

PMW

PACIFIC MUSICWORKS

Of Gods and Mortals

ST. STEPHEN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

SAT, OCT 8
7:30 pm

4805 NE 45TH STREET
SEATTLE, WA 98105

EPIPHANY
PARISH OF SEATTLE

SUN, OCT 9
2:00 pm

1805 38TH AVENUE
SEATTLE, WA 98122



Dashon Burton



Maya Kherani

The stellar voices of bass-baritone **Dashon Burton** and soprano **Maya Kherani** join Stephen Stubbs and Pacific MusicWorks for a passionate and emotionally charged program of duets from Baroque opera and oratorio.

"... watching [Dashon Burton] sing feels like looking directly at the sun — he is alight with the spirit of the music."

— *The Boston Globe*

"Maya Kherani brings intelligence, vulnerability, and a rich, soaring soprano."

— *Opera News*

"From her opening ornate aria, Maya Kherani's Partenope sailed through Handel's effusive coloratura with gleaming precision and impassioned conviction."

— *San Diego Story*

"Each was illuminated by Burton's wondrous musical gifts — his robust, sinewy vocal tone, probing interpretive mastery and charismatic communicative directness."

— *San Francisco Chronicle Datebook*



PACIFIC MUSICWORKS

Pacific MusicWorks presents
Of Gods and Mortals

Saturday, October 8, 2022 – St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Seattle
Sunday, October 9, 2022 – Epiphany Parish of Seattle

Program

Passacalle (*Il Primo libro di Canzone*, , , , Naples, 1650) Andrea Falconieri (1585-1656)

Act IV, scene 1 from *L'Orfeo* (Mantua, 1607) Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

Ayres for the Violin, 1685: Nicola Matteis (c. 1650-after 1713)

 Aria amorosa

 Diverse bizzarie sopra la Ciaccona

Col partir la bella Clori (Rome, c. 1707) Georg Frideric Händel (1685-1759)

Trio Sonata in F (Rome c. 1707) Händel

 Andante – Allegro – Adagio – Allegro

Tengo per infallibile Agostino Steffani (1654-1728)

Intermission

Awake and with attention hear (*Harmonia Sacra*, London, 1693) Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Sonata VI in G minor (Ten Sonatas of Four Parts, London, 1697) Purcell

Act III: The Cold Genius and Cupid from *King Arthur* (1691). Purcell

PACIFIC MUSICWORKS

Maya Kherani, *soprano*

Dashon Burton, *bass-baritone*

Tekla Cunningham and Adam LaMotte, *baroque violins*

David Morris, *viola da gamba and baroque cello*

Maxine Eilander, *baroque harp*

Stephen Stubbs, *lute, baroque guitar, director*

Henry Lebedinsky, *harpsichord and organ*

About the Program

After the various difficulties of ‘the COVID years’, we at Pacific MusicWorks began to imagine a season that could culminate with a full restoration of our dreams and ambitions regarding baroque opera. The opera that has been central to my work and imagination for most of my career is Monteverdi’s epoch-making creation of 1607: *L’Orfeo*. A few seasons ago we presented a concert version of the piece through which we discovered the phenomenal fulfillment of the title role with the Canadian tenor, Colin Balzer. To create a new production around Colin that would be worthy of being documented on a commercial recording became a little obsession of mine, and I’m thrilled to say that April 2023, at the culmination of this season, is the moment when we will realize that dream.

Assembling the ‘dream team’ with which to cast *Orfeo* was sure to bring back many of our long-time and trusted singer colleagues such as Aaron Sheehan, Danielle Reutter-Harrah, Jonathan Woody and Tess Altiveros – but there was also room for new discoveries. Two of the most impressive young singers which I have encountered, but not yet brought to Seattle for work with PMW, are featured on today’s program: soprano Maya Kherani and bass-baritone Dashon Burton. They will also both return in *Orfeo* as Plutone and Proserpina. Thus the idea of creating a concert featuring the two of them as a way to have our first artistic adventures together while also introducing them to the PMW audience seemed like the ideal way to begin the season.

Programming excerpts from larger works is what one of my English colleagues used to call “bleeding chunks”. It’s true that excerpts can have the unsatisfying feeling of lacking both preparation and aftermath. Luckily for us, the scene of Proserpina and Plutone in Monteverdi’s *Orfeo* is very self-contained except for the fact that Plutone’s final statement elicits a short celebratory choir from his minions. I was able to reshape this as a short movement with the two voices and strings covering all the parts, and I believe this will bring the scene to a satisfying close. We also thought to begin the scene with the iconic ‘Arcadia’ theme, which sets the scene for the whole opera. We preface the scene from *Orfeo* with a haunting *Passacalle* by the Neapolitan composer Andrea Falconieri, with its mesmerizing *basso ostinato* underpinning meltingly beautiful writing for the two violins.

Agostino Steffani was the supreme composer of vocal duets in the latter half of the 17th century. At the Boston Early Music Festival, we have made something of a deep dive into that Italian composer who spent most of his working life in Munich and Hannover. Between performing two of his great operas, *Niobe* and *Orlando*, we made a substantial exploration of his vocal duet repertoire, including one that remained most present in my memory: *Tengo per infallibile* for soprano and bass. Händel was such an admirer of Steffani’s that when he arrived in Rome from Hamburg in 1706 at the age of 20, one of his first purchases was a volume of Steffani’s duets. The previous year, in the spring of 1705, Händel had just scored a major success with his first opera *Almira* in Hamburg. When he turned his hand to writing an instrumental trio sonata in that first year in Rome, the melodies from *Almira* were evidently still ringing in his ears. Because we have been performing and recording *Almira* over the past few years, those self-quotations were immediately recognizable to me and gave me a special fondness for this early, inspired, and somewhat quirky example of Händel’s work in the genre. The largest body of work which Händel produced during the Italian years (1706-1710) was in the form of the Italian cantata. The aria *Col partir la bella Clori* is the first aria from the cantata called *Ah! che pur troppo è vero*. It has long been my single favorite aria from the cantatas, and although originally scored for solo voice and basso continuo, I have taken the liberty of adding some parts for two violins because it seemed to call out for instrumental enrichment. I hope the effect will be better than putting a moustache on the Mona Lisa.

The second half of our concert is devoted to one of the greatest geniuses of the late 17th century, Henry Purcell. We began with the premise that Purcell’s brilliant *divertissement* from his wonderful semi-opera of 1691 *King Arthur* would make the perfect ending for our concert. The idea of a musical *divertissement* was taken over from the *Tragedie Lyrique* of Jean-Baptiste Lully. Lully and his librettist Quinault created a formidable body of work that dominated French opera from the time of its creation (1671-1687) until at least the moment when Rameau created his first operas in the 1730s. Purcell and his contemporaries were the direct English beneficiaries of this legacy. However, the English public was reticent to accept plays that were completely sung, so they created the hybrid form of the semi-opera – spoken plays adorned with act-ending musical moments in the tradition of the French *divertissement*. Purcell here creates a scene of memorable charm and compelling musicality. The Cold Genius – a personification of the frozen north, stutters out his opening aria as if literally frozen. Cheeky Cupid arrives and makes fun of him as a “doting fool” who must let go of freezing winter and allow Love to usher in the spring. Cupid vows to raise the people from their frozen doldrums and allow them to embrace one another in love. They reiterate the refrain “’Tis Love, ’tis Love which hath warm’d us”. The Cold Genius then joins together with Cupid in “Sound a parley: Love was made for a pleasure and not for a pain”.

This Frost Scene is preceded by one of Purcell’s most ingenious trio sonatas, which, like the Falconieri which began our program, is built on a repeating bass. The difference is in the scope of Purcell’s musical imagination, which takes the form farther than the earlier composer could have imagined.

I have saved the description of Purcell's magnificent solo for bass voice and continuo, *Awake, and with attention hear*, for last. Partly because it is such a personal favorite of mine and partly because I was unsure whether I would find adequate words to describe it. The piece was first brought to my attention by my colleague Harry van der Kamp. We 'cooked it up' with Harry and my original continuo ensemble *Tragicomedia* around 1990 and performed it often in the following years. It remained an imposing piece in my memory, but it is a huge project for a singer to take on. I was delighted that when I proposed it to Dashon Burton for this concert he expressed himself as ready and willing for the challenge. In the original print, called *Harmonia Sacra*, it is prefaced with the indication: *The 34th Chapter of Isaiah Paraphrased by Mr. Cowley and set by Mr. Purcell*. The poet Abraham Cowley (1618-1667) died when Purcell was just eight years old, so it was not an active collaboration. Cowley is often seen as a mere transitional figure between John Donne and the Metaphysical poets of the early 17th century, and Alexander Pope and the Augustan poets of the early 18th century. However, many mid-17th century composers, including Purcell's mentor John Blow, were particularly attracted to Cowley's imagery as source material for musical settings and Purcell followed this inclination.

In this instance, Cowley follows the general outline and spirit of the verse from Isaiah – a terrifying vision of the devastation wrought by God on the day of vengeance – but Cowley's poetic formulation cries out for declamation and musical setting. Sometimes it draws forth Purcell's most serious declamatory mode:

When at the final Doom
Nature and *Time* shall both be *Slain*,
Shall struggle with *Death's Pangs* in vain,
And the whole *world* their *Funeral Pile* become.

And at other times it tips him into a grotesque and gleeful *danse macabre*:

God does a solemn *Sacrifice* prepare;
But not of Oxen, nor of Rams,
Not of Kids, nor of their Dams,
Not of Heifers, nor of Lams.

And at the end he leaves us with an apocalyptic sense of devastation:

And if of lost *Mankind*
Ought happens to be left behind,
If any *Reliques* but remain,
They in the Dens shall lurk, *Beasts* in the *Palaces* shall reign!

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Texts and Translations

Monteverdi: L'Orfeo – Atto Quarto

Proserpina:

*Signor, quell' infelice
Che per queste di morte ampie campagne
Và chiamand' EURIDICE,
Ch'udit' hai tù pur dianzi
Così soavemente lamentarsi,
Moss'hà tanta pietà dentr'al mio core
Ch'un' altra volta io torno à porger preghi
Perche'il tuo Nume al suo pregar si pieghi.
Deh se da queste luci
Amorosa dolcezza unqua trahesti,
Se ti piacqu'il seren di questa fronte
Che tu chiami tuo Cielo, onde mi giuri
Di non invidiar sua sorte à Giove;
Pregoti per quel foco
Con cui già la grand'alm'Amor t'accese;
Fa ch'Euridice torni
A goder di que giorni
Che trar solea vivend'in fest'e in canto,
E del misero ORFEO consola'l pianto.*

Plutone:

*Benche severo & immutabil fato
Contrasti amata sposa à tuoi desire,
Pur null' homai si nieghi
A tal beltà congiunta à tanti prieghi.
La sua cara EURIDICE
Contra l'ordin fatale ORFEO ricovri.
Ma pria che' trag' il piè da questi abissi
Non mai volga ver lei gli avidi lumi,
Che di Perdita eterna
Gli fia certa cagion' un solo sguardo
Io così stabilisco. Hor nel mio Regno
Fate ò Ministri il mio voler palese,
Si che l'intenda ORFEO
E l'intenda EURIDICE,
Ne di cangiarl'altrui sperar più lice.*

Orfeo – Act Four

Proserpina:

My Lord, that sorrowful man
Who through these lands filled with the dead
Goes calling: "EURIDICE",
Whom you have just heard
Lamenting so sweetly,
Has awakened so much pity in my heart
That I return once again to implore you
That your godliness give way to his prayers.
Oh, if from these eyes of mine
You have ever drawn the sweetness of love,
If it has ever pleased you, this gentle brow
Which you call your heaven, and by which you swear
Not to envy even Jove his fate;
I pray you, by that fire
With which Amor enflamed your great soul;
Allow EURIDICE to return
To enjoy those days
Which she spent in feasting and song,
And console the tears of the wretched ORFEO.

Plutone:

Even though a severe and unbending fate
Stands in opposition to your desires, beloved wife,
Let nothing be denied
To such beauty conjoined with such prayers.
His beloved EURIDICE
Despite the fatal decree, ORFEO shall recover.
But, before he sets foot outside of these abysses
He must never turn his eager eyes toward her,
For an eternal loss
Will be the certain result of a single glance
Thus I ordain it. Now throughout my kingdom
Let my ministers make my will be known,
Such that ORFEO hears it,
And also EURIDICE,
And let no one hope to change it.

Proserpina:

*Quali gratie ti rendo
 Hor che si nobil dono
 Conced' à preghi miei Signor cortese?
 Sia benedetto il dì che pria ti piacqui,
 Benedetta la preda e' l' dolc' inganno,
 Poiche per mia ventura
 Feci acquisto di tè perdendo il Sole.*

Plutone:

*Tua soave parole
 D'Amor l'antica piaga
 Rinfrescan nel mio core,
 Così l'anima tua non sia più vaga
 Di celeste diletto
 Si ch'abbandoni il marital tuo letto.*

Proserpina:

How can I thank you enough
 Now that such a noble gift
 You give in answer to my prayers, my kind Lord?
 Blessed be the day when I first pleased you
 And blessed too my capture and the sweet deception,
 For, to my good fortune,
 I acquired you, whilst losing the Sun.

Plutone:

Your sweet words
 Have renewed the ancient wound of love
 In my heart,
 But do not allow your soul to long
 For heavenly delights
 Such that you abandon your marital bed.

Translation: Stephen Stubbs

Händel: Col partir la bella Clori

*Col partir la bella Clori
 Si parti dell'alma mia
 Ogni gioja, ogni piacer.*

*Ma che fido io non l'adori
 Non farà la sorte mia
 Se mi niega di goder.*

With the parting of the beautiful Chloris

With the parting of the beautiful Chloris
 Every joy and every pleasure
 Also departs from my soul.

But my fate cannot prevent me to
 Faithfully adore her,
 Even as it prevents me to enjoy her presence.

Translation: Stephen Stubbs

Steffani: Tengo per infallibile

*Tengo per Infallibile,
 Bella Clori, che morirò,
 perch'il foco che m'infiammò
 è già reso inestinguibile.*

*Spargo da' mesti Lumi,
 per spegner tanto ardore,
 disciolt'il Cor in lagrimosi Fiumi;*

I am certain

I am certain,
 Lovely Chloris, that I will die,
 For the fire that inflames me
 Has by now proved itself inextinguishable.

Streaming from two mournful eyes,
 In order to quench this conflagration,
 my heart dissolves in rivers of tears;

*Ma il caldo elemento,
Per essermi avverso,
riceve Alimento
dai Pianti ch'io Verso*

*e rende Amor per gioco
Salamandra dell'Acque
il mio bel foco.*

*Infocati sospiri
Se'n volano dal Petto
in traccia di ristoro a miei desiri;*

*Ma fattisi Venti,
fan anco [unico?] di Clori
più freddi, più argenti,
i tepidi Avori*

*e mormoran ch'è Lieve
Gelar con mesti fiati
Un sen di neve.*

But the burning fire,
Doing me yet more harm,
Receives sustenance
From the tears I shed

And Cupid, playing a joke on me,
Renders my beautiful fire
As a Water Salamander;

Burning sighs
Fly forth from my breast
In search of bringing relief to my desires;

But transformed to chilling winds,
They only make
More cold, and yet more frozen
The tepid ivory of Chloris' breasts

And they (my sighs) murmur: it is easy
To freeze with sorrowful winds
A breast of snow.

Translation: Stephen Stubbs

Purcell: Awake, and With Attention Hear

Text from Isaiah 34, para. Abraham Cowley (1618-1667)

Awake, and with attention hear,
Thou drowsie World, for it concerns thee near;
Awake, I say, and listen well,
To what from God, I, his loud Prophet, tell.
Bid both the Poles suppress their stormy noise,
And bid the roaring Sea contain its voyce.
Be still thou Sea, be still thou Air and Earth,
Still, as old Chaos, before Motions birth,
A dreadful Host of Judgments is gone out;
In strength and number more
Then e're was rais'd by God before,
To scourge the Rebel World, and march it round
about.

I see the Sword of God brandish'd above;
And from it streams a dismal ray;

I see the Scabbard cast away.
How red anon with Slaughter will it prove!
How will it sweat and reek in blood!
How will the Scarlet-glutton be o'regorged with
his food!
And devour all the mighty Feast!
Nothing soon but Bones will rest.
God does a solemn Sacrifice prepare;
But not of Oxen, nor of Rams,
Not of Kids, nor of their Dams,
Not of Heifers, nor of Lams.
The Altar all the Land, and all Men in't
the Victims are,
Since wicked Mens more guilty blood to spare,
The Beasts so long have sacrificed bin,
Since Men their Birth-right forfeit still by Sin,

'Tis fit at last Beasts their Revenge should have,
And Sacrificed Men their better Brethren save.

So will they fall, so will they flee;
Such will the Creatures wild distraction be,
When at the final Doom,
Nature and Time shall both be Slain,
Shall struggle with Deaths pangs in vain,
And the whole world their Funeral
Pile become.
The wide-stretcht Scrowl of Heaven, which we
Immortal as the Deity think,
With all the beauteous Characters that in it
With such deep Sense by Gods own Hand were
writ,
Whose Eloquence though we understand not, we
admire,
Shall crackle, and the parts together shrink
Like Parchment in a fire.
Th'exhausted Sun to th'Moon no more shall lend;
But truly then headlong into the Sea descend.
The glittering Host, now in such fair array,
So proud, so well appointed, and so gay,
Like fearful Troops in some strong Ambush ta'ne,
Shall some fly routed, and some fall slaine,
Thick as ripe Fruit, or yellow Leaves in Autumn fall
With such a violent Storm as blows
down Tree and all.

And Thou, O cursed Land,
Which wilt not see the Præcipice where thou
dost stand,
Though thou standst just upon the brink;
Thou of this poysoned Bowl the
bitter Dregs shalt drink.
Thy Rivers and thy Lakes shall so
With humane blood o'reflow.
That they shall fetch the slaughter'd corps away,
Which in the fields around unburied lay,
And rob the Beasts and Birds to give
the Fish their prey.
The rotting corps shall so infect the aire;

Beget such Plagues, and putrid Venomes there,
That by thine own Dead shall be slain,
All thy few Living that remain.
As one who buys, Surveys a ground,
So the Destroying Angel measures it around.
So careful and so strict he is,
Lest any Nook or Corner he should miss.
He walks about the perishing Nation,
Ruine behind him stalks and empty Desolation.

Then shall the Market and the Pleading-place
Be choakt with Brambles and o'regrown
with grass.
The Serpents through thy Streets shall rowl,
And in thy lower rooms the Wolves shall howl,
And thy gilt Chambers lodge the Raven and the Owl,
And all the wing'd Ill-Omens of the aire,
Though no new-Ills can be fore-boded there.
The Lyon then shall to the Leopard say,
Brother Leopard come away;
Behold a Land which God has giv'en us in
prey!
Behold a Land from whence we see
Mankinde expulst, His and Our common Enemie!
The Brother Leopard shakes himself, and
does not stay.

The gluttred Vulturs shall expect in vain
New Armies to be slain.
Shall finde at last the business done,
Leave their consumed Quarters, and be gone.
Th'unburied Ghosts shall sadly moan,
The Satyrs laugh to hear them groan.
The Evil Spirits that delight
To dance and revel in the Mask of Night,
The Moon and Stars, their
sole Spectators shall affright.
And if of lost Mankind
Ought happen to be left behind,
If any Reliques but remain,
They in the Dens shall lurk, Beasts in
the Palaces shall raig.

Purcell: from King Arthur, Act III

Cupid

What ho! thou genius of this isle, what ho!
Liest thou asleep beneath those hills of snow?
Stretch out thy lazy limbs. Awake, awake!
And winter from thy furry mantle shake.

Cold Genius

What power art thou, who from below
Hast made me rise unwillingly and slow
From beds of everlasting snow?
See'st thou not how stiff and wondrous old
Far unfit to bear the bitter cold,
I can scarcely move or draw my breath?
Let me, let me freeze again to death.

Cupid

Thou doting fool, forbear, forbear!
What dost thou mean by freezing here?
At Love's appearing,
All the sky clearing,
The stormy winds their fury spare.
Thou doting fool, forbear, forbear!
What dost thou mean by freezing here?
Winter subduing,
And Spring renewing,
My beams create a more glorious year.

Cold Genius

Great Love, I know thee now:
Eldest of the gods art thou.
Heav'n and earth by thee were made.
Human nature is thy creature.
Ev'rywhere thou art obey'd.

Cupid

No part of my dominion shall be waste:
To spread my sway and sing my praise,
E'en here, e'en here I will a people raise
Of kind embracing lovers and embrac'd.

Cupid

'Tis I, 'tis I that have warm'd ye.
In spite of cold weather
I've brought ye together.

Chorus

'Tis Love that has warm'd us?

Cupid & Genius

Sound a parley, ye fair, and surrender.
Set yourselves and your lovers at ease.
He's a grateful offender
Who pleasure dare seize:
But the whining pretender
Is sure to displease.
Sound a parley?
Since the fruit of desire is possessing,
'Tis unmanly to sigh and complain.
When we kneel for redressing,
We move your disdain.
Love was made for a blessing
And not for a pain.

Chorus

'Tis Love that has warm'd us?



PERFORMERS

Maya Kherani



Indian American soprano MAYA KHERANI has been lauded for her vibrant voice and exciting characterizations in repertoire from the Baroque to the modern. Upcoming projects include a debut at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence and Versailles as DRUSILLA/FORTUNA *L'incoronazione di Poppea* with Mo. Alarcon, a world premiere project as PIPER Pay the Piper Glyndebourne, MUKHTAR Sankaram's Thumbprint Portland Opera, Muffat's *Missa in labore* requies Philharmonia Baroque, Messiah Boston Baroque, Portland Baroque, American Bach Soloists and Rhode Island Philharmonic, Reena Esmail's *Meri Sakhi Ki Avaaz* (My Sister's Voice) Berkeley Symphony, SUSANNA *Le Nozze di Figaro* Opera San Jose, and PROSERPINA Monteverdi's *Orfeo* (concerts and recording) Pacific MusicWorks in Seattle, conducted by Stephen Stubbs.

Most recent engagements include her European debut with the Fondazione Giorgio Cini – Seminari di Musica Antica singing the modern-world premiere of French Baroque works from Caribbean. She then returned to sing in a follow-up program, directed by Mr. Memelsdorff and

Vivica Genaux. Additionally, she sang the title role of PARTENOPE Opera NEO, BEATRICE Three Decembers and BELINDA Dido and Aeneas Opera San Jose, POLLY PEACHUM The Threepenny Opera West Edge Opera, ROSINA Cinnabar Theater, Laura Kaminsky's Today It Rains Opera Parallèle and MUSETTA La Bohème West Bay Opera. Additional recent engagements include DESPINA *Così fan tutte* and LISETTE La Rondine Opera San Jose, ALTISIDORE Boismortier's *Don Quichotte chez la Duchesse* Central City Opera, her debut in the role of MEERA in the world premiere of Jack Perla's River of Light Houston Grand Opera (HGOCO), JILL in the world premiere of BRITOMARTE in Martín y Soler's *L'arboire di Diana* (The Chastity Tree) West Edge Opera, JILL in the world premiere of Jack and Jill and the Happening Hill Salt Marsh Opera, the title role of SEMELE Pocket Opera, and FRASQUITA Carmen West Bay Opera. Other premières include Neil Rolnick's *Anosmia*, released by Innova Records in 2013, and Dante de Silva's "graphic opera" Gesualdo with Opera Parallèle. A passionate interpreter of early music, Ms. Kherani has been featured with the American Bach Soloists, the San Francisco Bach Choir, the Amherst Early Music Festival, Early Music Vancouver, and the American Handel Society Festival.

Ms. Kherani's numerous awards include semi-finalist in the 2020 Glyndebourne Cup, the 2015 McGlone Award from Central City Opera, 1st Place and Audience Favorite at the James Toland Vocal Competition, 2nd Place at the Peter Elvins Vocal Competition the Kalvelage Award at West Bay Opera's Holt Competition, two Encouragement Awards from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and the top overall Barlow Award at the San Francisco Bay Area NATS competition, where she also won 1st Place in both the Professional Art Song and Aria categories.

Ms. Kherani graduated summa cum laude from Princeton University with a B.S.E. in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering and certificates (minors) in Music Performance, Materials Science, and Robotics and Intelligent Systems. At Princeton, she received the Isidore and Helen Sacks Award for excellence in Music Performance and was a dancer and choreographer for Naacho South Asian Dance Company and a member and soloist in the Princeton University Glee Club. She holds a Master of Music degree with honors from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and a Professional Certificate from the Boston University Opera Institute.

Dashon Burton



Dashon Burton has established a vibrant career appearing regularly throughout the US and Europe in favorite pieces, including Bach's *St. John* and *St. Matthew Passions* and the *Mass in B Minor*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Beethoven's Symphony no. 9, Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah*, and Mozart's *Requiem*.

He opened the 2021-22 season with the Handel & Haydn Society of Boston led by Marin Alsop for Beethoven's Symphony no. 9 which he will repeat later this season with the Nashville Symphony and Giancarlo Guerrero. Throughout the season he makes several notable orchestral debuts, including with the Chicago Symphony in Handel's *Messiah* led by Nicholas McGegan, with the Los Angeles Philharmonic with Michael Tilson Thomas for the maestro's new song cycle *Meditations on Rilke*, with the Pittsburgh Symphony performing Dvořák's *Te Deum* as led by Manfred Honeck, and Verdi's *Requiem* with the Seattle Symphony and Thomas Dausgaard.

He continues his relationship with San Francisco Performances as an Artist-in-Residence with appearances at venues and educational institutions throughout the Bay Area and makes a debut with Celebrity Series of Boston in recital.

Operatic engagements in recent seasons have included Strauss' *Salome* at the Salzburg Festival led by Franz Welser-Möst, Peter Sellars' production of Claude Vivier's *Kopernikus* throughout France and Germany, Sarastro in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, and Jupiter in Rameau's *Castor et Pollux* with Les Talens Lyriques.

A multiple award winning singer, Mr. Burton won his second Grammy Award in March 2021 for Best Classical Solo Vocal Album with his performance featured in Dame Ethyl Smyth's masterwork *The Prison* with The Experiential Orchestra (Chandos). He also received top prizes in the ARD International Music Competition, the Oratorio Society of New York's Vocal Competition, and Bach Bethlehem Vocal Competition.

As an original member of the groundbreaking vocal ensemble Roomful of Teeth, he won his first Grammy Award for their inaugural recording of all new commissions, including Caroline Shaw's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Partita for 8 Voices*.

His other recordings include *Songs of Struggle & Redemption: We Shall Overcome* (Acis), the Grammy-nominated recording of Paul Moravec's *Sanctuary Road* (Naxos); *Holocaust, 1944* by Lori Laitman (Acis); and Caroline Shaw's *The Listeners* with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. His album of spirituals garnered high praise and was singled out by the New York Times as "profoundly moving...a beautiful and lovable disc."

Mr. Burton received a Bachelor of Music degree from Oberlin College and Conservatory, and a Master of Music degree from Yale University's Institute of Sacred Music. He is an assistant professor of voice at Vanderbilt University's Blair School of Music.

Tekla Cunningham



Praised as “a consummate musician whose flowing solos and musical gestures are a joy to watch”, and whose performances have been described as “ravishingly beautiful” and “stellar” and lauded for “long, amber-tinted lines and pertly articulated phrases”, violinist Tekla Cunningham enjoys a multi-faceted career as a chamber musician, concertmaster, soloist and educator devoted to music of the baroque, classical and romantic eras. She is co-artistic director and concertmaster of Pacific MusicWorks and is an artist-in-residence at the University of Washington. She founded and directs the Whidbey Island Music Festival, now entering its sixteenth season, producing and presenting vibrant period-instrument performances of music from Monteverdi to Beethoven and beyond and plays regularly as concertmaster and principal player with the American Bach Soloists in California.

Tekla is continually inspired by the expressive and communicative possibilities of the gestures and rhetoric of baroque and classical music. A passionate chamber musician, she founded the Novello Quartet which for over ten years explored the music of Josef Haydn and his contemporaries with Cynthia Freivogel, Anthony Martin and Elisabeth Reed. With La Monica Ensemble, she explored chamber music of the 17th century, with performances praised as “sizzling” and for their “pitch-perfect timing”. In a performance of Mozart’s g-minor string quintet at the Valley of the Moon festival “Ms. Cunningham’s violin playing was unutterably sweet and rich. Ms. Cunningham’s playing took the lead, and the quartet in turn followed. The depth of sorrow in this interpretation was heartrending. The concluding movement, adagio-allegro, began with a lovely singing and deftly phrased lament by Ms. Cunningham . . . it was an inspired and inspiring performance”.

She has appeared as concertmaster/leader or soloist with the American Bach Soloists, Baroque Chamber Orchestra of Colorado, Seattle Baroque Orchestra, Musica Angelica, and Pacific Baroque Orchestra, Pacific MusicWorks, TENET and has played with Apollo’s Fire, Los Angeles Opera, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, and at the Berkeley, Carmel Bach, San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival, Indianapolis, Oregon Bach, Vancouver Bach, Savannah, Bloomington Festivals and Valley of the Moon festivals, and on Early Music series’ from Music Before 1800, Boston Early Music Festival, Pittsburgh Renaissance and Baroque, Houston Early Music, San Francisco Early Music Society, Vancouver Early Music, Early Music of the Islands, Portland Baroque .

Tekla’s solo album of Stylus Phantasticus repertoire from Italy and Austria, from Farina, Fonatana, Uccellini to Biber, Schmelzer and Albertini, with an extravagant continuo group of Stephen Stubbs (baroque guitar and chittarone), Maxine Eilander (baroque harp), Williams Skeen (bass violin), Henry Lebedinsky (harpsichord and organ) will be released August 20, 2021 on Reference Records. She can be heard on live and studio recordings including American Bach Soloists, Disney’s Casanova soundtrack, Apollo’s Fire, Pacific MusicWork’s “Handel’s Tenor”, Philharmonia Baroque, Tafelmusik, The Amorous Lyre, La Monica’s recording of Merula and his contemporaries, Haydn’s op 50 string quartets with The Novello Quartet, Mozart Flute Quartets (with Janet See, Laurie Wells and Tanya Tomkins) and many more.

Adam LaMotte



Adam LaMotte is well known to audiences throughout the country as a leader of both period and modern ensembles. He has appeared as soloist, concertmaster, and conductor of numerous orchestras, including the Northwest Sinfonietta in Seattle, String Orchestra of the Rockies, Astoria Festival Orchestra, Portland Baroque Orchestra, and the Maggini String Orchestra in Houston. His new CD, *The Exquisite Hour*, features Romantic works for violin and piano.

As violinist and violist, Adam has been hailed by critics as an “especially compelling” and “superb violinist” with “exceptional talent,” whose performances are “energetic and exquisite.” As artistic director of the Montana Baroque Festival, he brings first-class period instrument performances to the rural Montana community. He has co-founded two critically acclaimed ensembles, in Portland and in Houston, and continues to produce many chamber music and chamber orchestra performances. In collaboration with ensembles such as American Bach Soloists, Portland Baroque Orchestra, Ars Lyrica, and Chanticleer, Mr. LaMotte performs

on period instruments, using a fine Italian instrument made in 1730 by Bernardo Calcagni, for which he is indebted to his generous patrons who made the purchase possible.

Adam was nominated for a 2012 Grammy Award, as part of the El Mundo baroque ensemble, and is now Program Director for the Berwick Academy, which guides young professionals in the art of period instrument playing. As Artistic Director of the Montana Baroque Festival, he brings world-class period instrument performances to the rural Montana community. In 2018, Adam founded the Amadeus Chamber Orchestra in Portland.

David Morris



David Morris has performed across the U.S., Canada, and Europe on Baroque violoncello, viola da gamba, lirone, and bass violin. He has been a continuo player for the Boston Early Music Festival's opera productions since 2013 and is a member of Quicksilver, the Galax Quartet and the Bertamo Trio. He is a frequent guest performer on the New York State Early Music Association and Pegasus Early Music series and has performed with Tafelmusik, the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Mark Morris Dance Group. He has produced operas for the Berkeley Early Music Festival and the SF Early Music Society series and has been a guest instructor in early music performance-practice at Cornell University, Amherst College, Oberlin College, the University of Colorado at Boulder, UC Berkeley and the SF Conservatory of Music. He has recorded for Harmonia Mundi, New Albion, Dorian, Drag City Records, CBC/Radio-Canada, and New Line Cinema.

Maxine Eilander



Maxine Eilander has had a thirty-year career performing on historical harps throughout Europe and the USA. She is the harpist for Pacific MusicWorks in Seattle and the Boston Early Music Festival. Recordings featuring Maxine as a soloist include Handel's Harp, released on ATMA, with all of Handel's obbligato music written for the harp, including his famous harp concerto, which she has also recorded with Tafelmusik (A Baroque Feast, Analekta). The release of William Lawes' Harp Consorts on ATMA garnered much favorable press. Other recordings include Sonata al Pizzico, a recording of Italian music for harp and baroque guitar with duo partner Stephen Stubbs (ATMA) and Teatro Lirico released on the ECM label. Pacific MusicWorks' second recording Stylus Phantasticus was released in 2021 with music for violin and continuo instruments. In 2012 she was invited to perform Handel's Harp Concerto at the prestigious World Harp Congress in Vancouver. Maxine is adjunct professor of historical harps at the Thornton School of Music, USC. She also works with students at Case Western and the Juilliard School and teaches in her home studio in Santa Clarita, California, as well as online Zoom sessions.

Together with Stephen Stubbs, she has begun publishing music through Proteamusic.com.

Stephen Stubbs



Stephen Stubbs, who won the **GRAMMY Award** as conductor for Best Opera Recording 2015, spent a 30-year career in Europe. He returned to his native Seattle in 2006 as one of the world's most respected lutenists, conductors, and baroque opera specialists and in 2014 was awarded the Mayor's Arts Award for '**Raising the Bar**' in Seattle. Before his return, he was based in Bremen, Germany, where he was Professor at the *Hochschule für Künste*.

In 2007 Stephen established his new production company, **Pacific MusicWorks**, based in Seattle, reflecting his lifelong interest in both early music and contemporary performance. The company's inaugural presentation was a production of South African artist William Kentridge's acclaimed multimedia staging of Claudio Monteverdi's opera *The Return of Ulysses* in a co-production with the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. PMW's performances of the Monteverdi *Vespers* were described in the press as "utterly thrilling" and "of a quality you are unlikely to encounter anywhere else in the world".

Stephen is also the **Boston Early Music Festival's** permanent artistic co-director along with his long-time colleague Paul O'Dette. Stephen and Paul are also the musical directors of all BEMF operas, recordings of which were nominated for five GRAMMY awards, and won the **GRAMMY for Best Opera Recording 2015**. Also in 2015 BEMF recordings won two **Echo Klassik** awards in Germany, and the **Diapason d'Or de l'Année** in France. In 2017 they were presented with the Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik.

In addition to his ongoing commitments to PMW and BEMF, other recent appearances have included Handels' *Giulio Cesare* and Gluck's *Orfeo* in Bilbao, Mozart's *Magic Flute* and *Così fan Tutte* for the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival, Handel's *Agrippina* and *Semele* for Opera Omaha, Cavalli's *Calisto* and Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie* for Juilliard, Mozart's *Il re pastore* for the Merola program and seven productions for Opera UCLA including Cavalli's *Giasone*, Monteverdi's *Poppea* and Handel's *Amadigi*. In 2020 before the lockdown he conducted Landi's *La Morte d'Orfeo* for Los Angeles Opera's Young Artist program, Charpentier's *La descente d'Orphée aux enfers* for Opera UCLA and Stradella's *San Giovanni Battista* for Opera Omaha. In recent years he has conducted Handel's *Messiah* with the Seattle, Edmonton, Birmingham and Houston Symphony orchestras.

His extensive discography as conductor and solo lutenist include well over 100 CDs, many of which have received international acclaim and awards.

Stephen is represented by Schwalbe and Partners (schwalbeandpartners.com).

Henry Lebedinsky



Hailed by The Miami Herald for his “superb continuo...brilliantly improvised and ornamented,” GRAMMY-nominated historical keyboardist, composer, and conductor Henry Lebedinsky has performed with the Seattle Symphony, Seattle Opera, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Charlotte Symphony, Seraphic Fire, Sonoma Bach, and the Cantata Collective, among others. Recent conducting engagements include the Seattle Baroque Orchestra and Sonoma Bach’s Live Oak Baroque Orchestra, and he serves as co-Artistic Director of the San Francisco Bay Area’s AGAVE. With countertenor Reginald L. Mobley, he has spent the past dozen years introducing listeners near and far to music by Black composers from the past two and a half centuries, including recent appearances at the Musée d’Orsay in Paris and Festival Printemps Musical des Alizés in Morocco. In 2014, he founded Seattle’s Early Music Underground, which engaged with new audiences through bringing Baroque music to brewpubs, wineries, and other places where people gather, and presenting it in multimedia contexts which both entertain and educate. In the middle of the pandemic, he launched his newest venture, Classical Uncorked, (<http://classicaluncorked.com>) an artist-driven music cooperative that blends music, wine,

spirits, and good company while seeking to center both performers and repertoire from historically excluded populations.



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Michele Kennedy



*Tess Altiveros and
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Music, Murder and Mayhem MAR 25/26, 2023



Maxine Eilander



Danielle Reutter-Harrah

The years leading up to the English Civil War in 1642 were full of riotous discord, reflected in the popular Broadside Ballads. At the same moment, **William Lawes**, the greatest English musical genius between Dowland and Purcell, was producing vocal and instrumental music of unparalleled beauty. His life was cut short in battle, but his legacy of musical jewels—including the unique Harp Consorts and songs achieved the perfect balance of emotion, words, and music—shed insight into life during this turbulent period of history.

PMW

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Monteverdi L'Orfeo

April 15/16, 2023 – Seattle April 22/23, 2023 – San Francisco



Colin Balzer

Key'mon Murrah

Maya Kherani

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The myth of Orpheus, a timeless tale of love and loss, has resonated with audiences for millennia. Monteverdi's setting was the first unqualified operatic masterpiece, full of dramatic word painting, narrative urgency, rich orchestration, and exquisite writing for vocal ensemble. L'Orfeo feels as fresh and full of relevance as it must have at its premiere in 1607. Monteverdi specialist and GRAMMY® winner Stephen Stubbs leads Pacific MusicWorks and the Dark Horse Consort in a concert version featuring a cast for the ages with the spectacular Colin Balzer in the title role.



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