

BRONX

Dutch National Opera Academy

In collaboration with the Early Music Departments of
Conservatorium van Amsterdam & The Royal Conservatoire of The Hague

Cleopatra e Cesare

Dramma per musica in three acts by Carl Heinrich Graun

Libretto by Giovanni Gualberto Bottarelli after Corneille's "La Mort de Poppée"

First performed at Königliche Hofoper Berlin 07. December 1742

First performance of this production: Kees van Baarenzaal, The Hague 01. December 2021

Further performances 03. & 05. December 2021

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The Cast

Cleopatra, <i>Queen of Egypt</i>	Kris Ng*	
Cesare	Maria Koshiishi	
Cornelia, <i>Pompeo's widow</i>	Maria Koroleva	<i>01. & 05. December</i>
	Idil Kutay *	<i>03. December</i>
Tolomeo, <i>Cleopatra's brother</i>	Gabe Clarke	<i>01. & 05. December</i>
	Theodor Uggla	<i>03. December</i>
Arsace, <i>Arabic Prince, Cesare's rival</i>	Lucie van Ree	<i>01. & 05. December</i>
	Marion Dumeige *	<i>03. December</i>
Lentulo, <i>Tribune and Cesare's Friend</i>	Tinka Pypker *	
Achilla, <i>Egyptian Prince, Tolomeo's friend</i>	Michal Karski	<i>01. & 05. December</i>
	Einar Gudmundsson	<i>03. December</i>
Sesto Pompeo, <i>Cornelia's son</i>	Noëlle Drost	<i>01. & 05. December</i>
	Sharon Tadmor **	<i>03. December</i>

* DNOA graduate

** student of the Royal Conservatoire The Hague

Duration ca. three hours with one fifteen minute interval

*The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment in the auditorium are forbidden
Members of the audience are requested to turn off all mobile phones and digital alarms*

Creative Team

Jonathan Peter Kenny *conductor*

James Conway *director*

Luca Andrea Stappers *set & costume design*

Tim van't Hof *lighting design*

Production Credits

Aristide Moari *assistant conductor*

Onno Heerlien *assistant director & stage manager*

Marisa Grande *embodiment coach*

Mirsa Adam, Marta Liebana *repetiteurs*

Valentina di Taranto *language coaching*

Astrid Vreeken, Aurora Klugt *hair & makeup*

Sophie de Groen, Sanne Kamp *costume design assistance & wardrobe*

Manfred Kokmeijer *production manager*

Joop de Jong, Lukas Petow *technical manager*

Waut Panis, Joost Smit *lighting operator*

Tom van Hooff, Bart Vliex *Kees van Barenzaal technical team*



Orchestra

A collaboration between the Early Music Departments of the Conservatorium van Amsterdam & the Royal Conservatoire The Hague.

Kees Koelmans *Acting Head of Early Music – Conservatorium van Amsterdam*

Teunis van der Zwart *Head of Early Music – The Royal Conservatoire The Hague*

Erik van Lith *Coordinator of Early Music – Conservatorium van Amsterdam*

Brigitte Rebel *Coordinator of Early Music – The Royal Conservatoire The Hague*

Andrew Wong *Concert Master* | Tuuli Korte | Hanna Crudele | Iris Kengen | Anna Vidal
Farion *violins I*

Alyssa Wright | MengHan Wu | Fátima Hernández Silva | Tianyi Huang *violins II*

Maria Garcia Sanchez | Alba Meza *violas*

Gied van Oorschot | Jin Nakamura *cellos* Ron Veprik *double bass*

Anezka Sejnohova | Anežka Levová *flutes* Beto Caserio | Brian Lyons *oboes*

Laura Audonnet | Rianne Helmus *bassoons* Felix Foster | Athiná Drakonakis *horns*

Diogo António da Costa Marques *timpani* Katerina Manakova | Rafael Arjona Ruz *Lutes*

Sae Goto | Aristide Moari *harpsichords*



Synopsis

Background

Cesare has chased his defeated rival Pompey to the shores of Egypt; there Cleopatra and her younger brother Tolomeo contest for the throne. Tolomeo has forged an alliance with Pompey, but before the opera begins Tolomeo betrays him, and arranges his death with the agreement of Cesare.

Act I

Cesare is acclaimed in Egypt. Cornelia, wife of Pompey, comes with her young son to claim the property and privilege of her defeated husband – but before she can speak, Tolomeo's ally Achilla presents Cesare with the head of Pompey.

At this moment Cornelia realises Cesare's guilty association with her husband's death. Cesare, offended by the indiscretion, treats Tolomeo and Achilla as barbarians. Both are angry and defiant. Cornelia calls on Cesare to avenge her husband's ignoble death.

Cleopatra arrives, and attempts to court Cesare's favour in a different way to her brother. Cesare is smitten. This romantic introduction is observed by Arsace, a young noble to whom Cleopatra was promised. Arsace promises his services to Cesare, but in secret he seeks to assassinate him; Arsace then joins forces with Tolomeo and Achilla.

Cornelia prepares to kill herself as she carries the urn of her husband's ashes. Cesare interrupts her, and advises against excessive behaviour. At the same time Lentulo arrives and calls on Cesare to arm himself to subdue the rebelling Egyptians.

Act II

In the course of the rebellion, Tolomeo is taken prisoner while Achilla and Arsace escape.

The victorious Cesare turns to Cleopatra, who urges him to marry her. Though Cesare is overwhelmed by desire, Lentulo advises that the Roman senate would not accept a barbarian consort. Cesare agrees that a letter should be sent to the senate explaining that the marriage is purely tactical. Lentulo regards infatuation – and all emotionally driven conduct – as folly.

Interval

Act II (continued)

Disappointed in her son Sesto, and in Cesare, Cornelia decides to kill the imprisoned Tolomeo herself. Cesare stops her, and she raves. Cesare then chastises his prisoner, but Tolomeo replies with spirit that Cesare is a tyrant and oppressor of peoples all over the world, whose days are numbered. Cesare is moved to free the impetuous youth as an indication of his clemency. Tolomeo is unmoved, and resolved to rebel again against the Roman.

Cleopatra invites Cesare to marry her according to the rites of Egypt. Scandalised but seduced, Cesare agrees. The ceremony is interrupted by Tolomeo, Achilla and Arsace, who topple the Egyptian idols. Cleopatra and the Romans are outraged.

Act III

Tolomeo, Achilla and Arsace are Cesare's prisoners. He is bewildered by their defiance and made furious by their contempt.

Cornelia again contrives Tolomeo's death – this time with success.

Cleopatra has intercepted the letter to the Roman senate, describing her as a trophy to be brought to Rome. Her grief tells her that she actually loved Cesare, and that love turns to anger. In her despair she still does not recognise the suffering her own dismissal brought to faithful Arsace.

Cleopatra confronts Cesare with his betrayal – and he excuses himself, saying the letter was a deception to be practised on the Senate. He begs Lentulo to win her back for him. Lentulo agrees, and is amused by Cleopatra's easy persuasion – and at the deceptions enjoyed and suffered by all lovers.

Cleopatra and Cesare are reconciled at last. Cornelia is left unsatisfied, as she is not avenged on Cesare himself. Cesare's general pardon of the conspirators affects no one. Rome and Egypt are in harmony, for the moment.



Carl Heinrich Graun (1704–1759)

Born in Wahrenbrück in the Margraviate of Brandenburg, Carl Heinrich Graun (7 May 1704 – 8 August 1759), is regarded as the most important German composer of Italian opera of his time.

In 1714, he followed his brother, Johann Gottlieb Graun, to the school of the Kreuzkirche, Dresden, where he sang in the Dresdner Kreuzchor and the chorus of the Dresden Opera. He studied singing with Christian Petzold and composition with Johann Christoph Schmidt.

In 1724, Graun moved to Braunschweig, singing at the opera house and writing six operas for the company. In 1735, Graun moved to Rheinsberg in Brandenburg, after he had written the opera *Lo specchio della fedeltà* for the marriage of the then crown prince Frederick (the Great) and Elisabeth Christine in Schloss Salzdahlum in 1733. He was Kapellmeister to Frederick the Great from his ascension to the throne in 1740 until Graun's death nineteen years later in Berlin.

Opera in Berlin 1742

More than anything else, King Frederick William I's death on 31 May 1740, was a great liberation for Crown Prince Frederick. His father had forbidden him to play the flute, considered the arts a waste of money, and had savagely cut back on court music. Although Frederick was able to gather a modest circle of musicians around him in his small Rheinsberg Palace about 100 kilometres north of Berlin, he could only dream of opera performances there.

Immediately after his accession to the throne, he commissioned his friend Georg Wenzeslaus von Knobelsdorff to build a magnificent opera house. It was the first free-standing opera house ever built; until then court operas had always been part of the palaces. The impatient king did not want to wait for the completion of the new building, so the still-unfinished house was inaugurated on the occasion of the carnival season on 7 December 1742 with *Cleopatra e Cesare* by his court composer Carl Heinrich Graun.

Graun had come to Rheinsberg from Braunschweig in 1735, influenced the musical tastes of the Crown Prince there, and followed the new King to Berlin. There had been a royal orchestra there for the previous 200 years, making today's Staatskapelle Berlin one of the oldest orchestras in Europe.

It was not until the time of Frederick II that the ensemble was significantly enlarged, enabling it to play lavish baroque operas that could stand up to international comparison.

Francesco Algarotti was commissioned to engage the best singers in Italy for Berlin, and was later elevated to the peerage by the King for his success. During this period, the castrati Porporino and Felice Salimbeni came to Berlin and were paid top salaries. In addition to singing in opera performances, which only took place during the short carnival and ball season, they also had to perform for members of the royal family in private.

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, the eldest son of Johann Sebastian, also came to Berlin at this time, and fulfilled his duties in the opera as a harpsichordist. Although the court opera house on Unter den Linden was not completed until ten months after its opening with *Cleopatra e Cesare*, it quickly became the centre of festive self-expression for the Baroque royal court.

Frederick II held grand celebrations here, wanting to impress his court company as well as his international guests. During the opera, the King sat in a comfortable chair in the centre of the stalls, while the officers of the army surrounded him, standing; the nobles were assigned seats in the upper circles according to their importance. Commoners were allowed to attend the performances, but tickets could not be purchased; instead, access was granted only to Berliners with good shoes, which were considered a sign of wealth and education.

In the opera house, they were then allowed to enjoy the music and at the same time catch a glimpse of the glamorous world of the nobility, which was otherwise closed to them.

Ornamentation in the Baroque

Ornamentation in music of the baroque is one of the most complex elements with which 21st century performers and listeners have to engage. After the rigorously detailed scores of Verdi, Puccini and Stravinsky, indicating precisely how the music should be interpreted, it is difficult to return to less consistently marked music and attempt to understand what exactly was the knowledge shared between composer and performer. Not all was written down since virtuosos in the 18th century (both singers and instrumentalists) considered themselves the equal of the composer, co-creators of the music, a space having been left purposely for their artistry. As such, delivering music of this period without the requisite performer input renders the music incomplete and worse, dangerously naked.

As one would expect of a fleeting, improvised art, written examples as to how to elaborate are scarce. A few treatises have survived, the most interesting for vocal music being Pier Francesco Tosi's *Observations on the Florid Song*, a treatise on singing, style and ornamentation dedicated to the Earl of Peterborough. Directed at both teacher and student, it emphasises the need for study, technique, and good taste.

Tosi insisted that ornamentation was not an optional extra but crucial to performance: "Passages or graces being the principal ornaments in singing and the most favourite delight of the judicious, it is proper that the singer be very judicious to learn this art". Singers must project themselves onto the music – each interpretation being unique to that performer – and all choices must be governed by good taste (which is learned and acquired). The art of singing laid in brilliant, flexible divisions (dividing a longer note into several shorter notes), the most esteemed and admired quality being expressiveness. The aim was to increase the affekt (passion) of the aria whilst demonstrating technical skill and musical intelligence: "There are five principal qualifications which will bring him to admirable perfection, viz, judgement, invention, time, art, and taste".

He urged his readers to boldness and daring (and this of course was an age of flamboyance and display), remarking several times that too many ornaments is preferable to too few: "a deficiency of ornaments displeases as much as the too great abundance of them; but of the two he will dislike the former most, though it gives less offence (the latter being easier to be amended)". Good taste can be learnt, imagination is harder to acquire.

He indicated that cadenzas should be performed only where there is a fermata (not at any final cadence), and sung in a single breath. He administered a firm rebuke on the composing of embellishments at the keyboard, insisting that vocal graces must "proceed from the heart" and come directly from the voice: "The instrumental performers of some ability imagine that the beautiful graces and flourishes, with their nimble fingers, will have the same effect when executed with the voice, but it will not do!"

When addressing how to ornament the tripartite da capo aria¹ he is at his most revealing: "In the 1st (part) they require nothing but the simplest ornaments, of a good taste and few, that the composition may remain simple, plain and pure; in the 2nd they expect that to this purity some artful graces be added by which the judicious may hear that the ability of the singer is greater; and in repeating the air, he that does not vary it for the better is no great master."

1 *Italian opera seria used as its prime building block the da capo aria. Its form can be outlined as follows: 1st part: orchestral ritornello (introduction), vocal entry, ritornello; 2nd part: often voice and continuo (harpsichord and cello) alone, modulating to relative key; 3rd part: da capo (from the top), that is a reprise of the 1st section with elaborate vocal ornamentation. Composers were happy to use this form, the dramatic convention of his time, since it suited the demands of the singer, librettist, composer and audience.*

We would expect Tosi to recommend decorating the 3rd part (da capo), but it is surprising to modern performers that he requires ornaments in the 2nd section (which is heard only once). Even more surprising is that he advises against adding too many ornaments to the 1st part. Clearly, singers were routinely adding what Tosi regarded as too many ornaments to the first section of the aria.

Proof of this obligation to elaborate is provided by Handel himself in his ornaments for *Ottone*, one of the few existing examples of written ornamentation. It is hard to know why Handel wrote these embellishments, since no self-respecting singer would permit such an intrusion. The arias, all for Teofane, are transposed down a fourth from soprano to alto and in none of the known revivals was this role sung by an alto. The great Handel scholar Winton Dean speculated they were prepared in an emergency for an inexperienced English singer and their survival is a fortunate accident. Whilst incomplete, they are very instructive, especially in the Act 1 aria "Affanni del pensier".

As singers still do, Handel has scribbled ornaments onto the vocal line of the stave, and whilst pitches are clear, rhythm is harder to decipher. What amazes is the abundance and complexity of his version, full of flexible divisions enhancing and reflecting the lines, a bold use of rhythm and some surprising harmonic clashes. He builds bridges across lines, filling in rests, creating larger more expressive units. He extends the tessitura (vocal range) slightly at the climactic point but does not rewrite the music into a higher key, make extreme excursions above the stave, or finish on a high note as sometimes heard today. Lines begin and end on original pitches and movement is predominantly stepwise and shapely, apart from one emotional leap of a tenth. The line is not distorted, but amplified to a greater expressiveness. It is an invitation to boldness but not a license to the grotesque.

The second section is generously embellished as Tosi indicated. As Monteverdi did in "Possente spirito" in his *Orfeo*, Handel shows the basic vocal line, then shows us the type of thing he is expecting to hear. The lavishness of Handel's ornamentation suggests that we are much too puritanical in our approach today.

On a couple of occasions I have heard celebrated singers (both tenors, but I'm sure that is coincidental ...) declare that certain arias are "too beautiful to ornament". This seems to me to misinterpret fundamentally the composer's intentions, since arias have been composed presuming performer's intervention. This reluctance comes probably from an exaggerated respect for what is perceived to be the original, but the mistake is to think of a da capo aria as "theme and variation". Instead the music should be performed in a florid style from the outset (there is a clue in Tosi's title). Singers ornamented freely right up to Rossini, Bellini and Donizetti (and not just in repeated sections) – Rossini railed against the distorting of his music and so wrote elaborate fioriture himself since it remained a

crucial part of the style of the day. There have always been performers of questionable taste of course but that should not prevent us from being daring.

Singers of the 18th century sang only music of their time: the original Academy of Ancient Music was set up to perform "ancient music" – music more than ten years old. They possessed a deep understanding of their music and took pride in varying each presentation. It would be naive to imagine certain preparation did not occur since all improvisation contains an element of planning or chaos would occur.

One can improvise within a familiar framework or with those with whom you are familiar, and after all, if you had an important debut it would be foolish not to think ahead how to dazzle the audience and ensure a triumph, and foolhardy to attempt to do so without preparation! Tosi suggests beginning with small, "natural" ornaments whilst examining where more ambitious, "artificial" ornaments might be added. In this way: "he will make new discoveries, inventing new graces from whence, after comparing them well together, he will choose the best, and will make use of them as long as he thinks them so. From these he will proceed on to an almost infinite number of graces, so that he will increase his store of embellishments in a style that will be entirely his own".

The accomplished singer therefore, accumulated a library of possibilities from intense knowledge of the music and made choices in performance, depending upon the situation and how daring they felt. Today's singers have a harder job, since they need to be proficient at the drop of a hat in music from the 16th century up to the present day. Few have the opportunity to immerse themselves in music of a specific period only. Over the course of the rehearsal period we have worked with the singers of DNOA, encouraging them to learn to ornament the arias and tailor them to their own voices.

Jonathan Peter Kenny

Conductor, Cleopatra e Cesare

About DNOA

The **Dutch National Opera Academy** is a two-year master's programme for highly talented young opera singers focusing on the integration of singing and acting. DNOA graduates receive a Master of Music diploma and are thoroughly trained to be creative singing actors who are fully committed in their work and preparation for the many challenges of the professional field.

DNOA is a partnership of the *Conservatorium van Amsterdam* and the *Royal Conservatoire in The Hague*.

Paul McNamara *Artistic Leader*

Peter Nilsson *Head of Music*

Daniel van Klaveren *Drama*

Marisa Grande *Embodiment & Performative Body*

Klaus Bertisch *Master Research*

Mirsa Adami, Marta Liébana *Music staff*

Manfred Kokmeijer *Production & Operations Manager*

Cheuk Yan (Kris) Ng *Administrative Assistant (interim)*

Board: Janneke van der Wijk, Henk van der Meulen
For more information visit www.opera-academy.nl



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About the Performers & Creative Team

For more details about the current DNOA singers please see <https://www.opera-academy.nl/our-students>

Noëlle Drost *soprano* – The Netherlands – *Sesto*
Currently an undergraduate student of the Royal Conservatoire The Hague.

Performances credits include concerts with Atheneum Chamber Orchestra (Nieuwe Kerk in The Hague), J. C. Bach *Carattaco* (title role) with Das Neue Mannheimer Orchester, De Majo *La gara delle grazie* (Aglaiia) at the Amsterdam Grachtenfestival and appearances in the recital hall of the Concertgebouw and in the Hertz-zaal in TivoliVredenburg. She has been heard on Radio 4.

Awards include the Prinses Christina Competition (2019) and Classic Young Masters (Laureate).

Idil Kutay *soprano* – Turkey – DNOA graduate (2021) – *Cornelia*
Previous studies Royal Conservatoire The Hague (Bachelor of Music).

Performance credits include Mozart Gala (Residentie orkest/DNOA), Rossini *Petite messe solennelle* (Noorderkerk 's-Gravenz), Obrador's *Canciones clásicas españolas* and a Mozart Gala with the Residentie Orkest/ DNOA.

Studies supported by Scholarship of Excellence, Royal Conservatoire The Hague (2019-21), Dr. Nejat F. Eczacıbaşı Foundation Music Scholarship (2019-21).

DNOA roles include Adamo *Little Women* (Beth), Viardot *Cendrillon* (title role), Strauss *Die Fledermaus* (Rosalinde), Graun *Cleopatra e Cesare* (Cornelia) as well as Mozart *Così fan tutte* (Fiordiligi) and *La clemenza di Tito* (Vitellia) in productions cancelled due to the pandemic.

Kris Ng *soprano* – Hong Kong – DNOA graduate 2021 – *Cleopatra*
Previous studies at Conservatorium van Amsterdam (Bachelor of Music), The Chinese University of Hong Kong (Bachelor of Arts).

Performance credits include Jeths *Ritratto* (Ensemble) at Dutch National Opera, Bach cantatas (BWV 38, 62, 80) at the Hong Kong Bach Festival, Bach *Markus-Passion* at the Hong Kong Singfest, Mozart *Die Zauberflöte* (Zweite Dame) at the Lyric Opera Studio Weimar as well as appearing regularly in recitals in The Netherlands.



Scholarships include Young Music Maker Radio and Television Hong Kong Radio 4 (2017) K.Wah International Vocal Scholarship Opera Hong Kong.

DNOA roles include Adamo *Little Women* (Amy March), Viardot *Cendrillon* (title role), Strauss *Die Fledermaus* (Adele), Graun *Cleopatra e Cesare* (Cleopatra) and *La clemenza di Tito* (Servilia) in a production cancelled due to the pandemic.

Tinka Pypker *soprano* – The Netherlands – DNOA graduate (2021) – *Lentulo*
Previous studies at Royal Conservatoire The Hague (Bachelor of Music).

Performance credits include Zemlinsky *Der Zwerg* (Zweite Mädchen) at Dutch National Opera, Eyal Margalit *Kijk op voor de val* (Lana) for Opera Forward Festival/DNO, J.S. Bach *Carattaco* (Guideria) with Das Neue Mannheimer Orchestra, Mozart *Die Zauberflöte* (Papagena) at the Pelagian Festival, Monteverdi *L'Orfeo* (La speranza) with Musiktheater Transparent and a Mozart Gala with the Residentie Orkest/DNOA. Her extensive concert repertoire includes work by Bach, Charpentier, Graun, Heinichen, Rameau, Mozart, Berlioz and Andriessen.

DNOA roles include Adamo *Little Women* (Amy March), Viardot *Cendrillon* (Maguelonne), Strauss *Die Fledermaus* (Rosalinde), Graun *Cleopatra e Cesare* (Lentulo) as well as Mozart *Così fan tutte* (Despina) and *La clemenza di Tito* (Annio) in productions cancelled due to the pandemic.

Recent awards include the Miluška Duffková Bursary (2021).

Marion Dumeige *soprano* – France – DNOA graduate (2020) – *Arsace*
Previous studies at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam (Bachelor of Music), Conservatoire de Rennes, France (DEM), Université Rennes, France (B. Mus).

Performance credits include Mozart *Le nozze di Figaro* (Marzellina) at the Grachtenfestival Amsterdam, appearances at the Festival Lyrique de Belle-Île-en-Mer in operas by Massenet & Verdi and a Dutch recital tour as winner of Dutch Classical Talent 2020.

DNOA roles include Handel *Radamisto* (Tigrane), Berkeley *A Dinner Engagement* (Lady Dunmow) as well as Mozart *Così fan tutte* (Fiordiligi) and *La clemenza di Tito* (Vitellia) in productions cancelled due to the pandemic.

Jonathan Peter Kenny *conductor*

Jonathan Peter Kenny is from Liverpool. For English Touring Opera he has conducted *Flavio*, *Xerxes*, *Agrippina*, *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*, *Ottone*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Johannes-Passion*, *B minor Mass*, *Matthäus-Passion*, *Idomeneo* and most recently *Amadigi di Gaula*. Other conducting appearances include *Giulio Cesare*, *Rinaldo*,

Radamisto, Alcina, Serse (Lucca), *The Duchess of Malfi*, (Northampton) *Stabat Mater* (Dorothy Cross/Dublin), *Orfeo, Dido and Aeneas* (Royal College of Music), *Anxiety Fanfare* (Kings Place, Royal Festival Hall, London), Jocelyn Pook and Alice Oswald's oratorio *Memorial* (London Barbican, Adelaide Festival, Brisbane Festival). Digital work includes *Johannes-Passion, Mille regretz, Jonas, Io tacerò, Dido and Aeneas* (ETO at Home). As a singer he has performed for the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, English National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival, Salzburg Festival, Royal Opera Copenhagen, Teatro comunale di Bologna, Glimmerglass New York, at the BBC Proms, and with the Academy of Ancient Music, OAE, English Baroque Soloists, English Concert, RLPO, RSNO, Ulster Orchestra, Gabrieli Consort, with Gardiner, Hickox, Fischer, Parrott, Mortensen, van Immerseel, Bolton, and Bicket. Recordings include: *Matthäus-Passion* (Miller/Goodwin), *Agrippina* (Gardiner), *Buxtehude Cantatas* (van Immerseel) and Puccini *Requiem* (Fontaine). His edition of Handel *Tamerlano* has been produced in Dublin, Melbourne, Lisbon, and London.

James Coway *director*

Canadian-Irish James Conway has been General Director of English Touring Opera for twenty years; his leadership and programming of that company earned an Olivier Award in 2014. For ETO he has directed productions of operas by Monteverdi, Handel, Mozart, Donizetti, Janáček, Puccini, Debussy, Ullmann, Weill, Britten and Tippett, as well as a world premiere by Alexander Goehr. Before coming to ETO he was General Director of Opera Theatre Company in Dublin; his productions for that company travelled to New York (Brooklyn Academy of Music), and to festivals in Melbourne, London, Buxton, Paris, Düsseldorf, Prague, Brno, Lisbon and Porto. Notable among his freelance directing is the long-running production of *The Cunning Little Vixen* at the Janáček Theatre, Brno. After this production of Graun's *Cleopatra e Cesare* for the DNOA, he will return to London to direct new productions of *The Golden Cockerel* (Rimsky) and *Tamerlano* (Handel), and to revive his own productions of *La bohème, Agrippina, Ottone* and *Der Silbersee* (Weill).

Luca Andrea Stappers *design*

Born and raised in The Hague and Rome, Luca is a multi-talented visual theatre maker. After his graduation from Object theatre at the AHK (Amsterdamse Hogeschool voor de Kunsten) in 1995, he joined the artistic team of the Dutch site specific theatre group "het Monsterverbond" with which he performed, designed and directed throughout the Netherlands and abroad over a period of fifteen years. He subsequently returned to the AHK to complete his Master's studies in theatre (2012).

Past credits include the creation of *The Battle for Peace*, a theatre experience for an audience of 14,000 together with soloists, the Metropool Orchestra, Junkie XL and two hundred soldiers for the opening of 'The Year of the Utrecht Treaty' (2013) and the large outdoor spectacle *The Victory of Alkmaar* which he also directed (2017).

As a designer Luca worked for theatre, cabaret and music theatre, amongst others for SOUK, Het balletorkest and de Meervaart. He also created major parts of the art work for *FRIDA* at the Dutch National Ballet and English National Ballet.

In addition to this theatre work, Luca has designed stages for Diesel fashion shows, curated exhibitions for the Catherijneconvent Museum and de Vrijstaat as well as curating the exhibition of science EUREKA.

A guest teacher at the AHK, Vrijstaat and HKU and a member of the artistic team of the St Maarten Parade (an annual community art project with more than thousand participants and a city of Utrecht as audience) for the DNOA Luca has previously designed the set for Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*.

Tim van't Hof *light design*

Tim is an international operating Lighting Designer and Theatre Maker. He graduated from the Theatre Arts programme at the Amsterdam School of the Arts. During which he started designing for the junior company of Toneelgroep Amsterdam; *To be, or no, Hamlet* and *King Lear*. After graduating he has, among many others, collaborated with the Dutch National Opera Academy for *Phaedra*, *Alcina*, *The Rape of Lucretia* and *Radamisto*. Recently Tim completed his Master of Fine Arts from New York University where he operated as the Resident Lighting Designer for the Second Avenue Dance Company. Other credits include; *Quartet* and *Phaedra* (Toneelschuur Haarlem NL), *iHo* (Oostpool NL), *Henry V*, *Victory Garden*, *Welcome Home*, *Together Together* and *Anything Can Be* (NYU New York), *Incognito*, *Bull*, *Our Town* and *Kin* (Playwrights Horizon Downtown, New York) *Time is Love* (Finborough London), *Skyggespill – Shadowmusic* (Norwegian Chamber Orchestra), *Casablanca* (National Tour NL), *Cello Warriors* (European Tour) and *The Nether* (Het Nationale Theater).

Aristide Moari *assistant conductor*

The young French composer, pianist and conductor Aristide Moari studied Ecriture (Harmony, Counterpoint and Renaissance-polyphony) at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Paris. Always exploring areas of musical expression, in 2016 he chose to study orchestral conducting and piano at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam.

During his conducting studies he has proved himself to be a natural leader with interesting ideas and musical stories to tell and he quickly became a go-to person for performances of contemporary or non-traditional music: from conducting symphony orchestras, choirs and ensembles to playing piano in various formations. Since 2018 he has been involved as a répétiteur and assistant conductor at the DNOA.

The pandemic summer of 2020, with its lack of performing opportunities and certainty

about the future of classical music, brought Aristide back to his initial love: composition. He founded the Friday Compositions project with the purpose of sharing the joy of music with an online audience. His Friday Compositions gave birth to more than 30 chamber music pieces for different combinations, from solo double bass to string sextet, including a jazz trio and a recorder quintet.

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Programme Credits

Synopsis – *James Conway*

Opera in Berlin – *Uwe Friedrich, translation by Shirley Apthorp*

Ornamentation in the Baroque – *Jonathan Peter Kenny, an article written originally for ETO*

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