

## ***Antinous and Hadrian***

Two-act opera by **Clint Borzoni**, libretto by **Edward Ficklin**

presented by **operamission**, in collaboration with NYC's **Queer Urban Orchestra**

**August 28 - September 7, 2013**

Church of the Holy Apostles, New York City

**Jennifer Peterson**, conductor

HOSTS: Jennifer Peterson, Clint Borzoni, Edward Ficklin

**Part One:** Prologue and Act I, scenes 1-4 – Wednesday, August 28, 7-10pm

**Part Two:** Act I, scenes 5-8 – Thursday, August 29, 7-10pm

**Part Three:** Act II – Saturday, September 7, 4-7pm

### CAST

bass **Cory Clines** – Hadrian, emperor of Rome

tenors **Christopher Sokolowski** (Act I) and **Tommy Wazelle** (Act II) – Antinous, a Greek youth

mezzo-sopranos **Kimberly Sogioka** (Act I) and **Stephanie McGuire** (Act II) – Sabina, wife of the emperor

baritone **Brian Mextorf** – Marcus, her lover

soprano **Elisabeth Turchi** – Vera, high priestess of Isis in Rome

countertenors **Brennan Hall** (Act I) and **David Stanley** (Act II) – Phlegon, the emperor's servant

#### **in Egypt:**

bass-baritones **Brad Baron** (Prologue) and **Jeff Caldwell** (Act II) – High Priest, head of a temple in Hermopolis

baritones **Dennis Blackwell** and **Seth Gilman** – Two Fishermen

baritone **Dennis Blackwell** – An Alexandrian official

#### **in Bithynion-Claudiopolis** (a small Greek city in Asia Minor):

soprano **Caroline Worra** – Clara, mother of Antinous

mezzo-soprano **Jia Ling** – Nerea, a parent

tenor **Jonathan Hill** – Zenobios, a parent

baritone **Seth Gilman** – Kleon, son of Nerea

baritone **Dennis Blackwell** – Euthymius, son of Zenobios

soprano **Jennifer Behnke** – An Acolyte

baritone **Seth Gilman** – A Priest of the college of augurs

Off-stage voices of Saints and Pagans, Townspeople of Bithynion-Claudiopolis, Romans – **see additional pages**

The Orchestra for 'Creating the Work' includes members of [queerurbanorchestra.org](http://queerurbanorchestra.org) and many guests:

Kiah Abendroth, Alex Arellano, Jim Babcock, Seth Bedford, Bjorn Berkhout, Andrew Berman (QUO liaison), Jonathan Bloomfield, Emily Bookwalter, Alva Bostick, Cameron Burnes, Daniel Chang, Sandy Coffin, Suzanne Davies, Joseph Dermody, Craig Devereaux, David Elion, Andrew Emmons, Elizabeth Fagan, Travis Fraser, Matthew Garza, Ed Gonzales, John Gray, Matthew Hadley, Eric Hayslett (principal horn), Anna Hiemstra, Jordan Hirsch, Andrew Holland, Alexandra Honigsberg, Alan Hyde, Clifton Hyde, Erin Kulick, Michael Lee, Daniel Liao, Danny Marquez, Jessica McJunkins, Layne McNish, Rona Nahass, Fran Novak, Scott Oaks, Aaron Patterson, Vivian Penham, Mark Peters, Corinne Ramey, Alix Raspé (harp), Brendan Ratchford, Aaron Reichelt (principal oboe), Alvaro Rodas, Charles Scattamachia, Michael Vannoni, Vince Vuong (concert-master), Liann Wadewitz (personnel), Jamie Wilson, Paul Wolfram, Yuko Yamamura...as of 28 August.

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#antinous

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**Mini-synopsis by librettist Edward Ficklin**, please enjoy the opera...

## **Act I**

Prologue: Hir-Wer, the east bank of the Nile, October, 130 A.D. The off stage voices of the Saints and Pagans open the scene, only the river and desolate countryside are visible; a body is floating in the water; a small group of fisherman enter and are about to cast their nets into the water when they notice the body.

Scene 1: The marketplace of Bithynion-Claudiopolis (a small Greek city in present-day Turkey), June 123 A.D. A crowd waits expectantly for the arrival of the emperor Hadrian and his entourage, chief among them his lifelong assistant Phlegon. The emperor is celebrated by Zenobios, a prominent citizen, but has other things on his mind.

Scene 2: The marketplace again, a few days later. Three youths, Antinous, Kleon and Euthymius, are waiting in the marketplace, accompanied by family members, Antinous' mother Clara among them, to see them off.

Scene 3: Imperial Palace, Rome, 126 A.D. A banquet is in progress in the imperial palace. Present are Hadrian, his wife Sabina next to him, the general Marcus (Sabina's secret lover) and a number of other guests; Antinous and the two other Bithynian pages are serving the emperor and his guests.

Scene 4: Later that same night: Sabina is in her chambers pacing in a state of agitation; Antinous and Hadrian in the garden (a parallel scene) with the dinner guests from before.

Scene 5: Temple of Isis, Rome, August 128 A.D. Vera, high priestess of Isis, and an acolyte are in the midst of a ritual.

Scene 6: Antinous and Hadrian are alone in his chambers, later that night. A physician is just finishing his exam and leaving.

Scene 7: A garden in the palace, later that night.

Scene 8: Courtyard of the Temple of Jupiter, Rome, the next day. A crowd is gathered waiting for the emperor and priests to emerge from the sacrifice being offered to consecrate Hadrian's tour of the eastern provinces.

## **Act II**

Scene 1: Temple of Isis (Rome), Sabina's Chambers (Rome), Roman Camp (in the Sinai Desert), August 130 A.D.

Scene 2: Alexandria, September 130 A.D. Hadrian is giving audiences to local Alexandrians and hoping to escape the local politics of his least favorite part of the empire.

Scene 3: Hir-Wer, the east bank of the Nile, a few weeks later. We've now arrived at the location where the opera opened—and where Antinous meets his end. Marcus and Vera confront each other.

Scene 4: Hadrian, Antinous, and a small hunting party enter with the carcass of a lion; Antinous is wounded and is being supported by a soldier. Vera surreptitiously enters, stands aside and watches.

Scene 5: Outside the camp on the bank of the Nile, later that night. Antinous and Hadrian are sitting on the bank of the Nile, contemplating the river, the lion's pelt draped over them.

Scene 6: Roman camp, the next morning. Hadrian is sitting alone by a fire outside his tent, intently staring at the sky just before dawn.