

HWV 7 – **Rinaldo** – Georg Friedrich Handel
Opera in Three Acts
Libretto by Aaron Hill and Giacomo Rossi
Premiered February 24, 1711, London, Queen's Theatre,
Haymarket

June 14 and 16, 2016, 7:00 PM

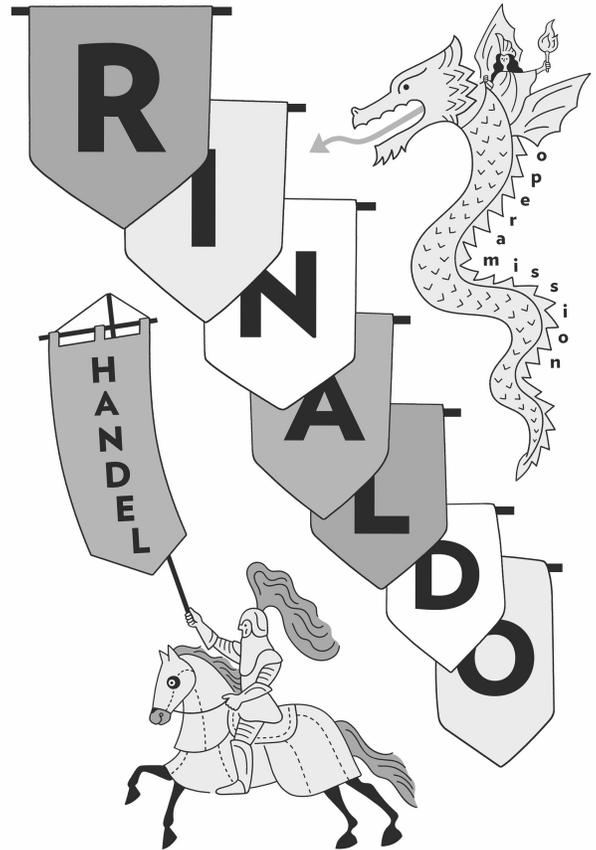
The edition used for this production is Friedrich
Chrysander's, published in 1896.

There will be one 15-minute intermission between Acts I
and II, and a brief pause between Acts II and III.

Thank you for attending *Rinaldo*, our fourth in the series
of Handel's complete operas.

The illustration is by Tomi Um, and we'd like to thank the
following for their support for **operamission**: Patrick
Fennig, Gene Murrow (GEMS), Donald Meineke (Holy
Trinity Lutheran Church), Joseph Hill, Kathe Jervis, Janet
Harris, Willard Martin, Deborah Mintz, Partow Payandeh,
Mary Anne Ballard and Alex Blachly (Pomerium).

Thanks to cast and orchestra, and to Brian Mextorf for
his assistance, and to Jeff Caldwell for his cohesion.



SYNOPSIS / TRANSLATION

The opera takes place in 1099; Goffredo is Godefroid de Bouillon, leader of the First Crusade.

Characters:

Goffredo, general captain of the Christian army
Almirena, his daughter, intended bride of Rinaldo
Rinaldo, hero of the battlefield
Eustazio, brother of Goffredo
Argante, King of Jerusalem, lover of Armida
Armida, Enchantress, Queen of Damascus
Mago Christiano (a Christian magician)
Un Araldo (a herald)
La Sirena (a siren)

NICHOLAS TAMAGNA
MALIA BENDI MERAD
RANDALL SCOTTING
ANDREW RADER
FRANCO POMPONI
CHRISTINE ARAND
BIRAJ BAKAKATY
IVÁN RIVERA de BELTRAN
LIEVE BUZARD

Overture

ACT ONE

The city of Jerusalem under siege, with a prospect of walls, through which soldiers of the battle exit. On one side are seen the tents of the Christian army.

Goffredo is surrounded by Almirena, Rinaldo, Eustazio, and his Guards.

Goffredo shares with his troops that he is looking forward to completing their efforts in achieving their goal of victory in liberating Zion (Jerusalem), as he points out the rising sun, illuminating their future eternal glory.

Aria – GOFFREDO

*Sovra balze scoscesi e pungenti,
il suo tempio la gloria sol hà.*

Over craggy and sharp precipices,
only glory has its temple.

*Nè frà gioje, piaceri e contenti
i bei voti ad apprendere si v`a.*

Among neither joys, pleasures, and contentments
do we go to suspend beautiful vows.

Rinaldo, affirming that Asia should expect an agonizing fate as the city's oppressed walls are subdued, reminds Goffredo of his expectation to be virtuously united with Almirena. Goffredo cautions Rinaldo to be patient. Almirena concurs, encouraging Rinaldo on his course towards glory in war, and reminding him that Cupid's torch can often cool martial ardor.

Aria – ALMIRENA

*Combatti da forte, che fermo il mio sen
piacer ti prepara, contenti d'ognor.*

Fight vehemently, because my heart
prepares pleasures for you, everlasting contentment.

*Con face di gloria bell'iri seren'
adesso risplenda nell'alto tuo cor.*

With the glorious torch of your beautiful, serene eyes,
may it now shine within your noble heart.

Eustazio weighs in, advising Rinaldo to take Goffredo's advice to heart. Rinaldo sees only the blindfolded archer at this moment.

Aria – RINALDO

*Ogni indugio d'un amante
è una pena acerba e ria.*

Every delay of a lover
is a bitter and cruel punishment.

*Il timore sempre lo sferza,
la speranza seco scherza,
or lo prova l'alma mia.*

Anxiety always blames it,
hope jokes with it,
now my soul tests it.

A herald approaches, accompanied by two guards.

The herald is respectfully requesting a frank conference between Argante and Goffredo. Goffredo gives his assent as Eustazio observes this political transaction.

Aria – EUSTAZIO

*Sulla ruota di fortuna
v`a girando la speranza.*

Hope goes spinning on the wheel of fortune.

*M`a se un cor virtute aduna,
gl'è sol base la costanza.*

But if a heart collects virtue,
constancy alone is its core.

Argante exits from the city in a triumphal chariot pulled by horses, and is followed by a great number of guards on foot and men on horses, and descends in a solemn cortège to approach Goffredo, who advances to meet him.

Aria – ARGANTE

*Sibillar gli angui d'Aletto,
e latrar vorace Scilla,
parmi udir d'intorno a me.*

The hissing of Alecto's serpents,
the howling of voracious Scylla,
I seem to be hearing all around me.

*Rio velen mi serpe in petto,
ne ancor languida favilla
di timor pena mi diè.*

Evil venom snakes within my breast,
its languid spark still punishing me with dread.

Argante requests a three-day truce with Goffredo, suggesting they consider honorably making amends for mutual offenses. Goffredo agrees, confident of being in the right, and suggests Argante is lacking in humility.

Aria – GOFFREDO

*Nò, nò, che quest'alma
scontenti non dà,
con placida calma
giovare sol sà.*

No, this soul
gives no displeasure,
with placid calm
it only knows how to do good.

*Ch'è grande il diletto
d'un nobile petto,
ch'a gloria sen và.*

The delight is great,
of a noble breast,
that carries itself toward glory.

Contemplating the uncertainty of war leads Argante to think about his ally and lover Armida, as she has infiltrated the enemy camp to learn their secrets and render their movements futile.

Aria – ARGANTE

*Vieni, o cara a consolarmi
con un sguardo tuo sereno!*

Come, oh darling, to console me
with your serene glance!

*Il tuo volto può bearmi,
e scacciar il duol dal sen.*

Your face can delight me
and dispel the sorrow in my breast.

Armida in the air, singing seated in a chariot pulled by two dragons spouting flames and fire from their mouths.

Arioso – ARMIDA

*Furie terribili!
circondatemi,
seguitatemi,
con faci orribili!*

Terrible furies!
encircle me,
follow me,
with dreadful torches!

The chariot having landed, the dragons pull it up in front of Argante, who goes to meet Armida.

Argante has impatiently anticipated Armida, and tells her of the brief truce, in their hopes of preserving Asia. She reveals to him a muddled enigmatic omen:

*„Se dal campo nemico
svelto fia di Rinaldo il gran sostegno,
spera pur d'Asia il desolato regno.”*

"If the great support of Rinaldo is taken away
from the enemy camp,
there is hope for Asia's afflicted kingdom."

Armida stops Argante's hasty instinct to attack, convincing him to entrust in her power.

Aria – ARMIDA

*Molto voglio, molto spero,
nulla devo dubitar.*

Much do I want, much do I hope,
I must doubt nothing.

*Di mia forza all'alto impero
saprò il mondo assoggettar.*

With my strength toward the lofty kingdom
I shall know how to subjugate the world.

Place of delights with fountains, paths, and aviaries, birds flying around and singing.

Arioso – ALMIRENA

*Augelletti
che cantate,
zefiretti
che spirate
aure dolci intorno a me,
il mio ben dite dov'è?*

Little birds
that sing,
little Zephyrs
that blow
sweet breezes around me,
tell me, where is my beloved?

Rinaldo and Almirena declare their affections for each other in fervid sighs.

Duetto – ALMIRENA and RINALDO

*A: Scherzano sul tuo volto le grazie vezzosette
R: Ridono sul tuo labbro i pargoletti Amori
a mille, a mille.*

A: Charming graces are playing over your face
R: Baby Cupids are laughing on your lips
by the thousands.

*Nel bel fuoco di quel guardo
Amor giunge al forte d'arte
care faville.*

In the beautiful fire of that glance,
under the power of Cupid's artifice,
arrive loving sparks.

Armida snatches Almirena from the hands of Rinaldo and leads her away.

Sinfonia

Rinaldo pulls his sword on Armida, who brandishes hers against him, preparing to battle; but as they engage a black cloud descends, full of horrible monsters emitting flames and smoke with great bellows, and cover Armida and Almirena, carrying them with them into the air, leaving in their place two frightful furies, who, after mocking Rinaldo, sink underground.

Aria – RINALDO

*Cara sposa, amante cara,
dove sei?
deh! ritorna a pianti miei!*

Dear betrothed, dear sweetheart,
where are you?
ah! return at my tears!

*Del vostro Erebo sull'ara,
colla face del mio sdegno io vi sfido, o spirti rei!*

On the altar of your Erebus,
I defy you with the fires of my scorn, oh evil spirits!

Rinaldo is immobilized, with his eyes fixed on the ground, and overwhelmed in a great confusion.

Rinaldo tells Goffredo and Eustazio what has just happened, that an "Amazonian pirate" has stolen his joy so rare.

Aria – RINALDO

*Cor ingrato, ti rammembri,
e non scoppii di dolor?*

Ungrateful heart, can you remember,
and not burst with sorrow?

*Mà se stupido rassembri,
ti risvegli il mio furor!*

But if you seem to be struck dumb,
awaken my fury!

Rinaldo still confused, Goffredo reacts with righteous sorrow. Eustazio consoles his brother and gives Rinaldo hope: he knows of a man who lives in a cavernous rock at the foot of a mountain who can plot the course of the stars, and finds virtue in stones and herbs. Eustazio suggests they seek his advice. Hope will be their escort.

Aria – EUSTAZIO

*Col valor, colla virtù
or si vada a trionfar.*

With valor, with virtue
now let us go to our triumph.

*Dall'indegna servitù
l'alta prole io vo' ritrar.*

From indignant servitude
I want to extract our noble progeny.

This brings a ray of hope to Rinaldo, as he demands Cupid lend his wings.

Aria – RINALDO

*Venti, turbini, prestate
le vostre ali a questo piè!*

Winds, turbines, lend
your wings to my feet!

*Cieli, Numi, il braccio armate
contro chi pena mi diè!*

Heavens, Gods, arm me
against she who caused me pain!

FIFTEEN MINUTE INTERMISSION

ACT TWO

Great placid sea reflecting a very beautiful rainbow; near the shore stands a boat at anchor, and at the helm we see a spirit in the form of a beautiful woman. Two Sirens are leaping in the waves.

Aria – EUSTAZIO

*Siam prossimi al porto,
per prender conforto
al nostro penar.*

We are near the port,
to find comfort
for our pains.

*Ch'il cor si consoli,
il duolo s'invola
da chi sà sperar.*

My the heart be consoled,
the sorrow banished
from he who knows how to hope.

Rinaldo and Goffredo ask when they will reach the Mago. Eustazio says it is not far.

While they are hurrying to continue their journey, the woman who is standing in the boat invites Rinaldo in.

She was sent by Almirena, who is awaiting Rinaldo alone on a solitary shore, to bring him across the waters.

Aria – La Sirena

*Il vostro maggio de' bei verdi anni,
oh cori amanti,
sempre costanti
sfiorate in amore!*

Your May of beautiful green years,
oh loving hearts,
always constant
caressed in love!

*Nè un falso raggio
d'honor v'affanni,
che sol beato
chi amante amato
possede un bel core.*

Nor should a false ray
of honor distress you,
for he alone is blessed
who, loved by a lover,
possesses a beautiful heart.

Rinaldo feels driven by an unknown force.

Rinaldo hesitates in suspense, then with fury resolves to enter into the boat, but is stopped by Goffredo and Eustazio.

Goffredo demands Rinaldo stop himself. Rinaldo is torn: hope, fear, confidence, dread.

When Rinaldo hesitates, the woman calls him again, and in a fury he wants to board the boat, but is stopped by the others.

The struggle between the three men continues; Rinaldo resolves to go to his beloved, despite all warnings.

Aria – RINALDO

*Il Tricerbero humiliato
al mio brando renderò.*

The three-headed Cerberus, humbled,
I shall surrender to my sword.

*E d'Alcide l'alto fato
colà giù rinoverò.*

And the lofty fate of Alcides
I shall renew down below.

Rinaldo enters the boat while still singing, and she immediately sets sail for open sea. Goffredo and Eustazio, having followed with their eyes, remain behind confused.

Despite the circumstances, Eustazio presses on, trusting glory with fearlessness.

Aria – EUSTAZIO

*Scorta rea di cieco Amore
guida un'alma a naufragar.*

Escorted guiltily by blind Cupid
a soul is driven to ruin.

*Ed è misero quel core
che non sà sempre pagnar.*

And it is miserable, this heart
which doesn't know to always fight.

Goffredo curses the situation, but despite the grief of losing his daughter invokes hope and virtue in his continuing heroism.

Aria – GOFFREDO

*Mio cor, che mi sai dir?
o vincer, o morir,
sì, sì, t'intendo.*

My heart, what can you tell me?
either to win or to die,
yes, yes, I understand you.

*Se la mia gloria freme,
sol da una bella speme
io pace attendo.*

If my glory falters,
it gives only a beautiful hope
and I await peace.

Delightful garden in Armida's enchanted palace.

Almirena is being tormented by Armida. Argante approaches her to cheer her up with his amorous advances. She rejects him and asks that he grant her her freedom, if he indeed loves her. He argues that he cannot, because if Armida found out they will both suffer her wrath. He is conflicted, and Almirena asks him to leave her in peace.

Aria – ALMIRENA

*Lascia ch'io pianga
mia cruda sorte,
e che sospiri
la libertà!*

Let me weep
my cruel fate,
and let me sigh
for liberty!

*Il duolo infranga
queste ritorte,
de' miei martiri
sol per pietà.*

May sorrow destroy
these chains,
my torments
are only for the sake of pity.

Argante's heart is in torment.

Aria – ARGANTE

*Basta che sol tu chieda,
per ottener da me
bocca amorosa.*

It would be enough if you would only ask
to obtain from me
an amorous mouth.

*Solo ch'il cor ti veda,
tutto si perde in te,
guancia vezzosa!*

My heart only sees you,
everything is lost in you,
charming cheek!

Armida triumphantly anticipates the powerful Rinaldo falling into her wrath, and orders her flying spirits to lead him in.

Two spirits lead Rinaldo to Armida.

Rinaldo demands Armida return Almirena to him. Armida refuses, and then notices her heart softens when she looks upon his face. She takes another approach and attempts to seduce him with her surroundings, and invites him to use his anger to conquer her. Rinaldo stands firm, causing the quarrel to heighten with her refusal to be rejected.

Duetto – ARMIDA and RINALDO

A: *Fermati!* R: *Nò, crudel!*

A: *Armida son fedel!*

R: *Spietata, infida!*

Armida: Stop! Rinaldo: No, cruel one!

A: Armida, I am faithful!

R: Ruthless, treacherous woman!

R: *Lasciami!* A: *Pria morir!*

R: *Non posso più soffrir.*

A: *vuoi ch'io m'uccida?*

R: Leave me! A: I will die first!

R: I cannot suffer any longer.

A: do you want me to kill myself?

Armida changes herself into Almirena

"Almirena" and Rinaldo are reunited. She asks for him to embrace her.

As they embrace, Armida takes her own form again, and Rinaldo flees.

Rinaldo curses this deception.

Armida changes herself into Almirena again.

"Almirena" again requests an embrace.

Rinaldo goes to embrace her, but then stops himself.

Rinaldo has learned that beneath her face lies hell veiled in paradise.

Aria – RINALDO

*Abbruggio, avvampo e fremo,
di sdegno e di furor.*

I'm scorched, I'm ablaze and I tremble,
from rage and fury.

*Spero, mà sempre temo
d'un infernal error.*

I hope, but I always fear
an infernal mistake.

Armida, alone, takes her proper form again.

Armida asks herself what powers will help her win Rinaldo's love. To make herself a trophy of an unhappy love? No: her furor demands him lifeless at her feet. But her soul will also die. Can her heart still give shelter to a traitor? Upon summoning her furies with the decision to kill him, she realizes he is too handsome.

Aria – ARMIDA

*Ah! crudel, il pianto mio
deh! ti mova per pietà!*

Ah, cruel one, my tears
please, may they move you to pity!

*O infedel al mio desio
proverai la crudeltà.*

Oh, unfaithful to my desire,
you shall test my cruelty.

Armida decides to try again. Perhaps, like a butterfly, Rinaldo will return to his flame.

Armida again assumes the form of Almirena

Argante enters, and again professes his undying love to "Almirena" as Armida watches him scornfully. Argante has decided to give Almirena her freedom, and risk the danger for an embrace.

When Argante goes to embrace her, Armida takes her form again, and pushes him away in great fury.

Armida has caught Argante. He admits his error and asks for Armida's forgiveness. She refuses firmly, so he leaves her to her furies.

Aria – ARMIDA

*Vo' far guerra, e vincer voglio,
collo sdegno chi m'offende
vendicar' i torti miei.*

I want to wage war, and I want to win,
with wrath, to avenge my wrongs
for he who offends me.

*Per abbatter quel orgoglio,
ch'il gran foco in sen m'accende,
saran meco, i stessi Dei.*

To overthrow that pride,
as a great fire ignites in my breast,
the Gods themselves shall be with me.

SHORT PAUSE

ACT THREE

A dreadful mountain with precipices and waterfalls, at the top of which can be seen Armida's enchanted castle, guarded by a great number of monsters of various forms; in the middle of the walls there is a gate with columns of crystal and every sort of gem; at the foot of the mountain there is a cave where the Christian Magician (Mago) lives.

Goffredo and Eustazio are contemplating the height of the mountain.

Eustazio and Goffredo have arrived at the cave of the Mago.

Eustazio calls out to the Mago at the mouth of the cave.

Eustazio asks for the Mago to share his wisdom.

The Mago exits his cave.

The Mago already knows the situation with Rinaldo, Almirena, and Armida. Goffredo and Eustazio are ready with their weapons, and are ready to start up the mountain when the Mago tries to stop them.

Swords in hand, Goffredo and Eustazio, followed by soldiers, ascend the mountain, and the Mago shouts to them.

The Mago warns them that they will be absorbed in a sea of terror.

Sinfonia

Goffredo, Eustazio, and the soldiers, having nearly reached the summit, are met by a company of horrible monsters with lit torches; when one part of the terrified soldiers turn back, another squad of monsters cuts off their path, and in the middle of their confusion, the mountain opens up and swallows them up, issuing out of the chasm flames, smoke, and massive thunder. At last Goffredo and Eustazio, with some of the soldiers, return to the Mago.

Goffredo and Eustazio learn from the Mago that more is needed to surmount this infernal fury. The Mago gives them fatal wands to carry with them to make the monsters flee. Onward to victory

Once more they ascend the mountain, and the Mago stands observing their passage, singing to encourage them. As before, the monsters present themselves, but by virtue of the wands are put to flight. Having arrived at the summit, they touch their wands on the gate of Armida's castle, and in an instant the walls and the mountain itself disappear, and in its place remains a stormy sea; Goffredo and Eustazio clutch on to a rock overhanging the sea, and then are seen going down on the other side.

Aria – MAGO

*Andate, oh forti,
frà straggi e morti
senza timore
or cola sù!*

Go, oh strong ones,
amid destruction and carnage
without fear
now up the summit!

*Ch'omai v'è guida,
compagna fida,
trà quell'orrore
fatal virtù.*

For now, as a guide,
faithful companion,
amongst those fatal horrors,
you have fatal virtue.

The Mago comments that virtue and eternal wisdom make a mockery of Styx as he returns to his cave.

In Armida's garden, she holds a dagger to Almirena's breast, about to kill her.

Rinaldo stops her, and Armida and Rinaldo engage in another verbal battle.

When Armida is about to strike a blow, Rinaldo takes hold of his sword, and goes with fury against her to kill her; but suddenly spirits arise from the ground to protect her.

When Goffredo and Eustazio touch the enchanted garden with their wands, it disappears in an instant, and a great desert remains. In the distance the city of Jerusalem is visible on a hill; in the walls there is a great gate, at the foot of which is a path winding down to the plain. Goffredo, Eustazio, and Rinaldo run to embrace one another, and as Almirena tries to do the same, Armida stops her, and tries again to stab her with the dagger.

Rinaldo takes hold of his sword to attack Armida, but when he strikes the blow, she disappears.

The Christians are reunited have vanquished the furor of hell. As the sun is rising, Goffredo suggests to Rinaldo, contaminated by illicit love, to cleanse his sword of the enemy.

Aria – GOFFREDO

*Sorge nel petto
certo diletto
che bella calma
promette al cor.*

There arises in my breast
a certain delight
that beautiful calm
promises to my heart.

*Sarà il contento,
doppo gran stento
coglier la palma
del nostro ardor.*

It will be the contentment
after the great difficulty
to collect the palm
for our effort.

Rinaldo welcomes the new day; he is spurred on by love, glory, and remorse.

Aria – RINALDO

*È un incendio frà due venti,
frà due fiamme questo cor.*

It is a fire between two winds,
this heart between two flames.

*Hà di gloria gli alimenti,
lo nodrisce un fermo amor.*

It is the food of glory,
nourished by a steadfast love.

Argante encourages his three generals to use not only their swords, but also courage and valor against the enemy.

Armida approaches the disloyal Argante, and this time they are both more forgiving. They are reconciled and together agree on the final preparations for battle.

Military instruments of every kind begin to play, and the army exits from the city, arriving at the foot of the hill as it passes in front of Argante and Armida, making the customary military salutes.

Marcia

Argante and Armida agree that their anger shall continue to be alleviated after success in battle.

Duetto – ARMIDA and ARGANTE

*Al trionfo del nostro furore
or corriamo que' mostri a legar.*

At the triumph of our fury
let us hasten to tie up these monsters.

*Che poi, caro (cara), questo core
dolce premio ti vuol dar!*

For then, dearest, this heart
will be a sweet reward for you!

Goffredo, Almirena, and Rinaldo have a moment of relief and calm after the cruel events.

Aria – ALMIRENA

*Bel piacere
è godere
fido amor!
questo fà contento il cor.*

It is a great pleasure
to enjoy
faithful love!
it brings the heart contentment.

*La fermezza
sol apprezza
lo splendor,
che provien d'un grato cor.*

Constancy
only appreciates
the splendor
that comes from a grateful heart.

Eustazio warns Goffredo that the enemy is nearing their tents. Goffredo assigns Eustazio the task of keeping Almirena safe during the impending battle. Rinaldo gives his assent and Eustazio agrees.

Aria – EUSTAZIO

*Di Sion nell'alta sede
la virtute ed il valore
oggi solo si vedrà.*

Of Zion in its lofty seat
virtue and valor alone
shall be seen today.

*Ch'al fin nobile mercede
d'alma grande, nobil core,
è una bella felicità.*

For in the end the noble reward
for an exalted soul, a noble heart,
is a beautiful happiness.

We hear resound all of the instruments of the Christian military, and the armata with solemn pomp, on foot, and on horse, pass in front of Goffredo and Rinaldo, giving them their military salutes.

Marcia

Rinaldo and Goffredo strategize to take two different routes into the city.

Aria – RINALDO

*Or la tromba in suon festante
mi richiama a trionfar.*

Now the trumpet in festive sound
summons me to triumph.

*Qual guerriero e qual amante
gloria e amor mi vuol bear.*

As a warrior and as a lover
glory and love will bring me joy.

Argante enters with his army, drawing them up into battle formation.

Argante makes his final address to his troops.

Goffredo enters with his entire army in battle formation.

Goffredo addresses his troops.

An orderly battle starts, each side staying in balance; but Rinaldo, having already taken the city, descends from the hill with a squadron, and assaults the enemy from the flanks, they take flight, and all that remains is for Rinaldo's troops to pursue them.

Battaglia

Aria – GOFFREDO

*Solo dal brando,
dal senno solo,
della vittoria
nasce il piacer.*

Only by the sword,
by the breast alone,
of victory
is born pleasure.

*Mà un cor amando
ferma il suo volo,
nè della gloria
cura il pensier.*

But a loving heart
stops its flight,
neither does glory
concern the thought.

Rinaldo enters, leading in Argante in chains.

Argante is defeated.

Eustazio enters with Almirena, leading a captured Armida.

Eustazio had found Armida in the tents, and she fell into their shackles. All are reconciled and Goffredo pronounces connubial glory and joy on Almirena and Rinaldo's love.

Armida recognizes a more powerful god and makes the decision to shatter her magic wand. Argante follows in her example, causing Goffredo to grant them their freedom. They embrace, as Armida welcomes Argante to join her on her throne.

Coro

*Vinto è sol della virtù
degli affetti il reo livor.*

Defeated only by virtue
the guilty malevolence of of the affections.

*E felice è sol quà giù
chi dà meta a un vano cor.*

And here on earth only he is content
who gives purpose to a frivolous heart.

End of the opera.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

For complete information on each artist, please visit their website.

Soprano CHRISTINE ARAND, a graduate from Northwestern University and The Juilliard School, began her professional career in Europe creating the leading role of Lise in *Les Enfants Terribles* by Philip Glass with Susan Marshall, and toured throughout Europe and the United States. She recorded the original cast recording with Orange Mountain Records.

Christine was in the original Broadway cast of '*La Bohème* on Broadway,' Maria in the Tony Award Winning Best Musical *Nine* at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre, Yvette in *Belle Époque* at Lincoln Center Theater and featured in *Kismet* and *Face the Music* with New York City's widely acclaimed City Center Encores!

In Paris, at the Théâtre du Châtelet, Christine was Eliza Doolittle in Robert Carsen's new production of *My Fair Lady* and performed both Maria and the Baroness in *The Sound of Music* in back to back performances.

Christine's widely varied roles include Cecilio in Mozart's *Lucio Silla* (Chicago Opera Theater) Salomé in Massenet's *Hérodiade*, Liù in Puccini's *Turandot* and Micaëla in *Carmen* (Dorset Opera, UK), Gilda in *Rigoletto* and Violetta in *La Traviata* (Kimmel Center, Philadelphia), the title role of *Agrippina* (Teatro Massimo, Palermo), Nanetta in *Falstaff* (Pine Mountain Music Festival), Zdenka in *Arabella* (San Francisco Opera), Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Arizona Opera and Fort Worth Opera), Poppea in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Juilliard Opera Center), Laurie in Copland's *The Tender Land*, Baby Doe in *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, Konstanze in *The Abduction from the Seraglio* (Connecticut), Tiny in Britten's *Paul Bunyan* (Glimmerglass Opera and New York City Opera) and Marguerite in *Faust*, and Mimi and Musetta in *La Bohème* in the Glimmerglass Young Artist Program.

A native of London, England, BIRAJ BARKAKATY's recent engagements include being the inaugural countertenor to perform at the renowned Mallery Recital Series at Rutgers University in February, the role debut of The Eunuch in Dina Pruzhansky's *Shulamit* at the JCC Manhattan in March, and the role of Pino in the world premiere workshop of Larry Lipkis' *Simonetta*.

Opera credits include the Chasseur in Charpentier's *Actéon* with Haymarket Opera, the Alto Soloist in the World Premiere of *Veal* by Harrison Atelier, Pangar in the concert premiere of *Three Weeks* by Yoav Gal at LABA, and the world premiere of Empire Opera's *Sweet Dreams*, where Biraj created the role of the Child. Other roles include Oberon in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Aspen Music Festival in 2011 conducted by Jane Glover and at the International Vocal Arts Institute in Tel Aviv in 2009, Polinesso in Handel's *Ariodante* for the Hub Opera Ensemble in 2010, Tolomeo in Handel's *Giulio Cesare* with Bel Cantanti Opera (2009), and the title in role in the U.S. premiere of Handel's *Silla* at the Bay Area Summer Opera Institute under the musical direction of Jennifer Peterson (2007).

This summer he will attend the Verbier Festival with Mastervoces, and he will also be a featured singer in the upcoming web TV series 'The Opera Den,' produced by Classical Voice Television.

After pursuing scientific studies in Paris, coloratura soprano MALIA BENDI MERAD made a career switch when she moved to the United States to study voice at Oberlin Conservatory in Oberlin, Ohio. In 2003, she made her debut with the Cleveland Orchestra. She was still a student when Maestro Franz Welser-Möst invited her to sing the 'Voce di cielo' in Verdi's *Don Carlo* in a cast including Samuel Ramey and Simon Keenlyside. She was re-engaged by the prestigious orchestra the following year to sing the First Flower Maiden in Wagner's *Parsifal* conducted by Pierre Boulez.

In 2007, she took part in the 'Wall to Wall' Festival at Symphony Space in New York City, and was featured in the New York City Opera's VOX Showcase, presenting excerpts from new operas by living composers.

In 2009 Ms. Bendi Merad sang the role of the Waldvogel in *Siegfried*, directed by David McVicar at the Opera du Rhin. In 2010, she appeared as Philine in *Mignon* by Ambroise Thomas under the baton of François Xavier Roth at the Opéra Comique in Paris. Additionally she made appearances at the opera companies of Montpellier, Marseille, Nice, Lyon, as well as further engagements at the Opéra du Rhin in Strasbourg, France.

In 2011 she sang the role of the Queen of the Night in Peter Brook's production of *A Magic Flute*, which premiered in the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord in Paris, and continued on a 3-year world tour throughout Europe, South America, United States, Asia, and Russia. In recent years Malia has been performing chamber music with various festivals and ensembles.

Hailing from Louisville, Kentucky, LIEVE BUZARD is an avid soprano soloist whose recent operatic roles include Echo in *Ariadne of Naxos*, Dalinda in *Ariodante*, Arthur/Honour in *King Arthur*, Barbarina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and Emmie in *Albert Herring*. With a special interest in early music, she has also performed selections from Luigi Rossi's *Orfeo*, Cavalli's *Il Giasone*, and Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*. Earlier this year, she sang Francesco Durante's *Stabat Mater* with Amherst Early Music.

Based in Manhattan, Lieve enjoys presenting art song in recital and singing in the St. Bartholomew's Choir. She has an A.B. in German Literature from Princeton University, where where she sang a staged performance of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*. Lieve currently studies with tenor David Kellett and will begin graduate study in vocal performance at Westminster Choir College this Fall.

Baritone FRANCO POMPONI is critically acclaimed for the rich, expressive beauty and powerful virility of his voice, with a cultivated musical style and unmatched dramatic intensity that has brought him to many of the world's most prestigious opera houses and concert halls.

In the 2015/2016 season, Pomponi sang Gessler in Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* at the Grand-Théâtre de Genève and Le Prince Metternich in *L'Aiglon* at Opéra Municipal de Marseille. He has most recently been heard as Prospero in *The Tempest* at the Hungarian State Opera in Budapest.

Pomponi's engagements from the 2014/2015 season included Nixon in *Nixon in China* at the San Diego Opera, Jack Rance in *La Fanciulla del West* at the Kentucky Opera, and Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress* at the Metropolitan Opera. Other recent engagements have included the title role in *Sweeney Todd* at Théâtre du Chatelet in Paris, Arcalüs in *Amadis des Gaules* by C.P.E. Bach for The Opéra Comique and La Fenice, the title roles in *Don Giovanni* and *Il Conte Almaviva* in Ljubljana, Slovenia and Valentin in *Faust* in Toulon, France.

Pomponi's European debut was in the title role of *Hamlet* at the Gran Teatro del Liceu in Barcelona. He has continued to win critical praise for his portrayal of The Prince Hamlet, most recently in 2010 in a new production for Opéra de Marseille. In 2010, Franco made other impressive debuts in the title role of *Don Giovanni* for The Bolshoi Opera in Moscow and Zurga in a new production of *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* at Opernhaus Zürich, Switzerland.

This charismatic singer is also a champion of rare and modern works, having received high praise for his portrayal of Stanley Kowalski in Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire* for The New Orleans Opera and the Tennessee Williams Festival, and Frank Chambers in Stephen Paulus' *The Postman Always Rings Twice* for Boston Lyric Opera, both directed by Colin Graham. At Opera National Sophia, Bulgaria he sang Don Gil in Gomes' *Maria Tudor*, which was broadcast and released on video and compact disc.

Countertenor ANDREW RADER has performed as a soloist and with Magnificat Baroque, LIBER: Ensemble for Early Music, and ¡Sacabuche! Ensemble throughout the United States, South America, and Europe. In addition to these chamber music activities, he has been involved in numerous solo and choral performances with Music City (formerly Belle Meade) Baroque of Nashville, Tennessee, Bourbon Baroque of Lexington, Kentucky, and Indianapolis Baroque. Sharing the stage with ARTEK, Marion Verbruggen Trio, AVE, Music's Re-creation and Archetti, he has performed at the Boston, Chicago, Madison, Bloomington and Berkeley Early Music Festivals during recent seasons.

Andrew's stage experience includes Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (as Oberon) and Indiana University Opera Theater's production of Handel's *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, for which he sang the title role under the baton of Gary Thor Wedow and the stage direction of Tom Diamond. Recently, he was the countertenor cover for all countertenor roles in John Adams' new Passion-Oratorio *The Gospel According to the Other Mary*, which premiered in March 2013 with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, conducted by Gustavo Dudamel and directed by Peter Sellars.

In 2009, Mr. Rader was the first place winner of the Grace Moore Memorial Scholarship Competition, Young Artist Division, and in 2011, he was the Third Place winner in the Gianni Bergamo Classic Music Award Countertenor Competition, held in Lugano, Switzerland. In 2014, he was the Third Place winner in the Orpheus National Vocal Competition, Young Artist Division. Mr. Rader performed in Carnegie Hall as a finalist in the Oratorio Society of New York solo competition in 2015.

Tenor IVÁN RIVERA de BELTRAN was last seen with the Opera Company of Brooklyn as Kasper in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, Nemorino in *L'Elisir D'Amore*, the Third Jew in *Salome*, Count Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville*, Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, Oronte in Handel's *Alcina*, and Monostatos in *The Magic Flute*. He was recently seen in Capitol Heights Lyric Opera's *Amahl and The Night Visitors* as Kasper, as Don Ramiro in *Cenerentola* and Count Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville*. He has also appeared as Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* with OperaOggiNY, Ferrando in Opera Manhattan's *Così fan tutte*, and Ferrando in the Underworld Productions' mounting of *Così fan tutte* at Symphony Space.

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

Upcoming and recent engagements for Randall include the role of Capucin in *Cyrano* with Michigan Opera Theater, his début with Seattle Opera in Handel's *Semele*, the role of Valentiniano in Gluck's *Ezio* with Odyssey Opera in Boston, a recital tour of Hungary and the Czech Republic, a program of selections from *Saul* and *Xerxes* exploring the year 1738 in Handel's life for the Handel House Museum in London, a concert entitled 'The Thief, the Priest, and the Lover' with Ballo Baroque Ensemble in London, and the role of Marc Antonio in the modern day premiere of Daniele de Castrovallari's 1662 opera *La Cleopatra* in San Francisco, and *Chichester Psalms* and *Carmina Burana* with the Santa Barbara Symphony.

Randall is also an award winner and finalist of many competitions including the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions (First Place District winner), the Marcello Giordani Competition, Connecticut Opera Competition, McCammon Competition, Licia Albanese Puccini Competition, and the Denver Lyric Opera Guild Competition. Randall has trained at the Royal College of Music in London, the Juilliard Opera Center, Butler University, the University of Colorado at Boulder, and as a Fulbright Scholar at the Liszt Academy in Budapest.

NICHOLAS TAMAGNA is a countertenor specializing in Handelian repertoire, he has conquered such challenging roles as Giulio Cesare, Ruggiero, Orlando, and Polinesso. His exquisite technique, seamlessly calibrated registration, clarity of diction, and dramatic versatility have won him critical acclaim and afforded him opportunities to sing a wide range of repertoire on many of the world's stages.

Early in 2016, he began his season making his Australian debut as Akhnaten in Philip Glass' *Akhanten* in a special performance on the March equinox in Mica Grange near Castlemaine, an 1850s Gold Rush town in Victoria, Australia. Also in 2016 he performed North American premieres of works by baroque female composers de Raschenau and de Rossi in Boston with La Donna Musicale, with planned recording dates. In 2016 he is touring extensively with Le Poème Harmonique in revival presentations of *Dido and Aeneas*, as well as other concerts, including a pastiche honoring the 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare, entitled 'To be or not to be,' featuring the music of Henry Purcell and the texts of Shakespeare woven together into a dramatic presentation. He joins Theater Ulm for a new production of Handel's *Riccardo Primo* in Spring 2017.

Early in 2015, Mr. Tamagna returned to the Händel-Festspiele at the Badisches Staatstheater in Karlsruhe, Germany as Oronte in the critically-acclaimed production of Händel's *Riccardo Primo* from director Benjamin Lazare, where he made his European debut in 2014. From March till June 2015 he performed the role of Polinesso in Handel's *Ariodante*, delighting audiences in a celebrated production from Kobie van Rensburg for Theater Münster. With French early music ensemble Le Poème Harmonique, he returned as the Spirit in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* for a concert presentation at the Bozar in Bruxelles. He debuted with the ensemble in this role in 2014 at Opéra de Haute-Normandie Rouen and Opéra Royal de Versailles in a production from Julien Lubeck and Cécile Roussat. Tamagna is featured in the filmed version of this production, which was released on DVD by Outhère Music in early 2015.

At the end of the 2015 season, Tamagna gave his debut performance in London for the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, where he sang the role of Hassan, created for him by Syrian composer Zaid Jabri in a newly composed opera *Cities of Salt*. The production was presented in partnership with Shubbak – A Window on Contemporary Arab Culture and the Brunel Institute for Contemporary Middle-Eastern Music, celebrating Middle Eastern classical composers.

Conductor, pianist, and harpsichordist JENNIFER PETERSON is the director of **operamission**, an arts organization bringing opera, chamber music, art song, and cabaret to audiences in inventive new ways, as in its laboratory-style presentation of 'Cosi fan tutte: Some Assembly Required,' a chronological cabaret of Kurt Weill's vocal music, and up-close and live-streamed production of Schubert's *Winterreise* from the autograph manuscript with tenor Adam Klein, a radio-style presentation of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* paired with Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat*, several operatic world premieres, and the ongoing series of G. F. Handel's complete operatic output with historical instruments.

operamission's ongoing Handel series has to date included two North American premieres, *Almira* (HWV 1) and *Rodrigo* (HWV 5). Critics have raved, "Saturday night's baroque fans were lucky to be treated to one of the best local Handel productions in years by this new and ambitious group, led by conductor Jennifer Peterson." And, "I've rarely attended a local show with such integrity and one that radiated a stirring belief in the work's musical worth." (Parterre Box, May 28, 2012)

Future **operamission** presentations and plans can be followed at operamission.org. Currently underway are productions of the complete *œuvre* of Handel's 39 Italian operas, along with workshops and development of new operas, annual cabaret evenings, and all varieties of repertoire.

Thank you for attending **operamission**'s HWV 7!