First Boston, a leading international investment bank is a major sponsor for our production of Semele.



City Recital Hall
Angel Place, Sydney
4,6,7 & 9 December 2002
at 7.30 pm

Bookings open & selling
steadily
CD offer for booking 4 or
more seats



ANNA RYBERG IN PARIS

Anna was recently rehearsing for the role of Iole in a production of Handel's Hercules for the Athens Festival. We sent a photographer from London to take this photo

NEWS

Tobias Cole, who sings Athamus, was awarded the Opera Foundation Australia's 2002 Metropolitan Opera Young Artists Study Award last Sunday at the Opera House. The award gives the winner the opportunity to study in New York for three months at the Met. Toby will leave in January to take up this award. Congratulations to you, Toby from all at Pinchgut Opera. In the opera, Athamus loses Semele and gets her sister, in real life Toby does not get second prize!

- The original manuscript has arrived from the British Museum and Erin Helyard has been able to pour over it. His comment: "It's amazing to see this work in Handel's own hand. He was famous for being a fast composer and you can see the speed and energy on the page". We also have the original libretto so we check on how the words have been bowdlerized over time.
- Sirius has completed a tour for Musical Viva. In the preview of this concert series in Vivace, Musica Viva said, "One looks like a rock star, the other a *settecento* Magdalen. Together, they are the core of Australia's newest period-instrument sensation, the Sirius Ensemble."
- Our posters are up in the foyer of the City Recital Hall. Here you can get a tantalizing glimpse of the image for our production.

Here are some more of our artist profiles :

SAMANTHA PAXTON, DESIGNER



Samantha met Justin Way at NIDA where she completed a Bachelor of Performing Arts majoring in Film, Television and Theatrical Design. Sam also has a Bachelor of Visual Arts majoring in Illustration and Graphic Design from the Queensland College of Art.

As a theatrical designer, Sam begins her process by combining the director's vision with her own gut instincts about the piece. Sam then works towards creating a visual world that will ignite the audience's imagination and assist in telling the story.

Angel Place has been an interesting design challenge as it is a honey coloured recital hall rather than a black drama theatre. Not only must the acoustics of the hall be preserved, no nails, screws or gaffer tape can be used to install the scenery!

Together Sam and Justin have created a landscape influenced by Arcadian imagery evident in the parks around the world. As Justin is based in London they compared Kew Gardens and Hyde Park with our own Centennial Park, Botanical Gardens and Hyde Park here in Sydney.

Sam and Justin have also used a Victorian wallpaper motif to help describe the social order between the world of the gods and the world of the mortals. The very vertical space of Angel Place has been utilized to illustrate this hierarchy. (And that's all we're going to tell you now. Ed.)

Sam is currently the resident designer for ABC TV's "Play School". Before that she was the art director for SBS's "Going Home". Sam has designed for the STC's Young Peoples Theatre and the Theatre Directory Workshops, Ensemble Theatre Company, Company B Belvoir and has also worked on "Songlines" and "Bananas in Pyjamas" for ABC TV.

CANTILLATION

The chorus for Pinchgut's production of Semele is the new professional choir, Cantillation. Here Alison Johnston talks about the group:

The tradition of choirs in Australia is a very fine one. Each of the states has a very fine symphonic chorus like Sydney Philharmonia Choirs who do a great job of producing excellent performances with amateur singers. What is puzzling and disappointing, though, is that there are no professional choirs anywhere in Australia. Even in a city the size and sophistication of Sydney we haven't gone down this path since the ABC Radio choirs of about 40-50 years ago. The only professional vocal ensemble that Australia has had until now is the Song Company, which is a six voice ensemble doing a terrific job with the repertoire for such a group.



Antony Walker and I decided that the time was right to go one step further. We believe that Sydney – and Australia – are ready for a professional choir. Antony and I had previously worked together - with composer Elliott Gyger - on the specialist 20th century vocal group The Contemporary Singers, and had long had the idea to try and take choirs to a new level in Australia.

We were very fortunate on a number of respects - firstly that we had worked with many fine singers who were and are extremely keen to come on the journey with us. We've been terrifically lucky to have built up a very close working relationship with ABC Classics with whom we have recorded a number of CDs - including our debut CD which was released in November 2001 and features Fauré's Requiem (with soloists Sara Macliver and Teddy Tahu Rhodes) and the world premiere recording of the orchestral version of his early work *La Naissance de Vénus*. On the performing front we've also been equally fortunate participating in some fantastic projects - with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in John Adams' *Harmonium*, with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra as guest choristers in Mahler's *Symphony No.8*, as the semi-chorus in Sydney Philharmonia's world premiere of Nigel Butterley's *Spell of Creation*, in a concert for his Holiness the Dalai Lama, and most recently a program for the Sydney Symphony that featured taiko master Eitetsu Hayashi.

We're aiming to be a choir which not only has very fine voices but that has the speed, agility and flexibility of a chamber orchestra. In other words, an ensemble of a kind that has not existed in Australia before. We're working part time now - but who knows - maybe full time in the future?

Look out for us in the coming months and year – we've just had another CD released – *Carmina Burana* – and as well as the chorus in *Semele*, we'll be on ABC TV in December with Handel's *Messiah* (also to be released on CD and video/DVD).

As well as the chorus for *Semele* Cantillation people will also be doing the small roles and the covers. Here's a profile of a couple of these singers....

Shelli Gilhome - Cupid



Shelli is a graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, joining Opera Queensland as a chorus member and later Young Artist in 1995. Shelli has been in the vocal finals of the ABC Young Performers' Awards twice, and in 1996 won a Royal Northern College of Music Scholarship, undertaking study there in 1997/1998. She has performed with many groups including the Queensland, Tasmanian and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras, and was a soloist in the opening ceremony of the Goodwill Games in 2001 (and she likes to think that everyone was there to see her and not Vanessa Amorosi or The Corrs!) Shelli is currently completing a Masters in Performance at the NSW Conservatorium.

Belinda Montgomery – Iris

Graduating with Honours in Music from the University of Sydney, Lindy was a member of the Renaissance Players for five years, and has sung with many Sydney based choral groups. She has appeared with many early music ensembles including the Sydney Consort, Salut!, Backgammon and the Australia Bach Ensemble with whom she appeared in the Melbourne Festival in 2000. As a soloist Lindy has been involved in works by Bach, Mozart, Handel and Reich, with groups including Sydney Philharmonia, Sydney Chamber Choir and Synergy. Lindy is an unrepentant Volvo driver.



WE ARE DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE A MAJOR SPONSOR CREDIT SUISSE

We are delighted to announce that Credit Suisse First Boston, a major international investment bank, has agreed to become a major sponsor of our first production. CSFB this year celebrates 30 years of operations in Australia and, in doing so, is very pleased to become a key supporter of a new opera company in an exciting new production. We look forward to working closely with CSFB and are very happy that they appreciate and support our objectives. We welcome CSFB to Pinchgut and thank them for their commitment.

WHILE WE ARE ON THE TOPIC OF SPONSORSHIP ...

Pinchgut is a non-profit company and is not receiving financial support from the Australia Council or the NSW Ministry of the Arts. We will pay full commercial rates to the Sydney City Council for use of the City Recital Hall. Our money will come from box office, commercial sponsorship and some generous private individuals. Our first production has been underwritten by a small group of music lovers.

If you would like to support Pinchgut and help secure its long term future, your donation would be greatly appreciated. The Pinchgut Public Fund is on the Register of Cultural Organisations, so donations over \$2 are fully tax deductible and a receipt for tax purposes will be issued. Donations may be sent to:

Pinchgut Opera Public Fund
PO Box 1017
Neutral Bay 2089

PS - What else? Oh, yes : most important, the Box Office is open.

All this work is to give you and the other music lovers of Australia a great experience. Don't miss out! Bring your friends. Even if they say they don't like opera, tell them Semele is a great way of experiencing something new and different.

Book at the Recital Hall in Angel Place or by phone 8256 2222 or though the website www.cityrecitalhall.com. But don't miss out! Don't let your friends miss out!

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Major sponsors



**“The inspired master of our art.”
Christoph Willibald von Gluck (on Handel).**