

EARLY MUSIC GUILD 2006 ✱ 2007 30th Anniversary Season

L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA

BY CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI (1567-1630)

February 9, 10, 16, and 17, 7:30 pm, Intiman Playhouse, Seattle Center

Opera Directors' Circle:

Lorri J. Falterman and
Stephen K. Strong
Nicholas J. Bez

*Special grant support for these
performances:*

Cooper-Newell Foundation
PONCHO

*The Early Music Guild is
supported by grants from:*

ArtsFund
City of Seattle Office of Arts
and Cultural Affairs
Fales Foundation
The Nesholm Family Foundation
The Seattle Foundation
Washington State Arts Commission
4Culture

Advertising sponsorship:

Classic KING-FM and
KBCS-FM

Thank you to the many volunteers
who helped to make this concert
possible.

Poppea, La Fortuna
Nerone
Ottavia, La Virtù
Ottone
Drusilla and Pallade
Seneca
Valletto
Arnalta, Lucano
Nutrice
Amore
Damigella and Student of Seneca
Liberto and Second Soldier
Student of Seneca, Littore, and Consul
Student of Seneca, Consul,
and First Soldier

* Replacing Michael Maniaci

Music Directors
Stage Director
Assistant Director
Producer
Set Design
Costume Design
Lighting Design
Stage Manager
Production Assistant
Supertitle Projection
Set Construction
Properties Construction
Harpsichord tuning

String Ensemble: Seattle Baroque Orchestra

Violin and Concert Master
Violin
Viola
Viola
Cello

Continuo Ensemble

Chitarrone, Guitar
Chitarrone
Archlute, Guitar
Triple Harp
Viola da Gamba
Harpsichord

Yulia van Doren
Ross Hauck*
Sarah Mattox
José Lemos
Catherine Webster
David Stutz
Linda Tsatsanis
Jason McStoots
Kevin Sutton
Alexander Mentzel
Melissa Plagemann
James Brown
Jonathan Silvia
Stephen Rumph

Stephen Stubbs and Fred Hauptman
Theodore Deacon
Anna Mansbridge
Gus Denhard
Richard Lorig
Josie Gardner
Jason Meininger
Dave Vaught
William Deacon
Ruth Stark
Seattle Scenic Studios
Guy Smith
David Calhoun

Ingrid Matthews
Tekla Cunningham
Stephen Creswell
Olga Gussow-Hauptman
Claire Garabedian

Stephen Stubbs
Gus Denhard
Elizabeth Brown
Maxine Eilander
Margriet Tindeman
Fred Hauptman

SYNOPSIS

Dramatis Personae

La Fortuna: Fortune
La Virtù: Virtue
Amore: Cupid, god of Love
Nerone: Emperor of Rome
Ottavia: Empress, Nero's wife
Poppea: New mistress of Nero
Ottone: Roman aristocrat
Seneca: Senator and Nero's teacher
Drusilla: Lady of the Court
Lucano: Poet and friend of Nero
Arnalta: Poppea's nurse
Nutrice: Ottavia's nurse
Valletto: Ottavia's page
Damigella: Girl
Liberto: Captain of the Guard
Littore: Officer
Two Soldiers
Consuls and Tribunes
Friends of Seneca

The story takes place in Rome during the reign of the tyrant Nero.

PROLOGUE. The goddesses Fortune and Virtue argue over who has more influence over the lives of men. But it is Amore, the young god of love and lust, who asserts his superiority and boasts that the following events will prove his claim.

ACT I

Scene i, the Courtyard to Poppea's House. Ottone, returning after several months from a diplomatic mission abroad, arrives at the house of his lover, Poppea. Laden with gifts he anxiously anticipates their reunion. Trying to enter he finds his way barred by the sleeping figures of Nerone's bodyguards. In utter despair Ottone realizes that Nerone is sleeping in the arms of his love. He laments his fate only to be frightened off by the voices of Nerone's guard.

One of the soldiers awakens and searches the courtyard for the source of the disturbance. He rouses his companion, who angrily complains about doing nocturnal duties for the sake of the emperor's pleasure. The first soldier speaks of the empress's humiliation over the love affair and Nerone's increasing neglect of the affairs of state. Both soldiers agree not to tell anyone of their complaints, seeing that no one is to be trusted any more. As dawn rises Nerone arrives and both soldiers return to their guard.

Poppea attempts to persuade Nerone not to leave her so soon. He, fearing scandal if their affair is known, tells her that Rome cannot know of their relationship until his wife, Ottavia, is formally

renounced. Nerone leaves but not until Poppea draws from him a solemn vow to return.

After Nerone is gone Poppea looks forward euphorically to becoming empress. Her old nurse, Arnalta, thinks her mistress has gone out of her head. She sternly warns Poppea of the hidden dangers lurking in pursuing such ambitions.

Scene ii, a Room in the Palace.

The empress Ottavia bitterly laments the humiliation that Nerone has brought upon her. In her fury she calls upon the gods to punish her husband, only to calm herself in the realization that she has blasphemed. Ottavia's old nurse arrives and makes light of the empress's torments. The nurse's philosophy is simply, "Don't get mad, get even." The nurse urges her to find a lover, a suggestion the appalled Ottavia rejects.

The great senator and philosopher, Seneca, enters and offers Ottavia flowery words of consolation. Ottavia at first chides him for his ineffective aid, then reassures him of her favor asking him to plead her cause before the people. Ottavia's valet is not so forgiving and vents his anger by swearing to set fire to the philosopher's books and beard.

Nerone arrives and informs Seneca of his desire to divorce Ottavia and marry Poppea. Seneca advises against it saying the action is counter to the law and the wishes of the people. Nerone cares nothing for the law nor his subjects and would tear the tongue out of those who would speak ill of him. This brings a strong rebuke from Seneca who cautions for reason. But force and desire are all that Nerone understands; no matter what the odds or opposition he will marry Poppea. Seneca, warning that the wrong side always

The Early Music Guild presents:
The Netherlands Bach Society
Jos van Veldhoven, director

B Minor Mass by J. S. Bach

Sunday, April 22, 2007, 8 pm
Town Hall, Seattle
Tickets \$20-\$38
Call 206-325-7066 or
www.earlymusicguild.org

wins when force and reason contradict each other, leaves.

Poppea, hearing of Seneca's opposition, decides to take action against the philosopher. She softens Nerone up by reminding him of the many sensual pleasures he has tasted while in her arms. For Nerone no praise can be too high to describe her merits, indeed even Rome and Italy are too narrow for her fame. Poppea then maliciously tells him of a rumor which implies that Seneca has been ridiculing him behind his back. Furious, Nerone calls his guard and orders that Seneca must die that very day.

Scene iii, a Room in Poppea's House. Ottone, depressed by Poppea's betrayal, finds access to Poppea's house. Seeking her out he bitterly laments her treatment of him. Poppea, annoyed by his remonstrations, tells him to suffer in silence; she obeys an imperial wish and will leave all others behind in her quest for the throne. Ottone argues that ambition is the lord of all vices but Poppea will have no more of his pleading. She leaves him saying that she belongs to Nerone.

The argument with Poppea has left Ottone in a worse state of mind than before. In his emotional devastation he even entertains thoughts of murdering Poppea, to such an end has her deceit forced him.

Drusilla, who has worshipped Ottone from afar, takes the opportunity of his despair to render him some comfort. As a response to Poppea's betrayal Ottone throws himself at Drusilla. His quick change of heart frightens the young woman and she expresses doubts as to his veracity. Ottone swears his love to her and Drusilla joyfully accepts him. Ottone, too is emotionally elevated by her

euphoria but the effect is only temporary, for while he has Drusilla's name upon his lips Poppea remains in his heart.

INTERMISSION

ACT II

Scene i, Seneca's Study. In the solitude of his study Seneca finds a quiet refuge for his thoughts far from the insolence and arrogance of the court. Nerone's guard enters with a command for his immediate death. Seneca has expected such a summons and accepts it calmly. The guard, moved by the philosopher's nobility of bearing, expresses that he should die happy in the knowledge that his works will live on to inspire others.

Seneca's wife and two of his friends enter and the philosopher tells them of his intention to commit suicide. He asks them not to grieve since his soul will now find true happiness in death. His companions plead for him not to die for life offers too many pleasures to be cast off so lightly. Yet Seneca remains resolute and orders that a bath be drawn so that he may open his veins and die in peace.

This unhappy scene is disrupted by the appearance of Ottavia's valet, who passionately proclaims his feelings for the serving maid. At first she refuses him (this being a most awkward moment for his attentions) but in time she is won over and gives herself to him ecstatically.

Scene ii, Seneca's Wake. Now that Seneca is dead, Nerone and his corrupt companions revel in the satisfaction that there is no one left to oppose their will. Nerone and his crony Lucano drink to Poppea's beauty and to the alluring power of lust.

Scene iii, a Room in the Palace.

Ottavia has ordered Ottone to appear before her, where she reveals her desire that he assassinate Poppea. At first Ottone cannot believe the command that he has been given and his hesitation elicits a savage reproach from the empress. Ottone pleads for time so that he might steel his heart to the task but Ottavia will have none of it. The empress warns Ottone that if he will not carry out the deed she will accuse him of an attempt to rape her and thus condemn him to hideous torture and death. Ottone reluctantly agrees and leaves in search for an appropriate disguise in which to hide his identity and accomplish the deed.

Scene iv, the Via Veneto.

Drusilla, delirious with joy, looks forward to Ottone repeating his vow of love. Ottone enters, wandering aimlessly. Drusilla attempts to raise his spirits but he is inconsolable. He tells Drusilla of the empress's plan to murder Poppea and that he must use some of Drusilla's clothing to disguise himself. Drusilla agrees to help and leads him off to dress him.

Scene v, Poppea's Garden.

Poppea falls asleep in her garden, dreaming of the day she will become empress. Arnalta sings a gentle lullaby to help her sleep. Amore enters and vows to stand guard over Poppea. Ottone steals silently in dressed in some of Drusilla's clothing and filled with loathing for the deed at hand. He hesitates momentarily at the sight of her beauty and must shore up his resolve to kill her. Just as he is about to stab her Amore appears and frightens him off. Poppea awakens to see what she thinks is the armed Drusilla escaping from the garden. Arnalta sounds an excited alarm.

Scene vi, a Dark Alley. Drusilla waits for Ottone's return, hoping that Poppea's death will finally leave Ottone only to herself. She is captured by Arnalta and the city guard who accuse her of trying to murder Poppea. Drusilla realizes that Ottone has failed and prepares to die to protect her beloved.

Nerone arrives and is told of Drusilla's attempted assassination. In his fury Nerone orders Drusilla to be tortured so that she may reveal those who conspired with her in this act. Hearing this Ottone enters and proclaims his guilt. Drusilla attempts to shield him but Ottone will have none of it. He tells Nerone of Ottavia's plot and asks that the emperor render death with his very own hand. Nerone grants Ottone his life and banishes him from Rome. Turning to Drusilla the emperor praises her courage and her steadfastness for her lover in the face of death. Drusilla wants only to be sent into exile with Ottone, a wish the emperor freely grants. Ottone has learned the true depths of Drusilla's love and sees that exile with her will be no punishment but an enrichment to his life. Nerone then declares Ottavia's actions unworthy of an empress and orders her immediate banishment.

Scene vii, a Train Station.

Ottavia, forced to leave her homeland, bitterly laments her fate.

Scene viii, the Throne Room.

Arnalta, overjoyed at her mistress's succession to the crown, looks forward to the attention, false compliments, and rise in status she will receive from people trying to win favor from Poppea by way of her faithful nurse. The room quickly fills with officials who hail Poppea as empress and shower her with gifts from throughout the world. Left alone, Nerone and Poppea passionately sing of their love.

**A Historical Context for
Monteverdi's
L'incoronazione di Poppea
by Stephen Stubbs**

Claudio Monteverdi's life and works span the two ages which we now call the end of the Renaissance and the beginning of the baroque eras. Nowhere is this more dramatically seen than in the separation between his three surviving operas, *L'Orfeo* of 1607, on the one hand and *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* (1640) and *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (1642) on the other. *L'Orfeo* was at once one of the crowning achievements of the late Renaissance and the first masterpiece in the very young genre of through-sung plays (Monteverdi called it a *favola* rather than our term, opera). The immediate context was the brilliant court of the Gonzagas in Mantua and it was a direct descendant of the humanist thought of the famous Florentine Cameratas of the late 16th century, which had led to the first operatic experiments of Peri and Caccini.

After the intervening decades, which saw a general economic decline in Italy and repressive measures from the Roman church as well as an array of musical and literary experimentation emphasizing the marvelous and virtuosic (*meraviglia*) and a shift of venue from the court to the public theatre, *Poppea* stands, arguably, as the first masterpiece of baroque opera. What is beyond argument is that it is the first opera to use a historical rather than a mythological setting. At this point in time Monteverdi was the aged and extremely venerable *maestro di cappella* at St. Mark's in Venice, and it is somewhat surprising to see him enter the theatrical world together with the much younger librettist Busenello. Even more surprising is the content of the

story, based on the torrid love affair of the Roman Emperor Nero with the ambitious seductress Poppea as described in the annals of Tacitus (one of the ancient authors banned by the Papal Index). Galileo, who could be seen as a scientific parallel to Monteverdi, had been condemned only nine years before, so these were still perilous times. What may have given Monteverdi and Busenello a sense of protection was their status as Venetian citizens. It may also be the clue to the attraction of the ancient Roman story for them.

Busenello wrote that the Venice of his time was "a new Rome", claiming for the *serenissima* the legendary power and glamour of the Rome of the ancient Emperors. Venice was sometimes symbolized as "the virgin" because of its impregnable position surrounded by water, but its fame throughout Europe was as the pleasure capital of the known world, especially at carnival time, and its courtesans were legendary. This atmosphere of political potency and sensual delights is reflected at every turn in *Poppea*, but with it is the delightful echelon of the servant class, both soldiers and domestics, who take every opportunity to pop the pompous bubble surrounding their "betters". This theatrical element was derived from the street theatre known as *commedia dell'arte* and it is one of Monteverdi's great achievements here to create a musical language for each class and character that is a musical equivalent of the accents and acting styles that we all remember from "Upstairs, Downstairs" (if we are old enough!). Add to that the mischievous workings of the boy-god Cupid who says of himself "I may be small, but I'm omnipotent", and you have a terrific night of theater made sublime by Monteverdi's music.

Staging *Poppea*
by Theodore Deacon

There is no question as to the magnificence of Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*. It stands as one of the greatest achievements of the tremendously fertile period of early Venetian opera. What is astonishing is that a portion of the music in the two surviving manuscripts is not by Monteverdi at all. Many scholars see the stylistic fingerprints of such composers as Cavalli, Ferrari, and Sartorio adding to the rich panoply of characters and scenes. Still, regardless of how many cooks contributed to this operatic broth, *Poppea* on stage has never failed to excite and rivet audiences throughout its long history. *Poppea's* seamless continuity owes much to the brilliance of its librettist, Giovanni Francesco Busenello (1598-1659).

Busenello was the quintessential Venetian of his time, a lifelong resident who embraced the wide variety of enterprises that this great merchant metropolis provided. Born to a rich and influential family, Busenello trained as a lawyer and dabbled in the intricate intrigues of Venetian political life. He was equally adept at mingling with the city's vibrant social and artistic milieu. His satires and lyric love poems were considered shockingly frank in their depiction of Venice's political and sexual peccadilloes, a daring venture in a city still in the throes of the Inquisition.

With this sort of experience it was natural that Busenello would involve himself in Venice's most popular and lucrative rage, the raft of newly opened public opera houses. While most of his texts were set by Francesco Cavalli, *Poppea* remains his finest drama. Unlike the typical libretti of the time, which focused on the noble

achievements of classic gods and heroes, Busenello's *Poppea* casts a cold, amoral eye on the acts and emotions of flawed mortals.

Poppea was based on the annals of imperial Rome by the historians Tacitus and Suetonius, who never passed up an opportunity to make the most of a lurid royal scandal. Busenello also took much of the structure of his drama from the play *Octavia*, interestingly attributed to Seneca, a central character in the opera. Busenello's depiction of Nero's Rome convincingly sets into verse the psychological and emotional turmoils of his protagonists. No one is spared Busenello's stark, pessimistic view of human nature. The good are tempted into corruption and the wicked triumph, at least for the moment.

Poppea displays all the hallmarks of Venetian libretti. Characters assume disguises, the gods intrude, *commedia* characters mock their betters, and all ends "happily." Busenello's genius gives all these conventions an ironic ring of truth. The gods are reflections of a character's inner moral struggle. The comic commentaries bring the follies of the nobility into sharper, more disquieting focus. Even the standard *lieto fine* is bittersweet because for all the ecstasy of their celebrated concluding duet, the joy of murderous Nero and *Poppea* will be short lived.

Busenello unquestionably wanted his tale of Imperial Rome to be more than an exercise in period drama. The librettist knew his audience would make the connections to his own time. Venice, once a mighty empire, was on a rapid course of financial and moral decline. Also, all of Italy was aware of the scandal of the Gonzaga family (Monteverdi's erstwhile Mantuan patrons) in which Duke Vincenzo II was

attempting to divorce his much older and infertile wife for a younger, nakedly ambitious beauty. Busenello's message was unavoidably contemporary and his theme universal.

The Early Music Guild's production at the Intiman Playhouse will carry on the spirit of Busenello's masterpiece. The shifting of the visual frame to Mussolini's Italy is a perfect match in that the Fascist dictator's desire to revive Rome's imperial glory had a disturbing operatic grandeur all its own. As was Busenello's intent in Venice 1642, our *Poppea* will be filled with living, passionate, immediately identifiable reminders that sexual and political recklessness is not confined to any one age.

The Music of *Poppea* by Fred Hauptman

Throughout much of the history of continuously sung music dramas the balance of interest has rested upon the music. In most familiar operas the text serves as a pretext for glorious displays of melody, agile or stentorian singing, and orchestral opulence. At times there have been some attempts to redress the situation and to establish a more even-handed relationship between text and music, as in the reform operas of Gluck or the later works of Wagner. For perfect equipoise, however, we must turn to the two surviving Venetian operas of Monteverdi, *L'incoronazione di Poppea* and *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*.

In both works the central musical texture is monody: a single vocal line accompanied by the continuo instrumentalists, who improvise accompaniments with the partial help of a sparsely figured bass. The small string ensemble is restricted to preludes and interludes and never competes with the primacy of the voice. Even today one often hears

these operas in "reconstructions" which add orchestral accompaniments to some or all of the vocal sections, but while some of this just might have been done in the Venice of Monteverdi's time, it is unnecessary if not egregious. In our performances we will stick to material that actually appears in the manuscripts of *Poppea*.

To call the solo vocal music that dominates the score of *Poppea* recitative is technically correct but, unfortunately, gives rise to memories of the rapid-fire patter that gives everyone a brief rest between the musical numbers in 18th- and 19th-century operas. Let us call it declamation instead. For most of the 17th century, declamatory music carried the main emotional burden of operas, with the relatively few ensembles, extended arias, or instrumental pieces reserved for situations of less intensity (significantly entitled *divertissements* in French opera, in which they were enlivened with dance.) Often the main characters were given nothing but declamation, as is the case with Ottavia in *Poppea*, for example.

For this to work you need a composer of immense skill and a superb sense of drama. While the music of *Poppea* conveys an extraordinary feeling of naturalism, indeed to such an extent that often one has the impression of hearing actual direct speech, Monteverdi cleverly commingles straightforward declamation with snatches of folksy melody, exotic harmonic progressions, changes of meter, etc., all of which serve to miraculously expose the inner workings of his memorable characters. In addition, most scenes do have musical "set pieces": either the fabulous duets which are such a feature of this particular score, or short strophic arias (songs in two or more stanzas, which usually

have the same bass in each stanza.) These more structured passages provide the necessary change of pace but are not elaborate or lengthy enough to destroy the dramatic framework.

It is important to keep in mind that Monteverdi and his contemporaries were very adept at handling large-scale forces in multiple parts, as for example in Monteverdi's *Vespers* or the sacred music of Cavalli. To give up these glowing, luxurious sounds for the almost minimalistic textures of the operas of their time is an act of courage that can't be underestimated. They staked all on the conviction that, in a properly intimate space, the starkly dramatic effect of musically inflected speech would be more than enough to compensate for the loss of luxury.

By the last third of the 17th century the balance of power began to shift to the more familiar situation described above. The operatic star system gradually came into being and arias soon became longer, more formal, and more virtuosic, most often accompanied by the full orchestra. By the early 18th century, old libretti were set again and again by different composers whose job was to write arias to suit the needs of the *prima donnas* of all sexes who were the main attractions. Some of this music is wonderful and the operas themselves can be greatly enjoyable but they inhabit a totally different world from that of *Poppea*, a world in which music and text are perfectly entwined. Arguably, no earlier or later opera has achieved as much.

Performer and Director Biographies

Yulia Van Doren (Poppea, La Fortuna), soprano, was born in Moscow and trained in voice and piano by her Russian mother and American jazz pianist father. While still an undergraduate at the New England Conservatory of Music she was awarded the grand prize in the International J.S. Bach Vocal Competition, third prize in the American Bach Soloists' Competition, recorded the role of Ceres in the Boston Early Music Festival recording of the Lully opera *Thésée*, and performed a series of concerts as guest soloist with ensemble Teatro Lirico. These performances with the Early Music Guild are Ms. Van Doren's professional opera debut. This season she also makes debuts at the Bach Festival of Philadelphia, the Boston Early Music Festival, Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, and Tanglewood, where she will sing Belinda in the acclaimed Mark Morris Dance Group production of *Dido and Aeneas*. Yulia is a first-year MM candidate at Bard College in a new graduate vocal program directed by soprano Dawn Upshaw.

Ross Hauck (Nerone), has appeared in concert with the National Symphony, Cincinnati Symphony, Chicago Symphony, and Tanglewood symphony. Opera roles to his credit include Almaviva in *Barber of Seville* with Sacramento Opera, Belmonte in the Tacoma Opera's *Abduction from the Seraglio*, the title role in *Dardanus* with Wolf Trap Opera, among other notable appearances. He has been a winner of the Macallister Awards, Florida Grand Opera competition, Wolf Trap Foundation Grant, and Opera Performance of the Year award at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. Mr. Hauck lives in Issaquah, Washington with his wife, Laura, and their twin sons, Daniel and Benjamin.

Sarah Mattox (Ottavia, La Virtù), mezzo-soprano, is the recent First Prize winner of the Belle Voci National Competition, and has sung principal roles with such companies as Seattle Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, Lyric Opera Cleveland, Tacoma Opera, and Amarillo Opera. Ms. Mattox made her professional debut with Seattle Opera as Feodor in their acclaimed production of *Boris Godunov*. The Seattle Times said that "...it was newcomer Sarah Elouise Mattox, in the 'pants role' of Boris's son Feodor, who raised eyebrows all over the Opera House with her believable, lifelike acting and her well-schooled voice." Ms. Mattox can next be heard singing the title role in *Carmen* for Tacoma Opera.

José Lemos (Ottone), countertenor, is one of South America's rising young artists. Jose is the First Prize winner and the Audience Prize winner of the 2003 International Baroque Singing Competition of Chimay, Belgium. He has appeared with Boston Baroque, Boston Cecilia, Harvard Early Music Society, Les Parlements de Musique, Buenos Aires Lirica, Piccolo Spoleto Festival Early Music Series, and the Aldeburgh Snape Proms in England. Some of the highlights for the 2006 and 2007 seasons include the release of his first recording with the Baltimore Consort, entitled *Cancionero*, featuring the incredibly beautiful repertoire of the early music of Spain. In April 2005 he made his European opera debut in a production of the Zürich Opera House of Handel's *Giulio Cesare* under the baton of Marc Minkowski.

Catherine Webster (Drusilla and Pallade), soprano, is engaged regularly with many leading early music and chamber ensembles in North America. Deemed one of the finest rising young singers of baroque repertoire, she has appeared as a soloist with Tafelmusik, Tragicomedia, Theatre of Voices, American Baroque Orchestra, Magnificat, Musica Angelica, Camerata Pacifica, El Mundo, Four Nations Ensemble, Ensemble Masques, Les Voix Baroques (Montreal), Early Music Vancouver, and in the Berkeley and Boston Early Music Festivals. Webster is a frequent collaborator with baroque opera directors Stephen Stubbs and Paul O'Dette, appearing under their direction in Festival Vancouver's production of Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* and the premiere of Mattheson's *Boris Goudenov* for the Boston Early Music Festival.

David Stutz (Seneca), bass, has performed in a wide range of musical genres including contemporary and baroque opera, Renaissance proto-opera, and medieval mystery plays. Locally, he was a cast member in the EMG production of *Venus and Adonis*, and sang Aeneas in Seattle Baroque's *Dido and Aeneas*. He premiered the role of Henry VIII in Garrett Fisher's *The Passion of St. Thomas More*, and has become a regular in the Northwest Puppet Center's annual opera productions, including a *Magic Flute* in which he simultaneously interpreted the roles of Papageno, Zarastro, the 3rd boy, and the 3rd lady. He looks forward to singing in their 2007 production of Francesca Caccini's *The Liberation of Ruggiero from the Island of Alcina*.

Linda Tsatsanis (Valletto), soprano, graduated from the University of Toronto and continued her education at Indiana University's Early Music Institute in the studio of Alan Bennett, working with faculty such as Nigel North, Elisabeth Wright, Paul Elliott, and Wendy Gillespie. She was featured as Venus in Blow's *Venus and Adonis*, Fanny in Arne's *The Cooper*, and Arthebuze in Charpentier's *Actéon*. She has performed with Seattle Baroque Orchestra and the Tudor Choir. Ms. Tsatsanis moved to Seattle in 2006 and has co-founded *Dulces Exuviae* with lutenist John Lenti. The *New York Times* described her performance at the 2005 Boston Early Music Festival as "ravishing".

Jason McStoots (Arnalta, Lucano), tenor, has been described by critics as "particularly outstanding" with "a perfect light-opera voice," "sweet, appealing tone and real acting ability." He has appeared as a soloist with groups around the United States including Boston Lyric Opera, The Handel Choir of Baltimore, Early Music Guild of Seattle, Emmanuel Music, Granite State Opera and Cape Cod Opera. An accomplished recitalist, Mr. McStoots has appeared in recital as a fellow with Tanglewood Music Center, Florestan Recital Project, Boston Vocal Artists, Red House Opera Festival, and the Boston French Library. He will appear in the Boston Early Music Festival's much-anticipated 2007 production of Lully's *Psyché*.

Kevin Sutton (Nutrice), tenor, a native of Indiana, received his early training at Ball State University in Muncie. He went on to earn a Master's degree in sacred music from Scarritt Graduate School in Nashville, Tennessee in 1988, and has studied at the University of North Texas. A sought after soloist and professional chorister, Mr. Sutton has performed with the Orchestra of New Spain, The Denton Bach Society and the Dallas Bach Society, the choir of St. Mark's School of Texas, the Texas Choral Artists, Musikanten Montana, Voces Intimae, The Orpheus Chamber Singers, Voice of Change and Atlanta's New Trinity Baroque.

Alexander Mentzel (Amore), boy soprano, was born and grew up in Cologne, Germany for the first eight years of his life. It was here that he made his stage debut at the age of six as The Mayor in the Cologne Cathedral Choir School's production of *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. Since moving to Eugene, he has kept up a busy schedule appearing in many community productions. He has appeared at the Actor's Cabaret of Eugene as Tiny Tim in *A Christmas Carol* and Chip in *Beauty and the Beast*. Recently cast in his first feature film, Alex played the role of Billy in *The Feast of Love* (2007) directed by Robert Benton, starring Morgan Freeman and Greg Kinnear and filmed on location in Portland, Oregon.

Melissa Plagemann (Damigella and Student of Seneca) mezzo-soprano, performs frequently throughout the Pacific Northwest and has appeared with some of the area's finest ensembles, including the Seattle Symphony, Tacoma Opera, Orchestra Seattle, Seattle Opera Guild, Skagit Opera, the Seattle Choral Company, Kitsap Opera, and NOISE, among others. Recent opera roles for Ms. Plagemann include Hänsel in Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel*, Carmen in semi-staged scenes with the Seattle Symphony, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, Tisbe in Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, and both the 2nd and 3rd Ladies in Mozart's *Magic Flute*. Equally at home on the concert stage, she has performed in several recent productions of Mozart's *Requiem*, as well as Copland's *In the Beginning*, and Saint-Saëns's *Christmas Oratorio*, among others.

James Brown (Liberto and Second Soldier), tenor, is an active proponent of early and new music. He has performed roles in such diverse operas as *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Carmen*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Così fan Tutte*, *Don Giovanni*, *Die Zauberflöte*, Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Conrad Susa's *Transformations*. Mr. Brown has sung with such opera companies as New York City Opera, New Orleans Opera, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Bronx Opera, Rogue Opera (Oregon), and many others. Mr. Brown is the Chair of Vocal Studies at Pacific Lutheran University.

Jonathan Silvia (Student of Seneca, Littore, and Consul), bass-baritone, is a graduate of Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, with a degree in Voice Performance and Pedagogy. Returning to Washington, he has since been involved in a wide variety of productions, including Bellevue Opera, Skagit Opera, Puget Sound Opera, Seattle Opera Guild, The Ladies Music Club, Seattle Civic Light Opera, Eastside Music Theater, and the University of Washington. In local opera he has performed as Luther/Crespel in *Tales of Hoffman*, Chief of Police in *Amelia Goes to the Ball*, Alidoro in *Cinderella*, Basilio in *Barber of Seville*, Colline in *La Bohème*, and Mikado in *Pearls of the Orient*.

Stephen Rumph (Student of Seneca, Consul, First Soldier), tenor, has recently sung Rodolfo in *La Bohème* with Tacoma Opera, Don Jose in *Carmen* with Skagit Valley Opera, *Das Lied von der Erde* with Northwest Mahler Festival, and Mozart's *Requiem* with both Walla Walla Symphony and Northwest Sinfonietta. Other recent credits include Tamino in *The Magic Flute* with both Skagit Valley Opera and the University of Washington, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* and Rachmaninoff's *The Bells* with the Tacoma Symphony, and Bach's *Mass in B Minor* with the Lake Chelan Bach Festival. Upcoming performances include *Messiah* with Tacoma Symphony, and an evening of Puccini and Mozart duets with the Federal Way Symphony.

Stephen Stubbs (Co-Music Director, chittarone, guitar), was born 1951 in Seattle and has been engaged in music-making since early childhood. Parallel interests in new and pre-romantic music led him to take a degree in composition at University and to study the lute and harpsichord. Further years of study in Holland and England preceded his professional debut as lutenist at Wigmore Hall, London in 1976. From 1980 to 2006 he lived in North Germany as professor for lute and performance practices at the Hochschule für Künste, Bremen. Stubbs has been invited to direct opera productions in Europe, the U.S.A., Canada and Scandinavia, including Monteverdi's *Orfeo* at the Netherlands Opera in Amsterdam 1997-8 to be revived in 2007. Since 1997 he has co-directed the bi-annual Boston Early Music Festival opera. The BEMF recording of Conradi's *Ariadne* was nominated for a Grammy this year. Stubbs's solo lute recordings include the music of J.S. Bach, S.L. Weiss, David Kellner and the Belgian lutenist Jaques St. Luc. With baroque harpist Maxine Eilander he has recorded *Sonate al Pizzico*, released on ATMA in 2004. Since the inception of the Dowland Project on ECM he has played on all the group's recordings.

Fred Hauptman (Co-Music Director) taught music at City College of New York from 1965 to 1999. While on leave in 1998-90 he lived in Seattle and was the music critic for Seattle Weekly and music director of the Versailles Ensemble. Since his return to Seattle in 1999 he has served as music director for Town Hall, where he produced their series of Bach Around the Clock marathons and worked with the Early Music Guild as a board member and leader for its opera productions, the *Monteverdi Chamber Operas* and John Blow's *Venus and Adonis*.

Theodore Deacon (Stage Director) has pursued a varied and critically acclaimed career as a stage director, composer, conductor, musicologist, and music critic. He received his doctorate in opera studies at the University of Washington and served there for many years as Director of Opera. Deacon has participated in over 100 productions throughout the United States, is in demand as a lecturer, and writes for opera journals worldwide. The London journal *Opera* declared his 1988 production of *L'incoronazione di Poppea* "would triumph on any stage in the world." His production for the Early Music Guild of Monteverdi's *Combattimento* and *Ballo delle ingrato* was chosen by the Seattle Post Intelligencer as one of "The Year's Ten Best" and praised as "a defining moment (for) chamber opera in Seattle." He was also producer for the EMG's recent presentation of John Blow's *Venus and Adonis*.

Anna Mansbridge (Assistant Director) is from the United Kingdom, where she studied dance for many years. She has choreographed and performed in many baroque operas in both Europe and the United States. In 2000 she founded Seattle Early Dance, the Northwest's premier early dance company, of which she is the Artistic Director. Their performance credits include Monteverdi's *Il Ballo delle Ingrate* and John Blow's *Venus and Adonis* with the Early Music Guild, and *Baroque Extravaganza* with Gallery Concerts, among many others. She is currently on the faculty of the Cascade Early Music Festival, the Accademia d'Amore, and the Seattle Academy of Baroque Opera, directed by Stephen Stubbs.

Ingrid Matthews (Concert Master, violin), Music Director of Seattle Baroque Orchestra, is well established as one of today's most respected exponents of her instrument. Matthews worked with many other leading North American period-instrument ensembles, including Philharmonia Baroque of San Francisco, Joshua Rifkin's Bach Ensemble of New York, and the American Bach Soloists of San Francisco, before founding the Seattle Baroque Orchestra in 1994 with harpsichordist Byron Schenkman. She has served as concertmaster for the New York Collegium under Andrew Parrott and held the same position for the prestigious Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra. Among the most-recorded baroque violinists, Matthews has won international critical acclaim for a discography which ranges from the earliest solo violin repertoire through the great Sonatas and Partitas of J.S. Bach.

Gus Denhard (Producer, chitarrone), has been Executive Director of the Early Music Guild of Seattle since 2000, overseeing its opera performances of the *Monteverdi Chamber Operas* and *Venus and Adonis*. He has directed and produced baroque opera performances for the Bloomington Early Music Festival, including the *Madrigals of Love and War*, *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, *Venus and Adonis*, *La Purpura de la Rosa*, and *Alcina*. As a lutenist he performs with Baroque Northwest, the Concord Ensemble, and other ensembles devoted to 16th- and 17th-century music. He recently completed his doctoral studies in lute performance at the Indiana University Early Music Institute in Bloomington, Indiana.

Richard Lorig (Set Designer) explored most of the facets of the theatrical experience before settling into his current career as a designer. He has performed (musicals, drama, improv), designed (costumes, scenery and lights) and directed. He attended graduate school at Arizona State University and received his MFA in Scenography. While at ASU, Lorig studied performance with Lee Breuer and worked with the Institute for Studies in the Arts. He is also a freelance designer whose recent work includes *Steel Magnolias* at Village Theatre and *All My Sons* at Taproot Theatre. He has also designed for Empty Space, Tacoma Actor's Guild, Bathhouse Theatre, NWAAT, Exchange Theatre, Civic Light Opera, Alice B., and Childsplay Inc.

Josie Gardner (Costume Designer) is the Costume Shop Manager/Costume Director for the University of Washington's School of Drama. She holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from UCLA and has a certificate in strategic leadership from the University of Washington. She has freelanced as a designer and an artisan at Seattle Repertory Theatre, Intiman Theatre, ACT, Tacoma Actor's Guild, Village Theatre, Civic Light Opera, and on the set of *Northern Exposure*. She teaches theatrical make-up and advanced make-up, and has taught workshops for Pacific Northwest Theatre Associates (PNTA) in Seattle. She also freelances as a fiber artist and teaches management classes for non-profit organizations.

Jason Meininger (Lighting Designer) has been lighting theatre, dance, and opera for fifteen years. His opera credits include *The Monteverdi Chamber Operas* and *Venus and Adonis*, with the Early Music Guild, *The Magic Flute*, *La Finta Giardinera*, and *Così Fan Tutti* at the University of Washington Opera, and Seattle Experimental Opera's world premiere of *Floralesque*. His theater work includes *Line One*, *Stage Door*, and *The Changeling* for Annex Theatre; *Lovecraft: Arkham, D.O.B.* with Open Circle Theater; and numerous productions with Theatre Simple including *Camino Real*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *The Big Time*, and *52 Pick Up*. Currently living in London, he was the resident assistant lighting designer at the Seattle Repertory Theatre for two years, and holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in Lighting Design from the University of Washington.

David Vaught (Stage Manager) has worked on all Early Music Guild staged productions to date. Mr. Vaught also works in lighting, audio, rigging and production management, and is currently Production Manager for Pacific Northwest Theatre Associates's event services department, working for various clients on special events, fashion shows, theater, film, and live music.

Tekla Cunningham (violin) is a native of Seattle. She recently returned to the Northwest after seven years in northern California. She performs across the USA and in Europe with renowned early music groups including the American Bach Soloists, Musica Angelica in Los Angeles, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, the San Francisco Bach Choir, and Seattle Baroque Orchestra, and also plays at the San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival and the Carmel Bach Festival. This year she founded Whidbey Island Music Festival, a summer chamber music festival presenting a variety of baroque and early classical concerts.

Stephen Creswell (viola) studied music at Indiana University and the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. Mr. Creswell has had the privilege of working with many great musicians, including Anner Bylisma, Mstislav Rostropovich, Gustav Leonhardt, Abraham Skernick, and the Guarneri and Juilliard Quartets. He currently performs with the Northwest Sinfonietta, Seattle New Music Ensemble, and the baroque orchestras of Seattle, Portland, and Vancouver, B.C. Mr. Creswell teaches as Adjunct Professor of Violin at Seattle University, is a member of the Annas Bay Musicians group, and frequently acts as concertmaster for the Seattle Choral Company and Seattle Pro Musica.

Olga Gussow-Hauptman (viola) has lived in the Seattle area since the summer of 1999. Prior to that she lived in New York City and performed with such groups as NYS Baroque, Concert Royal, ARTEK, Orchestra of the Old Fairfield Academy, Philadelphia Classical Orchestra, Brandywine Baroque (DE), and American Bach Soloists. She performed Monteverdi with The Ensemble for Early Music's Grande Bande in Hong Kong, on ARTEK's critically acclaimed recording of *Orfeo*, with the Miami Grand Opera's production of *Poppea*, and in Seattle performances of the Early Music Guild's baroque opera productions.

Claire Garabedian (cello) is well known as an accomplished baroque and modern cellist who has performed and recorded with many of the foremost orchestras and chamber ensembles in this country. She is now focusing on solo, chamber, and improvised music making. She is also completing a certificate program to become a music practitioner playing music at the bedside of the sick and dying, and conducting the New Baroque Orchestra, a community based baroque orchestra sponsored by the Early Music Guild. Claire received her BM from the New England Conservatory of Music, and her Master's in Historical Performance at the Longy School of Music.

Elizabeth Brown (archlute, guitar) is head of the Guitar and Lute program at Pacific Lutheran University and is active throughout the Pacific Northwest as a solo and ensemble performer. She has given solo recitals and performed concertos throughout the area from Vancouver to Southern California, and has been a featured soloist for the Seattle Bach Choir, Fresno Pacific University's Musica Pacifica Baroque, the Northwest Chamber Chorus, and St. Mark's Cathedral Associates. An enthusiastic advocate for the guitar and lute, Ms. Brown has given numerous outreach performances at schools, senior centers, and community centers for the Seattle Classic Guitar Society and the Early Music Guild. Also active as a chamber musician, Ms. Brown is a member of Baroque Northwest, and has appeared with ArtsWest, Seattle Pro Musica, and the City Cantabile Choir.

Maxine Eilander (triple harp) has appeared as a continuo player and soloist with many ensembles including Teatro Lirico, Tragicomedia, Les Talens Lyriques, Tafelmusik, The Toronto Consort, Les Voix Humaines, The Sixteen, and Seattle Baroque. She has appeared around the world in productions of Monteverdi's three operas (*L'Orfeo*, *L'incoronazione di Poppea* and *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse*) in Vancouver, Toronto, New York, Amsterdam, Stuttgart, Hamburg, and elsewhere. She plays on a range of specialized early harps: the Italian *arpa doppia*, the Spanish cross-strung harp, the German *Davidsharfe*, the Welsh triple harp, for which Handel wrote his harp concerto, and the classical single action pedal harp.

Margriet Tindemans (viola da gamba) has performed, recorded, and taught early music on four continents. A 2005 Grammy Nominee, she was named "Best asset to Seattle's Classical Music scene" in the Seattle Weekly's 2004 "Best of Seattle" issue. Tindemans was a founding member of the German ensemble Sequentia and the Huelgas Ensemble of Belgium. As a player of early stringed instruments, such as medieval fiddle, rebec, and harp, she performs and records with Medieval Strings. On viola da gamba she performs as a soloist, and performs with the Seattle Baroque Orchestra and the Gallery Baroque Players, and is a frequently invited guest with the Folger Consort of Washington DC, the Newberry Consort of Chicago and other leading early music ensembles in North America and Europe.
