



Victorian  
Opera

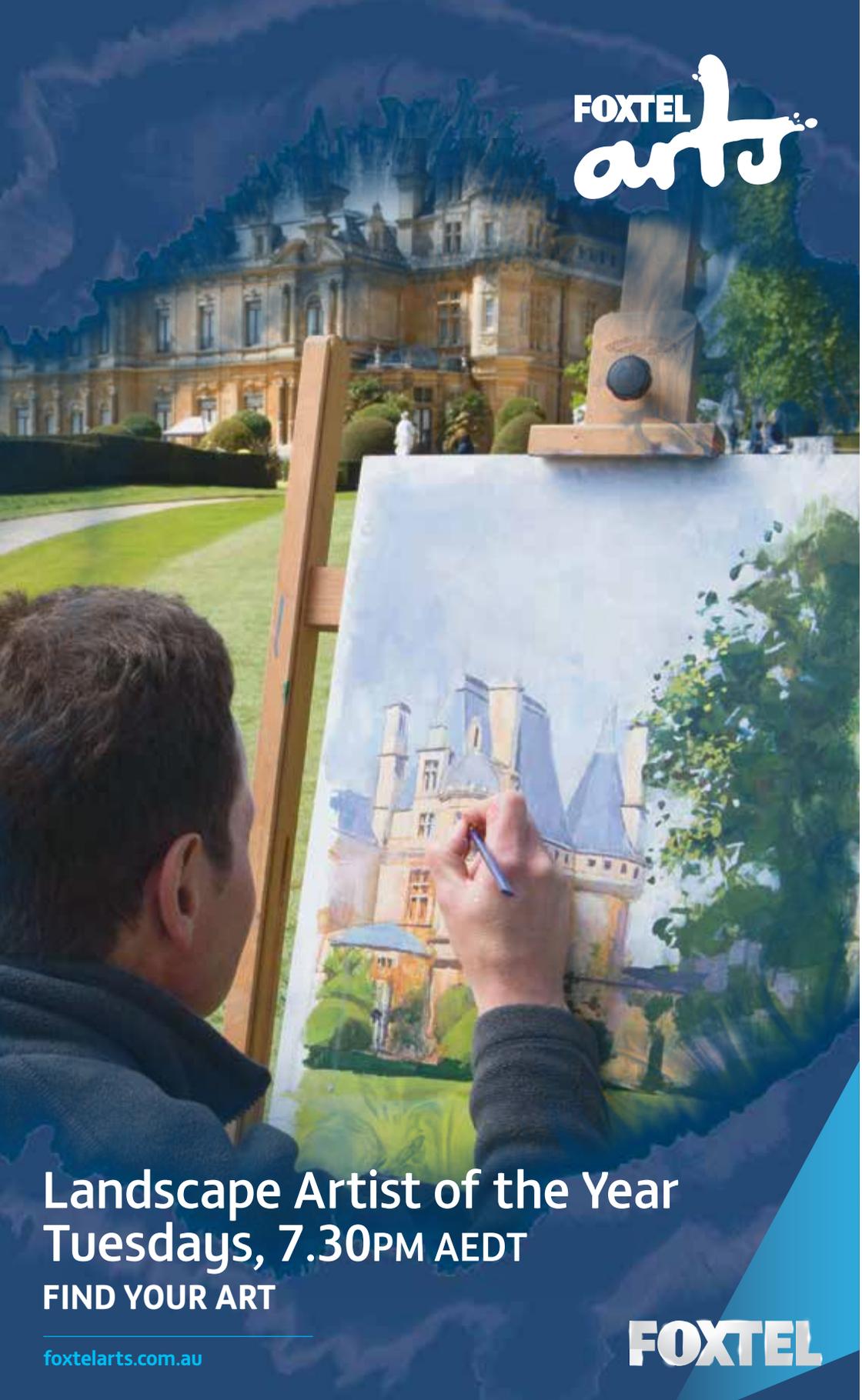


musica  
viva



# VOYAGE TO THE MOON

A BRAND NEW OPERA OF LOVE,  
LOSS AND HOPE

A landscape artist is shown from the back, painting a large, ornate chateau on an easel. The chateau is a grand, multi-story building with many windows and a central tower. The artist is using a brush to paint the building. The background shows a large green lawn and a path leading towards the chateau. The sky is blue with some clouds. The overall scene is a peaceful outdoor setting.

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# VOYAGE TO THE MOON

## MELBOURNE

MONDAY 15 FEBRUARY, 7.30PM  
TUESDAY 16 FEBRUARY, 7.30PM  
THURSDAY 18 FEBRUARY, 7.30PM  
FRIDAY 19 FEBRUARY, 7.30PM  
ELISABETH MURDOCH HALL,  
MELBOURNE RECITAL CENTRE

## SYDNEY

MONDAY 22 FEBRUARY, 7PM\*  
TUESDAY 23 FEBRUARY, 7PM\*  
SATURDAY 27 FEBRUARY, 2PM  
CITY RECITAL HALL ANGEL PLACE

*\*Recorded for broadcast by  
ABC Classic FM*

## BRISBANE

MONDAY 29 FEBRUARY, 7PM  
TUESDAY 1 MARCH, 7PM  
CONSERVATORIUM THEATRE,  
SOUTHBANK

*Presented in association with  
Opera Queensland*

## CANBERRA

FRIDAY 4 MARCH, 7PM  
LLEWELLYN HALL,  
ANU SCHOOL OF MUSIC

## PERTH

MONDAY 7 MARCH, 7.30PM  
PERTH CONCERT HALL  
*Presented in association with  
West Australian Opera*

## ADELAIDE

FRIDAY 11 MARCH, 7.30PM  
SATURDAY 12 MARCH, 7.30PM  
ADELAIDE TOWN HALL  
*Presented in association with  
Adelaide Festival of Arts*

*Voyage to the Moon* is a collaboration between Victorian Opera and Musica Viva, in association with the Performance Program of the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, led by Jane Davidson (overall Academic Curator of this partnership), Alan Maddox (Associate Investigator), Frederic Kiernan and Joseph Browning (Research Associates). This tour is supported by the Musica Viva Amadeus Society.



Australian Government  
Australian Research Council



Musica Viva is assisted by the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

Musica Viva is assisted by the NSW Government through Arts NSW.

# FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, MUSICA VIVA AUSTRALIA

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© KEITH SAUNDERS

Richard Mills, the Artistic Director of Victorian Opera, called me in January 2013 to see if there was a way our two companies could work together. Victorian Opera had developed an enviable reputation for mounting unusual but very successful new opera productions, but had limited experience in touring interstate. Musica Viva has 70 years' experience in touring performers around the country, but no infrastructure to create performances with a heavy theatrical element. A mountain of synergy was waiting at the juncture of these two companies, and three years later we can finally enjoy the result.

It took many months to fasten on the idea of a Baroque pasticcio opera – an original operatic scenario using carefully chosen pre-existing Baroque music to plump out its drama. This way we could keep the size of the touring party to a known, manageable level and ensure the highest quality of source music, while still presenting a production with exciting new characteristics. More months rushed by as we sought a team of writer and director who had the requisite time available, could work together well and would be utterly committed to the project. After a few false starts, but to our great good fortune, the team arose in just

one person: the incredibly talented playwright and director Michael Gow.

From the outset Michael was enthusiastic about the pasticcio, had a great love of Baroque opera in general and considerable personal knowledge of the field. Even at our very first program meeting he mentioned an interest in using 'Moon' imagery in some way during the production, and that he was looking at a passage from Ludovico Ariosto's epic 16th-century poem *Orlando furioso*. This notion matured into a fully-fledged original theatrical treatment that, through a series of workshops with the wonderful cast we'd assembled, became custom-tailored for the personality and talent of each singer.

Welcome to the first production of 2016 by both Victorian Opera and Musica Viva. It is a great thrill for all of us to be working together and to find ourselves on virgin territory, on our way to the Moon.

**CARL VINE AO**

**ARTISTIC DIRECTOR  
MUSICA VIVA AUSTRALIA**

# FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, VICTORIAN OPERA

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In many ways this project has been a marriage and reconciliation of unlikely elements – a chamber music presenter and an opera company; a single concise work synthesised from many different elements by the great Baroque expert Alan Curtis and director Michael Gow; an epic source, *Orlando furioso*, reframed as a chamber opera; a cosmic scenography reframed as a single-set touring production; and Baroque extravaganza distilled into a concentrated chamber format.

The development of this work has presented many challenges to all concerned, and the major setback of the untimely death of Alan Curtis at a crucial period of the work's evolution was only overcome by the skill and determination of all involved. I would like to record my collegial appreciation and thanks to Professor Jane Davidson and her team from the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions for her and their unfailing support in the exercise of fully and accurately rendering the artistic intentions of Alan Curtis in the finished score. This has been a happy and productive marriage of scholarship and practical research that has had, I feel, a felicitous outcome.

The singers have, from the inception of this idea, resonated the practice of their Baroque and Classical forebears by real engagement in the evolution of the dramatic and musical text, so that in the final outcome they claim a special ownership of their roles – as they would have in earlier times.

The 18th-century notion of opera as a sharply etched drama of the passions – each character being defined by the geography of the work's emotional landscape – has been a fertile ground for discovery and rediscovery of some abiding truths of the human condition – expressed through music which, although of its time, has the capacity to speak in accents which communicate to our contemporary sensibility.

This *Voyage to the Moon* has been also our collective voyage of discovery; I hope you enjoy what we have found.

## **RICHARD MILLS AM**

**ARTISTIC DIRECTOR  
VICTORIAN OPERA**

# FROM THE WRITER AND DIRECTOR

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Two things I love led to the development of this piece.

Baroque music is intensely theatrical. Human emotion channelled into such strict forms produces those extreme moments of experience that are the essence of drama. It's like a shortcut straight to the core of life. There's no need for exposition in these operas, they start right in the middle of things and what we learn about the characters comes to us without preamble or setup. The moment they step on the stage there's conflict, there are problems to solve, missions to undertake, people to be rescued, avenged or destroyed. There's no realism, no imitation of the surface of life, but a dive straight into the anguish and joy of being alive.

And with their closing moral, they always seem optimistic. They argue that through suffering comes wisdom and a way forward to a better life. Here no sopranos need to be sacrificed as punishment for wayward behaviour, no tenors die to appease heaven or society. People survive, by the skin of their teeth, yes, but they are granted some hope and forgiveness.

The title echoes the first sci-fi film, Georges Méliès' silent masterpiece *Le Voyage dans la Lune*. Ariosto's vast 16th-century epic *Orlando furioso* is often mentioned as an early example of science fiction, because in Canto 34 the knight Astolfo travels to the Moon to retrieve Orlando's sanity. Librettists found in this great poem an almost inexhaustible source of characters, situations and themes for the Baroque operatic stage.

I was a teenage sci-fi tragic. I loved, still love, the door this genre opens into other realities, other possibilities of story telling. With the help of the late Alan Curtis and Australian composer Calvin Bowman I've harnessed the freedom of science fiction to the driving intensity of Baroque music to celebrate loyalty, courage and forgiveness.

**MICHAEL GOW**  
WRITER AND DIRECTOR  
VOYAGE TO THE MOON

# FROM THE MUSICAL DIRECTOR

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The process of creating a new chamber opera out of existing material from the Baroque era has been both fascinating and challenging. From the first workshop week of joyful Skype meetings with Italy-based Alan Curtis (whose encyclopedic knowledge of the Baroque repertoire was truly wondrous), to the final presentation of the score, it has been a true collaboration of artistic and academic minds.

Arias, ensembles and instrumental passages have been chosen from across the vast repertoire including works by Telemann, Vivaldi, Orlandini, Handel and de Majo, handpicked for their expressive and emotive content. New text in English was created and recitatives were written to link the musical items and advance the drama of the storyline.

The chamber orchestration of the work creates a varied and colourful soundscape, and adds a lush and florid layer to the vocal fireworks.

It has been a joy being part of the creation of *Voyage to the Moon* and I applaud the incredible efforts made by all to complete the work after Alan Curtis's passing. To bring it to the stage with such fine collaborators is a real privilege.

## **PHOEBE BRIGGS**

**MUSICAL DIRECTOR  
VOYAGE TO THE MOON**

# CREATIVE & PRODUCTION CREDITS

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## Creative Team

Musical Director	<i>Phoebe Briggs</i>
Writer & Director	<i>Michael Gow</i>
Musical Arranger	<i>The late Alan Curtis and Calvin Bowman</i>
Set & Costume Designer	<i>Christina Smith</i>
Lighting Designer	<i>Matt Scott</i>
Production / Stage Manager	<i>Luke Hales</i>
Head Electrician	<i>Peter Darby</i>
Repetiteur	<i>Phillipa Safey</i>
Musica Viva Operations Coordinator	<i>Michelle Zarb</i>

*Voyage to the Moon acknowledges Sydney Costume Workshop.*

## Cast

Orlando / Selena	<i>Emma Matthews</i>
Astolfo	<i>Sally-Anne Russell</i>
Magus	<i>Jeremy Kleeman</i>

## Instrumental Ensemble

Harpsichord	<i>Phoebe Briggs</i>
Oboe	<i>Emma Black</i>
Oboe	<i>Celia Craig (Adelaide only)</i>
Violins	<i>Rachael Beesley, Zoë Black</i>
Viola	<i>Simon Oswell</i>
Cello	<i>Molly Kadarauch</i>
Bass	<i>Kirsty McCahon</i>

Pitch: A=440Hz

Temperament: Equal

*Celia Craig appears courtesy of Adelaide Symphony Orchestra.*

# SYNOPSIS

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Eighteenth-century Baroque vocal music sought to underscore the meaning of the text and plot with the aim of 'moving the affections' of the audience.

*Voyage to the Moon* is a moral and highly emotive tale. It is Michael Gow's take on a section of Ludovico Ariosto's epic poem *Orlando furioso*, from the 16th century, where we are confronted by verbal and musical manifestations of distress, frenzy, madness, anger, pathos and affection.

The story begins as we encounter the warrior Orlando who is suffering a 'great madness' after his love Angelica has eloped with Medoro, a knight from the enemy forces. Orlando's friend and colleague, Astolfo, tries to help him.

Drawn by the power of the friendship between the two men, Magus (a wise magician) arrives to offer counsel. He conjures up a chariot to take Astolfo to the Moon, which is home to lost things, and the likely site of Orlando's missing sanity. But before Astolfo can save his friend, he has to convince the fierce Guardian of the Moon, Selena, that Orlando is worth saving.

In a desperate plea, Astolfo offers his own life in exchange for Orlando's sanity. This act of altruism and loving friendship moves Selena, and she hands over Orlando's sanity, stored as vapour in a jar.

Returning to Earth, Astolfo is forced into a fight with Orlando, whose ongoing rage and anger have left him in a frenzy. In the middle of their bitter exchange, Magus releases the vapour and a magical calm soothes Orlando as his sanity is restored. The opera ends as Orlando reflects on how the passionate love he experienced for Angelica was 'madness', but the love of friendship and loyalty triumphs over all.

# PROGRAM

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## VOYAGE TO THE MOON

### Overture

[Antonio VIVALDI (1678–1741) Overture from *L'incoronazione di Dario* (The Coronation of Darius), RV 719 (1717)]

**Recitative:** 'Orlando, for a year we have pursued' [*Astolfo, Orlando*]

**Aria:** 'Sleep gently free of torment' [*Astolfo*]

[GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685–1759) 'Deh! v'aprite, oh luci belle' from *Teseo* (Theseus), HWV 9 (1713)]

**Recitative:** 'Astolfo my loyal friend' [*Orlando*]

**Aria:** 'Torment and rage assail me' [*Orlando*]

[GIAN FRANCESCO DE MAJO (1732–1770) 'Tutti tremar dovrete' from *Ricimero, re de' Goti* (Ricimero, King of the Goths) (1758)]

**Recitative:** 'Orlando, I left you to rest' [*Astolfo, Orlando*]

**Duet:** 'O why this rage and torment?' [*Orlando, Astolfo*]

[SIGISMONDO MOLINO 'Perché questa rabbia e tormento?']

**Recitative:** 'Can madness fall so sudden' [*Astolfo*]

**Aria:** 'Do not go and leave me weeping' [*Astolfo*]

[HANDEL 'E pur così in un giorno...Piangerò la sorte mia' from *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* (Julius Caesar in Egypt), HWV 17 (1724)]

**Sinfonia:** Mysterious Music

[HANDEL *Ariodante*, HWV 33 (1734), from Scene 1 Act 2]

**Recitative:** 'Are you a demon, have you come from Hell?' [*Astolfo, Magus*]

**Aria:** 'Now ride we bravely' [*Magus*]

[HANDEL 'Già risonar d'intorno al Campidoglio io sento' from *Ezio*, HWV 29 (1732)]

**Recitative:** 'How is this possible?' [*Astolfo, Magus*]

**Aria:** 'Who dares trespass in my kingdom?' [*Selena*]

[HANDEL 'Neghittosi, or voi che fate?' from *Ariodante*]

**Recitative:** 'Across the reaches of the sky I have travelled' [*Astolfo*]

**Trio:** 'Never shall I obey you' [*Selena, Astolfo, Magus*]

[CHRISTOPH WILLIBALD VON GLUCK (1741–1787) 'Passami il cor, tiranno!' from *Ezio* (1750)]

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**Recitative:** 'Is there nothing that will persuade you' [*Selena, Magus*]

**Aria:** 'Goddess, I stand here humbly' [*Magus*]

[HANDEL 'Gelido in ogni vena scorrer mi sento il sangue' from *Siroe*, HWV 24 (1728)]

**Recitative:** 'Fine words, but your argument must fail' [*Selena*]

**Duet:** 'Friendship will conquer everywhere' [*Selena, Astolfo*]

[DE MAJO 'Ah, se mi sei fedele' from *Moteczuma* (1765)]

**Recitative:** 'A great sacrifice to give up your life' [*Selena, Astolfo, Magus*]

### **Sinfonia**

[GEORG PHILIPP TELEMANN (1681–1767) Concerto no 3 in G major (c 1750)  
(originally for oboe d'amore)]

**Recitative:** 'We have flown across Africa' [*Magus*]

**Aria:** 'As strong as an army' [Orlando]

[JOHANN ADOLPH HASSE (1699–1783) 'O placido il mare' from *Siroe* (1733)]

**Recitative:** 'Orlando, these taunts and insults' [*Astolfo*]

**Aria:** 'Stand and fight' [*Astolfo*]

[GIUSEPPE MARIA ORLANDINI (1676–1760) 'Col versar, barbaro, il sangue' from *Berenice* (1725)]

**Recitative:** 'Your friend offered himself to ransom' [*Magus*]

**Sinfonia:** Beautiful Unearthly Music

[HANDEL 'Entrée des Songes agréables' (Entrance of the Pleasant Dreams) from *Alcina*, HWV 34 (1735)]

**Aria:** 'Now may the storm be over' [*Magus*]

[HANDEL 'Fra l'ombra e gl'orrori' from *Fernando* (*Sosarme*), HWV 30 (1732)]

**Recitative:** 'Orlando, is your soul now free from the fury' [*Astolfo, Orlando*]

**Trio:** 'Friendship triumphs' [*Orlando, Astolfo, Magus*]

[VIVALDI 'Doppio i nemi e le procelle' from *Il Giustino* (Justinian), RV 17 (1724)]

Running time approximately 75 minutes.

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# Musica Viva Amadeus Society



The Amadeus Society exists to help bring the excitement and inspiration of the world's most extraordinary musicians to Australian audiences. In 2015, the Society provided significant support for the Tafelmusik and Maxim Vengerov national tours. This year, the Society is proud to support the world premiere and national tour of *Voyage to the Moon*.

To learn more about the Amadeus Society and how you can help bring some of the world's leading artists to Australia, please contact:

**Hywel Sims**  
**Director of Development**  
**Tel: 02 8394 6672**  
**Email: [hsims@musicaviva.com.au](mailto:hsims@musicaviva.com.au)**



# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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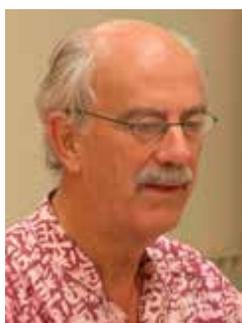


## Michael Gow

Michael Gow's plays include the Australian classic *Away, Toy Symphony, The Kid, On Top of the World, Europe, Sweet Phoebe, Live Acts on Stage, 17* (for the Royal National Theatre of Great Britain) and *Once in Royal David's City*. His plays have been performed in Poland, the Czech Republic, Vietnam, Japan and all over the US.

Michael Gow has been Associate Director of Sydney Theatre Company and Artistic Director of the Queensland Theatre Company. He has directed for all the major Australian theatre companies as well as Opera Australia, Australian Theatre for Young People and the Kennedy Center's New Visions / New Voices program.

His awards include two NSW Premier's Literary Awards, two Sydney Theatre Critics Circle Awards and an AFI Award for writing the ABC miniseries *Eden's Lost*. His most recent play, *Once in Royal David's City*, premiered at Belvoir in 2014. In 2015 he directed a remount of his production of *The Magic Flute* for Opera Australia, and his translation of *Mother Courage and Her Children* premiered at Belvoir.



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## Alan Curtis (1934–2015)

Equally known for his live performances and musicological work in establishing new performing practices for early opera, Alan Curtis enjoyed a fruitful career. A scholar, as well as a conductor and harpsichordist, he edited several important works with an appreciation for authenticity, effective performance, and – in the case of opera – stage-worthiness. Several of his best recordings were issued in the 1990s and in the new millennium.

Alan Curtis studied first at Michigan State University, attaining his bachelor's degree in 1955. His graduate study at the University of Illinois was interrupted after the completion of his master's program by two years of study with Gustav Leonhardt in Amsterdam. Following his work with the master harpsichordist, organist and conductor, Alan Curtis returned to the University of Illinois to complete his doctorate, awarded in 1963. By this time, he had already published several scholarly texts that had attracted the interest of the growing period performance movement. His doctoral thesis on Sweelinck quickly became a standard text on that composer's works for keyboard and later formed the basis for a more extended volume, published in 1969.

At the University of California at Berkeley, Alan Curtis was hired as a teacher in 1960, advancing to full professor by 1970. During that decade, he took advantage of increasing opportunities to put into practice the results of his research; he achieved a reputation as an accomplished harpsichordist and, increasingly, as a conductor of 17th- and 18th-century opera. A recording of Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* was heralded as an antidote to less authentic realisations. Equally, it demonstrated just how vital period performance could be when shorn of Romantic-period excesses.

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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While continuing his instructional work and music research in academia, Alan Curtis performed as a conductor and harpsichordist both in America and Europe. A 1980 La Scala debut conducting Handel's *Ariodante* led to other significant engagements in Italy. In 1984, he conducted Gluck's *Armida*, then not often heard, in Bologna, and in 1989, he led Cimarosa's even rarer *Gli Orazi ed I Curiazi* in Rome. In the aftermath, Alan Curtis founded the ensemble Il Complesso Barocco and recorded many operas with the group.

© Erik Eriksson (allmusic.com)



## Phoebe Briggs

Phoebe Briggs completed a Bachelor of Music degree at the University of Melbourne. She was a member of the Opera Australia music staff between 2002 and 2012, and in October 2012 was appointed Head of Music at Victorian Opera. For Victorian Opera, she has conducted *Sweeney Todd*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, *The Play of Herod* and *Alice's Adventures in Operaland* and assisted on *Into the Woods*. She conducted Opera in the Paddock for Opera Northwest, and was assistant / cover conductor for *Don Pasquale* (IFAC/Opera Australia, Tokyo), *The Magic Flute*, *The Merry Widow*, *Die Fledermaus*, *The Pearl Fishers*, *Così fan tutte*, *A Little Night Music* and *The Mikado* (Opera Australia) and *Guys and Dolls* (Ambassador Theatre Group).



## Emma Matthews

Emma Matthews is Australia's most highly acclaimed and awarded soprano, performing regularly with all the major Australian symphony orchestras and festivals, Opera Australia, state opera companies, and in recital.

Her many opera roles include the title roles in *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Royal Opera House, Covent Garden), *Lulu*, *Lakmé*, *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Handel's *Partenope*, Leïla (*The Pearl Fishers*), *Violetta* (*La traviata*), *Fiorilla* (*Il turco in Italia*), *Rosina* (*The Barber of Seville*), *Pamina* and *Queen of the Night* (*The Magic Flute*), *Donna Anna* (*Don Giovanni*), *Cleopatra* (*Giulio Cesare*), *Juliette* (*Roméo et Juliette*), *Marie* (*The Daughter of the Regiment*), *Gilda* (*Rigoletto*), *Konstanze* (*The Abduction from the Seraglio*), and *Amina* (*La sonnambula*).

Further career highlights include appearing as special guest with José Carreras at the Sydney Opera House, performing Mahler's *Symphony no 4* with Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo and the role of *Ismene* (*Mitridate*) for the Sydney Festival, and her two solo recordings: *Emma Matthews in Monte Carlo* (Deutsche Grammophon/ABC Classics) and *Mozart Arias* (ABC Classics).



## Sally-Anne Russell

Sally-Anne Russell has over 60 operatic roles in her repertoire, has sung in 15 countries and has recorded over 40 CDs/DVDs on the ABC Classics, Chandos, Move and Decca labels.

She is a regular guest with all Australian opera companies, symphony orchestras and major festivals and choral organisations, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Musica Viva and the Australian String Quartet.

Sally-Anne Russell has sung in the USA for Washington Opera and appeared for the Festival dei Due Mondi in Spoleto, Italy, Oper der Stadt Köln in Germany, Musikverein in Vienna, Pacific Baroque, the Kathaumixw Festival in Canada and in Japan. She has a decade-long association with the Carmel Bach Festival in California.

In the current season, she returns to the Melbourne, Sydney, Tasmanian, West Australian and New Zealand Symphony Orchestras and performs the role of Nancy T'ang in *Nixon in China* in Auckland, with further invitations to return to Europe, Singapore and Canada as well as undertaking recording projects for the ABC.



## Jeremy Kleeman

Jeremy Kleeman, a graduate of Victorian Opera's Developing Artist Program, has a Master of Music (Opera Performance) and Bachelor of Music from the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music. For the past two years, he has been a scholar with Melba Opera Trust on the Joseph Sambrook Opera Scholarship.

Jeremy Kleeman made his debut with Victorian Opera in 2008 where his roles have included Rapunzel's Prince in *Into the Woods*, Marquis d'Obigny in *La traviata*, Lord Valton in *I puritani*, and Albert the Pudding in the Green Room Award-winning world premiere of *The Magic Pudding* – the opera.

In 2015 he performed the roles of Jonas Fogg in *Sweeney Todd* for Victorian Opera and Teobaldo in Handel's *Faramondo* for the Brisbane Baroque Festival. Engagements on the concert platform have included Bach's *Easter Oratorio* and *Ascension Oratorio*, Fauré's Requiem, Beethoven's Mass in C major, Mozart's *Missa Brevis* in D major, Gounod's *Messe solennelle de Sainte-Cécile*, and Schubert's Mass in G major.

# HISTORY OF EMOTIONS

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The scholarly researchers working on *Voyage to the Moon* are members of the **Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, Europe 1100–1800**.

The Centre's aim has been to produce a new, interdisciplinary and comprehensive understanding of individual and communal emotions from 1100 to 1800, and to apply this knowledge to improve the social, cultural and emotional welfare of Australians today. Through detailed cultural and historical investigation, the Centre has explained how large groups, including the state, 'feel'; how large-group emotions can be manipulated by media and government; how emotions are communicated between individuals to create group action; and how individual biological responses relate to wider social processes.

This work has demonstrated that moral and political judgements require emotion; that the boundary between individual feeling and group feeling is extremely porous, challenging modern constructions of individuality, motivation and action; that emotions are a communicative strategy; and that shared emotional frameworks are crucial to the formation of communities and their boundaries. Emotions shape the world, rather than just reflect feelings about it. We now know that emotions can incorporate neurophysiological activation, motor expression and subjective feelings, but they are also products of long-standing, as well as evolving, cultural practices. In life situations, emotions are not experienced in isolation; they interact in multiple, complex and overlapping groups.

The Centre for the History of Emotion's Performance Program has developed a broad range of research projects, from staged theatrical and musical performances through to the enactment of social and cultural rituals. Some have taken place on formal stages, such as in the courtroom or at public execution sites, while others have been domestic or religious performances, taking place in private, intimate settings. This open approach to definition has provided opportunities for the development of these fascinating projects.

Given that the performances we are dealing with are live acts, typically with either a present or implied audience, much of the Program's research output has included reflective practice or rehearsal and performance experiences alongside more traditional written commentaries and evaluations of historical performances. Also, and crucially, this Program has been central to the development of the Centre's arts partnerships, with mutually developed works coming to fruition on the stage, through the written word and in conferences and collaboratories that have generated much international debate. This partnership with Victorian Opera and Musica Viva Australia is one such fertile collaboration.



Australian Government  
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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MELBOURNE



## PRE-CONCERT TALKS

Before journeying into the concert, explore the intricacies and delightful history of pasticcio operas, as well as the story and concept behind *Voyage to the Moon*, in a pre-concert talk delivered by Professor Jane Davidson of the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions. Discover what to listen out for, learn more about Baroque music and the lesser-known 18th-century composers featured in the score, and gain pre-show insights into the performance and musical techniques present in pasticcio opera.

Dr Alan Maddox will deliver the pre-concert talk in Sydney on Saturday 27 February, in place of Professor Davidson.

For talk times and venue details, visit: [www.musicaviva.com.au/voyage](http://www.musicaviva.com.au/voyage)

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## MEET THE ARTISTS

Immediately following the performance, join some of the singers, instrumentalists and creative team behind *Voyage to the Moon* as they talk about the music featured in the performance, the creative process, and their own experiences working on the pasticcio opera. Joining the conversation will be academic researchers from the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, who will invite the audience to participate in the discussion and share their own experience of the production.

Please note that there is no 'Meet the Artist' event in Melbourne on Monday 15 February.

For more information, visit: [www.musicaviva.com.au/voyage](http://www.musicaviva.com.au/voyage)

## MASTERCLASSES

As part of the *Voyage to the Moon* national tour, students are offered the opportunity to take part in masterclasses, providing them with access to mentoring from musicians and singers featured in the show. Members of the public, teachers and students are also invited to attend and observe this musical process. The *Voyage to the Moon* series of masterclasses is presented in partnership with the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, in association with a number of teaching institutions and other organisations nationally.

For more information on the Musica Viva Masterclass program, as well as details on which musicians are presenting masterclasses, visit: [www.musicaviva.com.au/masterclasses](http://www.musicaviva.com.au/masterclasses)

## BAROQUE MUSIC: PERFORMANCE, EMOTIONS, INSIGHTS

### 17 FEBRUARY, MELBOURNE RECITAL CENTRE

Join top international scholars and artists as they offer insights into how Baroque music was lived and performed at this free event, featuring exploratory workshops and seminars. Violinist Rachael Beesley makes a practical investigation of Baroque performance practice in a string masterclass; Dr Alan Maddox offers academic insight into the social and cultural milieu of the early modern experience; Richard Mills, Phoebe Briggs and Graham Pushee discuss the process involved in re-creating historical works for the opera stage; and Graham Pushee offers his international expertise to young professional singers on the art of Baroque operatic performance.

This is a free, ticketed event. For more information on session times and to book, visit: [www.melbournerecital.com.au/events/baroque-music-performanceemotions-insights](http://www.melbournerecital.com.au/events/baroque-music-performanceemotions-insights)

*Presented by the Performance Program of the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, in collaboration with Musica Viva and Victorian Opera.*

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## AUDIENCE RESEARCH PROJECT

*Voyage to the Moon* audiences are invited to participate in a comprehensive study being conducted by the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions. The study will track participants' emotional experience throughout the performance using software available on iPads. A two-dimensional measure traces the pleasantness / unpleasantness of the emotions the listener is experiencing on one dimension, and the degree of activation or arousal on the other dimension.

Audiences around the country will also be able to give detailed feedback in a post-concert survey, both at the event and online at [www.musicaviva.com.au/VoyageSurvey](http://www.musicaviva.com.au/VoyageSurvey). Be sure to look out for researchers at the event who will be offering the opportunity to participate in the survey and/or to be interviewed in person.

For more information on the audience research project and to participate, please visit: [www.musicaviva.com.au/voyage](http://www.musicaviva.com.au/voyage)

For more information on the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, visit: [www.historyofemotions.org.au](http://www.historyofemotions.org.au)

## FOLLOW THE VOYAGE TO THE MOON BLOG

In the lead-up to the production and throughout, the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions researchers are posting articles relating to *Voyage to the Moon* on their online blog. Be sure to follow the blog to gain a deeper understanding of the pasticcio opera, read about the fascinating research taking place and get an insight into the production and rehearsal process. Guest blog posts will also be provided by some of the performers and the creative team.

Visit our blog at [www.historiesofoemotion.com](http://www.historiesofoemotion.com) and select the category 'Voyage to the Moon'.

# ABOUT THE MUSIC



Interior view of the Royal Italian Opera House, Covent Garden, from the stage, constructed after the designs, and under the superintendence, of B. Albano. From a newspaper cutting probably from the *Illustrated London News*, hand-dated 1847. (Victoria and Albert Museum S.6163-2009. H Beard Print Collection, <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O205885/h-beard-print-collection-print-smyth>)

## PASTICCIO OPERA: A GENERAL HISTORY

Towards the end of the 17th century, the increasing popularity of public opera in Italy and elsewhere drove composers to come up with innovative solutions to meet the demand. One solution was to draw together a number of existing musical works into a new opera, with either an existing or newly written libretto.

These operas were referred to using the Italian term 'pasticcio' (pastiche), initially in a pejorative manner. Later, during the 18th century, the genre lost the stigma of inartistic medley, and came to be seen as a legitimate and respectable compositional approach.

Arias for pasticcio operas were often chosen by the performers, who were motivated by a desire to showcase their vocal expertise. Recitatives and ensembles were provided by the house composer or music director. This type of musical borrowing brought its own benefits and challenges: the use of existing music certainly saved the composers much time, but the process of assembly, compilation and revision was almost never straightforward. In many cases, librettists needed to find a way of enhancing the drama of a plot in order to appease the demands of singers and composers, whose chosen arias almost never fitted with the text of the new production.

Moreover, composers were faced with the task of connecting the existing musical numbers in a way that made musical sense. Pasticcio opera is thus one of the most obvious examples of a musical genre relying on the concepts of shared intellectual and creative property for its development.

Many well-known composers – including Vivaldi, Handel, Gluck, Mozart and Haydn – contributed happily to the body of pasticcio opera; Handel's *Elpidia* (1725) is a famous example. Basing it on a libretto written in 1697 by Apostolo Zeno, but thoroughly revised, Handel discarded the original music (by Ziani) in favour of more recent arias by Vinci and Orlandini, contributing himself only certain passages of recitative and possibly also the duets. Many of the arias chosen were already in the repertoires of his singers (who included the famous castrato Senesino), and the resulting style, while distanced somewhat from the composer's own idiom, lacks none of the cohesion or drama of his own operas. Attempts at pasticcio were, of course, not always successful, but at least composers working in this way could claim such creations as their own, and be paid accordingly.

Several other genres also mixed existing musical numbers with newly composed works, including the ballad opera, the English comic opera, the *Singspiel* and the *opéra comique*, but it was *opera seria*, being more or less a succession of self-contained virtuoso arias, which lent itself most comfortably to this kind of borrowing.

Ludovico Ariosto's Italian epic poem *Orlando furioso*, dating from the early 16th century, is amongst the most influential pieces of European literature from that period, and inspired countless plays, novels and operas, especially in the Baroque period. Works based on this text include an eponymous opera by Giovanni Alberto Ristori (in 1713, and again in collaboration with Antonio Vivaldi in 1714), and Vivaldi's production of *Orlando* in 1727, all at the Teatro San Angelo in Venice. Better-known examples are Handel's *Orlando* of 1733, as well as *Ariodante* and *Alcina* (both 1735). Jean-Baptiste Lully's *Roland* (1685) and Haydn's *Orlando paladino* (1782) are also based on Ariosto's epic tale.

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

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Whether any previous productions of *Orlando furioso* count strictly as pasticcio is debatable. Certainly, the collaboration between Ristori and Vivaldi in 1714 reflects a certain Baroque spirit of creative exchange, and in Vivaldi's 1727 production several new aria texts were provided to facilitate the inclusion of arias from his earlier operas.



Gustave Doré: *St John and Astolfo travel to the Moon in Elijah's chariot in search of Orlando's lost reason, 1877* ([http://www.all-art.org/impressionism/dore-ariosto8\\_x.html](http://www.all-art.org/impressionism/dore-ariosto8_x.html))

## VOYAGE TO THE MOON AS A PASTICCIO

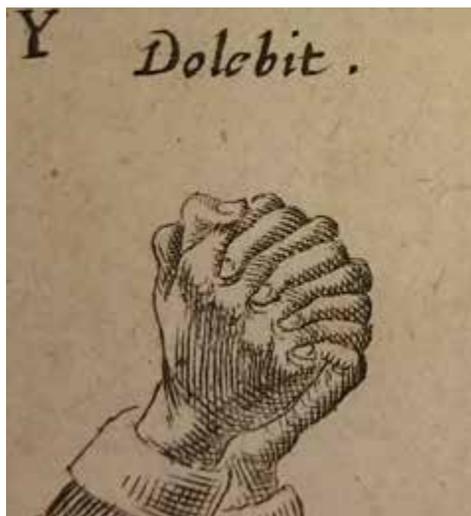
*Voyage to the Moon*, which is Michael Gow's take on a section of *Orlando furioso*, has required researchers from the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, Europe 1100–1800, to interrogate historical sources in order to understand how musical borrowing and blending – the core characteristics of pasticcio opera – were achieved. The artistic team was asked to source arias from the 18th century, drawing on composers who used the genre themselves. These arias were to form the backbone for a new libretto, thus reimagining the pasticcio genre to create a new work for the 21st century. The skill and knowledge of the music team has produced a blending of some

very well-known arias by Handel, along with relatively unknown works by Vivaldi, Giuseppe Maria Orlandini, Johann Adolph Hasse, Gian Francesco de Majo and Christoph Willibald von Gluck.

## EMOTION IN BAROQUE MUSIC

Of the many aspects of performance etiquette and meaning from the Baroque period, the communication of emotion is the central element. As Francesco Geminiani wrote in his treatise *The Art of Playing on the Violin* (1751), 'The Intention of Musick is not only to please the Ear, but to express Sentiments, strike the Imagination, affect the Mind, and command the Passions'. Of course, only some of the communicative devices used were notated in the score; historical treatises like Geminiani's also reveal other improvisatory performance practices, which describe how to make the performance more 'affective'.

The approaches used to intensify these affective experiences in the Baroque period were very different to those of the present day. Focusing on the 18th century – when the pasticcio form was at its height – musical devices employed to intensify affective content included repetition and variation. Rhythmic devices and melodic shapes were also used to heighten the emotive elements, especially when aiming to capture the essence of words in vocal music, for example in slow-moving melodies reflecting a sad text. Exploring and finding appropriate keys and key relationships was another element that dictated meaning, with specific harmonic relationships supporting the dramatic curve of the plot. Vocal and instrumental timbre and tessitura were also specifically modified to reflect emotional character: for example, Wisdom being deep/rich and low, Madness being thin/penetrating and high. Bodily postures and gestures also added to the meaning. The artist was to 'orate', drawing on stocks of the art of rhetoric. These included gestures to mark beats or words, or to symbolise a specific emotional state.



*Dolebit* ('he/she will grieve/suffer'), taken from John Bulwer *Chirologia, or the Naturall Language of the Hand, with Chironomia, or the Art of Manuall Rhetorique* (London, 1644), 65

## COMMUNICATING EMOTION IN VOYAGE TO THE MOON

In *Voyage to the Moon* we are confronted by verbal and musical manifestations of distress, frenzy, madness, anger, affection, pathos and loss. For each emotional state, there is a genre of aria to suit: a rage aria, a madness aria, an aria revealing love and friendship, and so on. Each aria conforms to specific musical requirements, but, more than this, each aria offers a showcase for the singer: a coloratura soprano with a dizzying display of vocal fireworks, the warm rich hues of the mezzo, and the depths of felt emotion in the bass-baritone. In addition to concerns that relate to the arias, the instrumentalists will be applying historical practices to their bowing, timing, use of dynamics and ornamentation. The musical messages will be rich in historical reference and detail to intensify the emotions expressed in the text and the musical compositions. The resulting intermingling of musical elements offers a bounty of expressive riches – light, shade, stillness, fury, tranquillity and energy.

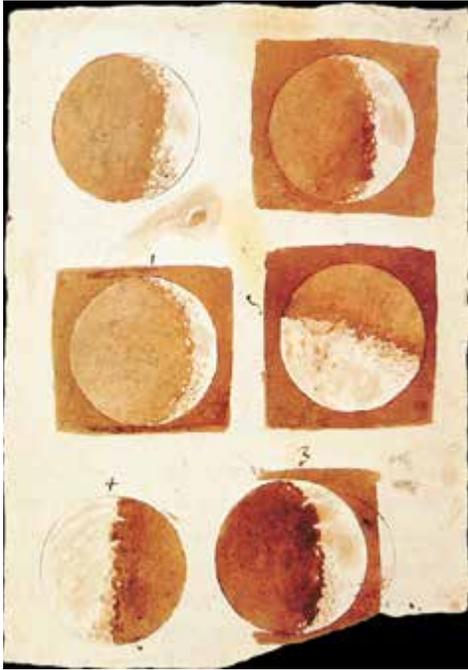
## WHAT ARE 'MOON OPERAS'?

In the late 17th century, around the same time as pasticcio opera was becoming popular, another operatic subgenre emerged which took the Moon as a central theme. These operas usually involved some feigned trip to the Moon, or an imaginary visit to Earth by lunar inhabitants. This interest was encouraged by the contemporaneous discoveries of new lands and peoples, and prompted new ways to represent 'the other' in the collective imagination (something Edward Said would later term 'Orientalism'). More than this, the Moon as a symbol came to index an array of broader social significations, including the emotions of detachment and disenchantment with society, as well as reflection and regeneration; it became a vantage point from which one could observe, and reflect on, humanity more broadly.

## 'THE COSMOS' IN HISTORY

Since antiquity, the predominant understanding of 'the Cosmos' had been based on the writings of Plato and Aristotle. According to these philosophers, the world consisted of 53 concentric, crystalline, transparent, geometrically perfect spheres rotating on different axes. At the centre of each sphere was the stationary Earth, and stars were fixed on the outer sphere. However, the rise in scepticism during the early modern period contributed to a change in cosmology, from Aristotle's closed world to an infinite universe, most famously through the work of Nicolaus Copernicus (1473–1543) and Galileo Galilei (1564–1642).

# ABOUT THE MUSIC



*The Phases of the Moon: drawing by Galileo Galilei, 1616, courtesy of <https://commons.wikimedia.org>*

## 'THE MOON' AS A LITERARY TROPE

Stories taking the Moon as a central theme date back as far as the second century. One notable example is Lucian of Samosata's *Icaromenippus*, which tells the story of Menippus, a man disenchanted with the foibles of society who finds repose and revelation after travelling to the moon. Ludovico Ariosto's epic poem *Orlando furioso* – the basis of Michael Gow's libretto for *Voyage to the Moon* – offers a later example of this concept at play. Aphra Behn (1640–1689) and Nolant de Fatouville (?–1715) are also key figures in the historical development of the Moon in literature.

## EXAMPLES OF 'MOON OPERAS'

Opera, with its synergetic combinations of music, text and drama, provided a unique and powerful means for exploring these lunar themes, and the popularity of Moon operas grew in the 18th century. Key examples include *Il regno della Luna* (The Kingdom of the Moon), composed by Niccolò Piccinni in 1770, and *Il mondo della Luna* (The World of the Moon), a libretto by Carlo Goldoni set to music by a number of composers – firstly by Baldassare Galuppi in 1750, and later by Joseph Haydn in 1777.

## ORLANDO FURIOSO AS A MOON OPERA

Operatic adaptations of Ariosto's famous poem *Orlando furioso* have been composed by Lully, Vivaldi and Handel, amongst others. The poem itself is very long – 38,736 lines in total – and librettists have not always considered the Moon episode as an essential element in their adaptations, instead substituting alternative means of restoring Orlando's wits, involving some form of magic. However, Piccinni's *Il regno della Luna* makes an obvious reference to the poem: it uses the plot device whereby human sanity is stored on the Moon by a society with superior attributes to that on Earth. Michael Gow's libretto focuses on these very elements of the story.

## MOON OPERAS: CHALLENGING SOCIAL ORDER

During this early modern period of voyage and discovery, opera composers and librettists had to navigate the expression of affective states associated with 'new-world' values and cultures in the light of European norms, and the perceived 'alterity' of foreign cultures. This set the scene for the depiction of fantastic and fictional non-European worlds in a theatrical setting. Composers developed the ability to engage audiences and 'move the affections' through musical-rhetorical techniques, helping to shape the subgenre into a forum for critiquing contemporary human society. Librettists too were free to create and invent

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such worlds at will, and since they were beyond the reach of normal human experience, they provided a safe place for challenging the established order. The Moon is not the only imagined locale exploited in literature, theatre and opera, others being, for example, fictitious antipodean islands, planets and fantastical realms based on Amazon mythology. But the Moon stands out because of its unique place in relation to the history of philosophy, culture and science. Depictions of the Moon in opera were therefore closely connected not only with feelings of separation and detachment, but also with subversive and destabilising motivations.

## RESEARCHING THE CREATIVE PROCESS

What kinds of creativity and collaboration go into producing a new opera? What challenges and opportunities does the pasticcio genre present to a creative team? How do performers approach the task of communicating Baroque emotions to contemporary audiences? These are some questions asked in an ongoing study of *Voyage to the Moon* by academics from the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, Europe 1100–1800.

Over the last year, researchers have been documenting a wide range of creative activities surrounding the opera. Early in the process, Michael Gow worked on writing the libretto, while Alan Curtis, and later Calvin Bowman, sourced, arranged and composed the music. Several workshops, held throughout 2015, provided opportunities for the creative team to meet and collectively build the new production, incorporating the ideas of librettist, arranger/composers, musical director and singers. Music and text moved back and forth between these group workshops and Gow and Bowman's solitary revisions to the libretto and the score in an ongoing cycle. Once the score was complete, singers and instrumentalists began to learn their parts and develop their roles. At the same time, work on the set, lighting and costume design gathered pace. Rehearsals early in 2016 saw a new collaborative phase as the whole creative

team finally came together to bring the opera to the stage.

To understand these diverse activities, researchers conducted interviews, observed workshops and rehearsals, and analysed the emergent score and libretto. Talking with the creative team helped to uncover their ideas about the relationship between sounds, stories and emotions and their distinctive contributions to the project. Observing collaborative work helped to uncover important creative strategies that are often given little thought outside the rehearsal room. In these ways, the researchers have listened to this new work emerge, hearing how words and notes become invested with emotional significance and how the final production is woven from multiple strands of activity.

**Now that the opera has reached the stage, the research team is keen to engage its audiences in questions about emotional impact and affect. We ask you to either complete a survey online ([www.musicaviva.com.au/VoyageSurvey](http://www.musicaviva.com.au/VoyageSurvey)), or fill out one of the paper surveys available in the theatre. Doing so will help us to understand your response to the opera and highlight the important moments in terms of narrative, musical and overall dramatic scope. This work will all contribute to a new book we are developing on *Voyage to the Moon*.**

© Jane Davidson and Frederic Kiernan, ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, with information on Moon operas provided by Lawrence Mays, The Australian National University.

# INTERVIEW

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© LAURENCEHEYM

Alan Curtis (1934–2015)

*Voyage to the Moon* may be opera as you've never heard it before – but its guiding principle would not have been unfamiliar in the 18th century. Baroque pasticcio (pastiche) operas consisted of music by several different composers, selected and brought together to suit a story and its performers. Such creations have long been out of fashion, but today the tide is turning and their potential for appealing to modern audiences is being explored by various companies, not least the Melbourne-based Victorian Opera and national arts organisation Musica Viva.

'Pasticcio suits us, as it did the entrepreneurs of the 17th and 18th centuries,' says Phoebe Briggs, Victorian Opera's Head of Music. 'It gives us a new piece suited to touring and co-production, and it offers flexibility in that the music can be chosen from a variety of composers. While the style is essentially the same throughout, each individual musical item will bring something special and slightly different to the piece.'

The brand-new pasticcio opera *Voyage to the Moon* therefore unites arias by Handel, Vivaldi and many more in an off-the-wall tale of madness, marvels, magic and healing. Its libretto is by the Australian playwright and director Michael Gow and the score was largely compiled by the musicologist Alan Curtis, one of the towering figures behind the revival of Handel's operas in recent decades. Alan was invited to create the score by the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions; a partner for *Voyage to the Moon*.

Tragedy intervened. Alan Curtis died suddenly in July 2015 while still hard at work on the piece. He had completed the lion's share.

The present writer was lucky enough to be in touch with Alan Curtis only days before he passed away; with no hint of malady, he offered a spirited, fascinating interview overflowing with enthusiasm.

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'I grew up equating "pasticcio" with "hodge-podge" and treating both terms as derogatory,' Curtis related. 'Perhaps it was a memorable dish of "pasticcio di lasagna" in a fine restaurant in Venice back in the 1960s that first suggested to me another point of view. But more seriously, it was Reinhard Strohm's fine chapter on Handel's pasticci in his book on 18th-century opera that first strongly aroused my interest.'

*Voyage to the Moon*, he added, was 'the first pasticcio I have ever composed – though my half-century and more of conducting Baroque opera often led me to deal with many of the same problems: finding arias and ensembles to suit a particular situation, and composing, in various styles, any parts that might be missing.'

The process resembled a game of musical ping-pong, batting words and music back and forth. 'Michael Gow sends me words, though usually not yet the final ones,' Curtis said. 'They often almost at once give me ideas which I then try to put down on paper. The recitatives and ariosi are mine; the arias, duets and trios are all by mid-18th-century composers: Handel and Vivaldi, of course, but also Telemann and various Italians, especially Neapolitans such as 'Ciccio' de Majo. I send suggestions to Michael and if he agrees that the aria is appropriate we both set about fitting his text to the existing music, sometimes by altering the music a bit, sometimes by changing the text.'

But why not simply perform an existing Baroque opera? Curtis picked out several areas in which pasticcio might even have the edge over traditional Baroque opera for 21st-century audiences. 'Certainly the possibility of making the plot easier to understand, or more relevant, is worth considering,' he said, 'but there is also the freedom to revive what, although often abused, was not in itself such a bad idea: the possibility to choose arias that particularly suit the available singers.'

'An even more important advantage, to my mind, is the possibility of reducing the recitative to a minimum. Even the best Baroque operas often come with acres of arid recitative that can be boring. This remains a major obstacle to the successful revival of most Baroque opera.'

Curtis is sorely missed. Michael Gow pays warm tribute to his work. 'Alan was incredibly generous with his knowledge and experience, and staggering in his familiarity with the music of this period,' he says. 'We hit it off straight away and the emails that flew between here and [his home in] Florence were full of great ideas, insights, wonderful asides into history and life.' Phoebe Briggs joins the appreciation: 'Alan was absolutely delightful to work with,' she says. 'He had so much to offer, and such a vast knowledge of the repertoire; it was a joy to see him so excited about the project.'

Even if you've never seen anything like it before, says Gow, *Voyage to the Moon* is an experience not to be missed. 'You will hear some great music you've never heard before, sometimes by composers you've never heard of, performed by three wonderful singers who are also very good actors,' he smiles. 'It's the best of both worlds: theatre and music.'

Jessica Duchon © 2015



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*exaggerated skirt shape  
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# Voyage to the Orlando Moon

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If you have any questions about this list, please contact Claire Burrell-McDonald on  
(02) 8394 6636 or cburrellmcdonald@musicaviva.com.au

*This list is complete as at 20 January 2016.*

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heavily embroidered bodice and lower sleeves indicative of 'romant'

polonaise style drawing up of bodice

sheer embroidered train from shoulders

# Selena Voyage to the Moon

Costume designed by Christina Smith

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