

BOSTON BAROQUE
Martin Pearlman, Music Director

ANNUAL SEMI-STAGED OPERA

Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*



**AMANDA
FORSYTHE**
soprano
Poppea



**ANTHONY ROTH
CONSTANZO**
countertenor
Nerone



**RYAN
BELONGIE**
countertenor
Ottone



**KEVIN
LANGAN**
bass
Seneca



**BRIAN
GIEBLER**
tenor
Arnalta



**TARA
FAIRCLOTH**
stage director

*In a new performing version by
Music Director Martin Pearlman*

Boston Baroque revisits Monteverdi's striking story of love, politics, and power. The semi-staged production features Boston favorite, soprano Amanda Forsythe, in the title role, joined by the Boston Baroque debut of countertenor superstar Anthony Roth Costanzo as Nerone.

FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2019 AT 7:30PM
SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 2019 AT 3:00PM
NEC'S JORDAN HALL

TICKETS FROM \$25
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PROGRAM

BOSTON BAROQUE
Martin Pearlman, Music Director

Jephtha

George Frideric Handel (1685 – 1759)

Act I

INTERMISSION

Act II

Act III

Conductor, Martin Pearlman

Jephtha Nicholas Phan, *Tenor*
Iphis Ava Pine, *Soprano*
Storgè Ann McMahon Quintero, *Mezzo-soprano*
Hamor Randall Scotting, *Countertenor*
Zebul Dashon Burton, *Bass-Baritone*
Angel Sonja Tengblad, *Soprano*

FRIDAY MARCH 8, 2019 AT 8:00PM
SUNDAY MARCH 10, 2019 AT 3:00PM
NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY'S JORDAN HALL, BOSTON

Pre-concert lecture by Dr. Laura Prichard, one hour before the concert

Nicholas Phan sponsored by the Mattina R. Proctor Foundation
Randall Scotting sponsored by Susan Maycock and Charles Sullivan

In consideration of the performers and those around you, please turn off all electronic devices during the concert, including tablets, cellular phones, pagers, watch alarms, and messaging devices of any kind. Please note that photographs, recordings, and videos are strictly prohibited during concerts.



*Boston Baroque is funded in part by the
Massachusetts Cultural Council.*

BOSTON BAROQUE

Martin Pearlman, Music Director

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FEATURED ARTISTS

NICHOLAS PHAN, TENOR (JEPHTHA)

Described by the *Boston Globe* as "one of the world's most remarkable singers," American tenor Nicholas Phan is increasingly recognized as an artist of distinction. Praised for his keen intelligence, captivating stage presence and natural musicianship, he performs regularly with the world's leading orchestras and opera companies. Also an avid recitalist, in 2010 he co-founded the Collaborative Arts Institute of Chicago (CAIC) to promote art song and vocal chamber music.



PHOTO: BALANCE PHOTOGRAPHY

Mr. Phan once again launches his new season in Chicago, curating CAIC's seventh annual Collaborative Arts Festival. This year's three-day festival (Sep 5 - 8), "The Song as Drama," will examine the narrative power of the song cycle and the ability of song to tell epic stories with minimal forces. Other highlights of his 2018-19 season are two role debuts: Eumolpus in Stravinsky's *Perséphone*, with Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony; and the title role in this production of Handel's *Jephtha*. The title role in Bernstein's *Candide*, with Marin Alsop and the Israel Philharmonic, will mark his debut in Israel. In addition to three programs with the San Francisco Symphony, he will return to major orchestras across the country including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, and Colorado Symphony. A celebrated recording artist, Mr. Phan will be heard on two forthcoming recordings: Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette* with Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony, (recorded in June 2017); and Handel's *Joseph and His Brethren* (recorded in December 2017) with Philharmonia Baroque and Nicholas McGegan, singing the roles of Simeon and Judah.

Mr. Phan's most recent solo album, *Illuminations*, was released on Avie Records in April 2018. His previous solo album, *Gods and Monsters*, was nominated for the 2017 Grammy Award for Best Classical Vocal Solo Album. His previous solo albums made many "best of" lists, including those of the *New York Times*, *New Yorker*, *Chicago Tribune* and *Boston Globe*. Mr. Phan's growing discography also includes a Grammy-nominated recording of Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* with Pierre Boulez and the Chicago Symphony, the opera *L'Olimpiade* with the Venice Baroque Orchestra, Scarlatti's *La gloria di primavera* with Philharmonia Baroque, an album of Bach's secular cantatas with Masaaki Suzuki and Bach Collegium Japan, Bach's *St. John Passion* (in which he sings both the Evangelist and the tenor arias) with

FEATURED ARTISTS

Apollo's Fire, and the world premiere recordings of two orchestral song cycles: *The Old Burying Ground* by Evan Chambers and Elliott Carter's *A Sunbeam's Architecture*.

Mr. Phan has appeared with many of the leading orchestras in the North America and Europe. He has toured extensively throughout the major concert halls of Europe with Il Complesso Barocco, and has appeared with the Oregon Bach, Ravinia, Marlboro, Edinburgh, Rheingau, Saint-Denis, and Tanglewood festivals, as well as the BBC Proms. Among the conductors he has worked with are Marin Alsop, Harry Bicket, Pierre Boulez, James Conlon, Alan Curtis, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, Charles Dutoit, James Gaffigan, Jane Glover, Manfred Honeck, Bernard Labadie, Louis Langrée, Nicholas McGegan, Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Muti, John Nelson, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Helmuth Rilling, David Robertson, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Masaaki Suzuki, Michael Tilson Thomas, Bramwell Tovey and Franz Welser-Möst.

An avid proponent of vocal chamber music, he has collaborated with pianists Mitsuko Uchida, Richard Goode, Jeremy Denk, Graham Johnson, Roger Vignoles, Inon Barnatan, Myra Huang and Alessio Bax; violinist James Ehnes; guitarist Eliot Fisk; harpist Sivan Magen; and horn players Jennifer Montone, Radovan Vlatkovic and Gail Williams. In both recital and chamber concerts, he has been presented by Carnegie Hall, London's Wigmore Hall, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Atlanta's Spivey Hall, Boston's Celebrity Series, and the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. In 2010, he co-founded the Collaborative Arts Institute of Chicago, an organization that promotes the art song and vocal chamber music repertoire of which he is Artistic Director.

Mr. Phan's opera credits include appearances with the Los Angeles Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Glimmerglass Festival, Chicago Opera Theater, Seattle Opera, Portland Opera, Glyndebourne Opera, Maggio Musicale in Florence, Deutsche Oper am Rhein, and Frankfurt Opera. His repertoire includes the title roles in Bernstein's *Candide*, Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* and Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Nemorino in *L'elisir d'amore*, Fenton in *Falstaff*, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, and Lurcanio in *Ariodante*.

A graduate of the University of Michigan, Mr. Phan is the 2012 recipient of the Paul C Boylan Distinguished Alumni Award. He also studied at the Manhattan School of Music and the Aspen Music Festival and School, and is an alumnus of the Houston Grand Opera Studio. He was the recipient of a 2006 Sullivan Foundation Award and 2004 Richard F. Gold Career Grant from the Shoshana Foundation. In 2018, Phan was appointed to the faculty of DePaul University.



PHOTO: DIANA M. LOTT

AVA PINE, SOPRANO (IPHIS)

Soprano Ava Pine has enjoyed a rich and varied career on both concert and operatic stages. Recent solo performances include a program of jazz standards with the Cliburn Concert Series in Fort Worth, Handel's *Messiah* with Boston Baroque, Fort Worth Opera's 2017 festival Grand Opening Night Concert, the role of Anna Sorenson in *Silent Night* with Atlanta Opera, and *Messiah* with Dallas Bach Society. Her 2015–2016 season featured performances as The Young Girl in *After Life* with UrbanArias and Kryisia in Jake Heggie's *Out of Darkness* with Music of Remembrance.

Ms. Pine has enjoyed frequent reengagements with both the Dallas and Fort Worth Symphonies, as well as leading operatic roles with Fort Worth Opera, Dallas Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Chicago Opera Theatre, Kansas City Lyric Opera, Florentine Opera, Opera Colorado and Tulsa Opera, among many others. She received a Grammy nomination for her 2011 recording with Ars Lyrica of Houston, singing the title role of Cleopatra in Hasse's *Marc' Antonio e Cleopatra*. She made her European debut with the BBC Symphony Orchestra as The Angel in the UK premiere of *Angels in America*, a role she first debuted with Fort Worth Opera.

In 2017 Ms. Pine left singing as a full-time career and now balances musical performances with her work as a bone marrow transplant nurse for New York-Presbyterian Hospital.



PHOTO: TIM HILL

ANN MCMAHON QUINTERO, MEZZO-SOPRANO (STORGÈ)

Ann McMahon Quintero returns to Boston Baroque after singing the mezzo-soprano part in last season's performance of Mozart's *Requiem*. Hailed by the *Baltimore Sun* as "fully nuanced...warm honeyed tones and soaring regally," Ms. Quintero brings to the operatic and concert stage outstanding know-how and confidence.

FEATURED ARTISTS

Developing a robust career singing with the Washington National Opera, Santa Fe Opera, the Spoleto Festival, and the Boston Lyric Opera, Ms. Quintero recently made her Asia debut with engagements with Musica Viva Hong Kong as Azucena (*Il trovatore*). She added to her international appearances with New Israeli Opera in Gluck's *Armide* and joined Teatro alla Scala for its production of Lorin Maazel's *1984*.

A frequent artist with Boston Baroque, Ms. Quintero has also sung numerous performances with the Defiant Requiem Foundation conducted by Murry Sidlin in New York's David Geffen Hall and Boston's Symphony Hall; performed with the Charlotte and Alabama symphonies, National Philharmonic, and Opera Orchestra of New York; and was soloist with the National Endowment for the Arts Opera Honors Inaugural Awards Concert.

Ms. Quintero is a winner of the Sara Tucker Study Grant from the Richard Tucker Music Foundation, the Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation International Vocal Competition, and the George London Foundation, and a semi-finalist in Plácido Domingo's Operalia. She is also a Grand National Finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.



RANDALL SCOTTING, COUNTERTENOR (HAMOR)

Randall Scotting's vocal agility, warm tone, and masculine stage presence define him as an acclaimed interpreter of baroque opera heroes. He is recognized for his innovative recital and concert programs and performances of avant-garde contemporary works.

This season, Mr. Scotting performs in *Calcutta*, a cross-over concert combining traditional eighteenth-century British and Indian music, with Ensemble Tempus Fugit at the Left Bank Opera Festival in Leeds and at the SAMA Arts' Women in the Arts Festival at Wilton's Music Hall in London.

Last season, he performed Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* and selections of Vivaldi with LoftOpera, Capucin/Cuigy in David DiChiera's and Bernard Uzan's *Cyrano* with Opera Carolina, and a double bill of *Dido and Aeneas/Venus and Adonis* in the roles of Spirit/Cupid with Florentine Opera. Prior to last season, he performed the title role in *Rinaldo* at Merkin Hall with Operamission, Valentiniano in Gluck's *Ezio* with Odyssey Opera, and Capucin/Cuigy with Michigan Opera

Theater. He also performed in an Off-Broadway production of *Paris!* as the Greek goddess Hera with Company XIV, an acclaimed, innovative company in Brooklyn, NY; took part in The Playwright's Lab series with the New Dramatists in New York City; and joined National Sawdust's production of *Ariodante*. Other previous engagements include his debut with Seattle Opera in Handel's *Semele*; a recital tour of Hungary and the Czech Republic; a program of selections from *Saul* and *Xerxes* for the Handel House Museum in London; a concert entitled "The Thief, the Priest, and the Lover" with Ballo Baroque Ensemble in London; and the role of Marc Antonio in the modern-day premiere of Daniele de Castrovillari's 1662 opera *La Cleopatra* in San Francisco.

Mr. Scotting performed Giuliano in Cavalli's *Eliogabalo* for New York City's Gotham Chamber Opera, where the *New York Times* lauded him as "excellent" and possessing a "clarion countertenor" voice; the title role in Handel's *Giulio Cesare* at Fort Worth Opera, where he was praised for his "technical brilliance with his delivery of spot-on lines of coloratura within his many arias;" excerpts from *Oscar* with Santa Fe Opera; and the title role in Handel's *Orlando* for Hobart Baroque in Australia, a role he previously performed with Sacramento Opera and the Liszt Orchestra in Budapest. Additional roles include Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*, the title role in *Orfeo ed Euridice*, and the leading role in *Akhmaten*.

In concert, Mr. Scotting recently appeared at St. Cecilia's Hall in Edinburgh, sang *Chichester Psalms* and *Carmina Burana* with Santa Barbara Symphony, performed a solo recital for the Göttingen Haendel Festspiele Historical Music Series, presented 'Handel's Rivals' at the Handel House Museum, presented staged versions of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* and Maxwell Davies's *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, and presented Antonio Caldara's newly rediscovered oratorio *Le gelosie d'un amore utilmente crudele* in London. He was the featured vocalist with the Baroque Orchestra of Colorado singing the music of Handel and performed concerts in several well-known London venues, including St. Martin-in-the-Fields, the National Gallery, and the V&A Museum. He has performed twice at Carnegie Hall, first under the baton of Ton Koopman in works of Handel and later in a performance piece with Bobby McFerrin.

Mr. Scotting's discography includes recordings of the title role in Antonio Caldara's oratorio *Santo Stefano*, a modern cantata for chorus and soloist entitled *Dive: A Water Music*, and on the DVD of Vivaldi's opera *Ercole sul Termodonte* from the Festival dei Due Mondi in Spoleto, Italy, with ensemble Il Complesso Barocco conducted by Alan Curtis.

FEATURED ARTISTS

Mr. Scotting is an award winner and finalist of many competitions, including The Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions (District Winner), the Marcelo Giordani Competition, Connecticut Opera Competition, McCammon Competition, Licia Albanese Puccini Competition, and Denver Lyric Opera Guild Competition. He trained at London's Royal College of Music, the Juilliard Opera Center, the University of Colorado at Boulder, and as a Fulbright Scholar at the Liszt Academy in Budapest.

DASHON BURTON, BASS-BARITONE (ZEBUL)

Praised for his "nobility and rich tone," (*The New York Times*) and his "enormous, thrilling voice seemingly capable ... [of] raising the dead;" (*Wall Street Journal*), bass-baritone Dashon Burton has appeared in the Brahms *Requiem* and Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with Franz Welser-Möst and the Cleveland Orchestra in the last two seasons, and in Mozart's *Requiem* in the summer season at Severance Hall. He joined forces with Cleveland and Welser-Möst again in 2017-2018 for reprise performances of their groundbreaking production of Janacek's *Cunning Little Vixen* and for performances of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in their *Prometheus Project*, at home and abroad in Vienna and Japan.



PHOTO: TATIANA DALIBECK

This season, Mr. Burton sings Beethoven Symphony No. 9 with the Handel and Haydn Society in Boston, in Sweden with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, and with the Orlando Philharmonic. He appears twice at Carnegie Hall with the Oratorio Society of NY for Handel's *Messiah* and in the world premiere of Paul Moravec's *Sanctuary Road*, and performs in David Lang's *The Little Match Girl Passion* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Mr. Burton revisits the role of Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* on tour with Opera de Dijon in Limoges and Caen, and sings recitals with Lindsay Garritson and with Craig Hella Johnson for Conspirare in Austin. Throughout the season he continues to tour with the Grammy-winning contemporary vocal ensemble Roomful of Teeth, and ends the season at Grant Park Music Festival singing Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*.

Mr. Burton is a frequent guest with ensembles including Boston Baroque, Philharmonia Baroque, the Handel and Haydn Society, the Carmel and Bethlehem Bach Choir Festivals, and the symphony orchestras of Baltimore, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Kansas City, New Jersey, Oregon, and the St. Paul

Chamber Orchestra. Forays into more varied repertoire in the last seasons have included his performances of Michael Tippett's *A Child of our Time* at Harvard, Barber's *Dover Beach* and Hans Eisler's *Ernste Gesaenge* with the chamber orchestra A Far Cry in Boston, Copland's *Old American Songs* with the Kansas City Symphony, Schubert's *Die Winterreise* with string quartet, and performances and the recording of Craig Hella Johnson's *Considering Matthew Shepard* with the vocal group Conspirare.

Mr. Burton's opera roles include Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* in Dijon and Paris, and Jupiter in Rameau's *Castor and Pollux* with Christoph Rousset and Les Talens Lyriques. He has toured Europe in the *St. John Passion* with Christoph Prégardien's Le Concert Lorraine, and in Italy with Masaaki Suzuki and the Yale Schola Cantorum in the *St. Matthew Passion*, a work he also sang on tour in the Netherlands with the NNSO.

Mr. Burton began his professional studies at Case Western Reserve University and graduated from the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music. Upon graduation, he was invited to join Cantus, a professional men's classical vocal ensemble based in Minneapolis, and toured with them for five years. In 2009, Burton entered Yale University's Institute of Sacred Music, where he studied vocal literature including Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610*, Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, and Mendelssohn's *Elijah* under tenor James Taylor. He received his Master of Music degree in 2011.

Dashon Burton appears by arrangement with Colbert Artists Management, Inc., 307 Seventh Avenue, Suite 2006, New York, NY 10001.

SONJA DUTOIT TENGBLAD, SOPRANO (ANGEL)

Commended by the Boston Globe for her "crystalline tone and graceful musicality", soprano Sonja DuToit Tengblad is a versatile performer with credits spanning the Renaissance era through the most current composers of our time. Recent highlights include Vivaldi's *Juditha triumphans devicta Holofernis bolbarie* (Abra and Ozias), Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* (La Fortuna and Giunone; Grammy-nominated recording with Linn Records) and Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* (First Lady) with Boston Baroque; appearances with the Handel and Haydn



FEATURED ARTISTS

Society in Bach's *St. John Passion* (soprano soloist), Purcell's *King Arthur* (Cupid) and Handel's *Samson* (Israelite Woman); Handel's *Acis and Galatea* with the Blue Hill Bach Festival (Galatea); Knussen's *Symphony No. 2* for high soprano with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and her Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center debuts, both with the New York City Chamber Orchestra. She was awarded second place in the 2014 American Prize competition's art song and oratorio division.

A champion of new music, Ms. Tengblad curated *Modern Dickinson* (with Seattle Opera regular Eric Neuville and Austin Chamber Music director Michelle Schumann), a program featuring all 21st century settings of Emily Dickinson's poetry that was named the #3 Best Arts Event in Austin, TX 2015 and was nominated for four Austin Critic's Table Awards. She has premiered many roles and works, including the Boston premiere of Kati Agócs' *Vessel* for three solo voices and chamber ensemble, and Agócs' world premiere of *The Debrecen Passion* for which she was a featured soloist, both performed and recorded with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project. In 2015 she premiered Shirish Korde's *Questions for the Moon* with members of the Silk Road Ensemble. A highlight for Ms. Tengblad was appearing in a concert celebrating the 80th birthday of composer Dominic Argento; the Minnesota Star Tribune described her performance as "the most affective performance of the evening". Recent seasons included performances with BeatSong, her recital project with percussionist Jonathan Hess, featuring world premieres by Matthew Peterson and Emmy award-winning composer Kareem Roustom.

In addition to Boston Baroque Ms. Tengblad performs with the Grammy-winning ensemble Conspirare out of Austin, Texas; the Yale Choral Artists; and Boston's Blue Heron, Lorelei Ensemble, and Handel and Haydn Society. Upcoming highlights include the Lorelei Ensemble's appearances with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Symphony Hall and Carnegie Hall, and solo engagements including Mahler's Symphony No. 2 with the Boston Philharmonic, Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* with the Landmarks Orchestra, and Porpora's *Calcante ed Achille* with A Far Cry.

BOSTON BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Christina Day Martinson,
concertmaster

Jesse Irons
assistant concertmaster

Julia McKenzie
Danielle Maddon
Lena Wong
Amy Sims

VIOLIN II

Sarah Darling*
Laura Gulley
Asako Takeuchi
Etsuko Ishizuka
Julia Connor

VIOLA

Jason Fisher*
Barbara Wright
Lauren Nelson

VIOLONCELLO

Michael Unterman*
Velleda Miragias
Denise Fan

CONTRABASS

Deborah Dunham*

FLUTE

Joseph Monticello*

OBOE

Priscilla Herreid*
Alison Gangler

BASSOON

Clayton Zeller-Townson*

TRUMPET

Paul Perfetti*
Christopher Belluscio

HARPSICORD & ORGAN

Peter Sykes*

PERSONNEL MANAGER

Paul Perfetti

**Principal*

*The orchestra performs on
period instruments.*

BOSTON BAROQUE CHORUS

SOPRANO

Emily Bieber
Jessica Cooper
Cassandra
Extavour
Kelley Hollis
Olivia Miller
Julia Steinbok
Ruby White

ALTO

Marylène Altieri
Carrie Cheron
Elizabeth Eschen
Mary Gerbi
Margaret Lias
Elena Snow

TENOR

Henry Lussier
David McSweeney
Gene Stenger
Connor Vigeant
Jason Wang
Patrick Waters

BASS

Ryne Cherry
Bradford Gleim
Brett Johnson
Will Praepstis
Ulysses Thomas
Dana Whiteside

PROGRAM NOTES

BY MARTIN PEARLMAN

Handel's last oratorio—and last major work—sets the biblical story of Jephtha from the book of Judges. As he is about to lead the Israelites into battle, Jephtha makes a vow to God that, if he is victorious, he will sacrifice the first living creature that he sees on returning to his fields. As he returns in triumph, his daughter, his only child, runs out to greet him and becomes that "creature" that he has vowed to sacrifice.

It is a wrenching drama, but it is also a work that comes from a devastating time in the composer's life. Handel began work on this great oratorio on January 21 of 1751 but, after several weeks, his eyesight was failing, and, in the midst of writing the celebrated chorus, "How dark, o Lord, are Thy decrees," he penned a poignant note in the score: "Reached here on 13 February 1751, unable to go on owing to weakening of the sight of my left eye." He saw doctors and visited watering places at Bath and Cheltenham for his health and by mid-June felt well enough to resume work, but he struggled. His writing in the autograph score is shaky, and he eventually went completely blind in his left eye. On completing the score, he wrote the date, August 30, as was his custom, but, perhaps because of his failing health, he added "age 66."

The premiere of *Jephtha* took place at Covent Garden on February 26 of the following year. Despite being now blind in one eye and gradually losing the sight in his other eye, Handel was able

to conduct the performance. The work was a success and was repeated twice that season. It was then revived, with some alteration, in three more seasons during Handel's lifetime.

In the seven years that remained to him, the blind master is said to have still played organ concertos during performances of his oratorios, but he no longer directed the ensemble. Charles Burney reported that he was "always much disturbed and agitated" during the aria "Total eclipse" in *Samson*, in which the hero has gone blind:

"The recollection that Handel had set this air to music, with the view of the blind composer then sitting by the organ, affected the audience so forcibly, that many persons present were moved even to tears."

He composed little during these last years, the few "new" works that derived from this time being largely assembled by others from his earlier music.

The libretto for *Jephtha* was written by Thomas Morell, who had provided Handel with libretti for several of his previous oratorios. Morell took some freedoms with the biblical story. He adapted some of his material from an earlier Jephtha oratorio by Maurice Greene, added the characters of Hamor and Jephtha's wife Storgè, and inserted lines by Milton, Pope, Addison and others within his own text. Most significantly, though, he altered the

ending. In the original story, Jephtha's daughter (unnamed in the bible) goes for two months to the mountains to mourn her fate and then returns to be sacrificed and lamented. But Morell gives it a more Christian bent: an angel descends to announce that Jephtha's daughter Iphis is to live "dedicated to God in pure and virgin state forever." The tragedy of the Old Testament story is thus turned into joyous praise of a merciful God.

Handel's last two oratorios, *Theodora* and *Jephtha*, are both deeply religious works dealing with life and death, but it seems here as if the composer's focus is somewhat different from that of his librettist. Handel does not make as much of the angel's intervention and the happy ending as one might expect. It is a scene that some writers have felt is anticlimactic and weakens the drama. Indeed, it does not appear to have been part of Handel's original conception but a scene that he added afterwards. Nor does he make a musical highlight of Jephtha's rash vow that sets the drama in motion. Rather, he focuses on the human suffering caused by the vow. His characterizations are vivid. Through the music, Jephtha evolves from brash warrior to horrified father to a man who humbly accepts fate; his daughter's childlike innocence evolves into stoic acceptance; and the horror and rage of Jephtha's wife Storgè are palpable. In a brilliant quartet near the end of Act II ("O spare your daughter"), each character expresses different thoughts about the impending catastrophe.

The inevitability of fate is also a focus. The chorus, which is only occasionally an actor in the drama, is more often a spectator, and, like a Greek chorus, it comments poignantly on the action and states the moral themes. This happens most memorably in the chorus that ends Act II. Here Handel appears to have changed Morell's "What God ordains is right" to Alexander Pope's more powerful statement, "Whatever is, is right." One cannot help recalling that this chorus, which begins "How dark, o Lord, are Thy decrees," was the one during which Handel had to lay down his pen because of his growing blindness.

SYNOPSIS

Jephtha was scorned as an illegitimate child and driven out of Israel by his half brothers. He has been living in Tob with his wife, Storgè, and their daughter, Iphis, who was born in exile. Soon after Jephtha's exile the Ammonites attacked Israel and began a long and bitter war.

ACT ONE

The Israelites have been at war with the Ammonites for the past eighteen years. After all their military leaders have been killed, the people have begun to turn away from Jehovah to worship false gods. In desperation, they ask the exiled Jephtha to return and lead their forces in a final offensive against the Ammonite occupation.

Jephtha agrees to lead the army on condition that he is allowed to lead the country, if he wins the battle. The Israelites, led by Jephtha's half-brother, Zebul, agree to his demand. Jephtha says goodbye to his wife and daughter. Iphis then bids farewell to the Israelite, Hamor, to whom she is engaged and who will fight alongside her father in the forthcoming battle. Jephtha, worried about the outcome of the battle, privately makes a deal with God: if he returns, he will sacrifice the first living thing that he sees upon his return.

Meanwhile his wife fears that some misfortune will happen. She is comforted after this nightmare by her daughter and servants. Jephtha, who has failed to secure a peace by treaty, prepares his Israelite forces for the battle.

ACT TWO

Hamor informs Iphis of her father's victory, and describes the miracle of the battle, in which an army of angels signaled the enemy's defeat. She asks her servants to prepare to welcome her father back.

Jephtha returns triumphant and commends the bravery of his officers, Zebul and Hamor, but says that God deserves the real credit for the victory. Iphis then appears unexpectedly to greet her father with her servants. Jephtha is horrified to realize that it his daughter who is the subject of his rash promise to God. He is forced to tell everyone of his vow, and all try to persuade him to change his mind.

He refuses. Iphis herself convinces him that she will go ahead with the sacrifice for the sake of her country and family. The community wrestles with the nature of the goodness of a God who asks for the murder of a child.

ACT THREE

Jephtha, his wife and the community prepare for Iphis's sacrifice. The whole community appeals to God for guidance. Just as Iphis is being dragged off to her death an angel appears and forbids the sacrifice to proceed: Iphis must dedicate herself to a life of chastity and the service of God.

Jephtha thanks God for sparing Iphis's life. Iphis and Hamor say farewell to each other, and the people rejoice and praise God for their victory.



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HENRY PURCELL
SOCIETY of BOSTON

The Tempest

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PROGRAM TEXTS

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

RECITATIVE

ZEBUL:

It must be so – or these vile Ammonites, our lordly tyrants now these eighteen years, will crush the race of Israel. Since Heaven vouchsafes not, with immediate choice, to point us out a leader as before, ourselves must choose; and who so fit a man as Gilead's son, our brother, valiant Jephtha? True we have slighted, scorn'd, expell'd him hence, as of a stranger born: but well I know him; his gen'rous soul disdains a mean revenge, when his distressful country calls his aid, and perhaps Heaven may favour our request, if with repentant hearts we sue for mercy.

AIR

ZEBUL:

Pour forth no more unheeded pray'rs
To idols deaf and vain.
No more with vile unhallow'd airs
The sacred rites profane.

CHORUS

No more to Ammon's god and king,
Fierce Moloch, shall our cymbals ring
In dismal dance around the furnace blue.
Chemosh no more will we adore
With timbrell'd anthems to Jehovah due.

SCENE TWO

RECITATIVE

ZEBUL:

But Jephtha comes – Kind Heaven, assist our plea. O Jephtha, with an eye of pity look on thy repentant brethren in distress. Forget of thy wrongs, redress thy sire, thy friends, thy country, in extreme despair.

JEPHTHA:

I will: so please it Heaven; and these the terms. If I command in war, the like command, Should heaven vouchsafe us a victorious peace, shall still be mine.

ZEBUL:

Agreed; be witness, Heaven.

AIR

JEPHTHA:

Virtue my soul shall still embrace,
goodness shall make me great.
Who builds upon this steady base,
dreads no event of fate.

RECITATIVE

STORGÈ:

'Twill be a painful separation, Jephtha.
To see thee harness'd for the bloody field. But ah, how trivial are a wife's concerns, when a whole nation bleeds, and groveling lies, panting for liberty and life.

AIR

STORGÈ:

In gentle murmurs will I mourn,
As mourns the mate-forsaken dove;
And sighing wish thy dear return
To liberty and lasting love.

SCENE THREE

RECITATIVE

HAMOR:

Happy this embassy, my charming Iphis, which once more gives thee to my longing eyes. As Cynthia, breaking from th'involving clouds on the benighted traveler, the sight of thee, my love, drives darkness and despair. Again I live; in thy sweet smiles I live, as in thy father's ever-watchful care our wretched nation feels new life, new joy. O haste, and make my happiness complete!

AIR

HAMOR:

Dull delay, in piercing anguish,
Bids thy faithful lover languish,
While he pants for bliss in vain.
Oh, with gentle smiles relieve me;
Let no more false hope deceive me,
Nor vain fears inflict a pain.

RECITATIVE

IPHIS:

Ill suits the voice of love when glory calls, and bids thee follow Jephtha to the field. There act the hero, and let rival deeds proclaim thee worthy to be call'd his son: and Hamor shall not want his due reward.

AIR

IPHIS:

Take the heart you fondly gave,
lodg'd in your breast with mine.
Thus with double ardour brave, sure conquest shall be thine.
Take the heart you fondly gave.
Lodg'd in your breast with mine.

RECITATIVE

HAMOR:

I go; my soul, inspir'd by thy command, thirsts for the battle. I'm already crown'd with the victorious wreath; and thou, fair prize, more worth than fame or conquest, thou art mine.

DUET

HAMOR, IPHIS:

These labours past, how happy we! How glorious will they prove!

SCENE FOUR

RECITATIVE

JEPHTHA:

What mean these doubtful fancies of the brain? Visions of joy rise in my raptur'd soul, there play awhile, and set in darksome night. Strange ardour fires my breast; my arms seem strung with tenfold vigour, and my crested helm to reach the skies. Be humble still, my soul. It is the Spirit of God; in whose great name I offer up my vow.

*If, Lord, sustain'd by thy almighty pow'r,
Ammon I drive, and his insulting bands,
From these our long-cultivated lands
and safe return a glorious conqueror;
What, or whoe'er shall first salute mine eyes
Shall be for ever thine or fall a sacrifice.*
'Tis said. Attend, ye Chiefs, and with united voice invoke the holy name of Israel's God.

CHORUS

O God, behold our sore distress,
Omnipotent to plague or bless!
But turn thy wrath and bless once more
Thy servants who thy name adore.

PROGRAM TEXTS

SCENE FIVE

RECITATIVE

STORGÈ:

Some dire event hangs oe'r our heads,
some woeful song we have to sing in
misery extreme. O never, never was my
foreboding mind distrust before with
such incessant pangs.

AIR

STORGÈ:

Scenes of horror, scenes of woe,
rising from the shades below,
add new terror to the night.
While in never-ceasing pain
that attends the servile chain,
joyless flow the hours of light.

SCENE SIX

RECITATIVE

IPHIS:

Say, my dear mother, whence these
piercing cries, that force me, like a
frightened bird, to fly my place of rest?

STORGÈ:

For thee, I fear, my child; such ghastly
dreams last night surpris'd my soul.

IPHIS:

Heed not these black illusions of the
night, the mocking of unquiet slumbers,
heed them not. My father, touch'd with
a diviner fire, already seems to triumph
in success, nor doubt I but Jehovah hears
our pray'rs.

AIR

IPHIS:

The smiling dawn of happy days
Presents a prospect clear,
And pleasing hope's all-bright'ning rays
Dispel each gloomy fear.
While ev'ry charm that peace displays
Makes spring-time all the year.

SCENE SEVEN

RECITATIVE

ZEBUL:

Such, Jephtha, was the haughty king's
reply: No terms, but ruin, slavery and
death.

JEPHTHA:

Sound then the last alarm; and to the
field, ye sons of Israel, with intrepid
hearts dependent on the might of
Israel's God.

CHORUS

When his loud voice in thunder spoke,
with conscious fear the billows broke
observant of his dread command.
In vain they roll their foaming tide;
confin'd by that great pow'r
that gave them strength to roar,
they now contract their boist'rous pride
and lash with idle rage the laughing
strand.

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE

RECITATIVE

HAMOR:

Glad tidings of great joy to thee, dear
Iphis, and to the house of Israel I bring.
Thus then, in brief. -- Both armies in
array of battle rang'd, our general stept
forth, and offer'd haughty Ammon
terms of peace most just and righteous;
these with scorn refus'd, he bade the
trumpet sound: but scarce a sword was
ting'd in hostile blood, ere all around the
thund'ring heavens open'd, and pour'd
forth thousands of armed Cherubim:
when straight our general cried; "This is
thy signal, Lord, I follow thee, and thy
bright heav'nly host". Then rushing on
proud Ammon, all aghast, he made a
bloody slaughter and pursued the flying
foe till night bade sheathe the sword,
and taste the joys of victory and peace.

CHORUS

Cherubim and Seraphim,
unbodied forms,
The messengers of fate,
His dread command await;
Of swifter flight, and subtler frame,
Than lightning's winged flame,
They ride on whirlwinds,
directing the storms.

AIR

HAMOR (TO IPHIS):

Up the dreadful steep ascending,
While for fame and love contending,
Sought I thee, my glorious prize.

RECITATIVE

IPHIS:

'Tis well – Haste, haste, ye maidens, and
in richest robes adorn me like a stately
bride to meet my father in triumphant
pomp while around the dancing banners
play.

SCENE TWO

RECITATIVE

JEPHTHA:

Zebul, thy deeds were valiant; nor less
thine, my Hamor; but the glory is the
Lord's.

AIR

JEPHTHA:

His mighty arm, with sudden blow,
Dispers'd and quell'd the haughty foe.

CHORUS

In glory high, in might serene,
He sees, moves all, unmov'd, unseen.
His mighty arm with sudden blow,
Dispers'd and quell'd the haughty foe.

SCENE THREE

RECITATIVE

IPHIS:

Hail, glorious conqueror! Much-loved
father, hail! Behold thy daughter and her
virgin train come to salute thee with all
duteous love.

AIR

IPHIS:

Welcome as the cheerful light
Driving darkest shades of night:

PROGRAM TEXTS

Welcome as the spring that rains
Peace and plenty o'er the plains!
Not cheerful day
Nor spring so gay
Such mighty blessings bring
As peace in her triumphant wings.

RECITATIVE

JEPHTHA:

Horror! Confusion! Harsh this music
grates upon my tasteless ears. – Be gone
my child, thou hast undone thy father.
Fly, be gone, and leave me the rack of
wild despair.

AIR

JEPHTHA:

Open thy marble jaws, O tomb,
And hide me, earth, in thy dark womb!
Ere I the name of father stain
And deepest woe from conquest gain.

RECITATIVE

ZEBUL:

Why is my brother thus afflicted? Say,
why didst thou spurn thy daughter's
gratulations, and fling her from thee
with unkind disdain?

JEPHTHA:

O Zebul, Hamor, and my dearest wife,
behold a wrenched man; thrown from
the summit of presumptuous joy, down
to the lowest depth of misery. Know
then, I vow'd the first I saw should fall
victim to the living God – my daughter,
alas! It was my daughter, and she dies.

STORGÈ:

First perish thou; and perish all the
world! Hath Heaven then bless'd us with

this only pledge of all our love, this one
dear child, for thee to be her murderer?
No, cruel man.

AIR

STORGÈ:

Let other creatures die;
Or heav'n, earth, seas and sky
In one confusion lie,
Ere in a daughter's blood,
So fair, so chaste, so good,
A father's hand embrued.

RECITATIVE

HAMOR:

If such thy cruel purpose; lo, your friend
offers himself a willing sacrifice to save
the innocent and beauteous maid.

AIR

HAMOR:

On me let blind mistaken zeal
Her utmost rage employ!
'Twill be a mercy there to kill,
Where life can taste no joy.

QUARTET

ZEBUL:

O spare your daughter!

STORGÈ:

Spare my child!

HAMOR:

My love!

JEPHTHA:

Recorded stands my vow in Heaven
above.

STORGÈ, HAMOR, ZEBUL:

Recall the impious vow, ere 'tis too
late. And think not Heaven delights
in Moloch's horrid rites.

JEPHTHA:

I'll hear no more; her doom is fix'd
as fate.

SCENE FOUR

RECITATIVE

IPHIS:

Such news flies swift; I've heard the
mournful cause of all your sorrows.
Of my father's vow, Heaven spoke its
approbation by success: Jephtha hath
triumph'd. Israel is free. For joys so
vast, too little is the price of one poor
life – but oh, accept it Heaven, a grateful
victim, and thy blessings still pour on my
country, friends and dearest father!

AIR

IPHIS:

Happy they! This vital breath
With content I shall resign,
And not murmur or repine,
Sinking in the arms of death.

ACCOMPANIED RECITATIVE

JEPHTHA:

Deeper and deeper still thy goodness,
child, pierceth a father's bleeding heart,
and checks the cruel sentence on my
falt'ring tongue. Oh, let me whisper it
to the raging winds, or howling deserts;
for ears of men it is too shocking. Yet
have I not vow'd? and can I think the
great Jehovah sleeps, like Chemosh, and
such fabled deities? Ah no; Heaven heard
my thoughts, and wrote them down. It
must be so. 'Tis this that racks my brain
and pours into my breast a thousand
pangs that lash me into madness. Horrid

thought! My only daughter! So dear a
child, doom'd by a father! Yes, the vow is
past. And Gilead hath triumph'd o'er his
foes. Therefore, tomorrow's dawn -- I
can no more.

CHORUS

How dark, O Lord, are thy decrees!
All hid from mortal sight!
All our joys to sorrow turning
And our triumphs into mourning,
As the night succeeds the day.
No certain bliss,
No solid peace
We mortals know
On earth below.
Yet on this maxim still obey:
WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.

ACT THREE

SCENE ONE

ARIOSO AND RECITATIVE

JEPHTHA:

Hide thou, thy hated beams, O sun, in
clouds and darkness deep as is a father's
woe: a father, offering up his only child
in vow'd return for victory and peace.

AIR

Waft her, angels, through the skies,
Far above yon azure plain.
Glorious there, like you, to rise,
There like you forever reign.

RECITATIVE

IPHIS:

Ye sacred priests, whose hands ne'er yet
were stain'd with human blood, why

PROGRAM TEXTS

are ye thus afraid to execute my father's will? The call of Heaven with humble resignation I obey.

AIR

IPHIS:

Farewell, ye limpid springs and floods,
Ye flow'r'y meads and leafy woods;
Farewell thou busy world, where reign
Short hours of joy and years of pain.
Brighter scenes I seek above,
In the realms of peace and love.

CHORUS

Doubtful fear and reverent awe
Strike us, Lord, while here we bow:
Check'd by thy all-sacred law,
Yet commanded by the vow.
Hear our pray'r in this distress,
And thy determin'd will declare.

RECITATIVE

ANGEL:

Rise, Jephtha. And ye reverend priests,
withhold the slaught'rous hand. No vow
can disannul the law of God; nor such
was its intent, when rightly scann'd;
yet still shall be fulfil'd. Thy daughter,
Jephtha, thou must dedicate to God, in
pure and virgin-state for ever, as not an
object meet for sacrifice, else had she
fall'n an holocaust to God. The Holy
Spirit, that dictated thy vow, bade thus
explain it, and approves thy faith.

AIR

Happy, Iphis, shalt thou live.
While to thee the virgin choir
Tune their harps of golden wire,
And their yearly tribute give.

Happy, Iphis, all thy days,
Pure, angelic, virgin-state,
Shalt thou live: and ages late
Crown thee with immortal praise.

ARIOSO

Jephtha: For ever blessed be thy holy
name, Lord God of Israel!

RECITATIVE

IPHIS:

My faithful Hamor, may that
Providence, which gently claims or
forces our submission, direct thee to
some happier choice.

QUINTET

HAMOR:

Freely I to Heaven resign. All that is in
Iphis mine.

IPHIS:

Freely I to Heaven resign, duteous
to the Will Supreme.
Still my Hamor I'll esteem.

HAMOR:

Duteous to Almighty Pow'r,
still my Iphis I'll adore.

ALL:

Joys triumphant crown thy days
and thy name eternal praise!

CHORUS

Ye house of Gilead, with one voice
In blessings manifold rejoice!
Freed from war's destructive sword,
Peace her plenty round shall spread,
While in virtue's path you tread.
So are they blest who fear the Lord.
Amen. Hallelujah.



Venice Baroque: Celebrating Barbara Strozzi

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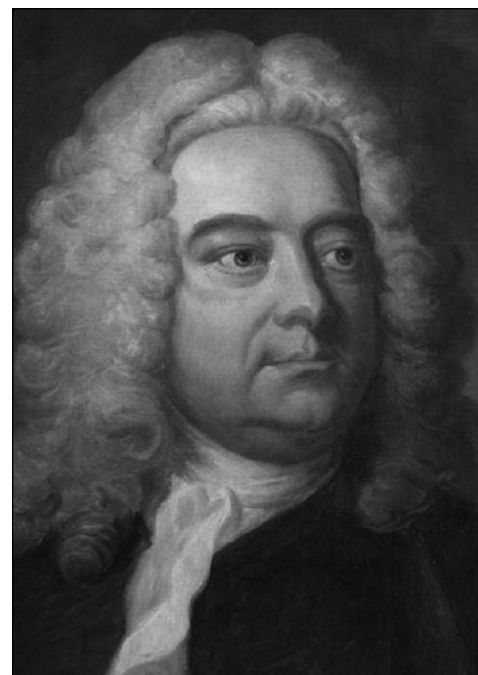
Born four centuries ago, Barbara Strozzi (1619-1677) was at the heart of the unique and thriving musical culture of 17th-century Venice. Taught by Francesco Cavalli, the city's most prominent composer, she and Antonia Bembo (ca. 1640-ca. 1720) found distinctive ways to sing and create extraordinarily passionate music. The program includes captivating songs and powerful laments by Barbara Strozzi from several of her eight published books of music, as well as arias from Antonia Bembo's *Produzione armoniche* and from Cavalli's opera *L'Artemisia*.

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