

NEWSLETTER



A powerful scene from David + Jonathan with Anders Dablin (David) and Richard Anderson (Achis). A slideshow of photos from Pinchgut's 2008 production is on our website - www.pinchgutopera.com.au.

Dear Friends

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2009, and an especial welcome to all the new newsletter subscribers we have. It is lovely to be with you all for another year.

Thank you all for your feedback on *David + Jonathan* and we wish you all the best for this year.

Over the next ten months we will tell you about our 09 production of Cavalli's *l'Ormindo*; about its composer Francesco Cavalli, our cast, crew and many other interesting (we hope!) things.

We'll be updating our website too with information about *Ormindo*, so bookmark www.pinchgutopera.com.au.

Our 09 production is Cavalli's *l'Ormindo*

First performed in Venice in 1644 *l'Ormindo* has been rarely seen since. It is, we believe, another neglected masterpiece.

Erin Helyard, conductor
David Walker, Fiona Campbell, Taryn Fiebig, Trevor Pichanick, Kanen Breen, Jane Sheldon, Anna Fraser and Andrei Laptev, principals
Talya Masel, director
Adam Gardner, designer

City Recital Hall
Angel Place Sydney

Wed 2 December 2009 7.30 pm
Sat 5 December 2009 7.30 pm
Sun 6 December 2009 5 pm
Mon 7 December 2009 7.30 pm

ABC Classic FM will broadcast a live recording of one of our performances of David + Jonathan on Wednesday 4 February at 8 pm EDT.

JUDY IS ON DISC!

Our 2007 production of Vivaldi's *Juditha Triumphans*, conducted by Atillio Cremonesi and featuring Sally-Anne Russell, David Walker, Fiona Campbell, Sara Macliver, Renee Martin, Cantillation and Orchestra of the Antipodes is now available on an ABC Classics CD.



You can order the double CD set online at www.buywell.com, at ABC shops or wherever good classical music CDs are sold. It is also available for download on itunes.

The Herald reviewed the disc recently and said "... variety and colour are notable, particularly the lutes and mandolin and the sweetly expressive chalumeau in Juditha's *Veni, Veni*."

CAVALLI'S L'ORMINDO

Over the next few months, we will be telling newsletter subscribers about Cavalli, his opera *l'Ormindo* and why we think it is an underappreciated masterpiece. For now, a brief introduction.

Francesco Cavalli was born Francesco Caletti in Crema in 1602 and spent most of his musical career in Venice. He seems to have adopted the name Cavalli after a family with whom he lived when he came to Venice in about 1616. He wrote much sacred music for San Marco and about 33 operas for the theatres then being built in the Republic of Venice.

Although his work is rarely performed these days there is no doubt that he made a major contribution to the development of opera. The conductor and scholar Jane Glover who wrote the only biography of Cavalli in English, summed him up: "It is perhaps true to say that Cavalli was to Monteverdi what Handel was to Bach."

He learned from Monteverdi but carried the artform further and, as Jane Glover also writes

"he produced some genuinely immortal works".

We think *l'Ormindo* is one of those works and that you will enjoy discovering it with us.

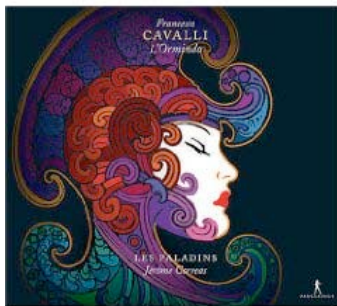
l'Ormindo was first produced in San Cassiano theatre in Venice in 1644. The libretto was written by Giovanni Faustini a frequent collaborator with Cavalli.

Described in the manuscript as a *favola drammatica musicale* to us it is somewhere between a comedy, a farce and a melodrama. It is certainly not a tragedy. No soldiers, no slaughter, no guns. But much mistaken identity, deceit and confusion between two pairs of lovers, as well as the husband of one of the lovers. And a serious, but happy, ending.

It is interesting that the two main female characters, Erisbe and Sicile drive the plot. Was it the first feminist opera?

Later newsletters will include a full plot synopsis and a translation (which is being done again by the wonderful Natalie Shea) of the Italian libretto.

SOURCES AND MORE INFORMATION



Jane Glover's *Cavalli* (1978) is sadly out of print. but copies are available second hand through www.abebooks.com and www.alibris.com

The *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* has a useful outline of Cavalli and his works. There are two recordings of *l'Ormindo*:

1. Les Paladins, conducted by Jerome Correas on Pan Classics. We believe that Fish Fine Music in Sydney has it or will soon have it in stock. Other shops could order it. Or you can order it from the usual overseas online services, but we would prefer that you support our (few) classical music retailers.

2. London Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Raymond Leppard. This is from the Glyndebourne 1967 production which, according to Raymond Leppard was the first production anywhere since 1644. This recording is not in the current catalogue but is often available second hand. We have two copies of the original 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ RPM disc which we could lend to anyone who still prefers their music analogue.

Some extracts are on a Naxos recording of Cavalli Arias and Duets which is also on iTunes.

A CONFESSION AND APOLOGY

We were careless. In the program for *David + Jonathan*, we (well, it was Ken) wrote that this would be the first production of *l'Ormindo* in Australia. We (he) should have checked more carefully. Fred Blanks and David Gyger, each of whom has an encyclopaedic knowledge of opera in Australia, have told us that there have in fact been two productions.

In May 1974 the NSW Conservatorium of Music (as it then was) presented a production conducted by John Bacon and directed by John Tasker. Then in 1980 the State Opera of South Australia mounted a production conducted by Myer Fredman and directed by Antony Besch.

We have asked Ken to take more care in future. Or at least check any historical stuff with Fred or David.

CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

Erin Helyard, one of the founders of Pinchgut, will conduct the production from the harpsichord. Erin was Assistant Conductor to Antony Walker in *David + Jonathan* and, as well as being a wonderful keyboard player, is noted early music scholar.

interested in early music and was first seen in Sydney with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra. She's now a principal soprano with Opera Australia, and has sung Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Papagena (*Magic Flute*), Musetta (*La bohème*) and recently Eliza Dolittle in the national tour of *My Fair Lady*.

Talya Masel will direct. Talya who (like Taryn and Fiona) comes from Perth is also directing, for Victorian Opera, a new chamber opera by Andrew Ford and Sue Smith called opening 18 April.

Adam Gardnir will design the production. Since graduating from the VCA, Adam has been very busy designing for theatre, ballet, film and opera.

We will profile Talya and Adam in a later newsletter.

NO CANTILLATION?

L'Ormindo does not have a chorus. Many people will be disappointed and we will miss having the chorus this year.

There are two reasons why we chose a work without a chorus. Many of the wonderful works of the baroque and early classical periods that Pinchgut has come to specialise in do not include a chorus. If we were to do only works that had a chorus we would be excluding many great but under-appreciated operas. That does not seem to be the right artistic policy.

Also, although we planned *Ormindo* over a year ago, we believe it is fortunate that we are doing a simpler production, with no chorus and a smaller orchestra, in the current economic environment. Pinchgut is determined to survive and thrive and to do that this year we must be even more careful with budgets.

However (he said hastily) this will not mean a production "on the cheap". Please come; you will not be disappointed. And for the Cantillation lovers *l'Ormindo* will give you the chance to hear three Cantillation-ers in solo roles: Jane Sheldon, Anna Fraser and Andrei Laptev. That, on it's own, is something special.



David Walker and Fiona Campbell in Juditha Triumphans

David Walker (Ormindo)

David was with us in 2007 for *Juditha Triumphans* and we are very glad to welcome him back.

Fiona Campbell (Erisbe)

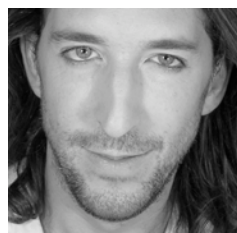
Fiona is a Pinchgut regular, most recently as love-lorn and vengeful Vagaus in *Juditha*.

Taryn Fiebig (Sicle)



This will be Taryn's first Pinchgut role. Another Perth soprano who trained with Molly McGurk (like Sara Maccliver) Taryn is particularly

Kanen Breen (Erice)



This will also be Kanen's first appearance with us. Now a principal tenor with Opera Australia, his roles include Monostatos (*Magic Flute*), the Sorcerer (*Dido & Aeneas*), Sellem (*Rake's Progress*), Cassio (*Otello*), Rodolfo (Luhmann's *La bohème*) and Swagman (Jonathan Mills' *Ghost Wife*).

Other principals, who we will introduce in a later newsletter are Trevor Pichanick (Armida) Jane Sheldon (Nerillo) Anna Fraser (Mirinda) and Andrei Laptev (Osmano).

WHERE WILL ANTONY BE?



Antony Walker, who has conducted nearly all of our productions, will be conducting a major work for one of his other opera companies – Pittsburg Opera. Pittsburg has not announced its 2008-09 season yet so we cannot name the work. He promises us, though, that he will be here to catch at least one show.

MONEY & OTHER MATTERS

We finished 2008 in pretty good financial shape. Box office numbers were a little down on 2007 but in money the result was better, due to a slight ticket price increase. The Sunday performance was very close to a full house. Box office covers just over half our total costs. Our objective is to increase this by achieving full houses.

Once again, individual donors and commercial sponsors and - to a lesser extent - government grants made it possible to pay the bills. This year will, we know, be difficult for all arts organisations as well as many other parts of the community. Pinchgut is determined to survive through these tough times and continue to present great performances of glorious music.

We need your help. We can discuss very flexible and commercially practical sponsorship arrangements with anyone interested. We also seek donations from anyone who agrees that what we are doing is worthwhile and is able to help. Any donation is very gratefully received and donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

To discuss sponsorship, donations or to find out anything about how we work, contact Liz Nielsen on liz@pinchgutopera.com.au or 0407 916 802.

AMORA HOTEL JAMISON SYDNEY



AMORA HOTEL JAMISON SYDNEY

We love the Amora. Our soloists stay there during the production and we enjoy its restaurants and function rooms for the final night party and a few other functions during the year. Liz and Anna especially like the Angsana Spa. We are grateful and proud to have them as a sponsor.

The management of the Amora have told us about a couple of special Valentine's day offers:

Valentine's Run Away with your Husband 13, 14 February

Enjoy a romantic getaway with your husband. This includes accommodation for 1 night in a Deluxe room for 2 people with a romantic dinner in Charr our signature restaurant. The dinner starts with a champagne cocktail followed by a four course succulent meal. Discover the special treat that will greet you in your room upon arrival. Breakfast next morning is also included in your package getaway. All this from only \$399.00.

Seafood Saturday Valentine Special February 14

Get up close and personal with our Seafood Saturday Valentine special.

Your package includes accommodation for 1 night in a Deluxe room for 2 people and dinner in Gallery Restaurant. Dinner starts with a glass of wine and then you can indulge yourself in the variety of seafood specialities that have been prepared by our Chef.

Breakfast is also included the following morning. From \$339.00.

Bookings for either at res@sydney.amorahotels.com.au or phone 02 9696 2500 mentioning the Pinchgut offer.

And that's it for us. Best wishes from Ken, Alison, Anna, Liz, Andrew, Antony & Erin

Calendar

Monday July 6 2009

Box office opens for newsletter subscribers

Monday July 20 2009

Box office opens for the public

Wed 2 December 2009

Performance #1 - 7.30 pm

Saturday 5 December 2009

Performance #2 - 7.30 pm

Sunday 6 December 2009

Performance #3 - 5.00 pm

Monday 7 December

Final night performance - 7.30 pm



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