







PELOPIDA

A RECENTLY REDISCOVERED OPERA
BY GIROLAMO ABOS

Inspired by the life of the Theban general Pelopidas, charting his rise from exile to revolutionary hero, the opera is set against the backdrop of political turmoil in ancient Greece. It follows his courageous fight to overthrow tyranny and restore freedom to his city. With themes of loyalty, sacrifice, and justice, Pelopida captures the spirit of resistance in the face of oppression.





Portrait of Alessandro Albani
(attributed to) Ludovico Mazzanti
Circa 1721–24





Kenneth Zammit Tabona

Valletta Baroque Festival
Artistic Director

Girolamo Abos's opera *Pelopida*, was originally commissioned and performed for Rome's Teatro Argentina in 1747. Arias, duos, and trios have been included in concert programmes over the years. However, this is the first time in living memory that the opera will be performed in its entirety. The opera is all about love, honour and betrayal unleashing a terrifying punishment within the perilous world of Ancient Greece, where hope and despair battle for supremacy. The opera is dedicated to one of the most influential prelate statesmen in Rome at the time. One must remember that Rome was a papal city ruled by the pope who was a sovereign prince with his cardinals as ministers.

Cardinal Alessandro Albani (1692–1779) was one of Rome's leading art patrons and collectors and a prominent supporter of artists and intellectuals. He was also a prince in his own right whose collateral descendants still flourish today — the sort of high-ranking patron to whom composers and impresarios commonly dedicated works.

Scholarly cataloguing of mid-18th-century Roman opera shows *Pelopida* listed among a group of stage works whose libretti or performances in 1747 were dedicated or presented “to the cardinal” (entries in tables of the works dedicated to Alessandro Albani). That same scholarship records that the impresario for the Argentina production was Gaetano Roccaforte, who appears in the sources as the person dedicating/issuing the libretto to Albani. This points to Albani acting as the honoured patron.

It has taken at least half a dozen years to realise this dream of mine to stage this extraordinary work at the highest level. Even Covid had a hand in delaying it but at last it will happen and will be presented in a very imaginative way that pays tribute to classical antiquity in a contemporary way.

I am confident that this opera, full of splendid Neapolitan style arias and pyrotechnical *coloratura* will become a staple in the baroque opera world.



Brett Nicholas Brown

Pelopida, Stage Director

When Kenneth Zammit Tabona invited me to direct a long-forgotten opera by Girolamo Abos, I felt I had been handed a precious archaeological artefact unearthed from the dust of time.

Opening the score of *Pelopida*, I wondered whether I would hear echoes of Abos sacred music. Instead, I discovered a trove of heroic visions unmistakably shaped by the Neapolitan school — supple recitatives, eloquent orchestral writing, and arias that fuse virtuosity with expressive clarity — all waiting to be brought back to life upon the stage.

Abos premiered *Pelopida* at Rome's Teatro Argentina in 1747. Appealing to the era's appetite for noble conflicts, moral testing, and high-stakes emotional display, Abos set a libretto by the Roman poet Gaetano Roccaforte, who reshaped the story of the Theban statesman Pelopidas (died 364 BC) within the moral and theatrical architecture of opera seria. What emerged was a drama propelled by revelation and betrayal.

Pelopida, leader of the Theban resistance against the exiled tyrant Pisistrato, has sworn before the gods that no despot shall ever again rule the city. As Egisto's political machinations tighten their grip, *Pelopida*'s son Clito — manipulated through his love for Pisistrato's daughter *Aspasia* — is drawn into a clandestine plot that threatens Theban liberty. *Aspasia* and *Ismene* struggle to save him, while *Oreste* is torn between friendship and civic duty, and *Pelopida*, bound by his oath, finds himself forced to condemn his own child.

Abos score charts these collisions with clarity, deepening the volatile bond between father and son and the equally fragile, impassioned love shared by Clito and *Aspasia* — the emotional heart of the opera.

Two hundred seventy-nine years after its premiere, *Pelopida* reveals that Abos was not merely a master of church music, but an opera composer of sophistication, immediacy, and depth.

For the Valletta Baroque Festival, I have transformed ancient Thebes into a sculpture museum: a place where past and present collide, and where the future can be contemplated amid fragments of curated memory. Within these guarded walls, *Pelopida* and his people negotiate the meaning of their destiny — claiming, displaying, and mythologising the spoils of war as foundations for a Theban identity both fiercely defended and deeply fragile.



Placing Pelopida within a museum allowed me to draw together two kinds of rediscovery: the unearthing of a forgotten opera and the quiet work of preserving cultural memory. Museums remind us that fragments endure when voices fall silent; setting the drama among these imagined relics reveals how stories survive not only through history, but through the care with which we choose to keep them alive.

It is now my pleasure to invite you into this reawakened world, brought to life in a contemporary setting by our splendid cast and the Arianna Art Ensemble under the baton of Maestro Giulio Prandi with Michele Barbieri as Assistant Conductor. My vision has been realised through the lithic design of Anthony Bonnici, the classical evocations of Luke Azzopardi, the illumination of Moritz Zavan, the sculptural physicality of Simon Riccardi-Zani, and the tireless musicianship of Geoffrey Thomas, who created our edition of Abos score.

Returning to direct another opera for Festivals Malta has been a joy, and I extend heartfelt thanks to Francis Agius, CEO of Festivals Malta; Etienne Bonello; Thomas Grima; Monique Saliba; Katriona Grixti; Caroline Agius; Christian Debono; Diogo Cruz Marques; and the entire Festivals Malta team. Teatru Manoel has charmed my soul, and I am grateful to its CEO, Edward Zammit; Artistic Director Adrian Mamo; Daniel Formosa; Dorothy Ebejer Castillo; Graziella Sammut; and all the dedicated departments for their invaluable support.

How much longer might Pelopida have remained silent were it not for Kenneth Zammit Tabona, Artistic Director of the Valletta Baroque Festival, to whom I owe my deepest gratitude. Kenneth's unwavering passion has made Pelopida a reality — a gift of cultural significance not only for the Maltese people, but for lovers of opera across the world.





VALLETTA BAROQUE FESTIVAL

Since its launch in 2013, the Valletta Baroque Festival has treated audiences to a unique event featuring some of the best soloists and ensembles in the baroque music scene. Taking as its main venue one of the oldest working theatres in the world, Teatru Manoel, this prestigious three-week festival also plays out within many wonderful baroque and historical venues, such as St John's Co-Cathedral and San Anton Palace. Organised by Festivals Malta every January, under the artistic direction of Kenneth Zammit Tabona, the festival highlights the enormous versatility of the baroque idiom and its mass appeal. Above all, the festival's strength lies in the wonderful baroque settings that one finds in Valletta and the Maltese archipelago; a precious legacy that each and every one of us Maltese treasure.



Teatru Manoel is one of the many jewels that the Maltese Islands has to offer. Built by the Knights Hospitaller of St John in 1732, this primo esempio of Baroque architecture opened its doors in 1732. Its construction was ordered by Grandmaster Fra António Manoel de Vilhena who ordered its establishment in 1731. Teatru Manoel is one of Europe's oldest working theatres, and is the oldest functioning theatre in the Commonwealth.

Historically speaking, the Teatru Manoel allowed for the performing arts to flourish within the Maltese Islands. Before its construction, performances were relegated to the halls and piano nobiles of the auberges of the order situated in Valletta. The construction of the Teatru Manoel stage brought some of the finest voices, musicians, actors and theatre-makers from the golden days of Baroque to the theatre.

Nowadays, the theatre continues to be a hub that cultivates an appreciation for the performing arts with tailor-made programmes such as Toi Toi which curates performances, workshops and classes particularly targeted towards young people. The theatre also includes a cornucopia of performances throughout the year ranging from opera to dance.





PELOPIDA

LIBRETTO





ATTO PRIMO | ACT ONE

SCENA I | SCENE I

Egisto:

Tebani udiste? A questo soglio al fine, che Pisistrato torni di Creonte è voler. Tebe il riceva, Son questi del re gli ultimi sensi, che a voi spiegar m'impose. Pelopida, che dici?

People of Thebes, have you heard? Creonte has finally decreed that Pisistrato should return to our land. Welcome him to Thebes. These are the King's latest words, which I have been appointed to convey to you. Pelopida, what do you say?

Pelopida:

Tebani udiste? A questo soglio al fine, che Pisistrato torni di Creonte è voler. Tebe il riceva, Son questi del re gli ultimi sensi, che a voi spiegar m'impose. Pelopida, che dici?

You could have caused less suffering to a Theban soul by now. I believe you can change the way you think and speak.

Egisto:

Nò. Si consigli meglio ciascun. Meglio...

No, let everyone receive the best advice possible. Even better...

Pelopida:

Non più! Taci, ed osserva come ognun si consiglia. Tebani, che di nuovo un tiranno in queste mura imperi in avvenir; meco giurate di mai più tolerar. Or voi seguite di Pelopida l'orme, ed il fatal suo giuramento udite: di spegner giura Pelopida per sempre di Pisistrato il nome in quest'arena. Irrevocabil pena di morte stabilisce a chi tentasse di riportar sul trono il tiranno. Ogn'ora, che convinto ne fia, voglio, che mora.

No more! Be silent and observe how each one takes counsel. O Thebans, swear to me that you will never again tolerate a tyrant's reign within these walls. Follow in the footsteps of Pelopida and hear his fatal oath: Pelopida swore to extinguish the name of Pisistrato forever in this arena. An irrevocable death penalty is decreed for anyone who attempts to restore the tyrant to the throne. With every passing hour, I become more convinced that I want him dead.



Oreste:

Ed io la legge, il giuramento eccomi a nome di Tebe a confermar. Prova sicura, pegno del cor, che giura, ecco la destra mia temuto Nume: per noi splenda il tuo lume.

I am here to affirm the law and swear the oath in the name of Thebes upon this altar. To demonstrate my sincere commitment, I raise my right hand before the dreaded god. May your light shine upon us.

Pelopida:

Egisto, in questa guisa Tebe sà consigliarsi.

Egisto, this is how Thebes can advise itself.

Egisto:

Ah, tal disprezzo un re non soffrirà. D'armi un torrente, quando da me saprà...

Ah, such scorn a king will not endure. He will unleash a torrent of arms when he hears from me...

Pelopida:

Taci. Lo sappia. Venga, questo d'armati minacciato torrente: argine ogn'ora la Tebana costanza all'impeto sarà.

Be silent! Let him be informed! Allow this wave of armed men to advance. Theban steadfastness will endure its violence hour after hour.

ARIA:

Digli, che tremi ognora che le giurai vendetta, che del tiranno aspetta da me la morte ancor.

Tell him that I tremble every time I swear vengeance upon him and that the tyrant still awaits death at my hands.



SCENA II | SCENE II

Egisto:

Quanto orgoglio han costoro! Arte non giova, forza non basta a moderarli: e pure non mi sgomento. Il piede ho già tra queste mura: ed oggi spero col differir la mia partenza, il varco aprire al Re. E per l'impresa sol d'un capo m'è d'uopo.

They are filled with pride! Art is futile. Strength alone cannot restrain them, but I remain unfazed. I have already entered these walls, and today I aim to clear the way for the king by delaying my departure. And only one leader remains to be chosen for the venture.

SCENA III | SCENE III

Clito:

Egisto.

Egisto.

Aspasia:

Amico, è ver che dal consesso nulla ottenesti?

Friend, have you heard anything from the assembly?

Clito:

E' ver, che il padre mio ogni offerta di pace austero ricusò?

Is it true that my father austere refused every offer of peace?

Egisto:

D'altro conviene ragionar bella Aspasia; oggi da Tebe dei disporti a partir. Sposa il tuo padre vuol destinarti, a chi dinuovo al trono ricondurlo saprà.

Let's discuss something else. Today, you must leave Thebes, beautiful Aspasia. Your father wants you to marry someone who can restore him to the throne.



Aspasia:

(Numi, che ascolto!)

(Oh gods, what do I hear?)

Clito:

(Crudel destino!)

(Cruel fate!)

Egisto:

Quindi a seguirmi t'accingi, o principessa.

Therefore, continue to follow me, Princess.

Aspasia:

(Oh stelle!)

(Oh stars!)

Clito:

Egisto, ma sai ch'ella è il mio ben?

Egisto, but you know that she is my beloved.

Egisto:

L'ami! E ti lasci il tuo bene rapir? folle!

You love her! And you let someone else steal your beloved? You fool!

Clito:

Ma come, oh Dio! Come impedirlo?

But how? Oh God! How can we stop it?





Egisto:

Posso fidarmi, che quanto son per dirti
custodisca geloso?

*Can I trust you to guard what I'm
disclosing jealously?*

Clito:

A te ne impegno l'onor mio, la mia fede.

I will pledge my honour and faith.

Egisto:

Or odi! Sappi, che in breve Pisistrato di
nuovo deve quivi regnar. Tebe in gran
parte applaude al suo ritorno; l'autor del
gran disegno, Aspasia, avrà in mercede:
alle squadre cretensi apri il sentiero.

*So listen! Know that Pisistrato will
soon reign here again. Most of Thebes
approves of his return. The mastermind
of the grand plan will be rewarded with
Aspasia, clear the way for the Cretan
troops.*

Clito:

Che dici!

What are you saying?

Egisto:

Così tu rendi l'usurpato comando a
chi alfin fu tuo re, d'Aspasia al padre:
d'Aspasia, ch'è il tuo amor!

*Therefore, you should return the usurped
kingdom to him who, after all, was your
king — Aspasia's father: Aspasia, who
is your beloved!*

Clito:

Sì... ma...

Yes... But...





Egisto:

Finisci... Clito, che mi vuoi dir?

Finish it... Clito, what are you trying to tell me?

Clito:

Che non poss'io.

That I can't do it.

Egisto:

Se però non ardisci, perdi Aspasia.

If you are not brave enough, you will lose Aspasia.

ARIA:

Sai che puoi perdere chi il sen t'accende:
Se vuoi risolvere, da te dipende di lieto
vivere col caro ben. Dal sonno destati,
non parlo in vano: se forse dubiti
d'armar la mano, con lei consigliati per
poco almen.

*Remember that you can lose the one who
brings joy to your life. It is up to you to
live happily with your loved ones to solve
this problem. Wake up; I am not speaking
in vain. If you doubt your ability to carry
a weapon, at least consider her advice.*





SCENA IV | SCENE IV

Clito:

Aspasia!

Aspasia!

Aspasia:

Idolo mio?

My love?

Clito:

La patria, vuoi che tutta distrugga, incenerisca? Altro non manca, che un tuo comando.

Do you want me to annihilate my entire homeland and reduce it to ashes? Your command is all that remains.

Aspasia:

Ah Clito, non mi creder sì vil, che giunger sappia della patria lo scempio ad importi, a bramar. Nol niego, è vero, che a me il perduto impero rin tal guisa, e al genitore. Ma il mio così saresti, e il tuo rossore?

Ah, Clito! Do not think me so wicked as to rejoice in the ruin of my homeland. I will admit that you would restore the lost empire and my father to me in this way. But would you dishonour yourself and me?

(Ah dal periglio d'un impresa, che puede costarmi i giorni suoi, lontano, o Numi, custoditelo voi).

(Ah, from the perils of this endeavour, which could cost me his life, far away from me. O gods, guard it yourselves; leave this fatal risk to others).

ARIA:

Son figlia... oh Dei...! Dovrei... m'intendi? Ma se t'accendi per me così: perchè parlarmi mio dolce amore, così, perchè vuoi tormentarmi (lo sò) così. Se il genitore di te mi priva, ah per dolore non sò s'io viva più lunghi dì.

I am the daughter... Oh gods! Should I...? Do you understand me? But if you care so much for me, why do you speak to me like this, my sweet Love? I know you wish to torment me. If my father were to take you away from me, I don't think I could bear the grief.



SCENA V | SCENE V

Clito:

La della patria, oh Dio! Lo scempio a meditar m'empie d'orrore. Oh giuramento! Oh promessa! oh destino! Un'empio parricida mi vuoi? Lo son: mi guida ove ti piace? Eccomi. Addio rimorsi; addio: tutti vi perdo, perché non ho valore, perché nel petto mio trionfa amore.

Oh, God of my homeland! The thought of the plan fills me with terror. Oh, what an oath! What a promise! Oh, fate! Do you want me to become an evil patricide? I am. Do you want to control me? Here I am. Goodbye, remorse. I am losing all of you because I am worthless, because love reigns in my heart.

ARIA:

Sento, che a suo talento già mi trasporta, e guida, ov'è più l'onda infida, ove più freme il mar. Ed io non ho rimorsi, tal benda ho già sul ciglio, che privo di consiglio men corro a naufragar.

I feel it is already leading and guiding me wherever the waves are treacherous, and the sea is perilous. I have no regrets; I have already shut my eyes and am running towards a shipwreck alone.

SCENA VI | SCENE VI

Ismene:

Ah, Signor, lode ai Numi.

Oh, Sire, praise the gods.

Pelopida:

Ismene, oh stelle! Come in Tebe ritorni! Eri pur anzi pegno, ed ostaggio a stabilir la pace con altre cittadine de' cretensi in poter!

Oh, Ismene! How did you come back to Thebes? You were a pawn and a hostage to secure peace with the cities under Crete's control!



Ismene:

Tralascia, Signor, queste domande. Sappi, che intesi, che col furor di cittadini ingrati Egisto oggi dovria Tebe all'arbitrio consegnar del tiranno; onde sull'armi è pronto ogni guerriero: e l'ora attende al venir stabilita.

Sire, please cease asking questions. I realised that, considering the fury of the ungrateful citizens, Egisto should surrender Thebes to the Tyrant, who has armed every warrior. The timing has yet to be determined.

Pelopida:

E fia mai ver...

And if it were true...

Ismene:

Di dubbi or bisogno non v'è. Fè dell'esposto ne faccia il rischio a cui m'esposi. In mezzo a un nembo di mille colpi e mille, che mi piovean d'intorno illesa alla cittade, e a te ritorno.

This is not the moment for doubt. Please consider this disclosure in light of the risks I undertook. Amid thousands of shots hailing down around me, I returned to the city and to you unharmed.

Pelopida:

Oh prode! Ah Tebe, ed io qual mercede potremo renderti in ricompensa?

Oh, brave one! What favour can Thebes and I offer you as a reward?

Ismene:

A me sol basta l'amor tuo, quel di Tebe: e sol mi lagno, che non mi fe' la sorte a Pelopida figlia; onde potessi seguire a pro d'ognuno in miglior guisa l'orme di tanto genitor.

To me, your love and that of Thebes is enough. I regret not being Pelopida's daughter, as I would have been able to follow in the footsteps of such a parent better than anyone else!



Pelopida:

D'essermi figlia s'altra brama non hai,
sposa di Clito al nuovo dì sarai.

*If your only wish is to be my daughter,
you shall be Clito's bride by the coming
day.*

Ismene:

(Oh me felice!)

(How happy I am!)

ARIA:

Or che tua figlia io sono Il mio dover
rammento; nel petto mio già sento del
genitore il cor. A meritar perdono non
mi lusingo in seno: so chi tu sei; ma a
pieno non mi conosci ancor.

*Now that I am your daughter, I remember
my duty clearly. I already feel my
father's heartbeat in my chest. I do not
flatter myself by thinking that I deserve
forgiveness; you know who I am, but I am
not yet entirely known to you.*

SCENA VII | SCENE VII

Oreste:

Oh rea sventura! oh sorte!

Oh, ill fortune! Oh, destiny!

Pelopida:

Che fù?

What happened?



Oreste:

Sorpresa è di Cadmo la rocca, e l'inimico, ormai s'accinge in Tebe a penetrar.

There was a surprise attack on the fortress of Cadmus, and the enemy is now trying to enter Thebes.

Pelopida:

Providi Numi di Tebe tutelari, i vostri tempi ah diffendete voi: voi proteggete la nostra libertà.

All-seeing gods, protectors of Thebes, defend your temples. You safeguard our freedom.

Oreste:

Tebe di perdersi è in procinto!

Thebes is on the verge of destruction!

Pelopida:

Il figlio tu ritrova, e il ponte entrambi a difender correte: e in Tebe, Egisto se non partì, s'arresti.

Search for my son. You two, run to defend the bridge. If he hasn't left Thebes yet, arrest Egisto.

ARIA:

Vuò del reo nel giusto scempio che, conosca il proprio errore; tinto in volto di rossore s'oda il fallo rinfacciar.

I want the offender to receive a fitting punishment, recognise his mistake, and repent of his crime with his face flushed with shame.



SCENA VIII | SCENE VIII

Aspasia:

Fermati. È ver...

Stop. It's true...

Oreste:

Di Cadmo è ver, che l'alta mole il tuo
tiranno genitore occupata ha poch'anzi,
e che già spera a momenti regnar. Ma
oh vana! Oh folle speme!

*Your tyrant father has just taken the high
castle of Cadmus and already hopes to
reign at any moment. But oh, vain hope!
Oh, foolish hope!*

Aspasia:

(Che ascolto! Il timor, ch'ho per Clito,
oh Dei m'accorra.)

*(What do I hear! Alas! The fear I feel is
for Clito, help me, oh gods!)*

SCENA IX | SCENE IX

Oreste:

Clito del padre è mente, che entrambi al
ponte a sostenerne andiamo de nemici
il furor.

*Clito, your father believes that we should
both go to withstand the enemies' fury at
the bridge.*

Clito:

Parti... verrò...

Go!... I'm coming...

Oreste:

Ma sai, che l'indugio è delitto?

*You know, though, that delaying is a
crime?*





Clito:

Il sò...

I know...

Oreste:

E perché dunque così t'arresti? Ah se d'onor ti senti...

So why, then, do you stop like this? If you feel that your honour...

ARIA:

Parto, ma il tuo sembiante torbido parmi, e nero dov'è l'ardir primiero del generoso cor. Oh quante schiere, e quante incoraggiar sapesti; se timido or t'arresti, chi mostrerà valor?

I'm leaving, but you seem troubled and gloomy to me. Where is the once-strong courage of your generous heart? How many armies and how much encouragement you could offer! If you timidly stop now, who will show bravery?

SCENA X | SCENE X

Aspasia:

Ah Clito, io già ti leggo in fronte il tuo delitto.

Ah, Clito, I can already see the crime written on your forehead.

Clito:

È ver son reo cara per te.

For your sake, my dear, I am truly guilty.

Aspasia:

Ah, che facesti mai?

Ah, what have you done?



ARIA:

Son confusa, son smarrita... nel pensare
al tuo periglio: ah non trovo più
consiglio tremo, oh dio, ben mio per te.

*I am confused, I am lost... Thinking
about your peril: Ah, I can't find any
advice, I tremble, oh God... My dearest,
for you.*

SCENA XI | SCENE XI

Clito:

RECIT:

Oh Aspasia! Oh tenerezza! Oh speme!
Oh amore per me fatal! Numi di
Tebe, oh come nel timor del mio bene
agl'occhi miei togliere or tutto il velo,
che nasconde l'orrore del tradimento
mio, del mio delitto. Perduta e già la
mia innocenza. Ah dunque è meglio la
vita terminar. Troppo mi pesa colpevole
morir... Oh reo destino! Il fallo dunque
emendar non posso?

*Oh, Aspasia! Oh, tenderness! Oh, hope!
Oh, love! Oh, fatal gods of Thebes, remove
now the veil from my eyes, which hid the
horror of my betrayal, of my crime, seen
in the fear of my beloved. My innocence
is already lost. Ah, then it is better to end
my life. It weighs too heavily on me to die
with guilt... O cruel fate! Can't I make
amends for my mistake?*

ARIA:

Già da fieri rimorsi agitato, odo il
suono degl'orridi carmi, che m'invita
a corregger tra l'armi il mio fallo e già
corro tra l'armi a pugar. Si difenda la
patria, si mora ch'abbastanza già vissi
fin'ora, se mi lice pugnando spirar.

*Already troubled by fierce remorse, I hear
the sound of horrible songs, inviting me to
right my wrongs with weapons, and I am
already rushing to fight. Let us defend our
country; let us die, for I have already lived
long enough; if I may, I shall die fighting.*

Pelopida:

Ah scelerato! Anima vile! Traditor!

Ah, villain! Vile soul! Traitor!



ATTO SECONDO | ACT TWO

SCENA I | SCENE I

Pelopida:

ARIA:

Ah, paventate indegni, perfidi, senza onor i vostri rei disegni, provino il mio rigor. Vittima tu cadrai dovrai, tu per rossore fremere, e sospirar. Ah, paventate, indegni, per voi già stride il fulmine. Mostri d'infedeltà. Non son più genitore, perfido, iniquo figlio, l'iniquo tuo consiglio mi spoglia di pietà.

Fear, you unworthy, treacherous, dishonourable ones. You shall feel the full force of my severity for your evil schemes. You will fall victim. You will blush, tremble, and sigh. Ah, fear, you unworthy ones! The thunderbolt is already striking for you, monsters of infidelity. I am no longer your father; you, treacherous, wicked son. Your evil advice has stripped me of pity.

SCENA II | SCENE II

Egisto:

Clito! A me prometti per Pisistrato ogn'opra.

Clito! You promised me all kinds of favours for Pisistrato.

Clito:

Ah parti, Egisto, involati da me. La tua vista, oh Dio, più m'accresce l'orror del fallo mio.

Ah, go away! Egisto, flee from me. In seeing you, oh God, I feel sorrier for the horror of my mistake.



Egisto:

ARIA:

Frena contanto orgoglio che al'fin chi
preme al soglio forse saprà punirti e farti
impallidir. Solo pietà mi desta la vostra
iniqua sorte ch'una riduce a morte di
duol l'altra a perir.

*Curb your pride, for he who occupies the
throne may yet punish you and make you
pale. Only pity stirs in me for your unjust
fate, which reduces one to death by grief
and the other to perishing.*

SCENA III | SCENE III

Ismene:

Clito, qual ti ritrovo!

Clito, I found you!

Aspasia:

In quale stato mi conviene mirarti!

In what state should I need to see you!

Clito:

Morir conviene.

It's better to die.

Ismene:

Morir!

To die!





Aspasia:

Ah tu ti perdi... E ti perdi.... per me.

*Ah, you're getting lost... getting lost...
for me.*

Clito:

(Quel pianto, oh Dio, più mi trafigge
il cor).

*(Oh God, that weeping cuts through my
heart even more.)*

Ismene:

Clito se morì, Io... mi sento... morir.

Clito, if you die, I... feel that... I'm dying.

Clito:

Deh, non piangete: prima del tempo, oh
Dio, voi m'uccidete.

*Please do not weep: Oh God, you're killing
me before my time.*

ARIA:

Ah le lagrime frenate, non piangete la
mia sorte, cara, amica, ah voi la morte
m'affrettate; Oh Dio, così. Cara, addio;
deh resta in pace. Non dolerti, amica,
tanto, nò, non merta il vostro pianto
chi ne' fallì troppo audace già si rese in
questo dì.

*Ah, stop the tears, don't cry for my fate.
Dear Friend, ah, you're hastening my
death. Oh God, like this. Dear, goodbye.
Remain here in peace. Don't fret so much,
my friend. He who erred many times so
conspicuously on this day doesn't deserve
your weeping.*



SCENA IV | SCENE IV

Aspasia:

Ismene?

Ismene?

Ismene:

Aspasia?

Aspasia?

Aspasia:

Oh Numi.

Oh, gods.

Ismene:

Che farem?

What are we going to do?

Aspasia:

Nol sò.

I don't know.

Oreste:

Aspasia, Ismene oimè! Si meste? Onde
deriva in voi tanto dolor?

*Aspasia and Ismene! Alas! They are in
mourning! From where does so much
sorrow come?*

Ismene:

Dunque non sai che Clito...

Therefore, you don't know that Clito...



Aspasia:

E che a momenti s'avvicina a morir?

And that he's nearing his death?

Oreste:

Ma la cagione! Parlate!

What is the cause? Speak up!

Aspasia:

Ah, ch'egli duce della congiura fu scoperto.

He has been identified as the leader of the conspiracy.

Oreste:

Che dite! E pure io crederlo non posso.

What are you saying? Yet, I cannot believe it.

Ismene:

Io l'amo, l'adoro...

I love him; I adore him...

Aspasia:

Oh Dio, ah che pur troppo egli è l'idolo mio.

Oh God, alas, he's my beloved.



ARIA:

Non vedi, ch'io moro se 'l miro in periglio, che palpito ognor? lo l'amo, l'adoro, Mi struggo d'amor. Ma il fato, la sorte se vuol la sua morte, col dolce tesoro morire saprò! Ah troppo l'adoro, mi struggo d'amor. Aita, consiglio, difendi l'amico: ma un'astro nemico sventure predice all'alma infelice, al misero cor.

Don't you see that I'll die if I see him in peril, and that I am anxious all the time? I love him, I adore him, I pine with love. But if fate, if fortune wants his death, I shall die along with my sweet treasure! Ah, I love him too much; I pine with love. Help, counsel me, defend a friend: but an adverse start predicts misfortune to the unhappy soul.

SCENA V | SCENE V

Oreste:

Dunque, Ismene, tu ancora tanta hai pietà per Clito, e sì poca per me.

So, Ismene, you have so much mercy for Clito but so little for me.

Ismene:

ARIA:

Se ad altra face arde il mio cuore, soffrilo in pace, colpa è d'amore, che d'altro strale già mi ferì. Io che non t'ami, non t'odio almeno, ma s'altro brami destarmi in seno lo spero invano per ora così.

If my heart burns for another, suffer it in silence; it is love's fault, which has already wounded me with another dagger. I, who do not love you, but at least do not hate you, but if you want to awaken something else in my heart, you are hoping in vain, at least for now.



SCENA VI | SCENE VI

Oreste:

Oh Dio! Dunque, se Clito si lasciasse perir, da Ismene un giorno forse ottener potresti quell'amore, che tanto... Ah no, non sia vero mai tal pensier.

Oh God! If Clito allows himself to perish, perhaps one day you shall receive Ismene's love, that you so desire... Ah no! Let not such a thought become reality.

ARIA:

Ah più tosto il ciel m'opprima, ch'eseguisca un tal consiglio. Un'amico in tal periglio no, non deggio abbandonar. Per desio di folle amante di lasciarlo un solo istante m'arrossisco nel pensar.

May the skies strike me down if that thought ever becomes true. No, I cannot abandon a friend in such peril. I am ashamed to think I would leave him even for a moment out of foolish love.

SCENA VII | SCENE VII

Pelopida:

Taci. Si cospirò poc'anzi contro di Tebe. In mente volgo, che delinquente, sa tante prove. Perche ad onta de' Numi, empio, ed ingrato la legge calpestasti, il giuramento, della patria nemico, e scelerato, ribelle perche fosti in quel momento: Clito, restar non deve invendicato di tua congiura il nero tradimento. Và dunque, e mori, e del supplicio all'ara In Tebe ad altri ad esser fido impara.

Silence! I firmly believe you are a criminal, with ample proof. Despite the shame of the gods, you acted evil and ungrateful, and have trampled on the law and the vow. When you were a rebel, you became the enemy of the homeland and wicked; Clito, your black treason and conspiracy cannot go unpunished. Now go, and die, so that others may learn to be faithful from your sacrifice at the altar in Thebes.



Ismene:

Ah pensi, rammenti, che poc'anzi a me in isposo in ricompensa il promettesti? A morte se adesso lo condanni, come evitar presso di me la taccia potrai di poca fè! Nò, nò, di vita oggi privar nol puoi, se alla promessa tua mancar non vuoi.

Ah, think, remember, that a few moments ago you promised him to me as a spouse as a reward. If you now condemn him to death, how could you avoid being seen by me as a man of little faith? No! No! You can't take his life today if you don't want to cancel out your promise.

Pelopida:

Perche di fede, o Ismene, mancar non soglio, in questo punto istesso fella destra del figlio disponi a tuo piacer.

So that I won't lack in faith, oh Ismene, at this very moment, place yourself to the right of my son at your leisure.

Clito:

Come!...

How?...

Ismene:

Nò, Clito, non dubitar: fidati a me. Della sua destra dunque se mi lice dispor, deggio ad Aspasia cederla, che in amor già mi prevenne, e che n'è degna più di me.

No, Clito, don't doubt, believe me. If I can dispose of his right side, I should leave it to Aspasia, as she has already vied for his love. And she is more deserving of it than I am.

Pelopida:

A lei la mano porgi dunque ora Clito.

So now, Clito, extend your hand to her.





Clito:

Eccola

Here it is

Aspasia:

Stupida anch'io sposo t'accetto.

Bewildered, I too accept you as my husband.

Pelopida:

De' tuoi voti a seconda ecco adempita la mia promessa, o Ismene; or s'adempisca il resto ancora. Odi: tuo sposo il figlio permisi, per che avesse il vostro amore Il suo castigo ancor. E sia tua pena saper, che quest'amore è a lui funesto ch'è il testimon verace, che la conferma reo della congiura.

My promise has been fulfilled according to your vows, oh Ismene. Now, let us fulfil the rest. Listen! Your husband, my son, has permitted himself to be punished to earn your love. This could prove fatal and perhaps be your grief, knowing that this love is painful for him, the faithful witness, and that confirms him liable to the conspiracy.

Aspasia:

Oh... Dio!... Salvalo!

Oh... God!... Save him!

Ismene:

Al fine rammenta, che è il tuo figlio, che il genitor tu sei.

In the end, remember that he's your son and you're his father.

Pelopida:

Non più: per lui non v'è pietà.

Not anymore: there's no mercy for him.





ARIA:

Ah, se'l condanno a morte non son crudele, ingrato; son padre sventurato vittima del dolor. Vuole così la sorte la legge lo condanna, e meco è più tiranna, perchè son genitor.

Ah, if I condemn him to death, I shall not be cruel or ungrateful; I shall be an unfortunate father, a victim of sorrow. Fate demands this; the law condemns him. It acts more as a tyrant with me, for I am his father.

SCENA VIII | SCENE VIII

Aspasia:

Ah Clito, ah sposo, di te vedova, e priva che mai farò? Ma voi, giusti Numi del cielo, deh per pietà abbreviate i giorni miei, m'affrettate il morir. Addio... ma i lumi a te chi chiuderà? Con man pietosa vorrei... ma poi...

Ah, Clito! What will I do as your widow without you? But you, oh just Gods in Heaven, please have mercy and shorten my days. Hasten my death. Goodbye... but who will close your eyes? I wish it could be done with a merciful hand...

ARIA:

Nò, non mi so risolvere. Se parto... o teco io resto: oh Dio, che affanno è questo. vorrei.. ma no... Ben mio, vado a morir. si ti precedo, o sposo, così vuol la mia fede: ma pigro intanto il piede mi nega di partir.

No! I don't know what to do. Should I stay with you or go? Oh God, how distressing this is. I want... but no... my love, I must hurry and go to die. Yes, I will go before you, my husband. My faith compels me, but my feet are hesitant and won't let me leave.





SCENA IX | SCENE IX

Clito:

Ismene, Egisto, andate... oh Dio... Non tardate... in mia vece consolatela almen. Lo vedi, amico, fin dove m'ha ridotto il mio destino, che mi porta a morir. Ah sol ti chiedo, che consoli il mio bene, nè l'abbandoni, oh Dio, fra tante pene.

Ismene, Egisto, go... Oh God... don't delay... at least console her on my behalf. Don't you see, my friend, what state my fate has reduced me to? It has brought me to the brink of death. Ah, I only ask you to comfort my love and, oh God, don't abandon her in so much sorrow.

Oreste:

Tutto per voi farò; ma v'assicuro, che dal destin severo entrambi di salvarvi io non dispero.

I shall do everything for you. I assure you, however, that I won't despair of saving you both from this dire fate.

SCENA X | SCENE X

Egisto:

Oh Dio! Clito, da te dipende, se Aspasia vuoi, che viva. Sappi, che il varco offresi aperto alla tua fuga...

Oh God! Clito, it's down to you whether Aspasia survives. Be aware that the passage is open for your escape...

Clito:

A me fuggire? Di ciò più non parlar.

Me escape? Don't mention it again.

Clito:

ARIA:

Dice, che non sà vivere senza di te un momento, che a sì crudel tormento resistere non sà. Che se fuggir non curi, dice, che al mio ritorno saprà finire il giorno, prima di te morra.

She says she cannot live a moment without you and cannot resist such brutal torment. She states that if escaping doesn't resolve things, she might end her day upon my return, dying before you do.



SCENA XI | SCENE XI

Clito:

Se fuggo per me è troppa viltà: se poi m'arresto ecco, che l'idol mio di propria mano già si trafigge il cor. Veggo già il sangue.. dalla crudel ferita.. ah qual funesta orrida immagine è questa!

It is too vile for me, should I escape, and should I stop, there, my beloved will pierce her heart with her own hand. I already see the blood... from the cruel wound... oh, what a gloomy, horrid image this is!

CAVATINA:

Trapassami il petto, punisci un'ingrato, ma teco spietato l'acciaro... Ah per pietà ferma, t'arresta: sospendi il colpo ancora. Deh vivi in pace, e lascia sol ch'io mora. Lascia, ch'io mora mio dolce amore serbati in vita non più rigore.... Oh Dio, parti sdegnata? Ascoltami ove vai? Fermati ingrata! Vuoi, che la fuga al fine.. ah chi ragiono? Ah già si dileguò. Sposa infelice! A morir corre altrove. Il suo destino si poteva impedire. Ed io tiranno... barbaro, ed io... che crudeltà! Da tutti sento già detestarmi. Odo già l'ombra, che a rinfacciar mi viene stillante ancor di sangue... Ah dove fuggo? Misero! Ove m'ascondo? Almen tramonti questo torbido giorno una volta per me. Son stanco al fine di più viver così. Venga, s'affretti, (che ormai più nulla temo), s'acceleri la morte. Già morì, già spirò la mia consorte.

Pierce my chest, punish the ungrateful, but with you, the merciless dagger... Ah, please stop, stop there. Ah, stay the blow. Please live in peace and leave me only to die. Leave me to die, my sweet love, and keep yourself alive, and no more punishment... oh God, are you leaving in shame? Listen to me, where are you going? Stop, you ungrateful! Do you want to escape at last... Ah, what am I saying? Ah, she is waning already. Unhappy spouse! She runs to die elsewhere. Her fate could have been avoided. And I, a tyrant... cruel, and I... how cruel! I already feel hated by everyone. I already hear the shadow that comes to meet me, still shining with blood... Ah, where should I escape? Poor me! Where should I hide? Let this day be set at least once more for me. I am finally weary of living like this any longer. Come, hurry, (for now I fear nothing); let death come quickly. My wife is already dead; she has already expired.

ARIA:

Ah mi si arresta il sangue stupido il cor s'agghiaccia già della sposa in faccia l'ombra per me terribile pallida veggo errar tremo... fuggir... vorrei... vorrei... da me nascondermi... la luce abbandonar...

My blood stops flowing, and my heart senselessly freezes. Already on my spouse's face, I see the terrible pale shadow staggering. I shudder... escape... I want... I want... to hide from myself... abandon the light...



ATTO TERZO | ACT THREE

SCENA I | SCENE I

Ismene:

Io disperar non voglio del tutto ancor.

I don't want to lose heart yet.

Oreste:

Che far poss'io? Parla? Tu che faresti?

What could I do? Speak? What would you do?

Ismene:

Il difensore a queste nostre mura se saprai conservare, lo ti prometto di nudrire per te tutto l'affetto.

If you can protect the defender of our bastions, I promise to nurture all my love for you.

ARIA:

Se è ver, ch'al mio ciglio d'amore t'accendi, già udisti il consiglio: conserva, difendi il nostro sostegno, di Tebe l'onor. Così ti prometto. Allora in mercede dell'alma l'affetto, la candida fede del core, la mano, me stessa, e l'amor.

If it's true that you are inflamed with love for me, then you have already heard the advice; preserve, defend our support and the honour of Thebes. This I promise you. In return, you will receive the affection of my soul, the genuine loyalty of my heart, my hand, myself, and love.

SCENA II | SCENE II

Oreste:

Si, si, a morire in vece di condurlo, venga meco nel campo: ivi tra l'armi si mora, o l'inimico si distrugga.

Yes, yes, instead of leading him to his death, I am taking him to the battlefield, where one may fall among weapons, or the enemy may be defeated.



Pelopida:

Oreste, la sentenza, Che si eseguisca è...

Oreste, let the judgment be carried out...

Oreste:

Signor tanta costanza ragionando d'un figlio, che alla morte già condannasti, ah come mai nel volto puoi conservare? Inorridisco...

Sire, how can you keep a steady countenance when you speak of your son, whom you have already sentenced to death? I'm horrified...

ARIA:

Padre più barbaro non vidi ancora, un figlio perdere! Voler che mora! Divengo stupido, mi fai tremar. Sono più docili le tigri Ircane, la prole tenera, di te più umane, sanno difendere sanno più amar.

A more heartless father who has lost a son, I have yet to meet, desiring him dead! I remain stunned; you make me shudder. The Hyrcanian tigers are gentler, their offspring sweeter, more humane than you are, and they know how to defend and love.

SCENA III | SCENE III

Clito:

Ah padre, io vengo (reo di morte, la vita non ti chiedo, non spero.) io vengo solo d'ubbidienza, di fè, d'amor, di stima a renderti un tributo in quel momento, che ne resta a' miei dì. Sò che perdono non merito da te, ma d'impetrarlo almen per l'alma mia. Non diffido però.

Ah, father, I come (guilty of death; I do not ask for my life, nor do I hope for it.) I only come out of obedience, faithfulness, love, and honour to pay you homage in this last moment of my days. I know I do not deserve pardon from you, but I trust I can at least beg for it for my own soul.



Clito:

Per mio sollievo ti chiedo, al fine chiedo, che Aspasia, in mia vece la ricevi qual figlia. Or non bramo di più. Mio padre addio, addio mia sposa. Al fine a morte andar conviene.

For my own comfort, I finally ask you to receive Aspasia as a daughter in my stead. Now I wish for nothing more. Goodbye, father, goodbye, spouse. At last, I shall go to die.

Aspasia:

Vengo teco a morir, morremo insieme. Tu sol procura, che d'entrambi le spoglie esangui, inanimate un rogo istesso per sollievo dell'alme arda, e consumi.

I'm coming to die with you; we shall perish together. You should only build a bonfire for both the bloodless and soulless remains so that it will burn and consume them for the repose of their souls.

Clito:

Sì, caro padre, insiem fa che s'aduni il mio cenere il suo: e un'urna istessa e l'uno, e l'altro in sé conservi.

Yes, dear father, let my ashes be gathered with hers, and let both be preserved in a single urn.

Aspasia:

E in essa la nostra sorte scrivi.

And inscribe our story on it.

Clito/Aspasia (a2):

Sposa/Sposo andiamo: e tu resta: amaci, e vivi.

Wife/Husband, let's go, and you remain to live and love us.

Aspasia:

DUETTO:

Padre, addio.

Goodbye, father.



Clito:

Mio genitore, ah, un'amplesso.

Ah, my father, an embrace.

Aspasia:

Un sguardo solo.

One look.

Clito:

Sì, concedi a lei che muore.

Yes, concede this to her who is about to die.

Aspasia:

Non negarlo a lui che muore.

Don't deny it to him who is about to die.

Clito/Aspasia (a2):

Padre addio: non sospirar.

Goodbye, father, don't sigh.

Clito:

Mi consolo amato bene.

I'm comforted my good love.

Aspasia:

Sposo amato, io mi consolo.

My dear husband, I'm comforted.

Clito/Aspasia (a2):

Che a vicenda le sue pene ne verremo a consolar.

That we shall see each other's sorrows comforted.



SCENA IV | SCENE IV

Pelopida:

Aimè! da qual letargo mi riscuoto? Mi desto? Oh Numi, e soffro che di sua propria mano allor, che spira Clito il mio figlio, disperata mora, S'uccida anche la Sposa? E lo permetto?

Alas! From what sleep am I awakened? Am I truly awake? Oh Gods, must I watch Clito, my son, die by his own hand, and see his wife, who is dying, take her own life in despair? Shall I condone this?

Ismene:

È l'inimico più feroce di prima in su le porte di Tebe a minacciar. Già corre Oreste l'impeto a sostenerne...

The enemy is more ferocious than ever, threateningly looming at the gates of Thebes. Oreste is already rushing to prevent the blow...

Pelopida:

Oh stelle! Perdono, oh Numi, pietà: pietà d'un padre, d'un cittadin fedele. Ah conservate, nella morte del figlio, la cara Patria almen; che se nel cielo l'immutabil destino oggi n'ha scritta la ruina, oh Numi, mi s'affretti il morir. Sì, se non lice al fato contraddire, fate, che possa almeno tra le ruine in libertà morire.

Oh stars! Forgive me, oh Gods, have mercy: mercy on a loyal father and citizen. Ah, with the death of my son, at least protect our beloved homeland, because if in Heaven the unchangeable destiny has written its destruction, oh Gods, let me die swiftly. Yes, if one could defy fate, at least allow me to die in freedom within its ruins.

ARIA:

S'affretti la morte, lasciate ch'io mora: che barbara sorte! La Patria, fin'ora, Che tanto difesi, perire dovrà? Che barbara sorte! S'affretti la morte. Nol posso soffrir. Men corro al cimento cercando vendetta: tu figlio, un momento, se mori, m'aspetta sul torbido Lete, ch'io vado a morir.

May death come soon; let me die: what a cruel fate! Should the homeland I have defended so valiantly until now perish? What a cruel fate! May death come swiftly. I cannot bear this. I am hastening to face tribulation to seek vengeance: you, son, just a moment, if you die, wait for me at the murky Lethe, as I am about to die.



SCENA V | SCENE V

Clito:

ARIA:

Non è tutto in questo giorno frutto sol
del mio valore, s'alle patria mura io
torno trionfante e vincitor. Mercè del
ciel, de' Numi se rivedo il caro bene se
alla patria le catene io spezzai col mio
valor.

*On this day, I returned triumphant and
victorious at the walls of my homeland,
but not everything is the fruit of my
valour. If I am seeing my beloved again,
and I broke the chains of my homeland
with my valour, it is by the mercy of the
heavens and the Gods.*

SCENA VI | SCENE VI

SCENA ULTIMA | LAST SCENE

Pelopida:

Figlio, mio caro figlio, alla tua mano
deve Tebe in gran parte oggi la sua
salvezza. In te ritrova la sua difesa, i
suoi trionfi: ah vieni, vieni al mio sen.

*Son! My dear son, Thebes owes much
of its salvation to you. In you, she
rediscovered her defences and victories.
Ah, come, come to my bosom.*

Oreste:

Ò grande di nostra etade onor. Vivi il
consente, il cittadin, la plebe, e Pelopida
stesso contraddirlo or non può. Serbati in
vita: vivi alla patria tua.

*Oh great one, honour of our age. Live! The
citizen agrees to this; neither the people
nor Pelopida himself can contradict it.
Stay alive: Live for your homeland.*

Pelopida:

Figlio, giacché la patria oggi teco è
indulgente, alla sua legge non voglio
contradir. Sappi, ch'anch'io, perche
fido le sono di tutto già mi scordo, e ti
perdono.

*Son, since the homeland is forgiving
you, I will not oppose its laws. Know
that, because I am also loyal to it, I am
forgetting everything and forgiving you.*



Aspasia:

(Respiro!)

(I breathe!)

Clito:

Ah genitore, io m'arrossisco nel pensare...

Oh, father, I blush whenever I think...

Egisto:

Tebani, a voi or Creonte m'invia non più funesto messaggier. Pentito del suo ingiusto favor per un tiranno, in libertà vi lascia, pace per me vi chiede, e brama solo amistade con voi.

Thebans, Creon has sent me not as a messenger of doom. He regrets the unjust favour he granted to a tyrant, and he will leave you in peace. He asks you to leave me undisturbed and seeks only your friendship.

Pelopida:

Di vantaggio non cercano i Tebani. A lor sol basta di vivere, e morire colle lor patrie leggi; onde sapranno difenderle gelosi dal dominio, e furor d'ogni tiranno.

The Thebans are not seeking other advantages. They only want to live and die by the laws of their homeland, where they know how to defend them jealously from the domain and fury of every tyrant.

Coro:

È del ciel felice dono, preggio in noi la libertà. E infelice è ancor sul trono chi per lei morir non sa.

And the joyful gift from Heaven, we accept freedom among us. And he who does not know how to die for her shall live unhappily even more on the throne.



FINE | *END*



Creative Team

Composer

Girolamo Abos

Librettist

Gaetano Roccaforte

Stage Director

Brett Nicholas Brown

Conductor

Giulio Prandi

Set Designer

Anthony Bonnici (EBEJER BONNICI)

Costume Designer

Luke Azzopardi

Light Designer

Moritz Zavan Stoeckle

Assistant Conductor

Michele Barbieri

Choreographer

Simon Riccardi-Zani

Project Lead (Set Design)

Antoni Garces

Project Assistant (Set Design)

Arjwan Hraga

Score Editor

Geoffrey Thomas

Répétiteur

Sofia Sciberras Narmania

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Stage Manager

Monique Saliba

Deputy Stage Manager

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Sarah Grech

Site Manager

Clint Bonavia

Stage Hand

Mario Cassar

Maestro di palcoscenico

Sigmund Mifsud

Hair

Lune Noire

Makeup

Gabriella Zammit Grungo

Libretto Translation

Mark Camilleri

Surtitlist

Albert Garzia



Brett Nicholas Brown is a director, actor and librettist. He began his career as a child soloist with Opera Australia and later trained as an actor at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London.

Brett's directorial credits include *Il Parnaso Confuso* and *La Corona* (Valletta Early Opera Festival), *Catalina's Story* ("Marin Sorescu" National Theatre of Romania); *Tiresias* (Bloomsbury Festival, London); *Vivaldi: Lovers and Warriors*, *Ich Habe Genug*, *You Say You Want A Revolution*, *Postcards*, *To Sleep Perchance To Dream* (Expressions of Interest); and *The Wild Party* (RADA). Future projects include *Alas*, *He's Mad* (European tour).

As an actor, Brett's highlights include work with Almeida, BBC, Park Theatre, Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare's Globe, Wise Children, York Theatre Royal (UK); ABC Classic, Camerata, Omega Ensemble (Australia); Cooltour (Czech Republic); HamletScenen (Denmark); Gangdong Arts Center (South Korea); and film appearances including the Academy Award-winning *The Theory of Everything* (Working Title). His award-winning solo production *Henry V [Man and Monarch]* has toured across Europe, Asia, and Australia with recent performances at the Hong Kong International Shakespeare Festival, Chişinău International Shakespeare Festival in Moldova, and Babel International Festival of Performing Arts in Târgovişte, Romania.

As a librettist, Brett wrote the text for Maestro David Coleman's choral work *Aer et Aqua* (Accademia Teatro alla Scala), and he is currently writing the libretto for Coleman's new opera.

Brett is a Fellow of both the Guild of Musicians and Singers, and the Institute of Arts and Letters. He is a recipient of Ars Musica Australis, the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust, Creative Partnerships Australia, the Ian Potter Cultural Trust, and the Opus 50 Trust.

Brett Nicholas Brown

Stage Director



Giulio Prandi is an acclaimed Italian conductor and a leading specialist in 18th-century vocal music. Driven by a passion for the sacred and secular repertoire of the Baroque and Classical eras, he founded the Coro e Orchestra Ghislieri in 2003, establishing an ensemble now recognised internationally for its refined interpretations and pioneering research. Under his direction, the ensemble has performed at prestigious venues such as the Berlin Philharmonie, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Teatro alla Scala, BOZAR Brussels, and major festivals including Oude Muziek Utrecht, Enescu Festival, and Internationale Händel-Festspiele Göttingen.

Prandi is Artistic Director of the Centro di Musica Antica della Fondazione Ghislieri in Pavia, awarded the 2019 “Premio Abbiati” for Best Musical Initiative in Italy. His award-winning discography with Arcana (Outhere Music) includes world premiere recordings of works by Pergolesi, Jommelli, and Galuppi, and earned him the 2022 International Classical Music Award for Choral Music with Rossini’s *Petite Messe Solennelle*.

His work balances historical scholarship with dynamic performance, reviving forgotten masterpieces and engaging audiences across Europe. Past highlights include productions at Teatro Filarmonico di Verona, Opéra Grand Avignon, and the Daegu Opera House in South Korea.

At the Valletta Early Opera Festival, Prandi has become a cornerstone of the artistic programme. Following critically acclaimed performances of Mozart’s *Apollo et Hyacinthus* and *Il Re Pastore*, he returns this year to conduct Gluck’s *Il Parnaso Confuso* and *La Corona* at Teatru Manoel. These rarely performed works, composed for the Habsburg court, align perfectly with Prandi’s mission to bring historical repertoire to life with stylistic integrity and emotional depth.

Giulio Prandi

Conductor



Michele Barbieri graduated in Piano at the Conservatorio di Lucca with highest honors and continued his studies at the Conservatorio Martini in Bologna, where he earned with distinction both a Master's Degree in Harpsichord and Historical Keyboards under the guidance of Maria Luisa Baldassari, and a Master's Degree in Chamber Music with a focus on early instruments. His final thesis was devoted to Alessandro Scarlatti's oratorio *La Santissima Annunziata* and its first modern performance in Bologna, prepared under the direction of Federico Maria Sardelli.

He further refined his artistry through masterclasses with internationally renowned musicians such as Andreas Staier, Lorenzo Ghielmi, Francesco Corti, Enrico Baiano, Marco Mencoboni, Bettina Hoffmann, Enrico Gatti, and others.

Active as a soloist, continuo player, and director from the harpsichord, he has performed in important concert halls and theatres in cities including Bologna, Rome, Turin, Florence, Palermo, Pisa, and Lucca. His repertoire spans from the Renaissance to the Baroque, with particular attention to major works such as J.S. Bach's *Brandenburg Concertos*.

Alongside his performing activity, he is deeply committed to the rediscovery and promotion of lesser-known repertoires, bringing to light unpublished works preserved in European music libraries.

He is the founder and director of the early music ensemble Segreti Armonici, selected for the European programme EEEMERGING 2026.

Michele Barbieri

Assistant Conductor



Anthony Bonnici studied Architecture at Kingston University, UK from 2008 to 2011 (RIBA Bronze Medal nominee) and at the Accademia di Mendrisio, Switzerland from 2013 to 2015. Bonnici worked in the office of Valerio Olgiati from 2015 to 2021. He was responsible for international projects and led the realisation of the CELINE Flagship Store in Miami, a winery in red concrete in Tuscany, a house in Alentejo, Portugal and the Pearling Site Entrance and Museum in Bahrain. For the last years at the office, Bonnici was the lead architect dealing with all projects for Kanye West, including his private residence, the Yeezy campus in Wyoming and a pedestrian city in Atlanta. After 16 years away, Bonnici returned to Malta in 2021 to create his own architecture and founded the office EBEJER BONNICI later that year with his partner, Karl Ebejer. In parallel he has been leading a third-year design studio at the University of Malta; expanding on his research and pursuit to create a new cultural identity for the Maltese islands and beyond.

Anthony Bonnici

Set Designer



After studying at Central Saint Martins (UAL) and the University of Malta (UoM), creative director and founder Luke Azzopardi launched his eponymous couture brand. The Luke Azzopardi studio focuses on deconstruction and researched aestheticism stemming from Luke's academic background in costume history. The creative director was awarded the prestigious 'Premio Cultura e Moda 2016' by L'Istituto Italiano di Cultura, the 'Fashion Designer of the Year 2018' award by LovinMalta, and most recently, the Arts Council Malta's 'International Achievement of the Year 2023' as well as 'Multidisciplinary Production of the Year 2023' alongside Open Square Collective and City of Art respectively. As a multidisciplinary designer, Azzopardi has designed large-scale national and international operatic as well as contemporary dance productions, and along with Open Square Collective, has been chosen by Arts Council Malta to design the country's debut pavilion at the London Design Biennale 2023 (LDB). 'Ghonnella: Deconstructing the Garment', his book on Malta's national costume, was published by MidSea Books in 2022. In the world of opera, Azzopardi specialises in Puccini, having designed costumes for all of the composer's major works.

Luke Azzopardi

Costume Designer



Moritz Zavan Stoeckle began his Bharatanatyam training in 1995 with Savitry Nair. In 2007 he started his career as a lighting designer in Venice at Teatro Fondamente Nuove. In 2010 he started training in contemporary dance. In 2012, he won the audience prize of the GD'A Veneto competition. In 2013 his Bharatanatyam solo debut was presented by Mavin Khoo in Venice, and the same year he performed in India under the guidance of SeetharamaSharma. Since then, he has performed several solo shows in India and Europe. Since 2012 he is also working as a freelance dancer and collaborated with several international companies and choreographers such as Contact Dance Company, Shobana Jeyasingh and Seeta Patel, with whom in 2022 he performed *The Rite Of Spring* at the Sadler's Wells. In 2018 he obtained an MA in 'Performing Arts – Dance' with a dissertation on multi-genre choreographies that merge Indian classical dance and contemporary dance. Currently he is working as a freelance dancer, lighting designer, and movement director while also working as assistant lecturer at Mcast, Institute for the Creative Arts in Malta.

Moritz Zavan Stoeckle

Light Designer



Simon Riccardi-Zani was born in Nice (France) in 1998. He studied at the Paris Opera Ballet School and contemporary art the Paris National Conservatoire before joining ŻfinMalta in 2019. Simon's interest in choreography led him to create a young audience piece in 2021. In 2022, he presented "Les Unes" as part of ŻfinMade evenings for emerging choreographers. In 2024, Simon represented France within the Franco-German Pavilion, with a second dance film "Les Uns" for the Malta Biennale 2024, and also performed at the United Nations Ocean Conference in 2025. Last season, Simon choreographed a new work for the full ŻfinMalta under the title "Les Autres" as part of the Żfindays programme alongside a screened version of the choreography.

Simon Riccardi-Zani

Choreographer



Cast

Pelopida

Valentino Buzza

Egisto

Filippo Mineccia

Aspasia

Lorrie Garcia

Oreste

Lucija Varsic

Clito

Vittoriana De Amicis

Ismene

Carlotta Colombo

Fate

Ruth Borg

Attendants

Kelly Peplow

Raphael Pace

Luigi Buhagiar



Valentino Buzza was born in Catania, where he graduated from the Vincenzo Bellini Conservatory in 2008. Over subsequent years, he attended masterclasses with Leone Magiera, Edda Moser, and Renato Bruson, among others. He won several international singing competitions including the Luciano Pavarotti Prize for the Marcello Giordani Foundation (2016) and First Prize at the Tito Schipa Opera Competition (2012).

Recently, he made his debut at the Opéra Royal de Versailles in Zingarelli's *Giulietta e Romeo* alongside Franco Fagioli in a new Stefan Plewniak/Gilles Rico production. Valentino played the lead role (Orfeo) in the film *The Opera! – Arias for an Eclipse* by Davide Livermore and Paolo Gep Cucco, featuring Vincent Cassel, Fanny Ardant, Erwin Schrott, and Rossy de Palma; it was broadcast on January 19, 2025, at La Scala.



He participated in various opera productions at the Centre Perfeccionament Plácido Domingo in Valencia (Palau de les Arts' Opera Studio), including *La Bohème* (Rodolfo) under the direction of Riccardo Chailly, *Così fan tutte* (Ferrando) conducted by Marco Guidarini, *La Traviata* (Giuseppe) and *Turandot* (Pang) both under Zubin Mehta, and *Simon Boccanegra* (Capitano dei balestrieri) alongside Plácido Domingo under the helm of Evelino Pidò.

Valentino embodied the title roles in the following masterpieces of the operatic repertoire: Mozart's *Sogno di Scipione* under the baton of Maestro Sardelli at the Malibran Theatre and *Bastien et Bastienne* in a Davide Livermore production in Genoa, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* under Stefano Montanari at the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Vivaldi's *Incoronazione di Dario* led by Federico Maria Sardelli for the Valencia Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia, and *Catone in Utica* by the same composer for both the Festival Opera Barga and the Teatro Comunale di Ferrara.

Valentino Buzza

Pelopida



In addition, Valentino appeared as Edmondo in Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* at the São Paulo Theatro Municipal and as Quint in Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* for the 2024/2025 opening season of the Teatro Carlo Felice di Genova in a new Riccardo Minasi/Davide Livermore production. He was Nemorino in Donizetti's *Elisir d'amore* in Florence and Catania, L'Abate di Chazeuil in Francesco Cilea's *Adriana Lecouvreur* at the Bari Teatro Petruzzelli, and Filandro in Cimarosa's *Astuzie femminili* under Alessandro De Marchi in Rome and Rieti.

With the complicity of Diego Fasolis, he performed Vivaldi's operas *Ottone in villa* (Decio) and *Farnace* (Pompeo) for La Fenice, where he could also be heard in the role of Pang in *Turandot* in a Francesco Ivan Ciampa/Cecilia Ligorio production.

Under the direction of Fabio Biondi, Valentino Buzza sang Handel's oratorio *Israel in Egypt* in Valencia and Monteverdi's *Orfeo* at the Theater an der Wien, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Liceu Barcelona, and Madrid Auditorio Nacional de Música. He was the tenor soloist in Mozart's *Coronation Mass* under the guidance of Zubin Mehta in Florence and sang Verdi's *Requiem* on a tour throughout Europe alongside Claus Peter Flor and the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano.

Valentino recorded Puccini's *Turandot* (cond. Zubin Mehta) and *Manon Lescaut* (cond. Plácido Domingo) for Decca, and Verdi's *Macbeth* (cond. Fabio Biondi) for Glossa. The 2025/2026 season sees Valentino perform the title role in *Pelopida* by Girolamo Abos under Giulio Prandi for the Valletta Baroque Festival and head to the Teatro di Pisa for both Britten's *Turn of the Screw* (Quint) and Donizetti's *Elisir d'amore* (Nemorino). He will make his Wigmore Hall debut with Vivaldi's *Serenata a tre*, RV 690, alongside Federico Maria Sardelli and his Modo Antiquo Ensemble.



Filippo Mineccia was born in Florence and gained international recognition, being considered by many as one of the greatest specialists in the repertoire of the glorious castrato era. As a child, he studied singing at the Fiesole School of Music, joining its Polyphonic Choir. After graduating in voice and cello from the Luigi Cherubini Music Conservatory in Florence, he studied with Gianni Fabbrini and Donatella Debolini.

Filippo recently made his Teatro alla Scala debut as Titta Castagna in Vinci's *Zite 'ngalera* in the new Andrea Marcon/Leo Muscato production and gained wide attention for the concerts he performed in Ravenna, Jerash, and Pompei under the baton of Riccardo Muti.

He has performed numerous Handel opera roles including Tolomeo in *Giulio Cesare* at both the Versailles Royal Opera and the Beaune Festival, Ottone in *Agrippina* at the Paris Seine Musicale and in a Thomas Hengelbrock/Robert Carsen production at the Theater an der Wien (issued on DVD by Naïve). For the Handel Festspiele in Halle, he appeared as Demetrio (*Berenice*), Dardano (*Amadigi*), and sang the title role in *Lucio Cornelio Silla*.

Filippo Mineccia reunited with Ottavio Dantone for Giacomelli's *Cesare in Egitto* (Achilla) in Innsbruck, for the title role in Vivaldi's *Il Tamerlano* at the Theater an der Wien (issued on CD by Naïve), and for a new Chiara Muti staging of *Giulio Cesare* (Tolomeo). After its premiere at the Teatro Alighieri in Ravenna, the production went on an extensive Italian tour visiting Modena, Piacenza, Reggio Emilia, and Lucca.

He was seen on stage as Caino in A. Scarlatti's oratorio *Il primo omicidio* alongside Philippe Jaroussky at the Salzburg Mozarteum and Montpellier Opera, as Ottone in Monteverdi's *Incoronazione di Poppea* conducted by Jean-Christophe Spinosi at both the Liceu Barcelona and Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, and as Ruggiero in Vivaldi's *Orlando furioso* at the Paris Théâtre des Champs-Élysées.



Filippo performed the title role in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* at the Teatro Massimo in Palermo, Osmida in Galuppi's *Didone abbandonata* under Ulises Illán at both the Auditorio Nacional de Música in Madrid and the Potsdam Festival, and was the Swan in Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* for the Rome Opera and, under the baton of Michele Spotti, for the 101st Arena di Verona Opera Festival.

He has also appeared in rare and lesser-known operas, starring as Achille in Francesco Sacinati's *Finta pazza* with Leonardo García Alarcón in Geneva, Versailles, and Amsterdam, and as Anassandro in the first modern performance of Riccardo Broschi's *Merope* conducted by Alessandro De Marchi in Innsbruck and Vienna.

Filippo Mineccia has issued a dozen solo albums dedicated to relatively unknown composers such as Attilio Ariosti, Leonardo Vinci, Niccolò Jommelli, Francesco Gasparini, and Johann Adolph Hasse. Mezzo has filmed the *Stabat Mater* by Pergolesi and Vivaldi, which he presented at the Chapelle Royale de Versailles.

The 2025/2026 season sees Filippo return to the Innsbruck Festival for Caldara's *Ifigenia in Aulide* (Teucro) under Ottavio Dantone and again the role of Tolomeo in *Giulio Cesare* at both the Teatro Petruzzelli in Bari (Stefano Montanari/Damiano Michieletto) and the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (Gianluca Capuano/Davide Livermore). He will make his debut in the title role of *Orlando* in a Pier Luigi Pizzi staging conducted by Ottavio Dantone at the Ravenna Festival, appear as Egisto in *Pelopida* by Girolamo Abos for the Valletta Baroque Festival, revive Gassmann's *L'Opera Seria* (Caverna) under Christophe Rousset at the Theater an der Wien, and perform in a Tito Ceccherini/Damiano Michieletto production of Francesco Filidei's *Il Nome della Rosa* at the Teatro Carlo Felice di Genova.

Filippo Mineccia

Egisto



Born in Marseille, Lorrie Garcia sang and played the piano from a very young age, exploring jazz and pop music. At the age of 21, she discovered the world of opera and her life was turned upside down. She began her singing studies at the Marseille Conservatory where she graduated with honours in 2018. She had masterclasses with contralto Sonia Prina and baritone Ludovic Tézier with whom she had the opportunity to work regularly thereafter.

While still a student at the Conservatory, Lorrie performed as a soloist at the Marseille Théâtre de l'Odéon in Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène*, *La Vie parisienne* and *La Périochole*. In 2017, she made her opera debut as Mercedes in *Carmen* in Avignon and appeared in *Misatango* by Martín Palmeri at the Opéra de Marseille.



The year 2019 marked her Italian debut as Mademoiselle Dangeville in *Adriana Lecouvreur* at the Teatro Filarmonico di Verona where she subsequently sang Kate Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, Alisa in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and the alto part in Cimarosa's *Missa pro defunctis*.

Lorrie Garcia took part in Plácido Domingo's 50th Anniversary Gala under the baton of conductor Jordi Bernàcer at the Arena di Verona featuring the famed Spanish tenor himself as well as opera stars Anna Pirozzi and Arturo Chacón-Cruz, and performed in the SKP Chengdu iSING! Opera Gala imagined by the acclaimed director Hugo De Ana.

Lorrie Garcia

Aspasia



Other important operatic debuts followed shortly, such as Flora in *La Traviata* at the Teatro Regio di Torino, a role she again took on at the Teatro San Carlo di Napoli under Francesco Ivan Ciampa, and Suzuki in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* during the Festival L'Aria di a Sarra in Corsica. She also performed the title role in *La Tragédie de Carmen*, Peter Brook's adaptation of Bizet's opera, for the Teatro Goldoni in Livorno followed by performances in Pisa, Rovigo and Savona.

Lorrie has enjoyed considerable success with the baroque repertoire, starring as Ozias in Vivaldi's *Juditha triumphans* under Alessandro de Marchi at the Innsbruck Festival and as Goffredo in Handel's *Rinaldo* with the ensemble Les Accents led by Thibault Noally at the Beaune Festival. She made her debut in Paris at the Théâtre de l'Athénée in the title role of Sartorio's *Orfeo* conducted by Philippe Jaroussky and staged by Benjamin Lazar.

With the historically informed ensemble I Gemelli founded by Emiliano Gonzalez Toro and Mathilde Etienne, Lorrie Garcia recorded Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* as well as *Vespro della Beata Vergine* by the same composer they presented at both the Victoria Hall in Geneva and at the Festival de Pâques in Aix-en-Provence. She joined I Gemelli also for Francesca Caccini's *Alcina* (Melissa) at Capitole de Toulouse, Opéra de Lausanne, Opéra Royal de Versailles and the Ambronay Festival, followed by a recording of the work.

Together with pianist Marion Liotard, she created the recital programme FÈMÎNA which pays tribute to women who have marked the history of music, taking the public on a journey through the beauties of a wide and varied repertoire including classical music, operetta, chanson française and jazz. Highly acclaimed by the press, the programme had been performed at the Avignon Opera and in Marseille during the 24-25 season.

Recent and forthcoming engagements include the title role in Giuseppe Maria Orlandini's *Arsace* under Martin Wählberg for the Barokkfest Early Music Festival in Trondheim, and Mère Jeanne in *Dialogues des carmélites* in an Yves Abel/Robert Carsen production for the Teatro Regio di Torino. Lorrie will make her debut with Fabio Biondi leading the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano for Handel's *Messiah* at the Auditorium di Milano.



The Croatian mezzo-soprano Lucija Varsic grew up in an artistic family. Her passion for Early Music has made her a sought-after baroque singer, collaborating with renowned ensembles such as Concentus Musicus Wien, Bach Collegium Zürich, and the Academy of Ancient Music. She completed her master's degrees in Vocal Performance and Historical Performance Practice at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna, where she performed roles in various opera productions, including *Dorabella*, *Dido*, and *Hänsel*.

Lucija is the 2025 winner of both the First Prize and the Audience Prize at the International Handel Singing Competition in London, UK. In 2024, she also received the First Prize and Audience Prize at the Concours international de chant baroque de Froville and was awarded three prizes at the International Cesti Baroque Competition in Innsbruck.

She has appeared at festivals such as the London Handel Festival, the Innsbruck Festival of Early Music, the International Harnoncourt Festival, and the International Baroque Days in Melk, and has performed in venues including the Vienna Musikverein, the Musikverein Graz, and the Vienna Konzerthaus. Most recently, she sang the roles of Humilità and Nobilità in *Stradella's Santa Editta* at the Festival de Musique Sacrée de Nice, and portrayed Andronico in *Vivaldi's Il Giustino* at the Innsbruck Festival of Early Music. She also appeared as Anna Kennedy in *Donizetti's Maria Stuarda* at the Vorarlberg Landestheater in Bregenz. With Teatro Barocco, she performed the role of Marc'Antonio in *Hasse's Marc'Antonio e Cleopatra* and Asteria in *Gluck's La Corona*.

As a concert singer, Lucija is active in both art song and oratorio. Her standard repertoire includes Mozart's masses, as well as Bach's oratorios, passions and numerous cantatas, which she has performed in Austria, Germany, France, and Switzerland. In March, she will appear as Dalinda in *Handel's Titus L'Empereur* at the 2026 London wHandel Festival.

Lucija Varsic

Oreste



Born in L'Aquila, she started her vocal studies in her hometown's Conservatory graduating with full marks and perfecting both in Italy and abroad (Salzburg's Mozarteum, Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst in Wien). She mastered her vocal technique with sopranos Mariella Devia and Antonella D'Amico, won several competitions - notably the VI Concorso Internazionale Renata Tebaldi in San Marino - and from 2018 to 2020 was trained at the Centre de Perfeccionament Plácido Domingo at Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia.

She has appeared in: *Le nozze di Figaro* in Wien and Valencia; the world premiere of Campogrande's *De bello Gallico* with Elio and Francesco Micheli in Florence; the world premiere of Colla's *Delitto e dovere* at the 65° Festival dei Due Mondi in Spoleto and in Novara; *Rigoletto* (Gilda) in Teramo; *Un ballo in maschera*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and *Carmen* in Tianjin and Harbin; *Die Zauberflöte* (Königin der Nacht) in Jerez de la Frontera, Cordoba and for the show *Intimissimi On Ice* at Arena di Verona.



Among her recent and future engagements: Martyn y Soler's *Il tutore burlato* in Valencia; her debut at Teatro San Carlo in *Il Trovatore* (Ines) conducted by M° Armiliato; *Dido and Aeneas* and her debut as Amina in Bellini's *La sonnambula* at Teatro Massimo in Palermo; *Adriana Lecouvreur* and the Gala concert *Fuoco di gioia* conducted by M° Renzetti at Teatro Regio in Parma; concerts at MiTo Festival with *Academia Montis Regalis*; *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi* at Teatro Comunale in Bologna; *Carmen* at Opera Carlo Felice in Genova; her debut as Nannetta in *Falstaff* in Verona.

Vittoriana De Amicis

Clito



Carlotta Colombo began her singing training at the age of 16. After graduating in Opera Singing from the Conservatorio di Musica in Como, she dedicated herself to the Baroque repertoire under the guidance of Roberto Balconi. She also gained a first-class honours degree in Philosophy from the University of Milan.

A finalist in the 2022 International Cesti Singing Competition for Baroque Opera in Innsbruck, Carlotta made her debut in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* (La Musica and Proserpina) at the age of 23. She subsequently collaborated with numerous early music ensembles including Il Pomo d'Oro, Europa Galante, Les Musiciens du Prince-Monaco, and the Boston Early Music Festival Chamber Ensemble.

Other important operatic debuts followed shortly, such as the roles of Fortuna and Drusilla in Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* in a George Petrou/Ted Huffman production at Oper Köln, and La Musica and Euridice in *L'Orfeo* under Gianluca Capuano at both the Opéra de Monte-Carlo and Salzburger Festspiele. Carlotta was Maddalena in Handel's *La Resurrezione* for the Teatro Comunale Ferrara and Melissa in *Amadigi di Gaula* by the same composer for the Sofia National Opera. In 2023, she made her Scala house debut with I Cameristi della Scala conducted by Giulio Prandi.

Carlotta recently embarked on a European tour alongside Joyce DiDonato and Il Pomo d'Oro led by Maxim Emelyanychev, performing Carissimi's Jephthe and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* at the Barbican Centre in London, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, Teatro Real in Madrid, and Elbphilharmonie Hamburg. An album of the concert will be released on the Erato label.



Under the baton of Ottavio Dantone, she performed as Amanzio in Vivaldi's *Giustino* at the Auditorio Nacional de Música in Madrid and Sociedad Filarmónica in Bilbao. Also active on the concert stage, Carlotta appeared at the Wiener Konzerthaus and the Pierre Boulez Saal in Berlin.

Her recordings include Pergolesi's intermezzo *Livietta e Tracollo* (Livietta) with the Boston Early Music Festival Chamber Ensemble (CPO), four little-known pastoral cantatas by the young Handel (Brilliant Classics), a recording with Giulio Prandi featuring sacred music for the Naïve Vivaldi Edition, and the release of Carlotta's first solo album *Arianna a Roma* alongside the Italian ensemble Anima & Corpo and Gabriele Pro, dedicated to the seventeenth-century repertoire for Roman female singers (Arcana).

Recent and forthcoming engagements include Carlotta's title role debut in Handel's *Rodelinda* under Alessandro Quarta at the Theater Kiel, Cleonilla in Vivaldi's *Ottone in villa* at La Fenice, Aristeia in a new Giulio Prandi/Fabio Ceresa production of Pergolesi's *L'Olimpiade* at the Teatro Pergolesi in Jesi, and Ismene in *Pelopida* by Girolamo Abos for the Valletta Baroque Festival.

Carlotta will also team up with Ottavio Dantone for a concert dedicated to Scarlatti at the Innsbruck Festival and with Alessandro Quarta for a series of recitals in Rome and Darmstadt.

Carlotta Colombo

Ismene



Arianna Art Ensemble

Violin 1

Gabriele Pro
Sara Meloni
Archimede De Martini
Karla Bocaz
Isabel Soteras

Violin 2

Raffaele Nicoletti
Domenico Schiccitano
Iben Kejser
Gabriele Politi

Viola

Sara Bagnati
Maria Cristina Vasi

Cello

Andrea Rigano
Maria Calvo

Double Bass

Fabio Longo

Harpsichord

Deniel Perer

Oboes

Rei Ishizaka
Arianna Zambon

Horns

Ermes Pecchinini
Sara Nashed

Trumpets

Mattia Cristino
Davide Maiello

Flute

Enrico Luca
Ida Febbraio

Bassoon

Giulia Breschi

Theorbo

Giulio Falzone



Arianna Art Ensemble, founded in 2007 by lutenist and composer Paolo Rigano and harpsichordist Cinzia Guarino, is dedicated to promoting Renaissance and Baroque vocal and instrumental repertoire through performances on period instruments, adherence to historically informed performance practices, and the rediscovery of unpublished manuscripts. Thanks to the versatility of its members, the ensemble can adapt to a wide range of configurations, from chamber music settings to small opera orchestras.

The ensemble also embraces experimentation and the performance of contemporary music using historical instruments. Its members have recorded for various labels, receiving praise from critics. Arianna Art Ensemble has won numerous awards in prestigious competitions, including first prize in the “Ancient Instruments” category at the 7th edition of the National Arts Award organized by the Italian Ministry of Higher Artistic Education in 2010.

To date, Arianna Art Ensemble has performed in some of Italy’s most important concert seasons and at various festivals and events across Europe. The group collaborates regularly with renowned artists such as Enrico Onofri, Giovanni Sollima, Dmitry Sinkovsky, and Fabio Biondi. In partnership with the MusicaMente Association of Palermo, the ensemble is actively involved in the production of the International Festival of Early Music in Gratteri, now in its 18th edition. It has also been promoting a concert season dedicated to early and Baroque music in Palermo for the past 13 years, featuring acclaimed musicians of both national and international renown.

In collaboration with Giovanni Sollima, the ensemble recorded the Sonatas and Symphonies by Giovanni Battista Costanzi for the Glossa label. In 2017, the ensemble brought to light previously unpublished manuscripts of sacred works by Antonino Reggio, an 18th-century harpsichordist and composer born in Aci Catena. In 2021, it released the album *Cimbalu d’Amuri* with Almendra Music, inspired by 17th-century Sicily. In 2022, with the Tactus label, the ensemble recorded *Musiche per arciliuto, chitarra e clavicembalo*, which received a five-star review from AMADEUS magazine.

Arianna Art Ensemble



Festivals Malta Team

Director (Operations)

Etienne Bonello

Senior Manager (Operations)

Claudette Debono Farrugia

Administrative Consultant

Mario Azzopardi

Manager (Finance)

Carmen Meli

Managers (Festivals)

Leanne Abela Grech

Daryl Ebejer

Thomas Grima

Anton Miceli

Monique Saliba

Jeanelle Vella

Neil Zerafa

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Martin Gauci

Manager

(Communications & Marketing)

Caroline Agius

Executive (Communications)

Celine Caruana

Executive

(Audience Development & Outreach)

Christian Debono

Executive

(Festivals Development)

Sigmund Mifsud

Executive (Creative):

Terrence Cutajar

Clayton Saliba

Executive (Site Management)

Ruben Balzan

Clint Bonavia

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(Projects Management & Precincts)

Antoine Zammit

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Gay Sultana

Isabelle Gatt

Christian Arding

Christian Delia

Katriona Grixti

Mario Cassar

Charles Marsh

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Ryan Spiteri

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Senior Officer (Administration)

Mariella Portelli

Senior Administration Officer

Ina Robinich

Technical Officer

Michael Belli

Senior Tradespersons

Saviour Busuttil

Patrick Cunningham

Colin Ellul

Alan Mifsud

Tradespersons:

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Chairman

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Festivals Malta would also like to thank Ms [Anna Trigona](#) for proofreading services for the festival.

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All information in this booklet is correct at the time of printing.