



WNO

Ariadne auf Naxos

Welcome to the 2010 Autumn Season and the third of our 'Eternal Light' operas.

I could not be more delighted to be presenting this revival of WNO's brilliant production of Richard Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos*, which is certainly among my all time favourite operas. The demanding vocal requirements require an exceptional cast, and we absolutely have that here. Sarah Connolly makes a welcome return to WNO in the role of the Composer and Gillian Keith makes her WNO debut singing the pyrotechnic role of Zerbinetta. Irish soprano Orla Boylan and Brazilian tenor Ricardo Tamura also debut with the company as Ariadne and Bacchus, and WNO's Music Director Lothar Koenigs is on the podium.

Also, don't miss our new production of Beethoven's *Fidelio* and the revival of WNO's hugely entertaining production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

Have a wonderful evening.

Croeso i Dymor yr Hydref 2010 a'n trydedd opera 'Goleuni Traglwyddol'.

Mae'n bleser gennyf gyflwyno adfywiad o gynhyrchiad rhagorol OCC o *Ariadne auf Naxos* gan Richard Strauss, sydd yn sicr ymysg fy hoff operâu. Mae'r gofynion lleisiol yn gofyn am gast eithriadol, ac rydym wedi llwyddo yn hynny o beth. Mae Sarah Connolly yn dychwelyd i OCC fel Cyfansoddwr ac mae Gillian Keith yn perfformio i OCC am y tro cyntaf trwy ganu rôl byrotechnegol Zerbinetta. Mae'r soprano o Iwerddon, Orla Boylan a'r tenor o Frasil, Ricardo Tamura, hefyd yn perfformio gyda'r cwmni am y tro cyntaf fel Ariadne a Bacchus, ac mae Cyfarwyddwr Cerddoriaeth OCC, Lothar Koenigs, ar y podiwm.

Hefyd, cofiwch ddod i weld ein cynhyrchiad newydd o *Fidelio* Beethoven ac adfywiad cynhyrchiad hwyliog iawn OCC o *The Magic Flute* gan Mozart.

Mwynhewch y noson.



John Fisher

Chief Executive & Artistic Director | Prif Weithredwr a Chyfarwyddwr Artistig

Ariadne auf Naxos



Opera in one act with prologue by
Richard Strauss

Text by Hugo von Hofmannsthal

Performances are given by
permission of Boosey & Hawkes
Music Publishers Ltd

First performance at Hofoper,
Vienna on 4 October 1916

First performance of this
production at the New Theatre,
Cardiff on 11 September 2004

Sung in German with surtitles in English (with Welsh surtitles in Cardiff
and Llandudno)

All performances start at 7.15pm

Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff

Thursday 7 October 2010
Saturday 9 October 2010

The Bristol Hippodrome

Tuesday 19 October 2010

Liverpool Empire Theatre

Wednesday 3 November 2010

Birmingham Hippodrome

Tuesday 9 November 2010

Venue Cymru, Llandudno

Thursday 18 November 2010

The Mayflower, Southampton

Tuesday 23 November 2010

New Theatre Oxford

Tuesday 30 November 2010

Cast

Major-Domo	Eric Roberts
Music Master	Robert Poulton
Composer	Sarah Connolly (ex 30 Nov)
	Imelda Drumm (30 Nov)
Bacchus	Ricardo Tamura
Lackey	Stephen Wells
Officer	Philip Pooley
Wig-Maker	George Newton-Fitzgerald
Zerbinetta	Gillian Keith
Ariadne	Orla Boylan
Dancing Master	Stephen Rooke
Naiad	Mary-Jean O'Doherty
Dryad	Patricia Orr
Echo	Joanne Boag
Harlequin	Owen Webb
Scaramuccio	Aled Hall
Truffaldino	Julian Close
Brighella	Wynne Evans

Conductor	Lothar Koenigs (ex 19 Oct)
	Simon Phillippo (19 Oct)
Director	Neil Armfield
Revival Director / Choreographer	Denni Sayers
Designer	Dale Ferguson
Lighting Designer	Tim Mitchell
Lighting realised by	Paul Woodfield
Musical Preparation	Simon Phillippo Stephen Wood
Staff Director	Caroline Chaney
Language Coaches	Katja Parmar Jacqueline Pischorn
Stage Manager	Katie Heath-Jones
Production Manager	Robert Pagett

Scenery built and painted by Cardiff Theatrical Services Ltd
 Properties, costumes and wigs by Welsh National Opera
 Additional costumes made by Alan Selzer, Terry Milton, Denise Haywood,
 Mandy Dymond and Diane Holmes
 Make up provided by **MAC**

English surtitles by Simon Rees
 Welsh surtitles by Mary Jones

Costume design illustrations by Dale Ferguson
 Front cover image created by petergill.com

The performance lasts approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes
 There will be one interval after the prologue

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Introduction

Richard Strauss collaborated with Hugo von Hoffmansthal on a reworking of Molière's comedy *Le bourgeois gentilhomme*, to be performed with an operatic and vaudeville entertainment after the play. This six-hour show was not a success, but some years later Strauss and Hoffmansthal rewrote the piece, adding a Prologue in which Molière's comedy is hinted at and the situation (of the simultaneous performance of a comedy and a tragedy) is set up.

Plot Summary

A wealthy Viennese gentleman has commissioned an opera seria about Ariadne auf Naxos by a gifted young composer as an after dinner entertainment.

Afraid that the opera might bore his guests, at the last minute he decides to liven up the entertainment with the addition of a commedia dell'arte troupe and a spectacular firework display. The comedians and opera singers are given no time to rehearse together, and while the clowns look forward to causing mayhem, the Composer and his singers are outraged at the perceived insult to their sacred art.

The opera begins with Ariadne abandoned on a desert island, mourning the loss of her beloved Theseus. Zerbinetta and the other clowns attempt to cheer her up, by saying that another man will soon come along. Bacchus, the god of wine, arrives to console Ariadne, and the two ascend to heaven. The commedia troupe watch from the wings, transported by the power and the beauty of the music.

Cyflwyniad

Cydweithiodd Richard Strauss gyda Hugo von Hoffmansthal i ail-greu comedi Moliere *Le bourgeois gentilhomme*, i'w pherfformio fel adloniant operatig *vaudeville* ar ôl y ddrama. Nid oedd y sioe chwe awr yn llwyddiannus, ond rai blynyddoedd yn ddiweddar ailysgrifennwyd y darn gan Strauss a Hoffmansthal, gan ychwanegu Prolog lle cyfeirir at gomedi Moliere a lle caiff y sefyllfa (o berfformio comedi a thrasiedi ar yr un pryd) ei sefydlu.

Crynodeb o'r Stori

Mae g r bonheddig cyfoethog o Fienna wedi comisiynu opera seria am Ariadne auf Naxos gan gyfansoddwr ifanc, dawnus fel adloniant ar ôl swper.

Gan ofni y gallai'r opera ddiflasu ei westeion, ar y funud olaf mae'n penderfynu bywiogi'r adloniant trwy ychwanegu commedia dell'arte troupe ac arddangosfa drawiadol o dân gwyllt. Nid yw'r digrifwyr na'r cantorion opera yn cael unrhyw amser i ymarfer gyda'i gilydd, a thra bod y clowniaid yn edrych ymlaen at achosi anhrefn, mae'r Cyfansoddwr a'i gantorion yn gandryll am fod eu crefft gysegredig wedi cael ei sarhau.

Mae'r opera'n dechrau gydag Ariadne wedi ei gadael ar ynys anghyfannedd, yn galaru am golli ei hannwyl Theseus. Mae Zerbinetta a'r clowniaid eraill yn ceisio ei chysuro, trwy ddweud y daw dyn arall i'r golwg cyn hir. Mae Bacchus, duw'r gwin, yn cyrraedd i gysuro Ariadne, ac mae'r ddau yn esgyn i'r nefoedd. Mae'r commedia troupe yn gwyllo ar yr ymylon, wedi eu cludo gan rym a cheinder y gerddoriaeth.



Brighella, (16th Century)

Synopsis

Prologue

The richest man in Vienna has commissioned two entertainments to be performed between a banquet and a firework display. The tragic opera *Ariadne on Naxos* is to be followed by a commedia dell'arte play, *Faithless Zerbinetta and her Lovers*. The Music Master protests to the Major-Domo that his pupil, the Composer's, work will be followed by a harlequinade, but the Major-Domo reminds him who is paying the bill, and adds that the fireworks will begin at 9 o'clock. The Composer wants to rehearse his opera, but the violins are playing at dinner, the Prima Donna (singing Ariadne) is not available, and the Tenor (singing Bacchus) dislikes his wig. The Composer learns to his rage that Zerbinetta is to perform after his opera, then thinks of a new tune. The Major-Domo brings the news that the two works are to be performed simultaneously. The Dancing Master tells the Composer to cut his opera to make room for the dances in the harlequinade. Zerbinetta asks for an explanation of the plot of Ariadne, as she has to work her troupe into the story. She ridicules the idea of longing for death, and recommends taking another lover as the cure for unrequited love. Zerbinetta and the Composer experience an intimate moment of deep connection which temporarily reconciles the Composer to the idea of the fusion of the two performances. The Composer sings of music's power, before flying into a rage again at the comedians.

Opera

Ariadne has been abandoned on the island of Naxos by Theseus, even though she helped him to kill the Minotaur and escape from Crete. She is asleep, and the three nymphs, Naiad, Dryad and Echo, watch over her and describe how she has been weeping. Ariadne wakes, and sings of her grief at Theseus' betrayal and her longing for death. Zerbinetta and the comedians witness her lament, and Harlequin tries to cheer her up with a song about the pleasures of life. Ariadne ignores him, and sings of the purity of Death's kingdom and how she longs for Hermes to take her there. Zerbinetta sends the clowns away and tries to persuade Ariadne that there are plenty of other men besides Theseus. Ariadne retreats to her cave, and Zerbinetta and the four clowns play their own masquerade. The three nymphs announce the arrival of Bacchus, who has escaped from Circe's island where men are turned to beasts. He mistakes Ariadne for Circe, and she mistakes him first for Theseus, then for Hermes. In their duet, Ariadne's longing for death becomes a desire for love, and Bacchus learns of his own divine nature. Zerbinetta comments that it is always like this: another love will come along to replace the old one.



ARIADNE

From Shadow into Light

Neil Armfield in conversation with Simon Rees



SR How did you first approach *Ariadne auf Naxos*, with its complex structure of comedy clashing with tragedy, the backstage world with the world on stage?

NA It's taken me a long time to get to love *Ariadne auf Naxos*, although it has always struck me as a work with incredibly beautiful passages. I've only ever seen it once on stage, and nobody I'd spoken to who'd seen a production of it could remember what it was about. Our job has been to highlight the two absolute dramaturgical realities, and to play to the hilt the realism of the backstage world, making it into a recognisable backstage of an

actual theatre. We decided that if the wealthy householder puts on performances like this, he must have a well-equipped private theatre. This means that the power structures which Strauss and Hofmannsthal show are placed in a context in which we can instantly read the geography of the space. We're deliberately playing with an internal joke in the piece: in the Prologue, Strauss makes the strutting opera-seria performers behave more like clowns than the clowns themselves. We are reinforcing this with costumes, so that whenever we see the prima donna, the tenor or the three nymphs there are Kleenex tissues forming clown ruffs around their necks, their hair is

strangely pinned up with stocking caps, and they're in make-up bases and in pyjama-like garments hiding their costumes, so their transformation into serious performers is much greater. While these people behave like hysterical fools, the commedia group look much more like the man in the street, and take a much more realistic, sensible approach to the issue of the combination of theatrical styles which is forced on them.

SR Is this reflected in the set as well as in the costumes?

NA When I began to be clear about the contradictions and contrasts within the work, I wanted to push them as far as possible so that there's no uncertainty about which world

we're in. In contrast to the backstage confusions, the production of the opera is as beautiful as it is within our means to create. Dale Ferguson and I abandoned a design we had been working on for some months, simply because the Ariadne opera was not supported in a space that was sensuously glowing with light, as we felt the island needed to be. So we started again and worked backwards from the production of the opera, and ended up with something more satisfying and vivid as a way of telling the story.

SR Does it look like a real Greek island?

NA It's nothing like a real Greek island but I'm hoping it evokes something of the desolation of



Ariadne's situation and the light and colour of the Aegean. I'm imagining this as if it were a production of *Ariadne auf Naxos* directed by Pina Bausch, as if one of the most exquisite and spiritual of directors finds a modern style, but an approach in which the classicism is able to sit comfortably. It isn't a way to update the opera. Making the frame of the opera contemporary was crucial to the comedy of the backstage life and the recognisability of the conventions that are being played with.

SR What are the difficulties with the commedia convention?

NA One of the most difficult things to achieve is that the comedy group have to be genuinely funny. There is a well-worn fallacy in opera that because something is meant to be funny and because it sounds funny then it is going to be funny. You sit there in the audience with a fixed grin, understanding what they're attempting, but not experiencing it. We have to work with the performers to find out what their clowns are, and what the originality of play might be between them. Fortunately they're a pretty fearless bunch. The atmosphere of rehearsal is crucial in terms of making a space in which people can breathe, and comfortably play together.

SR How lively an art form is the commedia these days?

NA Unfortunately commedia is one of those things which has the ring of the museum about it. There's nothing less funny than a bunch of people doing commedia for the sake of commedia. Commedia is individual clowning based on character, and the character comes from the personality of the performer, in combination with the behavioural needs of the character. It emerges from the mixture of the personality and the physical type of the performer. Unless you get performers who are comfortable to play from themselves, rather than from the notion of character, you'll never create comedy. *Fawlty Towers* is an excellent example of commedia dell'arte, though it never calls itself that. Here you have the foolish master, the idiot servant, the cunning maid, the overbearing wife, the braggadocio captain and so many other commedia characters, and the comedy always emerges from the character, as much as the situation.

SR Does the fact that it is in an opera make it easier or harder?

NA Commedia is ten times as hard when set in the relatively rigid framework of a musical score, as it is in *Ariadne*. No, a



thousand times harder. You have to make the timing natural to the music. It's something you can only find in rehearsal. You can't decide it in advance. The only way to build something organically is for us all to discover it and to develop it simultaneously. It means going in with a sense of what it might be, but with no specific sense of where it's going to arrive, so it is a blind leap of faith. Within the opera the commedia makes up more than a quarter of the length of the whole evening. It has to be good, and it has to lead us somewhere. The value of the prologue in particular is that it is a marvellous situation in that we have a composer who is

almost paradoxically highly serious (of course Strauss is parodying himself) set against a whole set of extremely practical clowns, who are jobbing actors, and whose essential message is – 'It's only a show, it just doesn't matter, it isn't worth getting worked up about'. This presents the contradiction to the composer singing so beautifully, lovingly and spiritually about the power of music. Both realities are true and coexistent.

SR Is this paradox something you have explored before?

NA One of my most stabilising thoughts, throughout the 24 years of my career as a director,

has been to carry the paradoxical notion that the work you are doing is the fullest, the most generous, the finest thing that you are capable of doing, with the contradictory understanding that it's only a show, and that finally it doesn't matter. Even though it has to matter deeply, you have to keep a practical sense that the world is the world, and, finally, family is probably more important. Both things have to be true. In *Ariadne auf Naxos* I love the

fact that it is such a working-out of a dual reality, in which the practical world of the comedy is enriched by its witnessing of the potential depth of expression and beauty that is achievable in the world beyond its own fence.

SR Does this enrichment go both ways?

NA At the same time as the comedians are enriched by the opera singers, the operatic world with its notion of higher



art is brought down to earth in lovely delicate bumps by the contact made with the clowns. It's the same comic idea you see in a Marx Brothers film where Groucho, Chico and Harpo are suddenly put next to Margaret Dumont, who is dealing with a highly serious situation or a piano recital, and they cope in their way with the comedy of this extraordinary creature. Our laughter never takes us higher than the comedy of that collision. But in *Ariadne*, at the same time as enjoying the comedy, we are drawn towards the point of transformation, which is one of the things I love most about the theatre. In my production of *Billy Budd*, for instance, the cast explored this during the prologue, when they appear on stage as performers, not as characters. By stepping from shadow into light, the miracle of theatre transforms the performer from being a person with problems and confusions to being a character, a pure and readable instrument of story-telling.

SR You've said that this affects the opera singers in *Ariadne* too.

NA I think the least of the problems of the piece is the transformation of the characters who have been idiotic prima donnas in the prologue into characters of high seriousness in the opera. The

commedia characters lead us into it, by showing a fascination with the power of theatre, and the generosity that artists have for each other. We have a sense of artists coming together and being genuinely respectful of each other. The commedia characters are so touchingly moved by the extremity of Ariadne's pain, and by the beauty of her singing, that they try and do everything they can to come in at her level. The beautiful first song of Harlequin to Ariadne is the improvisation of a great artist trying out the idiom of the art form he has stepped into to lend support. But as that support is resisted, the comedy level goes down and down. It's all an attempt to save the show, in the great tradition of 'the show must go on.' The combinations of commedia and opera are life-enhancing and wonderfully uplifting.

SR So what for you is the key to the work?

NA For me the key is that underneath Ariadne's dilemma is the idea that it's better to be alive than dead. Even though she thinks she'd prefer dying, and embracing death right up to the end, she is in fact having something like the first post-adolescent sexual experience, an experience which is led through love into finding a deep sensual, spiritual and



BACCHUS

Act 1

psychological connection with a human being. Through the combination of two people something new is born. That's what the work is about, and that's what Zerbinetta is singing about. *Ariadne auf Naxos* is full of so many wonderful paradoxes and turnings-in on itself, full of ironic reflections and echoes. When I was puzzling about what is this piece about, and how to find a connection with it, I had a long conversation with Anthony Freud, WNO's former General Director. I was wandering around a park in Leichhardt with a mobile phone, searching for

the answers, and Anthony said, 'Have a close listen to Zerbinetta's aria in the prologue'. What is revealed in that aria, and how it informs how we listen to Zerbinetta talking about the confusions of sexuality in the opera, gives the emotional dimension of the whole work. When you realise that this piece of comedy is being performed by a person who has her own deep well of pain and understanding, it shows you how Strauss and Hofmannsthal created their complex view of humanity up there on the stage, through layers of contradiction.



A window into the process

An email from Dale Ferguson, the designer of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, to Denni Sayers the choreographer, describing the products of the collaboration between himself and Neil Armfield, the show's director.

Hi Denni

Following your request for some information to support the design photographs; if our production were to be summarised in a sentence I would say it's about feelings of desolation caused by infidelity being reversed by the power of love.

The prologue is staged in a modern home fitted out with a well-equipped but small private theatre. The stage picture is divided by the cool grey stark brickwork of the dressing rooms occupied by the opera company and the chaotic backstage mess of lights, the reverse view of the scenery and improvised dressing rooms created by the commedia troupe. This is indicative of the hierarchy and snobbery existing between the two companies. The Major-Domo descends the stairs where the banquet is being held on another level. This stratum is useful for illustrating the low status of all the performers in the eyes of the patrons.

We intend to portray the way the characters behave backstage as in inversion of their performance style. That is,

the buffo commedia characters are focused, professional, serious and 'cool'. The opera divas behave like stereotypical 'clowns' and are dressed as such.

The point where the two genres cross over and touch, elevated by love, is when the Composer and Zerbinetta find common ground at the end of the prologue. The Opera is to be performed on a very simple and traditional design. A storm painted on old reused canvas flats with a hole in the backdrop for a cave and an old kitchen chair as a place to wait is how we created an environment that was desolate; one that evoked the desolation that Ariadne was feeling. The anger, resentment and powerlessness is how the canvas came to be torn as if she was able to destroy it with a piece of metal pipe and destroy her clothing in an act of frustration and self-mutilation. We then find her quietly resolute, ungroomed and waiting for death.

Surrounding her are the nymphs Echo, Dryad and Naiad wearing the simple satin slips of dancers in the colours of green (water),

mushroom (earth) and yellow (a mirror of the set colours). The commedia are like a modern theatre in education dance troupe, who are traditional exponents of the commedia dell'arte. They are dedicated to the preservation of centuries-old conventions, character types and performance styles while maintaining the lightness and improvisational qualities of the genre. This talent for improvisation is what enables them to adapt to the situation imposed on them and they do so by saying that the desert island is to be enjoyed for the beach that it is. They adapted their costumes (Zerbinetta stripping down to her underwear) and dance to relate to the imposed location.

The entry of Bacchus from the grid is in a ship that is a replica of the torn borders that make up the picture frame set. The descending 'bridge' is preceded by the smaller ship that crosses the stage on a wire, as the nymphs describe the approaching ship. The commedia characters and backstage crew are seduced by the story and are drawn to the wings to listen. They are then revealed when the set deconstructs for the journey to the heavens when the legs and borders fly out. The company share the moment as Ariadne and Bacchus appear in front of the perforated canvas 'star

cloth' at the end. They too, have been elevated by love in a way that the Composer and Zerbinetta were in the prologue and the two companies appear united.

This is where Neil and I arrived after a long trek down a very winding path, taking many ill-fated detours along the way. I hope I have organised the information in such a way that you can make sense of the photos and drawings you've received. I will copy this to Neil to ensure that I haven't omitted crucial information. I'm sure he will have a similar and more detailed account of the themes and ideas that don't directly resonate in the design.

I look forward to meeting you. I hope this turns dark into light.

Kind regards

Dale



Off with the old, on with the new

Michael Kennedy

Of all Strauss's operas, none had such a complex genesis as *Ariadne auf Naxos*. The project caused friction with his librettist Hugo von Hofmannsthal that might easily have brought their collaboration to an end. As will be seen, Strauss won his side of the argument, but only through tactful concessions. It is curious, too, that although *Ariadne auf Naxos* is regarded now as one of his best and most innovative works, he was at first indifferent, if not hostile, to both its first version and the Prologue to the second version. He completed the full score of *Der Rosenkavalier* in September 1910 and was at once eager for more work. On 20 March 1911, Hofmannsthal came up with two ideas in one letter. One was 'a thirty-minute opera for small chamber orchestra...called *Ariadne auf Naxos*' combining 'heroic mythological figures in 18th-century costume' with characters from the commedia dell'arte. This was to be a thank-offering to the theatre director Max Reinhardt who had stepped in at Dresden to produce *Der Rosenkavalier* (anonymously) when the local producer was baffled by it. The other idea was 'a magic fairy

tale with two men confronting two women, and for one of the women your wife might well, in all discretion, be taken as a model...'. The second project, which developed into *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, immediately attracted Strauss, who badgered his librettist to send him some of the text. But Hofmannsthal refused to be hurried.

Meanwhile he went to Paris where he saw Molière's *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* and this gave him another idea: he would adapt the play, Strauss could provide incidental music and in place of the Turkish ceremony with which the Molière ends, M. Jourdain (the *bourgeois gentilhomme*) would command an after-dinner performance of the opera *Ariadne auf Naxos* 'punctuated now and then by brief remarks from the dinner guests'.

Strauss's reaction was cool. 'The first half is very nice...the second half is thin. For the dances of the Dancing Master, tailors and scullions, one could write some pleasant salon music'. At this point, it is clear, Strauss had not realised that his collaborator was proposing a novel juxtaposition of play-with-music and opera.

Strauss received the last part of the *Ariadne* libretto on 12 July 1911. He had already sent Hofmannsthal a plan of the set numbers, from which it emerges that he originally intended the role of Ariadne for a contralto and that the role which immediately caught his fancy was that of Zerbinetta, one of the interpolated *commedia dell'arte* characters. For her, he wrote, he planned 'a great coloratura aria and *andante*, then rondo, theme with variations and all coloratura tricks (if possible with flute obbligato), when she speaks of her unfaithful lover (*andante*) and then tries to console Ariadne: rondo with variations (two or three). A *pièce de résistance*'. So it proved. The aria 'Grossmächtige Prinzessin' outdoes the Queen of Night's two arias in *Die Zauberflöte* for vocal pyrotechnics.

The figure of Ariadne, abandoned by the man she loves (Theseus) and longing for death on the island of Naxos, had haunted Hofmannsthal's imagination since he was a youth, just as it had haunted Monteverdi and Haydn. By contrasting her with the flirtatious Zerbinetta, he could explore the natures of two types of women: Ariadne eternally faithful to one man and yielding herself to another (Bacchus) only because she at first believes him to be Hermes,

the messenger of death, sent to lead her to Hades; Zerbinetta happily off with the old and on with the new. 'When two men like us set out to produce a "trifle" like this', Hofmannsthal wrote, 'it has to become a very serious trifle'. But Strauss had a pertinent practical question: how was the transition from Molière play to *Ariadne* opera to be effected? A short scene in prose, with no music, was the answer, 'in which the Dancing Master and Composer – who are responsible for arranging the opera performance at M. Jourdain's house – talk about the public, critics, etc. The Composer is to conduct a short heroic opera, *Ariadne auf Naxos*... After the opera a light-hearted afterpiece is planned for the Italian comedians. ...Now Jourdain sends his footman with the message that he wishes the two pieces to be performed simultaneously in time for a firework display... Consternation'.

Strauss's reaction to the completed libretto, received in mid-July 1911, was decidedly offhand and Hofmannsthal was piqued. He sent Strauss a highfalutin lecture on Bacchus's attitude to Ariadne. All very well, Strauss replied, but if he couldn't deduce all this from the libretto, what chance had the audience? Oddly, in view of what happened later, he focused on the prose linking

scene. 'Zerbinetta might have an affair with the Composer, so long as he is not too close a portrait of me'. He soon composed the incidental music – 'dashed off', he wrote years later, 'as it were "with my left hand"'.

It says much for the strength of the friendship between the two men that it survived this crisis. Hofmannsthal wrote a long account of the 'meaning' of the opera: 'whether to hold fast to that which is lost, to cling to it even unto death – or to live, live on, to get over it, to transform oneself...'

Strauss said the explanation was 'so beautiful and explains the meaning of the opera so wonderfully that a superficial musician like myself could not, of course, have tumbled to it'.

What is now known as the first version of *Ariadne* was produced by Max Reinhardt at Stuttgart on 25 October 1912. It was a fiasco. 'The play-going public felt it did not get its money's worth', Strauss wrote many years later, 'while the opera public did not know what to make of Molière'. Strauss was by now convinced of the work's quality, for which he had virtuosically used an orchestra of only 37 players (including important parts for piano and harmonium), and when Hofmannsthal in 1913 decided

that the Molière should be jettisoned and replaced by a sung Prologue based on the linking scene, he opposed the idea.

Hofmannsthal's idea for the Prologue was that Jourdain should become a rich un-named Viennese patron of the arts who would not be seen. Instead his footman would 'transmit his bizarre comments'. He worked out how one of Strauss's finest tunes in the incidental music (which would all be lost if the play was abandoned) could be incorporated into the Prologue. This is the Composer's aria 'Du Venus' Sohn'. It was first used as a Sicilienne for oboe in the overture to *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* and was sung in the first scene of the play by three sopranos. Proudly Hofmannsthal told Strauss of his new aria for the Composer in praise of music 'which ought to inspire you to find a new and beautiful melody, solemn and ebullient'. He described the words – 'Music is a holy art which brings together all men of courage, like cherubim around a shining throne' – as 'the kind of text Beethoven might have liked to use'. Unbelievably, in view of the wonderful music he later composed for it, Strauss called the libretto of the Prologue 'dreary' and not to his liking at all. The part of the Composer was 'downright distasteful to



DANCING MASTER



MAJOR-DOMO

MUSIC MASTER



WIGMAKER

him! He was immersed in *Eine Alpensinfonie* and *Josephslegende* and had had enough of *Ariadne*. It was not until three years later, at the end of 1915, when work on *Die Frau ohne Schatten* was held up, that he filled up his time by setting the Prologue.

Even then matters did not go smoothly. Hofmannsthal strongly objected to Strauss's decision to make the Composer a *travesti* role for mezzo-soprano. Nor had he ever been happy with Strauss's 'singing automaton' treatment of Zerbinetta, attributing it to his 'opportunism in theatrical matters'. Another major snag was how to end the *Ariadne* opera. In the first version, after the Bacchus-Ariadne duet the chorus return. Zerbinetta, proving her point, sings: 'A new god comes along and we surrender without a word'. The comedians' music is then recapitulated. Jourdain, who has fallen asleep, is wakened by a footman who asks if the fireworks display should still be held. All this had to go. Strauss suggested that the Composer should return to collect his fee. Hofmannsthal would not hear of it. Strauss compromised by retaining Zerbinetta's comment, returning to the love duet and letting the orchestra have the last word. He had (as is obvious) eventually enjoyed setting the Prologue – 'I'm the only

composer nowadays with some real humour, a sense of fun and a marked gift for parody...The Prologue to *Ariadne* marks the new road we must follow'. The second version was premièred in Vienna on 4 October 1916. Revivals of the first version are now few and far between.

Ariadne auf Naxos has a crucial place in Strauss's operatic development and output. Its popularity today is all the more remarkable in view of the vicissitudes through which it passed on its way to the version most often performed. The fashioning of the libretto has to be considered in any assessment of the work's musical structure. As Strauss was always prepared to admit, his musical imagination needed to be stimulated by an extra-musical idea, usually literary or poetic. He only 'became Strauss' (in the sense that Mahler 'became Mahler' with *Das klagende Lied*) when he abandoned the forms of symphony, concerto and sonata in which he composed in his youth and adapted the Lisztian symphonic-poem. Yet here, too, it was the *idea* that stimulated the music: in most cases in the tone-poems the detailed programme was written after the music had been completed, the most obvious examples being *Tod und Verklärung* and *Also sprach Zarathustra*.

Strauss also liked his dramatic material to be complex and variegated, as in *Salome* and *Der Rosenkavalier* and, after Hofmannsthal's death, in *Die schweigsame Frau*. At first glance he found the text of *Ariadne* too thin. He could not respond to characters who merely embodied artificial ideas, such as the commedia dell'arte characters with the exception of Zerbinetta, on whom he fastened at once as having the capability to be made musically interesting. In this context, one should remember that *Ariadne* was composed almost as a subsidiary task while *Die Frau ohne Schatten* was being laboriously written by Hofmannsthal and that at an early stage in discussions on *Die Frau*, Strauss dissuaded his librettist from having Harlequin and Esmeraldina as the earthly couple in contrast to the magical Emperor and Empress, hence the substitution of Barak and his wife.

The musical importance of *Ariadne auf Naxos* is twofold: as a combination in one work of *opera buffa* and *opera seria* and as a stage in Strauss's conversion of Mozartian *recitativo secco* into the continuously melodic conversational style which he perfected a few years later in *Intermezzo*. We do composer and librettist an injustice if we judge the creation of *Ariadne*

only through the published correspondence which has misled a number of writers into the assumption that Hofmannsthal was Strauss's intellectual superior and that this was a partnership between a Viennese man-of-letters and a Bavarian musician baffled by his collaborator's metaphysical flights of fancy. Strauss certainly acted as a brake on these, because he knew their works were intended for the theatre and its public, but he understood totally what Hofmannsthal was aiming for, even if he sometimes thought it unnecessarily obscure.

So while Hofmannsthal here provided a text about which he himself had very definite musical ideas, Strauss was prepared to concede a loss of musical autonomy with his belief that text and music were an integrated entity and that music alone was not the sole purpose of opera. This creative tug-of-war became the basic inspiration of the crowning glory of his operatic career, *Capriccio*, where it was left unresolved. Or was it?

Michael Kennedy © 2004

Ariadne – Ecstatic Transformation

Anthony Negus

There it stands written in the score in response to Ariadne's preparation for the arrival of the messenger of death, the God Hermes: 'in sanfter, extatischer Bewegung' (in gentle ecstatic motion), indicating not just a tempo but the feeling to be expressed, in words that take Wagner's expressive markings a step further. Out of the bitter sadness, so poignantly expressed in the first part of her monologue 'Wo war ich? Tot? und lebe noch? (Where was I? Dead? Yet still alive?) with its harmonium colouring, Ariadne dwells on the memory of Theseus-Ariadne in a sad noble aria whose music has already been heard in the prelude, and then passes through a gentle *Mignon*-like preparation to be enshrouded for death, 'Sie lebt hier ganz allein' (She lives here all alone). Now in the final extended section (after the interpolation of Harlequin's little song and comments from Zerbinetta) 'Es gibt ein Reich' she is ready to look the realm of death (Totenreich) in the face. Thus it is that she can greet Hermes with the gentle ecstasy of one who is ready to be released. She describes how her soul soundlessly follows its new Lord while her eyes and heart

are darkened and her body remains enshrouded behind. All through this experience, we have a feeling that a great moment is coming, and indeed it is. With complete self-abandonment Ariadne sings 'Du wirst mich befreien' (You will liberate me) and from here to the end of her solo the music carries us on a wave. Strauss crowns his achievement with characteristic harmonic side-steps in and around B flat major with her repetition of the words 'Du nimm es von mir, dies lastende Leben' (You take it from me, this burden of living) before the vision fades and the Harlequinade and Zerbinetta take over for the next three scenes.

The sudden change heralded by an exciting new trumpet theme, as the nymphs announce a wonderful miracle, a young god, is like the bursting of a dam: it is as though this moment has merely been postponed by the Harlequin episodes and now emerges the more urgently. How well composer and poet understood the psychology of dreams (so characteristic for the period 1900–1914) is shown by the fleeting anticipation of this music at the very beginning of



Ariadne's monologue 'Was hab ich nun geträumt' (What have I just dreamt) which gives to this scene a sense of something recognised and partially experienced. The whole passage that leads up to the arrival of Bacchus belongs to Strauss's great inspirations and is carried along on what I can best describe as a passionate wave of ecstasy. We shall see, when examining a little closer what takes place, how strongly he had absorbed *Tristan*.

Unless we know the myth of Jupiter and Semele it is hard to piece together the bits of information that we are given here on the origins of the youthful god (later Bacchus himself will describe them further). We hear that his mother was the beloved of a god and died at his birth: nymphs brought him up. It is touching how excited Echo (previously a feelingless voice of nature) becomes, repeating these last words 'Nymphen zogen ihn auf!' (Nymphs brought him up) no less than four times. 'Oh that it had been us', the three of them sing regretfully yet still carried on the exultant wave. The rhythmic excitement of the music is based on a Brucknerian rhythm in a very quick tempo of which the triplet part is directly associated with the god.



And there is a passionate four-bar phrase summing up and binding each section together, whose significance will later become more apparent. With increased excitement Bacchus's arrival on Circe's Island is described by Naiad and, slightly behind her, Echo: and now comes the *Tristan* experience. It is not merely that Strauss quotes the *Tristan* chord on 'Zaubertrank' (the magic drink that transforms all Circe's visitors into wild beasts), he also prepares the way for it in Dryad's description of Circe standing on the threshold to receive him and drawing him to her table: 'reicht die Speise' (offers him food) is already in the chromatic style, then with 'reicht den Trank, den Zaubertrank' (gives him wine, the magic wine) which is repeated several times there is a permeation of *Tristan* harmony. She continues triumphantly to narrate how he is resistant to Circe's arts and thus remains untransformed before her. The music takes on a god-like solemnity and breadth: there is a mystic quality in this rising theme of transformation that will govern the music of the duet; indeed this whole passage, echoing to some extent *Elektra/Orestes*, has a special colour and atmosphere that is the essence of Strauss' and Hofmannsthal's evocation of the Ancient Greek legends relived through their early

20th century experience. Before Bacchus sings his three-strophe song to Circe there is an exquisite moment (a gentle but still animated calm after the fever) in which Naiad and Dryad call on Ariadne while Echo, 'vogelhaft entzückt' (with bird-like ecstasy) repeats the word 'unverwandelt' (not transformed).

Ariadne is drawn as though to a magnet by the sound of Bacchus's voice and after his second strophe she sings a greeting to him as the messenger of death who brings peace and healing to all her suffering; now that passionate phrase from the Nymphs is transformed into one of sweep and breadth. After his third strophe it is further permeated by the increasing enchantment that is filling her senses – thus the link with the erotic Circe music giving the phrase a wider span and merging with Bacchus's festive entrance. Ariadne is ready to give herself up, to death as she consciously believes, or to something else which is unconscious; but as she sees him she undergoes a violent inner upheaval in which all her earlier confusion comes to a head and to the loudest most agonized discord in the score she cries out 'Theseus' in terror. This moment is a catharsis – in which she attains her inner release from Theseus and, reminiscent of Parsifal's

last upsurge of suffering in Act 3 'und ich, ich bin's der all dies Elend schuf' (and I, I it is who caused all this suffering), she leaves the immediacy of her grief behind. It becomes a memory, but one that she fears to lose because it involves a loss of identity (her last words in the opera are 'Lass meine Schmerzen nicht verloren sein' (let my sufferings not be all in vain)). She greets this stranger with the beautiful words 'Es ist der schöne stille Gott, ich grüsse dich du Bote aller Boten' (It is the beautiful peaceful god! I welcome you, you herald of all heralds!), a phrase that is at once a summary of her earlier monologue and the beginning of her new life.

Here now stand two beings, both under a misapprehension as to the other's identity and ripe for a new experience of transforming power. As Hofmannsthal indicates, Bacchus is a very young god who has had his first adventure on Circe's island and is left shy and deeply confused by it. So while Ariadne takes him for the beautiful still god who will release her, he believes her to be the sorceress of the island who may perhaps sing incantations and give him a magic drink like Circe. There is an enchantment in this music that weaves its spell gently and magnetically and he uses words 'verwandelst du' (do you

transform?) and 'Zauberin' (Sorceress) that become verbal leitmotifs. Their cross purposes continue after she has reminisced on her sufferings and how long she has waited for him, when he asks if she knows him already —she had called him by a name (Theseus). There is a shimmering mystery in his shy questions. She in her turn asks if he is testing her; how does he bring about the transformation, with a drink? He had spoken of a drink. With her half-understood reference to the drink, he stands in rapt contemplation of her as the Circe music descends and dies on the harmonium.

All this time a theme starting with a rising fourth and continuing up stepwise in triplets has been easing its way into the consciousness; it will find its true passionate voice near the end of the duet as his transformation of her sufferings to highest joy and is closely related to the more godlike and mysterious theme opening with the same interval, that gives voice to the deeper mystery of 'Verwandlung' (transformation). It is a good idea at this point to return to the prologue (written for the revised *Ariadne* and thus four years after the opera itself) for the explanation of what takes place between the two of them. Within the *parlando* style of the prologue the young composer's description of

Ariadne's experience stands out, bringing an atmosphere of mystery and seriousness of purpose that stays in the memory. Ariadne is the one who does not forget; she takes Bacchus for the god of Death and only for this reason does she go with him on his ship; she believes that she dies, *no she really dies*. All the motifs that we shall hear in the opera are encapsulated here: at 'Sie gibt sich dem Tod hin' (she gives herself up to death) we hear on the trombone the Hermes theme mysteriously in the minor and it combines (cellos and basses) with the rising theme of transformation as the composer describes her plunge into the mystery of transformation. Out of this wonderful combination is born a new theme: a warm one with triplets that emerges in the course of the duet and represents her rebirth. And to the passionate rising theme that opens with a fourth, he describes how Bacchus attains to godhead in her arms. How else in the world could one become a god but through this experience?

We return to the experience in *Ariadne*. From now to the end, there is a sense of gentle wonder that her pain is being removed: a new tender theme describes the land where she will come to rest, her pain forgotten. Bacchus, gaining in nobility and confidence,

describes first how his mother Semele died in flames as Jupiter, his father appeared in all his glory, then how the balsam and ether that run through his veins have resisted the Circe magic and thus on to a declaration of love: 'Dann sterben eher die ewigen Sterne, als dass du stürbest aus meinen Armen!' (may the eternal stars die rather than that you die out of my arms). The triplet theme of the god here has a measured tread that contrasts with the excited version of the nymphs' scene. To a fascinating combination of muted horns and trumpet with woodwind and celesta, Ariadne, almost afraid of the power of his ardour, refers to his magic words but half wishes to go back; yet the warm theme of her rebirth draws her on. She retreats for a while in 'bängen Staunen' (painful amazement) at the process she is undergoing, imagining that her mother's eye is upon her from the shadow of his cloak. All the while the music and text tell us of the magical transformation that is taking her over: she must have the memory of the girl she was before achieving oneness with the god. Each calls the other a worker of magic (Zauberer, Zauberin).

As, gently but inexorably, the motif of transformation carries them along through different keys, like a boat crossing to the other side with peaceful but

increasingly passionate rocking motion, she sees the cave of her sufferings decked with greenery and become a blessed resting place and a holy altar. The texture of the music seems increasingly to cloud the senses until light breaks through at her last words 'Wie wunder, wunderbar verwandelst du' (How miraculously you transform). As in *Tristan* 'Du Isolde, ich Tristan' where the roles become reversed, so here Bacchus takes over her beautiful melody and all the other melodies of passion are incorporated (both of Circe and of the god) to culminate in the great rising phrase that has for so long been prepared, 'Die Höhle Deiner Schmerzen' (the cave of your suffering I raise to highest bliss for you and me). An atmosphere of gentle magic is sustained as for the last time, and long delayed, we hear the three nymphs' lullaby, this time Ariadne singing with them 'What remains of Ariadne?' Strauss still has magic up his sleeve as we hear once more the almost forgotten theme that appeared so gently to describe the land of rest. It is like the reappearance of a theme in the Coda of a Mozart concerto not heard since the exposition. Though the opera ends (in this version) with a passionate reiteration of the duet music and we hear all the themes combined together in a grandiose apotheosis, it is this

quiet moment that rests gently
in the mind. Through all the
ecstasy of transformation
Ariadne says, 'let not all my
sufferings have been in vain.'

Anthony Negus © 1989



PRIMA DONNA



Lothar Koenigs

Lothar Koenigs Conductor (ex 19 Oct)

Lothar Koenigs is Music Director of Welsh National Opera. Previously Music Director Osnabrück 1999 – 2003. Operatic engagements include *Katya Kabanova* (Teatro La Fenice); *Wozzeck*, Janáček trilogy (*Jenůfa*, *Katya Kabanova*, *Makropoulos Case*), *Lohengrin* (Opéra de Lyon); *Jenůfa* (La Scala); *Don Giovanni* (Vienna State Opera; Metropolitan Opera New York; Dresden); *Jenůfa*, *Katya Kabanova*, *Idomeneo* (Cologne); *Elektra* (La Monnaie); Italian premiere Giorgio Battistelli's *Prova d'Orchestra* (Rome Opera); *Turandot* (Sassari); Henze's *Elegy for Young Lovers* (Ancona); *Der Freischütz* (Semperoper Dresden); *Khovanshchina* (WNO); Bayerische Staatsoper); *Wozzeck* (Bayerische Staatsoper); *Tosca* (Teatro Sao Carlos Lisbon); *La bohème*, *Carmen*, *Eugene Onegin*, *The Magic Flute* (Hamburg State Opera); *Wozzeck*, *Tosca* (WNO); *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (WNO; BBC Proms); *Fidelio* (WNO). Symphonic engagements include Beethoven



Simon Phillippo

Orchester Bonn; Orchestre Philharmonique de Luxembourg; Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra Tokyo; Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen; Radio Orchestra Saarbrücken; RAI Orchestra Turin; DSO Berlin; Orchestra dell'Accademia di Santa Cecilia Rome; Rotterdam Philharmonic; Orchestra Sinfonica de Sao Paulo; Orchestra dell'Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome); RAI Orchestra (Turin); Radio Symphony Orchestra Berlin; Wiener Symphoniker (Bregenz Festival); RAI Orchestra Milan; Dresden Philharmoniker in Verona; Krenek's *Karl V* (Bregenz Festival); concerts at the Tanglewood Festival and Teatro Massimo Palermo. Forthcoming engagements include *Turandot* (WNO); *Mahagonny* (Cologne) and concerts in UK and Europe.

Simon Phillippo Conductor (19 Oct)

Simon Phillippo studied at the Royal Academy of Music, and Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge, completing his PhD in 2000. Following a year at the National Opera Studio, Simon was

appointed to the music staff at WNO, where he has conducted *Rigoletto*, *Madam Butterfly*, *The Magic Flute*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Chorus!*, *The Elixir of Love*, *La bohème*, *Tosca* and several concerts. He has been chorus master for many WNO productions in recent years, including *Jephtha* and James MacMillan's *The Sacrifice*, and for WNO recordings of *Jenůfa* and *Katya Kabanova*. Simon has been Music Director of the Helios Orchestra of London, Opera Brava, and Opera & Concerts Worldwide, and he has worked with Opera Europa, Opera Holland Park, the Ernest Read Symphony Orchestra, Brandon Hill Chamber Orchestra and the Mozart Festival Orchestra. He conducted the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall in performances of *Madam Butterfly* in 2007 and *Tosca* in 2008, and he made his concert debut with the RPO earlier this autumn. In the summer of 2009 he was runner-up in the prestigious Leeds Conductors Competition, leading to further conducting engagements in Europe and the UK. Simon is also in demand as a pianist—



Neil Armfield

concerto soloist, chamber musician and accompanist—and he is Artistic Director of Musica Viva, a versatile chamber ensemble of musicians from WNO and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales.

Neil Armfield Director

Neil Armfield is in his final year as Artistic Director of Company B, at Belvoir Street Theatre, Sydney. He was appointed Co Artistic Director of Nimrod Theatre in 1979 where he premièred many Australian plays and since has directed for all of Australia's state theatre companies, Opera Australia, Bregenz Festival, Zurich Opera, Canadian Opera, ENO, Lyric Opera of Chicago and ROH Covent Garden. Neil was awarded Officer of the Order of Australia in 2007 for service to the arts, nationally and internationally. Neil's theatrical highlights include *Der Dämon* at the Bregenz Festival; world tour of *Cloudstreet*; *Exit the King* on Broadway starring Geoffrey Rush and Susan Sarandon; *Bliss* for Opera Australia, which recently performed at the



Denni Sayers

Edinburgh Festival; *Billy Budd*, and later this year, *Peter Grimes*, for Houston Grand Opera; *Midsummer Night's Dream* for Houston Grand Opera, Canadian Opera Company and later this year, Lyric Opera of Chicago. Neil will revive his production of *The Diary of A Madman* in 2010, starring Geoffrey Rush, for Company B and BAM in New York. Neil directed the feature film *Candy* (which he also co-wrote), starring Geoffrey Rush, Heath Ledger and Abby Cornish.

Denni Sayers Revival Director / Choreographer

Denni Sayers' early work was as choreographer and assistant director on numerous productions with Opera Northern Ireland; then as choreographer on *Medea* (Opera North); *Maria Stuarda* (Scottish Opera); *Orfeo ed Euridice* (New Israeli Opera). She has choreographed *Oedipus* (Royal National Theatre); *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (St Petersburg); *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Carmen*, *Paul Bunyan*, *The Bartered Bride* (ROH); *Boris Godunov* (ENO); *Rebecca* (Vienna); *Arshak 11*, *Der fliegende Holländer* (San

Francisco); *Boris Godunov*, *War and Peace* (Bastille); *L'Amour des Trois Oranges*, *Carmen* (Sydney); *The Little Prince* (Houston; Milwaukee; Boston; BBC TV); *Of Mice and Men* (Bregenz); *Carmen* (Oslo); *Porgy and Bess* (Washington; Chicago; San Francisco); *Peter Grimes*, *La fanciulla del West*, *The Bassarids*, *Turandot* (Amsterdam); *Parsifal* (ENO; San Francisco; Chicago); *Lohengrin*, *Eugene Onegin* (Baden Baden); *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (Zürich); Henze's *Boulevard Solitude* (ROH; Genova); *Die Gezeichneten* (Salzburg); *Fidelio* (Salzburg; Lyon); *Rigoletto* (Dresden); *The Bartered Bride* (Glyndebourne); *Der Vögelhändler* (Berlin); *Sweeney Todd*, *Pirates of Penzance* (Chicago); *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Don Carlos*, *Aida* (WNO); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Houston); *Peter Grimes* (Sydney). As director, work includes revivals of *Of Mice and Men* (Washington); *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Boston); new productions of *Tosca* (Toronto); *West Side Story* (Tel-Aviv); Rachel Portman's *The Water Diviner's Tale*; two



Dale Ferguson

Dr Who concerts (BBC Proms). Recent and future work includes *Don Giovanni* (Glyndebourne); Ibsen's *Emperor and Galilean* (Royal National Theatre); *Sweeney Todd* (Chichester Festival); *Elektra* (Salzburg); *Parsifal* (ENO); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Chicago); *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Toronto).

Dale Ferguson Designer

Dale Ferguson was born in Australia and graduated from The National Institute of Dramatic Art in Sydney in 1989.

Opera credits include *Ariadne auf Naxos* for Welsh National Opera and Boston Lyric Opera; *Marriage of Figaro* for Opera Australia/Welsh National Opera; *Fresh Ghosts* and *Motherland* for Chamber Made Opera; *Eugene Onegin* for Opera Australia.

In 2009 Dale was nominated for a Drama Desk Award and two Tony Awards for his set and costumes for the Broadway season of *Exit the King*. Dale's Sydney Theatre Company credits include *The Convicts Opera*, *Summer Rain*, *Howard Katz*, *Don's Party*, *The 25th Annual Putnam*

Country Spelling Bee, *Great Expectations*, *Sylvia*, *The Shaughraun* and *A Cheery Soul*. Recent work for The Melbourne Theatre Company includes *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *August: Osage County*, *God of Carnage*, *The History Boys*, *The Female of The Species*, *True West*, *The Seagull*, *Molly Sweeney*, *Dealers Choice* and *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*. For Company B Belvoir he has designed *Antigone*, *Exit the King*, *Peribanez*, *The Chairs*, *Measure for Measure* and *The Power of Yes*.

Tim Mitchell Lighting Designer

Opera and dance includes *Die Fledermaus* (WNO); *Die frau ohne schatten*, *Elektra* (Mariinsky Theatre); *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Boston); *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Requiem Ballet*, *Don Giovanni* (Kammeroper); *Carmen Negra* (Icelandic Opera); *The Snowman* (Korea/Sadler's Wells/Tour); *Cleopatra*, *Hamlet*, *Dracula* (NBT); *The Lady and The Fool* (BRB).

Theatre includes over 20 productions for the RSC, most recently *Morte D'Arthur*, *Twelfth Night*, *Love's Labour's Lost* and

Hamlet; *Henry IV Parts I & II* (Washington Shakespeare); *Cinderella* (Old Vic); *Merrily We Roll Along* (Donmar); *Hamlet* (Japan/Sadler's Wells); *Racing Demon*, *An Enemy of the People* (Sheffield); *Grapes of Wrath*, *Cyrano De Bergerac* *Bingo*, *The Master Builder*, *The Critic/Real Inspector Hound*, *Oklahoma* (Chichester); *Sleeping Beauty* (New York/Barbican/Young Vic); *Lend Me a Tenor* (Plymouth); *Master Class* (Tour); *The Cherry Orchard*, *Arthur and George* (Birmingham Rep); *The History Boys* (WYP/Tour); *Darker Shores*, *Alphabetical Order*, *Amongst Friends* (Hampstead); *A Month in the Country* (Salisbury); *Brighton Rock*, *Big White Fog*, *The Lightning Play*, *Enemies*, *Blood Wedding*, *Whistling Psyche* (Almeida) and in the West End: *Yes Prime Minister* (also Chichester); *Dirty Dancing* (also Toronto/Hamburg/Utrecht /USA tour/Berlin); *The Play What I Wrote* (also Broadway); *Toyer*, *Imagine This*, *Otherwise Engaged*, *As You Like It*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Of Mice and Men*.



Joanne Boag

Joanne Boag Echo

Scottish born Joanne Boag trained at NOS and RSAMD. She graduated from RSAMD with a BMus (Hons), a Masters in Performance with distinction and a Masters in Opera with distinction, under tuition of Patricia Hay.

Joanne is an experienced oratorio soloist and recitalist. Performances include Haydn's *Harmoniemesse*, conductor Nicholas Kraemer; Scottish première of Liszt's *Christus*; soprano soloist in Haydn's *Nelson Mass* (Edinburgh Festival); Poulenc's *Gloria* with Chorus and Orchestra of WNO, recital with pianist Michael Pollock (St David's Hall, Cardiff); opera gala with RSNO (Barony Hall, Glasgow); performed with Malcom Martineau and Patricia McMahon (Usher Hall, Edinburgh); recital tour of Trossachs National Park (Scottish Opera). Opera engagements include La Bergère *L'enfant et les Sortilèges*, Helena *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Nannetta *Falstaff*, Melisande *Pelleas et Melisande* (Alexander Gibson Opera School); Alinda/Cupid



Orla Boylan

Giasone (Early Opera Company). During 2007/2008, Joanne was an Associate Artist with WNO, where she performed Clorinda *Cinderella*, Nannetta *Falstaff*, Sandman/Dew Fairy *Hansel and Gretel*, Giunone *Le nozze di Teti e Peleo*. Recent engagements include Essential Scottish Opera tour; Arbate *Mitridate*, Frasquita *Carmen* (WNO); Drusilla *The Coronation of Poppea* (Early Opera Company); title role *Katya Kabanova* (Scottish Opera on tour).

Orla Boylan Ariadne

Since her breakthrough performances as Tatyana in Nikolaus Lehnhoff's production of *Eugene Onegin* (Baden Baden; Paris), Orla Boylan has become well known for her interpretations of the Slavonic repertoire and its heroines. Critically acclaimed performances of title roles *Jenůfa* and *Katya Kabanova* have taken her to Deutsche Oper Berlin, Staatsoper Hamburg, Oper Köln, Opéra de Lyon and Glyndebourne Festival. Recent highlights include title role *Iolanta* (Opera Holland Park); Lisa *Pique Dame* (Komische Oper

Berlin); title roles *Arabella*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Die Liebe der Danae* (Garsington Opera).

In 2007 Orla was awarded a Helpmann award for her performance of Procne in the world première of Richard Mills's *Love of the Nightingale* (Perth International Festival). Other roles include Aufseherin *Elektra* (Salzburg Festival); Countess *Le nozze di Figaro* (Oper Köln; New York City Opera; ENO); Donna Anna *Don Giovanni* (New York City Opera); Blanche Dubois in the Irish première of Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Opera Ireland); Madame Lidoine *The Carmelites* under Paul Daniel (Chandos); Ellen Orford *Peter Grimes* (West Australian Opera); Governess *The Turn of the Screw* (Angers-Nantes Opéra); Female Chorus *The Rape of Lucretia* (ENO; New York City Opera); Sieglinde *The Valkyrie* (ENO; Opéra National du Rhin). Orla also has extensive concert experience which has taken her all over the world. Highlights for 2010/2011 include role debuts as Tosca (Opera Ireland) and Elisabeth *Tannhäuser*



Julian Close

(Teatro Comunale di Bologna); Lisa (Komische Oper Berlin).

Julian Close Truffaldino

Julian Close was born in Cheshire. He gained a Doctorate in Applied Physics at the University of Leeds and studied at the Royal Northern College of Music. Julian has appeared with WNO, ENO, Scottish Opera, Opera North, Mid-Wales Opera, Lyric Opera Dublin, Opera Project, and Wexford, Buxton, Northampton, Longborough and Iford Festivals and The Royal Albert Hall in a wide range of roles including Wotan, Fafner, Hunding, Hagen *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, Titurel *Parsifal*, Colonna *Rienzi*, Dosifey *Khovanschina*, Vodnik *Rusalka*, Commendatore *Don Giovanni*, Grand Inquisitor *Don Carlos*, Pistol *Falstaff*, Sarastro and Sprecher *Die Zauberflöte*, Dr Bartolo *Le nozze di Figaro*, Count Walter *Luisa Miller*, Nilakantha *Lakme*, Méphistophélès *Faust*, Zuniga *Carmen*, Mayor *Jenůfa*, Collatinus *The Rape of Lucretia*, Timur *Turandot*, Colline *La bohème*, Don Basilio *Il barbiere di Siviglia*,



Sarah Connolly

Ferrando *Il trovatore*, Bonze *Madam Butterfly*, Luther and Crespel *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, Sparafucile *Rigoletto*, Ramfis *Aida*, Loredano *I due foscari*, Nourabad *The Pearl Fishers* and Prince Boland *Fierrabras*. He has performed concerts across the UK and USA including *Les Noces* at the Barbican, London and the Lincoln Center, New York. Recently Black Bob / Tom *The Little Sweep* (Aldeburgh), Monteverdi's *Vespers* and Hercules and Charon in Handel's *Alceste* for the English Bach Festival. Engagements in 2010 include Bonze (Opera Project); King Marke *Tristan und Isolde* (concert performance with Northern Wagner Orchestra); Verdi *Requiem* (Fakenham Choral Society).

Sarah Connolly Composer (ex 30 Nov)

Born in County Durham, Sarah Connolly studied piano and singing at the Royal College of Music, of which she is now a Fellow. She was made CBE in the 2010 New Year's Honours List. Recent operatic engagements include Dido *Dido and Aeneas*

(ROH; La Scala; La Monnaie); title role *Giulio Cesare*, Brangäne *Tristan und Isolde* (Glyndebourne Festival); Gluck's *Orfeo*, title role *The Rape of Lucretia* (Bayerische Staatsoper); Nerone *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* (Gran Teatro del Liceu; Maggio Musicale). Other roles include title role *Maria Stuarda*, Romeo *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* (Opera North); Octavian *Der Rosenkavalier* (Scottish Opera); Sesto *Giulio Cesare* (Paris Opera); Composer *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Annio *La clemenza di Tito* (Metropolitan Opera, New York); title role *Ariadante* (New York City Opera); Ino / Juno *Semele* (San Francisco). She has a longstanding relationship with English National Opera, where roles include Octavian, title roles *Agrippina*, *Xerxes*, *Ariadante*, Ruggiero *Alcina*, title role *The Rape of Lucretia*; Ottavia *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*; Dido *Dido and Aeneas* / *The Trojans*; Romeo, Susie *The Silver Tassie*, Sesto *La clemenza di Tito* for which she was nominated for an Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in Opera. Sarah is equally at home on the concert platform and has numerous



Imelda Drumm

recordings to her name, including a Grammy nomination for Elgar's *Sea Pictures*. Future engagements include her debut at Festival d'Aix-en-Provence and returns to Metropolitan Opera, New York; Paris Opera; Liceu in Barcelona; Glyndebourne Festival and Royal Opera House.

Imelda Drumm Composer (30 Nov)

Born in Ireland, Imelda Drumm studied singing with Dr Veronica Dunne and graduated with honours from Dublin City University. She attended National Opera Studio, 1997 supported by Glyndebourne Opera, and is currently studying DMus Royal Irish Academy of Music. Roles include Stephano *Romeo et Juliette*, Hippolyta *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Tisbe *La Cenerentola* (Opera Ireland); title role *Xerxes*, Theodata *Flavio* (Opera Theatre Company); title role *Carmen*, Hansel *Hansel and Gretel*, Cherubino *The Marriage of Figaro* (Lyric Opera); Meg Page *Falstaff*, Rosina *Barber of Seville*, Composer *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Fox *Vixen*, Beatrice *Beatrice and Benedict*,

Cherubino, Orphee *Orphee et Euridice*, title role *Carmen*, Dorabella *Così fan tutte*, Hansel *Hansel and Gretel* (Olivier Award winning Richard Jones production) (WNO); Annius *La clemenza di Tito*, Isolier *Comte Ory*, Cherubino (GTO); Dorabella, Cherubino (Glyndebourne Festival); Arbace *Artaserse* (Taradellas) (Festival Grec Barcelona); title role *La Cenerentola* (ETO); title role *Carmen* (Raymond Gubbay/Royal Albert Hall); Countess, Boulotte (Buxton Festival). Oratorio includes Mozart *K317*, *Kv257*, *Kv220*, *C Minor* and *Requiem* with Budapest Festival Orchestra, Ivan Fischer (Edinburgh Festival); Beethoven *Mass in C*, 9th *Symphony*; Handel's *Messiah*. Recital work includes Schumann Tour (OTC); Ravel *Sheherazade* (RTE Symphony Orchestra 2010). Awards include Richard Lewis / Jean Shanks from Glyndebourne Festival and Esso Touring Award. Recordings include Meg Page (S4C TV); Hansel (Channel 4 TV); Herdswoman *Jenùfa* with Mackerras (Chandos); Mozart's *Coronation Mass* (Dublin Choral Foundation).



Wynne Evans

Wynne Evans Brighella

Born in South Wales, Wynne Evans studied at Guildhall School of Music and Drama and National Opera Studio. As principal tenor with Welsh National Opera roles included Duke *Rigoletto*, Rodolfo *La bohème*, Alfred *Die Fledermaus*, Jaquino *Leonore*, Alfredo *La traviata*, Chevalier de la Force *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Brighella *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Tamino *The Magic Flute*, First Jew *Salome*, Liberto *L'incoronazione di Poppea*. Other engagements include Paolino *The Secret Marriage*, Prunier *La rondine*, Fenton *Falstaff* (Opera North); Alfredo, Cavaradossi *Tosca*, Third Jew *Salome* (ENO); Tamino, Italian Tenor *Der Rosenkavalier* (Scottish Opera); Fracasso *La finta semplice* (Classical Opera Company); Rodolfo (Castleward Opera); Foresto *Attila*, Arvino *I lombardi* (Chelsea Opera Group); *La traviata* (Opera Northern Ireland); Nemorino *L'elisir d'amore* (Glyndebourne Festival); Harry *La fanciulla del West* (Grange Park Opera); Param Vir's *Broken Strings* (Almeida Opera). Recent engagements include Cassio *Otello*, Pedrillo *The*



Aled Hall

Abduction from the Seraglio (WNO); *Nemorino* (WNO and Glyndebourne); *Schoolmaster / Mosquito* *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Grange Park Opera). In 2004 Wynne responded, on behalf of the Welsh rugby team, to the New Zealand Haka and has subsequently gone on to sing at over 30 internationals. This year Wynne became the face and voice of GoCompare.com starring in their new multi million pound advertising campaign. Future engagements include *Vakula The Tsarina's Slippers* (ROH); *Truffaldino The Love for Three Oranges*, Italian Tenor *Capriccio* (Grange Park Opera). He will also record *Brighella Ariadne auf Naxos*.

Aled Hall Scaramuccio

Aled Hall was born in Pencader, South West Wales. He studied music at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth and subsequently at the London Royal Schools' Faculty Opera School and the National Opera Studio. Aled made his operatic debut at Wexford Festival singing *Ippia Saffo*, subsequently returning to

sing Danilowitz *L'Etoile du Nord* for the company. Other engagements include Don Basilio *The Marriage of Figaro* (Welsh National Opera, Garsington Opera, Opera Holland Park); Don Curzio *Le nozze di Figaro* (Aix en Provence, Tokyo, Baden Baden, WNO, Opera Holland Park); Remendado *Carmen* (WNO, Raymond Gubbay Productions); Mr Upfold *Albert Herring* (Salzburger Landestheater); Monostatos *The Magic Flute* (Scottish Opera, WNO); Goro *Madam Butterfly*, Spoletta *Tosca* (Raymond Gubbay); Bardolph *Falstaff*, Frisellino *Le Pescatrici* (Garsington Opera); L'Abate *Andrea Chenier* (Scottish Opera, Opera Holland Park); Gaston *La traviata*, Flaminio *L'amore dei tre Re*, Chekalinsky *The Queen of Spades*, Borsa *Rigoletto*, Isèpo *La Gioconda*, Almeric *Iolanta*, Lord Cecil *Roberto Devereux* (Opera Holland Park); title role in Martin 's *Brundibar* (WNO); Priest in Lefanu's *The Green Children* (Buxton Festival). Aled also has a number of concert and recording highlights to his name. Recent engagements include Goro (Lyric Opera, Dublin); Remendado



Gillian Keith

(Raymond Gubbay); recording of Mercadante's *I Normanni a Parigi* (Opera Rara). Future plans include Trabuco *La forza del destino* and Ser Toldo Berardengo *Francesca da Rimini* (Opera Holland Park).

Gillian Keith Zerbinetta

Canadian soprano Gillian Keith, winner of the prestigious Kathleen Ferrier Award, made her Royal Opera debut as Zerbinetta *Ariadne auf Naxos* and has repeated the role with great success, most recently at the Opera de Oviedo. Other operatic appearances include Tytania in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (ROH); Nannetta *Falstaff* and Pretty Polly *Punch and Judy* (ENO); Tiny *Paul Bunyan* (Cregenz Festival); Elmira *Croesus* (Opera North); Ginevra *Ariadante* (Halle); Woodbird *Siegfried* (Scottish Opera); title role *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Basel; Boston). Concert performances include Mozart's *C Minor Mass* in Boston's Symphony Hall; Mahler 8 with the RPO; Haydn's *Creation* with CBSO; Handel's *Messiah* with



George Newton-Fitzgerald

The Toronto Symphony, as well as regular appearances at the Edinburgh Festival, under conductors such as Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Daniele Gatti, Sir Richard Armstrong, Peter Schreier, Sir Richard Hickox, Gianandrea Noseda, Harry Christophers and Sir Mark Elder.

Recordings include Zerbinetta *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Sir Richard Armstrong and Scottish Chamber Orchestra); Dallapiccola *Orchestral Songs* (Noseda and BBC Philharmonic); Handel's *Gloria* and several Bach Cantatas with Gardiner. Her recital discs include *Debussy: Early Songs*, and Strauss Lieder with Simon Lepper.

Engagements this season include Handel's *La Resurrezione* (Wiener Staatskapelle); Conti's *Don Chisciotte* (Netherlands Opera under Rene Jacobs) and *Pretty Polly* (Geneva).

George Newton-Fitzgerald Wig-Maker

George Newton-Fitzgerald studied at the Birmingham Conservatoire graduating with a 1st class degree. Upon leaving he joined



Mary-Jean O'Doherty

the cast of *Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* playing the role of Reuben / Butler, and on occasions, Jacob. Operatic roles include Dick Deadeye / Carpenter *HMS Pinafore* for D'Oyly Carte Opera Company; Herman *Les contes d'Hoffmann* and Count Ceprano *Rigoletto* for Mid Wales Opera; Baron Zeta *The Merry Widow* for Columbia Artistes; Marullo *Rigoletto* for European Chamber Opera; Aeneas *Dido and Aeneas* for the Ukraine State Opera. George is a member of WNO's Chorus where roles have included Uncle Yakuside *Madama Butterfly*, Old Gypsy *Il trovatore*, Flora's Servant / The Messenger *La traviata*, Wig-Maker *Ariadne auf Naxos* and Sciarbone *Tosca*. He has also worked with Chris de Burgh as his principal backing singer, both in the studio and on tour.

Mary-Jean O'Doherty Naïad

Australian soprano, Mary-Jean O'Doherty was the first recipient of the Australian International Opera Award (2008), a scholarship to study at



Patricia Orr

the acclaimed Cardiff University's Cardiff International Academy of Voice, in Wales, directed by the renowned tenor Dennis O'Neill, CBE. In February 2010 she performed the role of the Queen of the Night in Opera Ddraig's production of *The Magic Flute* in Cardiff.

Other engagements include the role of Carolina in CIAV's production of *Il matrimonio segreto* in Barga, Italy (2009); the role of Galatea in Pacific Opera's production of von Suppé's *Gorgeous Galatea* in Sydney and Young Heidi in the Production Company's production of Sondheim's *Follies* in Melbourne (2008).

Mary-Jean was a finalist for the Australian Singing Competition Mathy Award (2007). In 2011, Mary-Jean will be performing the role of Gilda in Prague State Opera's new production of *Rigoletto*.

Patricia Orr Dryad

Patricia Orr studied at Glasgow University, the RCM and the National Opera Studio and continues to study with Anne Mason.



Philip Pooley

Opera credits include Laura *Iolanta* (Opera Holland Park); Sorceress *Dido and Aeneas*, Orimeno *Erismena* (English Touring Opera); *Enfant L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, Bianca *The Rape of Lucretia*, Prince Orlovsky *Die Fledermaus* (RCM); title role *Tolomeo* (London Handel Society); Yolande in Maconchy's *The Sofa*, cover Julia *The Departed* (Independent Opera); cover Tisbe *La Cenerentola* and Flora *La traviata* (Scottish Opera) and cover Rosina *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (ENO). Recent and future engagements include Second Lady *The Magic Flute* (English Touring Opera); Varvara *Katya Kabanova* (Opera Holland Park and cover for English National Opera); cover Maddalena *Rigoletto* (ENO); Hippolyta *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Garsington Opera); *The Dream of Gerontius* with the Bach Choir. In 2010 the Friends of Opera Holland Park named Patricia Best Female in a Supporting Role for *Katya Kabanova*. In 2011 she will sing Beppe *L'Amico Fritz* for Opera Holland Park. Patricia has recently recorded the role of Brangwain *The Queen of Cornwall* by Rutland

Boughton, with the New London Orchestra.

Philip Pooley Officer

Philip Pooley was born in Birmingham. A former St. Paul's Cathedral chorister he studied at Christ Church College, Oxford and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama under Theresa Goble. Much of his early career was spent singing for early music ensembles, including The Sixteen, The English Concert, The Academy of Ancient Music, The Cardinal's Musick, the Huelgas Ensemble and the Choir of Brompton Oratory. In 2003 Philip joined the Chorus of WNO after seasons at De Vlaamse Opera, the Royal Opera House and Glyndebourne Festival Opera. Concert performances include *The Evangelist* in Bach's *St John Passion* in Groningen, The Netherlands; Vaughan-Williams' *Serenade to Music* in St John's Smith Square; Vaughan-Williams' *On Wenlock Edge* in the Holywell Music Rooms in Oxford; Britten's *War Requiem* at the Fairfield Hall, Croydon. Roles include The Mayor *Albert Herring* for GSMD;



Robert Poulton

Ferrando *Così fan tutte*, Alfredo *La traviata* for Surrey Opera; Mime *Das Rheingold* for The Ring Project; Officer *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Pargignon *La bohème* and Giuseppe *La traviata* for WNO.

Robert Poulton Music Master

Robert Poulton studied at GSMD and National Opera Studio. He made his professional debut singing Ferryman *Curlew River* (BBC TV) and spent much of his early career at Glyndebourne, winning the John Christie Award and Esso/GTO Award. Roles include Count Almaviva *Figaro's Wedding*, Ned Keene *Peter Grimes*, Leander *The Love for Three Oranges*, Don Alfonso *Così fan tutte*, Chorus *The Capture of Troy*, Animal Tamer / Acrobat *Lulu* (ENO); Ned Keene, Starek *Jenůfa*, Vicar *Albert Herring*, Minskman *Flight* (Glyndebourne); Figaro *Le nozze di Figaro*, Prus *The Makropoulos Case*, Golaud *Pélleas et Mélisande*, Marcello *La bohème*, Germont *La traviata* (GTO); Peter *Hansel and Gretel* (WNO; Opera Northern Ireland); Leporello *Don Giovanni*, Don Magnifico *La Cenerentola*, title role



Eric Roberts

Falstaff (WNO); Figaro (Scottish Opera); Leander, Germont, Podesta *Thieving Magpie* (Opera North); Falstaff, Leporello, Bartolo *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Garsington); Bartolo, Eugene Onegin, Don Magnifico (Grange Park); Baron Douphol *La traviata* (ROH); Harasta *Cunning Little Vixen*, Punch *Punch and Judy*, Starek (Netherlands Opera); Don Giovanni, Prus, Leander (Opera Zuid); Minskman (Vlaamse Opera; Adelaide Festival).

Creation of roles in contemporary operas includes Judith Weir's *The Vanishing Bridegroom* (Scottish Opera); Roderick Williams' *The Juniper Tree* (Munich Biennale; Almeida); David Sawyer's *From Morning to Midnight* (ENO).

Recent and future plans include Marquis *La traviata*, Benoit / Alcindoro *La bohème*, Prince Arjuna *Satyagraha* (ENO); Scarpia *Tosca*, Forester *The Cunning Little Vixen*, Falstaff, Popoloni *Bluebeard* (Grange Park); Germont (Opera Holland Park); Harasta (Netherlands Opera); Don Magnifico (Gran Teatre del Liceu); Golaud (OTC); baritone roles *Death in Venice* (Salzburger

Landestheater); Marco *Gianni Schicchi*, Baron Douphol (ROH); Ortel *Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg* (Glyndebourne).

Eric Roberts Major-Domo

Eric Roberts studied at Royal Manchester College of Music with Gwilym Gwalchmai. Roles include Papageno *The Magic Flute* (debut), Falke *Die Fledermaus*, Shelkalov *Boris Godunov*, Novice's Friend *Billy Budd*, Guglielmo *Così fan tutte* (WNO); Apollo *Orfeo*, Thoas *Iphigènia in Tauris* (Kent Opera); Figaro / Count *The Marriage of Figaro* (Opera 80, founder member); Yeletsky *The Queen of Spades* (New Sussex Opera); Tobias Mill Rossini's *Il Cambiale di Matrimonio*, Mountarat *Iolanthe*, Trinity Moses *The Rise and Fall of Mahagonny*, Bartolo *The Barber of Seville*, Redburn *Billy Budd* (Scottish Opera); Elviro *Xerxes*, King of Scotland *Ariodante*, Ormonte *Partenope* (Sadler's Wells); Bartolo, Jupiter *Orpheus in the Underworld*, Don Alfonso, Don Isaacs *The Duenna*, Sir Robert Cecil *Gloriana*, Papageno, Mr Gedge *Albert Herring* (Opera North); Ko-Ko *The*



Stephen Rooke

Mikado, Mayor *Christmas Eve*, multi roles *Pacific Overtures* (ENO); Benoit / Alcindoro *La bohème* (Glyndebourne); Montroc *Un Giorno di Regno*, Don Andres *La Pêrichole* (Buxton Festival); Jack Point, Lord Chancellor *Iolanthe*, Ko-Ko, Major General *The Pirates of Penzance*, Sir Joseph Porter (D'Oyly Carte); Bartolo (Brisbane Lyric Opera); Elder Son *The Prodigal Son* (La Fenice); baritone roles *Death in Venice* (Flanders Opera); Major General (Vancouver Opera); Faninal (Spoleto Festival); Don Magnifico *La Cenerentola* (Opera Zuid; Opera Theatre Company; Frankfurt). Recent and future plans include Bartolo (WNO; Opera Holland Park); Psychiatrist *One Touch of Venus* (Opera North; Ravenna Festival); Ko-Ko (ENO); Dulcamara (Grange Park); Don Magnifico (Frankfurt).

Stephen Rooke Dancing Master

Born in Newport, Gwent, Stephen Rooke studied at Royal Northern College of Music. Awards include Sir Anthony Lewis Memorial Prize, Webster Booth Award, Alexander Young Award, Curtis Gold Medal for Singing, Clonter



Ricardo Tamura

Singer of the Year Award, 1990. At college roles included Ferrando *Così fan tutte*, Oronte *Alcina*. Stephen was awarded Eric Vietheer Prize by Glyndebourne Festival Opera. Roles include Števa *Jenůfa*, Augustin Moser *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (WNO); Pilade *Ermione*, Chaplitsky *Pique Dame*, Malcolm *Macbeth* (Glyndebourne Festival); Jenik *The Makropoulos Case* (GFO at Brooklyn Academy of Music); Ferrando, Grimoaldo *Rodelinda*, Don Ottavio *Don Giovanni* (GTO); St Brioche *The Merry Widow* (ROH); Forsyth / Captain Fonnegra in the world première of David Homes' *Friend of the People*, Percy Shelley in the world première of *Monster* (Scottish Opera); Count Elemer *Arabella* (Opera North); Tito *La clemenza di Tito* (ENO); Tom Rakewell *The Rake's Progress* (ETO); Emilio *Partenope* (Early Music Company, Buxton and Convent Garden Festivals); Fenton *Falstaff*, Macduff *Macbeth* (City of Birmingham Opera); The Gardener *The Garden*, Mario Cavaradossi *Exposition of a Picture* (Mecklenburgh Opera); Sam *Susannah* (Midlands

Art Centre); Musil *Broken Strings*, Pilgrim 3 *Snatched by the Gods* (Almeida Festival; Scottish Opera); Ende *Esclarmonde* (Chelsea Opera Group); Florestan *Fidelio* (Opera Theatre Company). Stephen also has extensive concert experience.

Ricardo Tamura Bacchus

The Brazilian tenor Ricardo Tamura had just started a promising scientific career after graduating at age 21 in Geology and Physics at the University of Sao Paulo, when an unexpected sequence of events brought him to the operatic stage. Since his debut in Kassel, Germany – following vocal studies in the Juilliard School in New York and the International Opera Studio in Zurich – he has acquired an enormous and diversified repertoire, ranging from roles like Alfredo *La traviata* to Canio *Pagliacci*, from Gounod's *Faust* to Luigi *Il tabarro*, and has appeared in many of the most important opera houses in Continental Europe, including, for example, the Arena di Verona. He was selected



Owen Webb

as one of 29 opera personalities to appear in the book 'Life in Opera' from Amadeus Press (2009), in the company of names such as Plácido Domingo, Samuel Ramey and Anna Netrebko, to name just a few. Since his 2009 debut as Bacchus *Ariadne auf Naxos*, this has become one of his most requested roles, along with his other favourites Otello, Radames *Aida*, Calaf *Turandot*, Cavaradossi *Tosca* and Don José *Carmen*. WNO's production of *Ariadne auf Naxos* will mark his debut in Wales and the UK.

Owen Webb Harlequin

Owen was brought up in Pontlliw, South Wales. He studied at Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama with Beatrice Unsworth where he won numerous awards. His present teacher is Stephen Roberts. At Welsh National Opera, he was an Associate Artist and the recipient of the Schäfer and Chris Ball bursaries during 2005/2006. Roles include Ortel *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *The Song Contest of the Birds* and



Stephen Wells

Beasts by Mervyn Burtch, First Apprentice *Wozzeck*, Dançaïre *Carmen*, baritone *Seven Deadly Sins*, Schaunard *La bohème*, Masetto *Don Giovanni*, Marullo *Rigoletto*, Cappadocian *Salome*, 1st Officer *The Carmelites*, Kuligin *Katya Kabanova*, Helmsman *Tristan und Isolde*, Official Registrar *Madam Butterfly* (WNO). Other roles include Sweeney Todd, Papageno *The Magic Flute*, Zurga *The Pearl Fishers*, Escamillo *Carmen*, Guglielmo *Così fan tutte*, Dr Falke *Die Fledermaus*, Seraphin *Veronique*, Lord Tristan *Martha*. In addition to main house productions, Owen performs and leads many workshops for WNO MAX in both mainstream and special needs. Recent projects include *Through Listening Eyes* which was made into a DVD and won Best Short Film at the Calgary Film Festival, Canada; *The Merman King*, which has also been made into a DVD. Owen also has extensive concert experience. Future engagements include *Eyes Open* (Short opera film) and *Dumbworld* (New Production) both by Brian Irvine in Belfast; Opera Gala with Royal Philharmonic Orchestra;

Eisenstein (cover) *Die Fledermaus* (WNO).

Stephen Wells Lackey

Stephen Wells received his musical training in New Zealand and at the RNCM in Manchester where he was recipient of the Brigitte Fassbaender Lieder Prize. He studied singing with Neil Howlett, Patrick McGuigan and Enid Hartle, and has worked on roles and repertoire with Sergei Leiferkus and Andreas Scholl. He has sung with Wellington City Opera, Opera 74, Lakeland Opera, Bel Canto Opera, Claxton Opera, Guildford Opera, Opera Holland Park, Opera Les Azurieles, Onafhankelijke Toneel (Netherlands), Scottish Ballet and Opera North. Operatic roles include Count *Le nozze di Figaro*, Guglielmo *Così fan tutte*, Speaker *Die Zauberflöte*, Smirnov *The Bear*, Plunkett *Martha*, Eugene *Onegin*, Musiklehrer *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Dulcamara *The Elixir of Love*, Riccardo *The Night Bell*, Danilo *The Merry Widow*, Sid *La fanciulla del West*. He has also performed and recorded frequently with the BBC Singers, BBC Daily

Service, Geoffrey Mitchell Choir and Manchester Cathedral Choir. He has appeared as a soloist with numerous choirs and choral societies in the UK in works including Monteverdi's *Vespers*, the Bach *Passions*, *Messiah*, *Jephtha*, *Theodora*, *Carmina Burana*, *The Apostles*, *Sea Drift* and the *War Requiem*. Stephen joined the Chorus of WNO in June 2009 where roles have included Usher *Rigoletto* and also this season Second Prisoner *Fidelio*.

Orchestra of WELSH NATIONAL OPERA

Leader David Adams

Violin

David Adams
Lowri Porter
Martin Kegelman
Robert Tonkin
Donald McNaught
Ann Jones

Viola

Philip Heyman
Cédric David
Barry Friend
Louise Brodrick

Cello

Rosie Biss
Christopher Hodges
Alexandra Robinson
Simon Davison

Double Bass

Josie Ellis
Mary Condliffe

Flute

Jonathan Burgess
Nicola Dowton

Oboe

Catriona MacKinnon
David Probert

Clarinet

Leslie Craven
Daniel Rye

Bassoon

Stephen Marsden
Christopher Vale

Horn

Angus West
Donald Clist

Trumpet

Dean Wright

Bass Trombone

Alan Swain

Timpani

Patrick King

Percussion

Jonathan Helm
Andrew Cookson
Nick Baron

Harp

Katherine Thomas
Ceri Wynne Jones

Piano

Stephen Wood

Harmonium

James Southall

Celeste

Anthony Negus

Chorus of WELSH NATIONAL OPERA

Chorus Master Stephen Harris

Sopranos

Meriel Andrew
Anitra Blaxhall
Paula Bradbury
Megan Llewellyn Dorke
Claire Hampton
Fiona Harrison
Rosie Hay
Samantha Hay
Emma Mary Llewellyn
Laura Pooley

Mezzos

Amanda Baldwin
Neda Bizzarri
Jessica Handley Greaves
Helen Greenaway
Dorothy Hood
Sian Meinir
Nicola Morgan
Sarah Pope

Tenors

Simon Crosby Buttle
Michael Clifton-Thompson
Simon Curtis
Paul Gyton
Philip Lloyd Holtam
Howard Kirk
Gareth Lloyd
Huw Llywelyn
Philip Pooley
Cârthaigh Quill

Basses

Julian Boyce
Laurence Cole
Jasey Hall
Martin Lloyd
Philip Lloyd-Evans
Alastair Moore
George Newton-Fitzgerald
Jack O'Kelly
James Robinson-May
Stephen Wells