

11-9-2004

Concert: Dido & Aeneas

Patrick Hansen

Brian Hertz

Melanie Fishman

Lauren Ash-Morgan

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.ithaca.edu/music_programs

 Part of the [Music Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hansen, Patrick; Hertz, Brian; Fishman, Melanie; and Ash-Morgan, Lauren, "Concert: Dido & Aeneas" (2004). *All Concert & Recital Programs*. 3416.

https://digitalcommons.ithaca.edu/music_programs/3416

This Program is brought to you for free and open access by the Concert & Recital Programs at Digital Commons @ IC. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Concert & Recital Programs by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ IC.

ITHACA COLLEGE

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Dido and Aeneas

Opera in Three Acts
Music by Henry Purcell
Libretto by Nahum Tate

Ford Hall
Wednesday, November 9, 2004
8:15 p.m.

ITHACA

Dido and Aeneas

Opera in Three Acts Music by Henry Purcell Libretto by Nahum Tate

Music and Stage Direction
Musical Preparation
Assistant Directors

Patrick Hansen
Brian Hertz
Melanie Fishman,
Lauren Ash-Morgan
Meredith Gollmer, Patrick Hansen,
Brian Hertz

Continuo Players

Cast

Dido, Queen of Carthage
Aeneas, the Trojan Hero
Belinda, Dido's confidante
Second Woman, a courtier
Carthage Citizens:

Alexandra Loutsion
Philip Thornblade
Sara Barasch
Tiffany Desmond
Jilliann Law, Amy Pratt,
Lani Toyama, Johanna DeJose,
Jessica Gadani, Jennifer Hahn
Andrew DenBleyker, Todd Laff
John Marnell, Stephen Buck,
Anthony Gangitano, Dan Richards
Kimberly Buczek,
Karla Faggard, Amberly Foulkrod,
Megan Gebert
Zachary James
Krista Beth Donough
Rachele Armstrong
Christopher Hollowell
Carrie Erving
Denise Crawford, Rebecca Kutz,
Dan Lawler, Steve Uliana
Andrew Main
Megan Johnson Smith,
Beth Reichgott
R. B. Schlather

Courtiers:

A Sorceress
First Witch
Second Witch
An Elected Leader
A Spirit
Quartet of Witches:

A Sailor
Sailors

Une chambre gentilhomme

Setting: "This is the century of fear" – Albert Camus

Director's Notes:

"When fear is excessive it can make many a man despair." – Thomas Aquinas

The first known performance of Purcell's masterpiece was given at the same girls' school where Blow's *Venus and Adonis* was performed. Scholars assume this date to be somewhere around April of 1689. The libretto is an interesting amalgam of Tate's own ideas taken from a portion of Virgil's *Aeneid*. There are some significant differences, however. First and foremost, the Sorceress and her witch companions were a seventeenth-century creation – part of that era's tradition of using the supernatural in dramatic stories. In Virgil's tale, Aeneas is instructed to leave Dido to found the city of Rome by the real Mercury (who is acting on instructions from Jupiter.) In the Tate, the "Spirit" is sent by the Sorceress in the form of Mercury to convince Aeneas he must leave – thereby causing the tragedy of Dido's death. This tragedy is what the witches are after – "Elissa's Ruin"; (before Dido became the queen, her name was Elissa.)

I believe that the tragedy of *Dido and Aeneas* happens because Dido loses hope and falls into despair. The events are turned because "fate" or the "powers" cause Aeneas to follow his word of honor and obey his duty. If the gods decree it must be so, then it must be so. Even though he will cause his love's death, he must obey. Both Dido and Aeneas are powerless because they have given up their ability to choose their own fate. So – loss of liberty, loss of personal freedom, despair caused by loss of hope, fear of this powerlessness, fear of supernatural forces lurking in caves, obeying gods who decree fate, obeying the power structure...these are some of the issues that lie at the heart of this English operatic masterpiece.

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate, our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

– Nelson Mandela

“Naturally the common people don’t want war; neither in Russia, nor in England, nor in America, nor in Germany. That is understood. But after all, it is the leaders of the country who determine policy, and it is always a simple matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy, or a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship. Voice or no voice the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in any country.”

– Hermann Goering

“The middle of the road is where the white line is, and that’s the worst place to drive.”

– Robert Frost

How many of us are afraid? How many of us are afraid to have an opinion that deviates too far from the group? How many of us turn on our televisions to see war, death, poverty, infomercials, or political spin masters spinning their gospels? How many of us want to be more beautiful, have white teeth, own the new Toyota SUV, buy the right clothes from the right store – all in hope that these things might make us happy, less scared, less vulnerable? How many of us listen when a celebrity tells us what they think and why they are happy? Are we living our lives vicariously through a new aristocracy? Who are the gods now and are they telling us what our fate should be?