

THE COCKPIT

EO Ensemble
OrQuesta

7th, 9th, 10th, 11th February 2023,
7.30pm 11th, February 2.30pm

Céphale et Procris

Elizabeth-Claude
Jacquet de la Guerre

Marcio da Silva *Stage & Music Director / Set & Costume Design / Lighting*

Predrag Gosta *Harpsichord*

Cédric Meyer *Archlute*

Kate Bingham *Oboe/Recorder*

Paul Jenkins *Recorder*

Edmund Taylor, Christopher McClain *Violin*

Nathan Giorgiotti *Gamba*

Heitor Granafei *Dramaturg*

Kieran White *Céphale*

Poppy Shotts *Procris*

Helen May *L'Aurore*

Marcio da Silva *Arcas*

Anna-Luise Wagner *Dorine*

Jack-Lawrence Jones *Borée*

Tara Venkatesan *Flore*

Flavio Lauria *Pan/Erictée*

Lydia Ward *Iphis*

Jay Rockwell *Jalousie*

John Twitchen *Un dieux de la mer*

www.ensembleorquesta.com

**Our 2022 Grimeborn
production at The Arcola
Theatre was Monteverdi's
L'Incoronazione di Poppea**

★★★★★ 'Ensemble OrQuesta's approach, which offers an accessible and enjoyable way to enjoy the less familiar conventions of early opera, seems to me increasingly valuable. I hope that every seat is filled for the short run of this wonderful production.'
Owen Davies, Plays to See, 28.07.22

★★★★½ 'Helen May as Poppea and Julia Portela Piñón as Nerone are wonderful as the lovers. Both have exquisite voices and are utterly convincing in their erotic passion.'
Jane Darcy, The Reviews Hub, 27/07/2022.

★★★★ 'Controversial, mysterious, and highly sensual... while most theatres are currently packed with escapist fare, this dark and delicious production, redolent with lust and ambition.. is a wonderful alternative.'
Franco Milazzo.
Broadway World. 27.07.2022

★★★★ '..passionate and skilfully directed'
Inge Kjemtrup, The Stage,
28/07/22

★★★★ 'a scalding, compelling spectacle, sure to enrapture both opera veterans and newcomers alike.'
Rachel Wood,
A Young(ish) Perspective. 28.07.22

★★★★½ Key to the power of this production is da Silva's imaginative vision and his dynamism as director and conductor.'
Jane Darcy, The Reviews Hub, 27/07/22

★★★★ 'Grimeborn gets off to a smouldering start.. The capacity audience, attentive despite heat and hard seats, cheered.'
Fiona Maddocks, The Observer,
The week in classical, 30/07/22.

★★★★ '..the singing of the whole cast is quite sublime... a night of splendid music'
J.C. London Living
Large, 28/07/22

★★★★½ 'Ensemble OrQuesta's small band of musicians play with terrific verve and energy, shifting effortlessly from the extremes of poignant melancholy to the wildly bacchanalian.'
Jane Darcy, The Reviews Hub,
27/07/22

★★★★ 'The energy of the musicians is a delight to watch.'
Dominica Plummer,
The Spy in the Stalls

Ensemble OrQuesta was founded in 2013 by Marcio da Silva. The core company is dedicated to performing 17th and 18th century opera in all its richness and diversity to the highest of standards with period instruments. As well as returning here each year, Ensemble OrQuesta currently takes its professional opera productions to the Grimeborn Opera Festival at the Arcola Theatre. We hope that future expansion will

enable performances at other Off West End venues, such as the Jacksons Lane Theatre.

We are passionate about presenting creative and musically authentic interpretations of both well-loved and lesser-known 17th and 18th century operas, making opera accessible to as wide an audience as possible by offering tickets at reasonable prices and free tickets to students and under 18s. We offer opportunities for young singers and early career specialist instrumentalists to develop their skills and collaborate to deliver opera performances and recitals of the highest artistic quality. We look for ways to share our work interactively with children and with amateur musicians in local communities by developing outreach initiatives.

From the outset, our high-quality productions have secured critical acclaim. We have garnered a host of ★★★★★ and ★★★★★ reviews, from reputable music critics, ranging from, The Observer, to Opera Magazine, Plays to See, Seen and Heard International, Early Music Reviews, The Stage, Planet Hugill, The Spy in the Stalls, The Evening Standard, and The Idle Woman Blog.

In 2021 our production of Alcina was featured in The Observer, having been chosen as **No 4** in Fiona Maddocks' list of the [Top 10 Classical Music Performances of 2021](#). Our 2022 production of Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* at the Arcola Theatre received two OFFIE nominations: for Opera Production and Opera Performance and is an OFFIE finalist for Opera Performance.

EO also encompasses Ensemble OrQuesta Opera Academy which is dedicated to the training of the new generation of opera singers. Academies, which are held in several places in the UK across the year, give many talented young singers from all over the world the opportunity to perform complete roles in fully staged productions, in the original language, with professional ensemble accompaniment. The increasing success of these academies has lured singers from all over the world: Ireland, France, Canada, USA, Brazil, Romania, Hong Kong, Denmark, Spain, Portugal, Japan, Russia, Georgia, Turkey, Hungary, Poland, Germany, Sweden, Israel, Greece, Austria, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Argentina and across the UK. Many of the singers who now perform in EO's professional productions received their early training in stagecraft during an opera academy, and many of our new productions underwent the first stage of their development during these intensive courses.

Ensemble OrQuesta are looking forward to their appearance at the Grimeborn Festival at the Arcola Theatre in August. This will feature Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* in a unique pairing with a specially commissioned new work by the talented English composer Philip O'Meara entitled 'Lot'. This is based on the dramatic and troubling tale of sin and seduction centred on Lot and his daughters. We hope you will join us at the Arcola. Please pass on news of our work to interested friends. Thank you for your interest in our work.

Marcio da Silva.



Music Director - born in Brazil, **Marcio da Silva** studied singing, and choral and orchestral conducting at the Conservatoire de Toulouse, France. He received his Bachelor of Music degree in orchestral conducting from the Hochschule für Musik, Freiburg, Germany, before moving to London to undertake a Masters in orchestral conducting at the Royal College of Music. During this time, he was one of three conductors to take part in the London Symphony Orchestra Conducting Master Class with Sir Colin Davis and was one of the three finalists at the Princess Astrid International Conducting Competition. As a guest conductor Marcio has conducted orchestras in Poland, Italy, Czech Republic, Germany, Turkey, Norway, Brazil and Kosovo. Marcio was Music Director of Woodhouse Opera from 2012 until its final season in 2018, and he is the founder of the Ensemble OrQuesta. In these roles he has conducted and directed over 35 fully staged productions of operas ranging from less regularly performed works such as Lully's *Armide*, to popular works such as *Carmen*, *The Magic Flute* and *La Bohème*. In 2021 he stage and music directed Cavalli's *L'Ecisto* for Hampstead Garden Opera. He was the Music Director of Grange Choral Society from 2012-2022. He is also music director of the Hastings Philharmonic Choir, Billingshurst Choral Society, HPO Singers and HPO Songbirds, and artistic director of the Hastings Philharmonic Orchestra.

Harpichord - **Predrag Gosta**. Predrag is a renowned conductor and harpsichordist who is an alumnus of the Trinity Laban and Georgia State University in Atlanta, USA. Beside being a member of Ensemble OrQuesta, in London he is the director of New Trinity Baroque and the Makris Symphony Orchestra. With them he has performed with some of the most recognized names in the early music world, including Emma Kirkby, Evelyn Tubb, and Steven Devine, as well as Rachel Brown, Adrian Butterfield, Bojan Čičić, and Zefira Valova. He is also the Artistic Director of the Belgrade Early Music Festival, the Belgrade Baroque Academy, and the New Belgrade Opera in Serbia, and the Music Director of the Gwinnett Ballet Theatre in Atlanta, USA. Active on the operatic platform, Predrag has conducted to international acclaim, opera companies in the USA, Switzerland, Germany, Bulgaria and Serbia. On the concert platform he has conducted some of the best orchestras in the world, including the London Symphony Orchestra, the National Philharmonic in Washington DC, the Russian National Orchestra in Moscow, as well as the Sofia, Ruse, Burgas and the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestras. Currently, Gosta is also in the final year of his doctoral research at the University of Oxford. Among his many CD recordings are two with the LSO and ten with NTB.



Archlute: Born in Geneva, **Cédric Meyer** holds two Master's degrees from the Haute Ecole de Musique de Lausanne as well as a Post-Graduate Performance Certificate from the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis. Performing as soloist as well as within diverse ensembles, he has been notably invited by numerous festivals and concerts series in Switzerland, UK, France, Italy, Bulgaria, and Brazil. In 2016, Cédric joined Ensemble OrQuesta as musician, member of the artistic team, and musical editor. In 2021, the Valais Canton awarded Cédric an artistic research grant for his project on medieval lutherie and its implications for musical interpretation and performance practice. An accomplished luthier, Cédric is dedicated to handcrafting his own lutes for performance. In addition to his activities as a performer, Cédric teaches classical guitar at L'Ecole de Musique de Pully (CH).

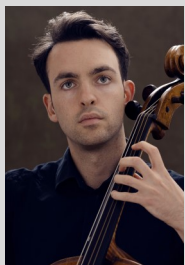


Recorder - Paul Jenkins. Paul studied Recorders and historically informed performance at the University of York, prior to becoming a chef, cooking in Toulouse, London, and Oxfordshire. He also has extensive experience as an educator working in Inner London Primary schools, specialising in music and combined arts. He holds an MA in Music and Education from the University of London Institute of Education, and he has worked as professional development consultant, project *animateur* and workshop facilitator for Lambeth Education and Hackney music service. Paul has also collaborated with English Pocket Opera Company, the British Film Institute, and the South Bank Centre Gamelan on outreach projects for Primary schools.



Violin - Edmund Taylor Edmund is a violinist specialising in Historical Performance. Founder and Director of period ensemble Bellot Ensemble, Edmund performs regularly across the UK and Europe as a violinist and leader for other period instrument ensembles, such as Ensemble OrQuesta and Armonico Consort, playing in venues such as the Royal Albert Hall and Southbank Centre. Edmund features as a soloist on the newly released Armonico Consort Signum Classics CD of the works of the Italian baroque composer Francesco Scarlatti. Edmund also enjoys freelancing in the realm of film and TV, having worked as a music support artist, recording artist, and music advisor on the films 'Emma and Napoleon and The Great' seasons 1 and 3, under the management of 'Music in Vision'.

Violin - Christopher McClain Born in Charlotte, North Carolina, USA Christopher began general music studies at the age of eight before deciding to specialize in viola at ten. After serving as principal violist of the Charlotte Symphony Youth Orchestra he finished both his high-school and Bachelor of Music Diplomas at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts followed by graduate studies at Boston University. During his university studies he explored music from the historical performance of violin, viola, recorder and viola da gamba to contemporary compositions culminating in many interdisciplinary collaborations with dancers, singers, actors and visual artists. Since relocating to London, UK in 2018 he has concertized in halls across the UK, Europe and the Middle East with ensembles including Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra as well as provided music for film and television.



Cello - Nathan Giorgiotti. Nathan is currently a Masters student at the Royal Academy of Music where he is a Christopher Hogwood Scholarship holder, and specialises in historical performance on the Viola da Gamba and Baroque Cello. Since his time at the Academy, Nathan has had the pleasure of working with leading figures in the early music scene, including Philippe Herreweghe and Rachel Podger. Recent highlights include winning the Nancy Nuttall Early Music Prize, being selected for the BREMF Live! Scheme and the OAE Experience Scheme, and a debut performance at the Wigmore Hall in March 2022.

Oboe/Recorder - Kate Bingham Kate

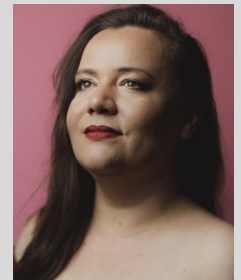
Kate is completing her Masters in Historical Performance at the Royal College of Music, where she specialises in recorders and baroque oboe. She is in demand for opera and cantata projects, as well as being a member of several chamber groups.





Céphale - Kieran White. Kieran continues to enjoy success in the UK and is rapidly establishing himself as a sought after soloist in mainland Europe working with many of the world's leading ensembles and festivals. Recent operatic engagements include two seasons with Warsaw Chamber Opera as Castor, *Castor & Pollux*, Hippolyte, *Hippolyte et Aricie*, at the Arcola Theatre (London), Valère/ Tacmas, *Les Indes Galantes*, and Arnalta and Lucano, *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, for Ensemble OrQuesta Baroque, Damon, *Acis and Galatea*, for The Dorset Opera Festival, Oronte, *Alcina*, for the Arcola Theatre (London) and Théâtre Basse Passière, Normandy, the title-role *L'Egisto* for Hampstead Garden Opera, Ruggiero in Caccini, *La Liberazione di Ruggiero*, and Pastore in Gagliano's *La Dafne* for the Brighton Early Music Festival, the Sailor, *Dido and Aeneas* at the Grange Festival and the world premiere of *A Kind Man*, with New Palace Opera. Upcoming engagements include a European tour and commercial recording of Lully's *Atys* with Les Talens Lyrique, Narete, *La fida Ninfa*, at Innsbrucker Festwochen der Alten Musik, *King Arthur* with Vox Luminis, *Matthäus-Passion* with Ars Musica, Collegium Vocale Briela and the Haags Toonkunstkoor and *Messiah* at Usher Hall conducted by Sir James MacMillan. Kieran graduated from The Royal Academy of Music achieving a Masters with distinction, receiving a Kohn foundation scholarship as a soloist in their Bach Cantata Series. In 2021 Kieran was awarded 2nd place at the Froville International Baroque Singing Competition and in 2022 won 1st place at the Aria Borealis Bodø Singing Competition.

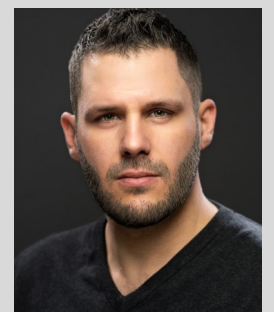
Procris - Poppy Shotts graduated with Distinction from the Royal College of Music, and previously the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Her performances at the 2021 Grimeborn Festival awarded her an OFAE nomination for *Best Opera Performance*, and a special mention in *The Observer* "...a newfound talent". A 2018 Lies Askonas Finalist, National Mozart Competition and Royal Over-seas League Semi-Finalist, and 2019 Somerset Song Prize Finalist, Poppy was the soprano soloist for the 2020 Naxos recording of Massenet's *Visions* with the RSNO. Further soloist work includes *Peer Gynt* with the Royal Philharmonic at Cadogan Hall, and regularly with St. John's Chamber Orchestra. Poppy recently did the voice work for the digital horror opera CROCODILE, which has been picked up for future TV broadcast by Sky Arts. Opera credits include Drusilla *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Ensemble OrQuesta) Fiordiligi *Così fan tutte* (St. Bartholomew's Chamber Orchestra), L'amour, Zaïde *Les Indes Galantes* (Ensemble OrQuesta), Oberto *Alcina* (Ensemble OrQuesta), Madame Goldentrill *The Impresario* (Pulp Rocket Theatre), Barbarina, *Le Nozze di Figaro* (RCM International Opera School), Susanna *The Marriage of Figaro* (Matchbox Opera), Dew Fairy *Hansel and Gretel* (St. Magnus Festival), Erste Dame *Die Zauberflöte* (2018), and Abigail Williams *The Crucible* (2019) with Berlin Opera Academy. Poppy joined the chorus of Scottish Opera in 2020 and has performed in productions of *Don Giovanni* (2022) and *Falstaff* (2021). She will perform in the 2023 Scottish Opera production of *Carmen*.



L'Aurore - Helen May graduated from the Royal Academy of Music with a Master of Arts in Vocal Performance (Distinction) and a DipRAM for outstanding final recital performance, having benefitted from the support of the William Gibbs Trust and the Josephine Baker Trust. In 2020 she was nominated for an OFAE Award for best opera performance for her role as Calisto in Cavalli's *La Calisto* at The Cockpit Theatre. Her 2022 performance as Emilie in *Les Indes Galantes* was described as 'superb, with the flexibility of tone and dramatic power that holds an audience rapt' (Plays to See). Helen has undertaken lead roles for Woodhouse Opera, Hampstead Garden Opera, Royal Academy Opera, Ensemble OrQuesta, Barefoot Opera, Bury Court Opera, London Opera Players, and Oxfordshire Contemporary Opera. Roles have included: Mimi (*La bohème*, Puccini); Poppea, Nerone and Valletto (*L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, Monteverdi); Alcina (*Alcina*, Handel); Mozart's Countess Almaviva, (*Le Nozze di Figaro*); Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*); Despina (*Così fan tutte*); First Lady (*The Magic Flute*); and Barbarina (*Le Nozze di Figaro*); Emilie (*Les Indes Galantes*, Rameau); Climene (*L'Egisto*, Cavalli); Galatea (*Acis and Galatea*, Handel); Morgana (*Alcina*, Handel); Diane (*Hippolyte et Aricie*, Rameau); Giannetta (*L'elisir d'amore*, Donizetti); Woodpecker (*Cunning Little Vixen*, Janáček); cover Jenůfa (Jenůfa, Janáček), Nimue (*Merlin*, premiere, Keith Beal); and cover Aurora (*Aurora*, premiere, Noah Moseley). Recent oratorio highlights include, Haydn's The Creation, Brahms *Ein Deutsches Requiem* and Verdi *Requiem*. Helen looks forward to a role debut as Santuzza, in Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* and world premiere in summer 2023.



Arcas - Marcio da Silva first gained renown as a boy soprano performing as a soloist in Germany, Italy, and Brazil, including performances for audiences of over 32,000 people. In 1998 he travelled to the United States, where he studied in Arizona for six months, graduating from the celebrated Phoenix Boys Choir. He went on to study singing, alongside choral and orchestral conducting, at the Conservatoire de Toulouse, receiving his *Diplôme d'Études Musicales*. Marcio also gained extensive experience in opera, beginning as a child soloist at Palacio das Artes in Belo Horizonte, and then subsequently at the Théâtre du Capitole de Toulouse, and the Théâtre des Champs Élysées and the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris. As a singer (baritone and countertenor) Marcio has performed the roles of Marcello in Puccini's *La Bohème*, Orfeo in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*, Arnalta in Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, Mercurio in Cavalli's *La Callisto*, Aristone in Cavalli's *Xerse*, Thésée in Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie*, Aeneas in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Colas in Mozart's *Bastien et Bastienne* and La Haine in Lully's *Armide*. He also performs regularly as a recitalist including most recently Vaughan Williams' 'Songs of Travel' and Schubert's 'Die Winterreise'. Marcio is an experienced vocal coach and an expert in baroque performance; he speaks seven languages fluently, and often plays baroque guitar and treble recorder in EO recitals and productions.





Dorine - Anna-Luis Wagner is a German soprano based in London. She recently completed a Ph.D. at the University of Cambridge, researching 17th-century opera singer, writer, and courtesan Margherita Costa. Alongside her studies, Anna worked as dramaturg and translator on high-profile opera productions in Germany, Austria, Italy, and the US. She also founded [Marginalia](#), an interdisciplinary performance collective bringing academic research to life on stage. With Marginalia, she has recently performed the role of Juliet in *A rose by another name*, a newly devised piece fusing Shakespeare's words with extracts from Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*. Other highlights include the title role in Händel's *Partenope* (Festivals Malta and Hampstead Garden Opera) conducted by Antonio Florio at Teatru Manoel in Valetta, Amore and Damigella/*L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Ensemble OrQuesta) at Grimeborn 2022, Belinda/*Dido and Aeneas* (Hampstead Garden Opera), Fatime/*Les Indes galantes* (Ensemble OrQuesta), Susanna/*Le nozze di Figaro* (Hampstead Garden Opera), Clorinda/*La Cenerentola* (Random Opera), The Artist/*hunger* by Joanna Ward (Edinburgh Festival Fringe), and roles with Cambridge University Opera including Cleopatra/*Giulio Cesare*, Micaëla/*Carmen*, Adina/*L'elisir d'amore*, title role/*Sāvitrī*, and Despina/*Così fan tutte*. Anna also created the title role of Green Opera's *Fillu*, a Lieder-opera telling the love story of Clara and Robert Schumann's daughter, and soprano Marie Fillunger.

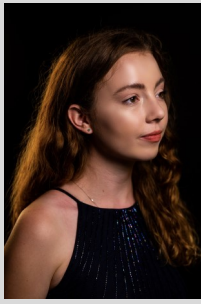
Borée - Jack Lawrence-Jones is a Britten Pears Young Artist, a London Festival Opera Young Artist, a Garsington Alvarez Young Artist and a Live Music Now Artist. He trained in the Choir of Clare College, Cambridge and at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Recent and upcoming opera roles include Lord Dunmow in Berkeley *A Dinner Engagement* (Staircase Opera), Guglielmo in Mozart *Così fan tutte* (Opera Kipling, Camden Fringe), Pollux in Rameau *Castor et Pollux* (The Opera Company, The Rameau Project, Sheldonian Theatre, Stour Music Festival), Osman/Huascar in Rameau *Les Indes galantes* (Ensemble OrQuesta), Conte in Mozart *Le nozze di Figaro* (St Paul's Opera, Ensemble OrQuesta), Belcore in Donizetti *L'elisir d'amore* (London Opera Productions, Llantilio Crossenny Festival), Moralès in Bizet *Carmen* (Kentish Opera), Graf (cover) in Strauss *Capriccio* (Garsington Festival) and the title role in Dove *The Enchanted Pig* (Hampstead Garden Opera). Recent concert work includes a staged production of Handel *Messiah* (Salon Opera), Saint-Saens *Oratorio de Noel* (Billingshurst Choral Society), Fauré and Brahms *Requiem* (The Cornerstone Choir and Orchestra), Fauré and Duruflé *Requiem* (Bromley Philharmonic Choir), Vaughan Williams *Dona nobis pacem* (New Sussex Singers), Mozart *Requiem* and *Coronation Mass*, and Haydn *The Creation* (Maldon Choral Society), Vaughan Williams *Five Mystical Songs* (London Concert Choir), and Vaughan Williams *Serenade to Music* for the Grenfell Tower Benefit Concert at the Cadogan Hall. Recent recitals include recitals around England with Live Music Now, a solo recital at the Red House, Aldeburgh, and Jack's Aldeburgh Festival debut in a recital of Korngold and Schumann songs.



Flore - Tara Venkatesan is an Indian-American soprano and recent MMus graduate as a Sir. Howard Stringer Scholar at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. She has performed as a soloist with the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, with the American Baroque Orchestra, with New Trinity Baroque Orchestra, and as recording artist for Walt Disney. Opera highlights include Clori (lead) in *L'Egisto*, Galatea in an *Acis and Galatea* pastiche, and Cassandra in *La Didone*, Thalia in *La Morte d'Orfeo* pastiche with the Yale Baroque Opera Project and Elm City Consort and Sandman in *Hansel and Gretel* with RWCMD. Oratorio highlights include the Peri in *Das Paradies und die Peri* and the soprano soloist in Haydn's *Nelsonmass* (both with Oxford Symphony Orchestra and Chorus), Rameau's *Quam Dilecta* (Wykeham Consort), and Handel's *Messiah* (American Baroque Orchestra). This is her debut with Ensemble Orquesta and she is looking forward to playing Drusilla in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. Tara also has a B.S. in Cognitive Science from Yale University and a PhD in Experimental Psychology from Oxford University. When she is not singing, she conducts and publishes empirical behavioural science research on how technologies, like virtual reality and haptic wearable devices, impact music consumption and creation.
**Tara is an Ensemble OrQuesta Academy singer for this production.*

Pan/Erictée - Flávio Lauria. Brazilian bass-baritone Flávio Lauria graduated from Federal University of Rio de Janeiro with a Bachelor degree in singing. He has been a regular performer in Brazil, Canada and the UK, particularly favouring roles in the operas of Mozart such as Figaro, and Don Alfonso. Of his Leporello, Opera Canada commented that his aria *Madamina Il Catalogo è questo* was 'flawlessly performed', (2018). Of his Papageno the Hastings Observer applauded his 'amiable Papageno,' and commended the fact that '*He is the only Papageno I have ever come across able to do his own whistling - a magnificent feat!*' (2019). Flavio made his debut at The Cockpit in February 2022, as Bellone in Rameau's *Les Indes Galantes*. The Stage review noted that Flavio's performance 'bursts with energy'. His operatic repertoire also includes Vodník (Rusalka), Aeneas (*Dido and Aeneas*), Comus (Charpentier's *Plaisirs de Versailles*), Giove (Cavalli's *Calisto*), Seneca (Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*), Melisso (Händel's *Alcina*), Colline (Puccini's *La Bohème*), Nicholas (Barber's *Vanessa*) and Morales (Bizet's *Carmen*).



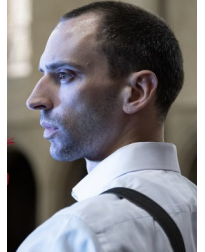


Iphis - Lydia Ward is a soprano from Nottinghamshire currently studying her Masters Degree in singing at Trinity Laban Conservatoire. She studied as a vocal specialist at Wells Cathedral School before securing a choral scholarship to Royal Holloway, University of London, where she gained a First Class Honours Degree in Music and German. Lydia is a recipient of the Southwell Choral Society Music Bursary Prize and was part of the 10th Genesis Sixteen cohort. She has recently completed her vocal scholarship with Voces8, as well as her Fellowship and Choral Scholarship at St Martin-in-the-Fields. As a freelance singer in London, Lydia has performed on multiple recordings and broadcasts, and has toured Europe, Asia and North America. Recent operatic projects have included working as Chorus Leader in *Candide* with Blackheath Halls Opera and the role of Harry in *Albert Herring* with St Paul's Opera. Lydia also enjoys teaching singing, violin and piano, as well as leading music workshops.

**Lydia is an Ensemble OrQuesta Academy singer for this production.*

Jalousie - Bass Jay Rockwell is delighted to be making his London debut with Ensemble OrQuesta. Recent performances include *Le Fauteuil* and *L'Arbre (L'Enfant et les Sortilèges)* and *Bartolo (Le nozze di Figaro)* with Conservatorio Superior de Música Valencia, *Masetto (Don Giovanni)* with Ensemble OrQuesta Opera Academy, *Seneca (L'Incoronazione di Poppea)* with Saluzzo Opera Academy, and *Colline (La bohème)* with North Wales Opera Studio. Jay is currently studying at Conservatorio Superior de Música Valencia.

**Jay is an Ensemble OrQuesta Academy singer for this production.*



Un dieux de la mer - John Twitchen is a tenor with a passion for opera and art song. He studied singing with Louise Winter and was a member of Glyndebourne Youth Opera 3 where he performed in the *Tête à Tête* festival and on the Glyndebourne stage. He completed his BMus (Hons) in Vocal performance at the University of Chichester with a 1st under the guidance of Ian Kennedy and performed the lead role in Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*. He has sung in the Dorset Opera Festival for three years performing roles in Eugene Onegin, Macbeth, Faust and *Le Comte Ory*, as well as roles in Barefoot Opera's *Carmen* and *La Bohème* where he took part in various body, movement and voice workshops with Jenny Miller and Penny Randall-Davis.

**John is an Ensemble OrQuesta Academy singer for this production.*

Ensemble OrQuesta would like to thank the following charitable trusts and foundations for their support of this production:

2022-23



Ensemble OrQuesta is also hugely grateful for the generous ongoing support of the:



EO Ensemble OrQuesta



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Director's note - this production

This production is quite special for me for a number of reasons. Firstly, performing a baroque opera by a female composer is something you don't do everyday. I came across this opera a couple of years ago, when looking for unedited pieces that would grant a new edition. I can't quite remember how I came across it, but, at a first instance, the composer was what attracted me to explore the piece. After some research about the characters, I could see that the piece would be worth the work of creating a new edition. This started before the pandemic. We were set to perform it as one of Ensemble OrQuesta Opera Academies on April 2020. That was first postponed to later that year and then cancelled all together. At the time I did spend some time with the staging, trying to come up with ideas, but I really struggled. Since the academy was cancelled and we moved on to other projects, I didn't look at this piece again until September last year.

This piece brings up a number of unusual challenges. Firstly, in general, the instrumentation that we had in the scores was very limited. For many of the arias, instrumental numbers and choruses, the manuscripts we found, only had one violin line and bass, or, in the case of the chorus, Soprano and Bass. This meant that I had to create music to make this piece work, musically, to begin with. This was however limited to the inner parts, so I didn't make too many changes to what Jacquet de la Guerre wrote.

Once you read the libretto, you understand that, although the theme of the opera doesn't seem unusual, you can find several feminist issues that you wouldn't expect in an opera of this time. The role of Dorine speaks about an idea of marriage and relationships that, I thought, would have seemed quite unusual at the time. With that in mind, and most importantly, with it being an opera by a woman, I felt that focusing the theme of the production on women would be a start. This is however a challenge for a man. I didn't want, however, for that challenge to be a reason for me deciding not to go in that direction, which, once I thought of it, couldn't be changed.

The prologue in French operas is usually something to welcome and honour the king. In our prologue I tried to play with that. Using the history of France's monarchy, I tried to turn the veneration to revolution. We have also incorporated the figure of Lully which must have played a big role in Jacquet do la Guerre's life. In a different world, with gender equality, her work might have expended in a different way and the recognition of her work, today, would possibly be comparable to Lully's.

In our productions in general, I try to have as much gender fluidity as the story allows, always to break the stereotypes of the time. Here, I have made Cephale not gender fluid but, a woman. I have made this into the story of two women who aren't allowed to love each other. I tried to create a visual divide between men and women while allowing for gender fluidity between some of the characters. Through the opera you will find a lot of symbolism that signify ideas that have dictated the way women live their lives for centuries. I also tried to incorporate that into all the choreographies. The main plot twist of this opera, which you will understand in the end, keeps with that theme, of horrible things that men have done, and continue to do to women.

I certainly hope that you enjoy this masterpiece and the vision I had for it. My objective as a music/stage director is to give people something beautiful, something real, but also to send you home having felt something. I like the idea that people will go home and chat about what they saw, both in a positive and negative way. In my productions, by the first performance, we will have tried to find a meaning for everything. I know you won't be able to see exactly what we meant, but our hope is that by adding meaning to all aspects of the production, you will be encouraged to do the same.

Marcio da Silva

Stage/Music Director

Céphale et Procris is an opera by the French composer **Élisabeth-Claude Jacquet de la Guerre**. It was the first French opera composed by a woman. This is the UK premiere of the work, and Ensemble OrQuesta would like to extend its grateful thanks to Angel Early Music, The Cavalli Foundation, and The Leche Trust for their support of this production.

Élisabeth-Claude Jacquet was born into a family that had been building **harpsichords and organs** for several generations. Her father was a noted organist and her mother was also from a musical family. Élisabeth was recognised as a **prodigy** at a young age (quite possibly as young as 5) when she stunned the French court with her improvising, performing, and sight reading on the harpsichord. She was taken to live at court at the age of **eight** to be raised and trained under the protection of **Louis XIV**.

Apparently, between **1667** and **1684**, Élisabeth's education was supervised by Louis' mistress **Madame de Montespan**, and then by the royal governess, later the queen, **Madame de Maintenon**. In **1677**, the French journal *Mercurie Galante* referred to the child wonder - '*la petite merveille*' - who 'sings at sight the most difficult music, accompanies, composes pieces and plays them in all keys.' In **1678** the same journal called her, 'the marvel of our century'.

Élisabeth's reputation as an inspired virtuoso grew as she advanced in age. She spent many years singing and playing in the king's salon and went on to dedicate most of her compositions to him. Exceptionally, Louis even allowed her to write for the **Académie de la Royale de Musique**. When the king's court moved to Versailles in **1683**, Élisabeth Jacquet remained in Paris, and in **1684**, at the age of 17 or 18, she married the organist and harpsichord teacher **Marin de la Guerre**. However, she always kept her ties to the French court, and she remained a protégé of the king until his death in **1715**.

A brilliant character, Jacquet de la Guerre composed and performed at a time when such freedom was still almost unheard of for a woman. As a composer she was prolific, and she proved herself to be flexible in being open to new musical styles and ideas, and innovative in being keen to introduce the new Italian style to France. Having enjoyed a distinguished career at court under Louis' protection, she extended her activities to private music in her own musical **salons**, and in public she became renowned as both a composer and a harpsichordist. Her principal compositions, the initial outstanding ones being a set of *pièces de clavecin* published in **1687**, and the final triumph being a Te Deum performed in the Louvre in **1721** to celebrate the recovery of the young Louis XV from smallpox, include harpsichord suites, trio sonatas, sonatas for violin and harpsichord, airs, cantatas, a ballet, an opera, and music for the Parisian fair theatres. *Céphale et Procris* is her only surviving stage work. By the time of her death at the **age of 63**, Élisabeth was very wealthy and had been accorded both critical and royal recognition, including a medal struck by Louis XV in her honour.

Céphale et Procris

Céphale et Procris takes the form of a *tragédie en musique* in five acts with an allegorical prologue. The libretto, by the French playwright **Joseph-François Duché de Vancy (1668-1704)**, is loosely based on elements of the myth of Cephalus and Procris as told in **Ovid's** narrative poem **Metamorphoses**, although de Vancy also added some of his own sub-plots. The central myth tells of the fateful destiny of two Greek lovers, who are driven to the blind horror of revenge by the plotting of jealous and amorous gods: Cephalus inadvertently kills Procris, convinced that she is unfaithful to him, and in his infinite sorrow he takes his own life...

Some evidence exists that the opera was written at least by **1691**, and possibly as early as **1687** - that is to say when Jacquet de la Guerre was between the ages of 22 and 26. The opera was first performed by the Paris Opéra on the stage of the **Académie Royale de Musique** at the **Théâtre du Palais-Royal** on 17 March **1694**. There is some suggestion that the delay in performance date might be down to Lully's opera monopoly - that *Céphale* could only be performed once Lully's virtual stranglehold on the operatic scene in France had been released.

Reception

At the time of its first presentation, the opera had very **limited success**; it only ran for **five or six performances**, before disappearing from the stage until a revival of interest in the work in **1989**. This may partly have been due to the poor literary quality of the libretto, with its confused addition of **sub-plots** that interrupt the story's dramatic tension rather than intensifying it. But it may also have been due to the **changing cultural and political climate** of Paris in the 1690s, which was generally unfavourable to elaborate *fêtes* allegorising love - even war had fallen out of favour. **Paris** was usurping the leading role of Versailles in musical life and audiences who looked to King Louis XIV as their arbiter of taste found that the king had lost interest in opera - the court was directing its repertoire more towards **sacred music**, undoubtedly under the influence of Louis' religiously conservative new wife, Madame de Maintenon. As Louis directed less attention to opera, theatrical performances gradually declined in quality. To cap it all, in the 1690s France began suffering **economic problems** and devastating **military losses**, both contributing to the **loss of public morale**. (Jacquet de la Guerre's almost excessive paean to the multi-dimensional glories of Louis XIV in the prologue to *Céphale* may

not have helped in this regard). It is also possible that the Parisian public harboured a certain **prejudice** against the work of a woman being presented on the city's opera stage, although there is no direct evidence of this. Perhaps what is more to the point, Lully's works continued to enjoy a monopoly for a goodly time after his death in 1687. All this created a generally unsympathetic atmosphere for opera - and perhaps for this opera in particular.

However, *Céphale et Procris* did find some favour outside Paris. The composer, music theorist, lexicographer, and collector **Sébastien de Brossard** performed the prologue at **Strasbourg's** Academie de la Musique, between 1695 and 1698, and the opera won considerable success with the Strasbourg public. Nevertheless, the Paris failure of her opera clearly made an impression, and de la Guerre did not return to dramatic works until the new vogue in dramatic French vocal music tempted her to compose her first book of **cantatas** in **1708**.

The music

In outline *Céphale et Procris* opens with a **prologue** glorifying Louis XIV, and this leads into the first of **five acts**, the first and last being most crucial to the tragic drama. The opera proceeds through a series of recitatives interspersed by various airs (solos and duets), ensembles, choruses, dances, and instrumental pieces. Significantly, these are all governed by a structure based on a **tonal centre**, giving rise to a cohesive whole. This tonal organisation is defined at the outset in the prologue, in reality an expansive French rondeau.

Unsurprisingly, Jacquet de la Guerre's music reflects the influence of **Jean-Baptiste Lully**, the founder of the French genre of *tragédie en musique* - after all, Lully had been the dominant influence in French music during Élisabeth's formative years. Stylistically and structurally the drama is carried mainly by **recitative** interspersed with lyrical **airs de cours**. Choruses (both *grand* and *petit chœur*) are assigned an exhortatory or supplicatory role. A small (five-part) orchestra provides overtures, preludes, *ritournelles*, dramatic symphonies, nature scenes, and dances.

Musicologists agree that there are many beautiful and powerful passages that reveal Jacquet de la Guerre to have been a sensitive musical dramatist, and modern critics propose that the work merits renewed attention. Jacquet de la Guerre creates a drama of imposing **psychological depth**; the characters' **unusually lengthy airs** portray overwhelmingly human emotions with **perception** and **power**. Through music that is by turns **exciting, tense, and poignant**, Jacquet de la Guerre paints the violence of Aurora's jealous rage, and the malevolence of her evil scheming, and brings to life the tortured conflict between her passionate desire for revenge and her compassion for her afflicted lover, and, as she focuses on the central lovers, she pulls at the heart strings with music that is **achingly beautiful** and harmonically adventurous to portray the depths of suffering and despair experienced by Céphale and Procris. Furthermore, Jacquet de la Guerre adds **original touches** of her own to the Lullian formula. Her unique contribution to the genre lies in incorporating **silence** for dramatic effect in the opera's poignant final scene, and most notably a quiet conclusion in place of the expected final chorus.

In essence, **Act I** establishes the plot, which presents the factor of **divine intervention** leading inevitably to the **tragedy** resolved in the final act. **Act II** lays out the critical theme of **infidelity** instigated by **powerful divinities**. Procris's deeply expressive air '*Lieux écartez, paisible solitude*' (act II, scene 1) an Italianate *da capo* air (rather than French rondeau form) expresses great suffering, challenging the singer with difficult melodic intervals and unexpected harmonies. In **Act III**, Céphale's air '*Amour, qui sous tes loix cruelles*', which is in rondeau form, is skilfully balanced with a *divertissement*, ballet, other songs, and dances. **Act IV** continues the theme of **infidelity**; Procris sings a moving lament, ('*Funeste mort, donnez-moi secours*', act IV, scene 3), followed by a chorus of demons set for hautes-contres, tenors and basses, this in turn leading to Céphale reappearing before Procris. **Act V** can perhaps be seen as a tragic resolution of **cruelty** as much as of **fidelity**. Procris expresses this in an impelling recitative '*Et quoyque mon coeur en murmure*', as she is overcome by what she believes to be Céphale's unfaithfulness, which dooms her never to be able to see him again.

Sources and the new edition

Céphale et Procris is exceptional among French baroque operas in that it has come down to us in **three different sources**:

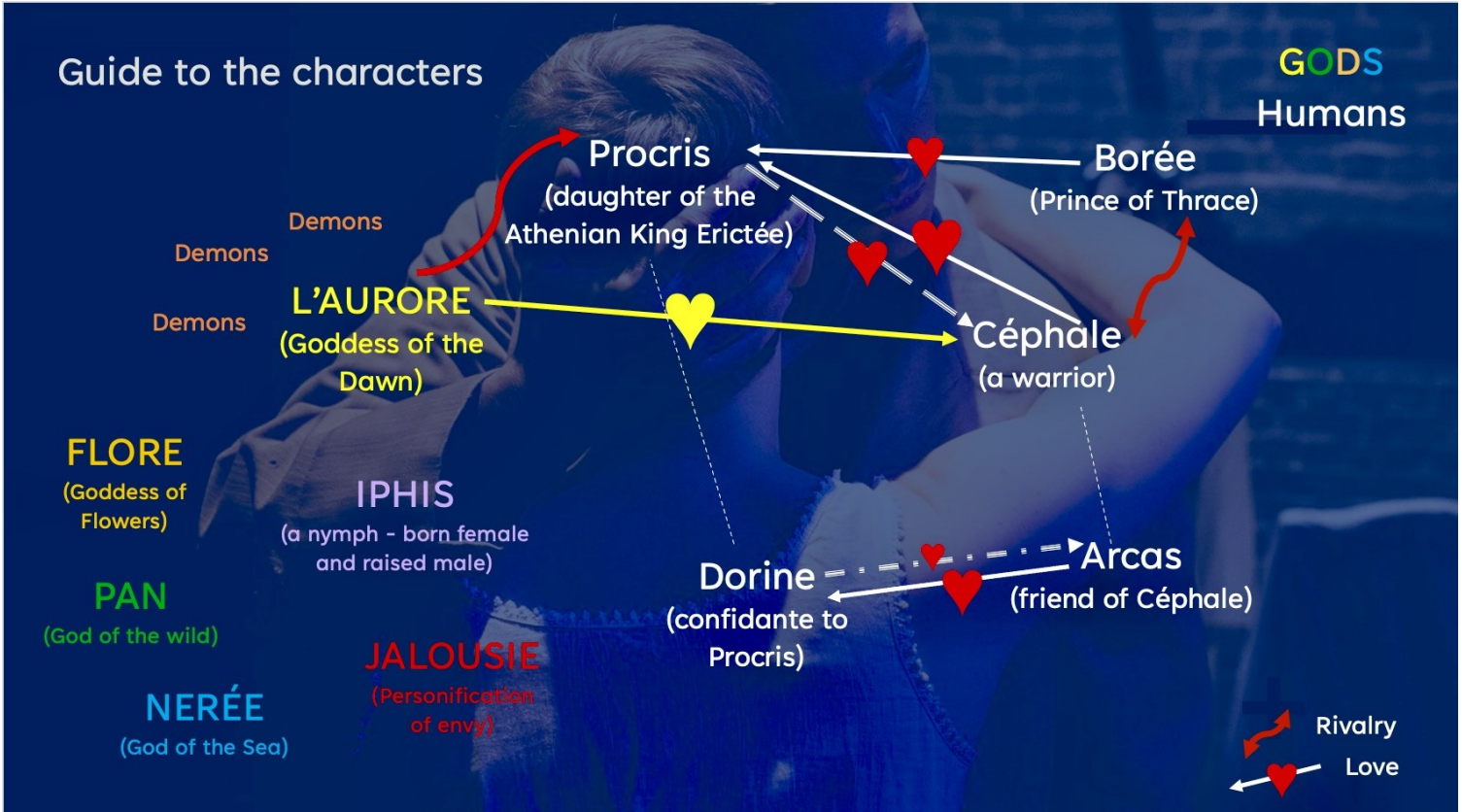
1) A souvenir score published in **1694** by Christophe Ballard. 2) A set of manuscript parts. 3) An arrangement of the Prologue prepared by Brossard for performance in Strasbourg (presumably in 1696). Such extensive source material sheds light on several areas of performance practice. .

Marcio da Silva and **Cédric Meyer** have compiled a **new edition** for Ensemble OrQuesta's **UK premiere** of *Céphale et Procris*. For this edition they have used the souvenir score published in **1694** by Christophe Ballard, and the manuscript set of separate parts, also dated **1694**. We are grateful to **Anna-Luise Wagner** for completing the translation of the libretto by Joseph-Francois Duché de Vancy.

The basic story:

The opera begins with a prologue in which divine entities celebrate the glory of King Louis XIV. The main opera (Acts I to V) is set in Athens. Cephalus, a warrior, and Procris, the daughter of the King of Athens, are in love but are yet to be married. Boreas, Prince of Thrace, is Cephalus' rival - he too hopes to marry Procris, and the gods help him press his claim, particularly Aurora (the goddess of dawn) who is in love with Cephalus and wants him for herself. When Aurora believes Cephalus has rejected her, she conjures up demons to cast a spell so that Procris will believe Cephalus has been unfaithful to her. The spell works but the goddess has a change of heart and convinces Procris that Cephalus has always been true to her. In the myth, Procris finds Cephalus and Boreas engaged in a fight. When she tries to intervene, Cephalus accidentally wounds her with an arrow and she dies, leaving her lover grief-stricken.

Since the interplay between the myth and the sub-plots tend to make the character interactions rather confusing you may find this visual guide helpful.



Extended synopsis for this 2023 production.

Prologue: Flore, Pan, Chorus, Nereus.

Before daybreak, Flore and Pan gather female and male deities (traditionally nymphs and fauns) to celebrate the mightiest of kings – Louis XIV. The nymphs dance for joy. Then the sea god Nereus appears. He also wants to take part in the celebration. He tells of hostile machinations that have no chance of success. The sea gods sing about love, and dance. Nereus suggests enacting the story of Procris' tragic love.

ACT I.

Scene 1: Boreas and Procris.

The Thracian* prince Boreas begs Procris, daughter of the Athenian king Erectheus, to return his feelings. Procris pretends to despise love in general. However, Boreas knows that she secretly loves Cephalus, the conqueror of the Thracians.

Scene 2: Dorine and Procris.

Procris admits her feelings for Cephalus to her confidante Dorine. Dorine reminds her that Erectheus will choose her husband today.

Scene 3: Arcas and Procris.

Cephalus' friend Arcas tells Procris about Cephalus' great love for her.

Scene 4: Arcas and Dorine.

Arcas tries in vain to win Dorine's favour. Dorine is not interested in love if it only offers misery. He cannot win her with his sighs. She doesn't want to make a declaration of love as her feelings could change and she might be inconstant. He wants a binding faithful love.

Scene 5: Chorus.

Athenians celebrate Cephalus's victory with dance and song.

Scene 6. The King and Athenians.

The king announces that there is peace again in Greece and that he wants to give Cephalus his daughter in marriage. Everyone celebrates victory and welcomes the prospect of the delights of love to come until the High Priestess Aurora appears.

Scene 7. The King, Aurora, and Cephalus.

Aurora condemns the king for his decision to arrange the marriage of Cephalus without the approval of the god. The gods had proclaimed that Procris must marry Boreas if peace was to come from the marriage. Cephalus objects and Erectheus agrees to consult the gods again.

ACT II.

Scene 1: Procris.

In solitude, Procris mourns the loss of her lover. When Cephalus approaches, she hides so that he doesn't see her tears.

Scene 2: Cephalus and Procris.

Cephalus comes to bid Procris final farewell, declaring that his death will appease the gods. He is heartened when he sees how much pain she feels at the thought of this separation. He suggests asking his father for help, but Procris is prepared to sacrifice her love to the will of the gods. Procris has no more hope - the heavens have condemned her to eternal tears. The two sadly say goodbye to each other (duet: '*Le ciel m'avait flatté*'), and Procris leaves him alone.

Scene 3: Cephalus.

Cephalus laments the cruelty of the gods ('*Dieux cruels, dieux impitoyables*'). When he sees Boreas coming with his Thracian friends, he hides to overhear them.

Scene 4: Boreas and friends.

Boreas is celebrating his happiness. A Thracian invites the inhabitants of the country to the celebration.

Scene 5: A shepherd and a shepherdess.

A shepherd and a shepherdess sing of the love that animates all nature.

Scene 6: Cephalus and Boreas.

Cephalus emerges from hiding and warns Boreas that he is not yet victorious - fate could turn again. Boreas arrogantly rejects his jealous and reckless threats. Cephalus swears revenge. Aurora enters.

Scene 7: Aurora and Cephalus.

Aurora seems to offer help to Cephalus. She asks about Procris and their love. Cephalus is confident in their mutual passion, but Aurora suggests that Procris is fickle if she has given in to Boreas so easily. Aurora proclaims her own wondrous attributes and the wisdom of her advice and tries to persuade Cephalus that the best way to respond to the unfaithfulness of Procris is to be fickle himself. But Cephalus struggles to believe that Procris was only pretending to love him; he proclaims that his own love will remain strong onto death. Aurora summons Zephyrs (wind gods) to accompany Cephalus as he leaves, promising to ensure a future full of happiness for him.

Scene 8: Iphis and Aurora.

Iphis queries why Aurora is trying so hard to make Cephalus unfaithful. Aurora confesses the depth of her love for Cephalus. She herself prevented his marriage and even left heaven because of him.

ACT III.

Scene 1: Cephalus.

Cephalus laments the cruel laws of love ('*Amour, que sous tes loix cruelles*').

Scene 2: Iphis and Cephalus.

Iphis offers comfort to Cephalus. She asks the goddess of lust to ease the pain 'D'un trop fidèle amant'.

Scene 3: Lust/Aurora, and Chorus.

Lust/Aurora and her followers dance and sing. They declare that the madness of loving brings the sweetest moments of life. The troubles caused are worth the pain; they should not be forsworn but bravely faced, since the joys make up for the suffering.

Scene 4: Aurora and Cephalus.

Aurora tries once more to convince Cephalus that Procris is fickle and should be treated with contempt. She confesses her passionate love for him. Cephalus is flattered but declares himself unworthy. Aurora is insulted and rages with anger. Cephalus is shocked that her love seems to turn so quickly into cruel hatred. Having shown her weakness to him Aurora is torn between anguish and outrage. Cephalus declares that he would even welcome death at her hands to end his torment. But Aurora cannot face punishing him in this way - she is distraught. Her tender passion for him and her grief will remain constant. But he, she declares, will find that he offers 'the generous gift of a constant passion' to the 'deceitful charms' of Procris.

Scene 5: Aurora and Iphis.

Aurora is both anguished and ashamed; her heart is torn between tenderness and anger. She asks Iphis to help her take revenge. Even though Cephalus abandons her, her love is stronger than ever, and her anger fuels her love rather than diminishing it.

ACT IV.

Scene 1: Arcas and Dorine.

Arcas says goodbye to Dorine; he must leave the country in the entourage of Cephalus because Boreas is marrying Procris. He renews his proposal. Dorine is still reluctant to commit to an entanglement; she fears that the fire of his love will abate once he has what he desires. Arcas is initially disappointed, but reluctantly agrees to move on. Perhaps in the end a more light-hearted love is sweeter; an excess of tenderness can lead to greater sadness.

Scene 2: Aurora and Iphis.

Aurora, in a torment of rage, invokes the God of Jealousy, calling him up from the abyss to disturb the mind of Procris, to make her believe that Cephalus is unfaithful to her and to awaken a cruel hatred in her. But Aurora is struck down by a fearful pain at the thought that Cephalus will be devastated by this. Iphis reassures her, and she is calmed, seeking to remember, despite her extreme passion, that she must hate him even though she loves him.

Scene 3: Procris.

Procris desperately longs for death (*'Funeste mort, donnez-moi du secours'*). An ominous rumbling indicates that the gods are intervening.

Scene 4: Procris.

Procris feels a darkness descend upon her.

Scene 5: Procris, Jealousy, Rage, and Despair.

Jealousy tells Procris that her lover is unfaithful and that she should replace her love with hate and anger (*'Pour calmer vos ennuis'*). Procris is overwhelmed. Jealousy, Rage, and Despair summon more demons to exploit her weakness and dominate her mind with their thoughts.

Scene 6: Jealousy and a Chorus of Demons.

Jealousy, and the demons enchant Procris.

Scene 7: Procris and Cephalus.

Procris awakens, agitated by the anger Jealousy has aroused in her. When Cephalus tries to help her, she angrily rejects him and vows to marry his rival, even if she will die because of it. She can no longer trust Cephalus. Cephalus is plunged into despair.

ACT V.

Scene 1: Procris and Dorine.

Procris is now firmly convinced of Cephalus's unfaithfulness – she is torn between anger and despair. Dorine tells her about his tears and pleads with her to be calm, but Procris refuses to believe her declaring that no hatred is too great for him.

Scene 2: Boreas, Procris, and Chorus.

When Boreas appears with his Thracian and Athenian friends, Procris tearfully declares that she would now like to marry him. Boreas is overjoyed that Love has triumphed over difficulty and his followers dance with joy.

Scene 3: Procris.

Procris doubts her decision – she fears that great unhappiness lies ahead and once again considers death.

Scene 4: Aurora and Procris.

Aurora's anger has now subsided. She reveals to Procris that Cephalus still loves her and that her doubts were caused by a jealous deity. She offers to help Procris, as a reward for her tenderness. She urges Procris to go to Cephalus to renew her love; she need no longer fear the wrath of the gods.

Scene 5.

Scene 6.

Scene 7.

Scene 8: Cephalus and Procris.

Dorine brings the dying Procris to Cephalus so the two can say goodbye. Procris asks Cephalus to continue to love her after her death but not to let his grief overcome him (*Accompagnato: 'Non, vivez'*). She dies. Cephalus decides to follow her to the underworld.

* *In Ancient History, Thracians inhabited large parts of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey).*

Women and music in 17th-century France

Élisabeth undoubtedly had prodigious talent, but she was also born in fortuitous times. The court's musical activities under Louis XIV are legendary, particularly the ballets and operas by **Jean-Baptiste Lully** (1632-1687) in which the king danced, and the theatre productions by **Molière** (the stage name of Jean-Baptiste Poquelin). But the French court was not the only place where music was being composed and performed in Paris in the second half of the 17th-century. Salons were held by wealthy women as early as **1653**, and women were known to be among the performers, singing or playing the lute or harpsichord. One of the most famous patrons was **Louise de Mollier** (1615-1688), who was herself a composer.

Women associated with the court also acted as **patrons**. Lully's mistress **Marie Certain** (d.1711) was well known for the musicales over which she presided, and Louis XIV's cousin, the **Duchesse de Guise**, also held influential salons. **Louis' mother** maintained her own private musical entourage, and Mesdames de Montespan and de Maintenon organised their own chamber music concerts in Louis' private apartments. The first generation of singers who had been trained by Lully could find opportunities to sing at the Académie de la Royale de Musique - established in 1669 as the **Académie d'Opéra** for women to learn singing. Thus the French tradition of women making music was well established when Élisabeth first came to the attention of the king.

But undoubtedly, for women instrumentalists, professional opportunities were dependent on impressing members of the court, which de la Guerre did. Of course, it was down to personal initiative that she later went on to establish musical salons in her own home. But she was composing in a period when music patronage was fashionable, and opportunities were burgeoning. She lived to see the establishment of the **Concerts Spirituels** (1725) - one of the first public concerts series in existence. These originally took place in the Salle des Cent Suisses of the Tuileries Palace, but concerts of a similar name were later established in Vienna, London, and elsewhere. These offered a new public forum for choral, vocal, orchestral, and chamber music works during the Easter fortnight and on religious holidays when other spectacles were closed. As for the French court, five years after de la Guerre's death, a woman was appointed as the royal court harpsichordist - she was Francois Couperin's daughter.