

Season 2012/13

**Antonio Vivaldi**

**Farnace**

Dramma per musica in tre atti  
Libretto: Antonio Maria Lucchini



# Antonio Vivaldi Farnace

Following up the resounding success of *Faramondo*, PARNASSUS ARTS PRODUCTIONS will also for the new project rely on the fruitful cooperation with the Swiss orchestra I BAROCCHISTI under the baton of Diego Fasolis. For the staged productions, we could win the young exceptional talent George Petrou together with Concerto Köln.

While most of Vivaldi's instrumental music is particularly popular and well known, his opera compositions (there are 45 of them!) are rarely performed.

Vivaldi's FARNACE received its world premiere during the Carnival Season in February 1727 at the Teatro di Sant'Angelo in Venice. FARNACE became a kind of touchstone for Vivaldi's later operatic career. Within a few seasons the opera was restaged several times. Apart from a revival at the Teatro Sant'Angelo itself in the autumn season of 1727 (a very rare case for operas at this time), FARNACE was presented in Prague (1730), Pavia (1731), Mantova (1732), Treviso (1737) and Madrid (1739). A production in Ferrara was planned for the carnival season of 1739, but was cancelled and therefore never executed.

This fact explains why there exist various versions of this opera. The original composition for Venice remains lost, but there exist 2 well revised partituras of the productions of 1731 (for Pavia) and 1738 (for Ferrara).

PARNASSUS ARTS PRODUCTIONS will focus on Vivaldi's own composition for Ferrara from 1738 that hitherto has never been presented on stage, nor been recorded. The comparison with the various existing libretti makes it possible to reconstruct the version that was performed in Venice in 1727 - thus can be said that the version of 1738 includes mostly new arias to the "original" version. Relating to the Libretto of Antonio Maria Luccheni, PARNASSUS ARTS PRODUCTIONS will use act I & II of the 1738 score and the act III of the 1731 version, as Vivaldi did not compose this newly.

# The Story

The plot of FARNACE refers to the historical person of Pharnaces II, son of Mitridate and King of Bosporus 64-47 B.C. The historical events in the libretto are freely interpreted.

## Act I

Farnace, King of Pontus, has been defeated by the Romans and banished from the city of Heraclea. He thinks of revenge, but doubts to be victorious. Therefore he orders his wife Tamiri to kill first their son and then herself to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Romans. The Queen Berenice, Tamiri's mother enters the scene. She hates Farnace and has therefore allied with Pompeo, the general of the Roman troops to kill the defeated king. In the meantime, Selinda, Farnace's sister, who has been captured and imprisoned by the Romans, has managed to seduce the Roman prefect Aquilio as well as Gilade, captain of Berenice's army and plays of one against the other; thus trying to help her brother. Tamiri has decided to save her son and hides him in the mausoleum of the Kings of Pontus. In the moment she wants to kill herself, Berenice enters and stops her daughter from committing suicide. While they argue, Pompeo enters with his army, intensifying the atmosphere of hatred.

## Act II

Selinda follows her strategy, in pretending to choose between Gilade and Aquilio, she rejects both of them. Berenice in the meantime has ordered to search for Farnace and his son. Farnace is in such despair that he tries to commit suicide but is prevented by his wife Tamiri. Startled to see her alive, he upbraids her of "cowardice" for not having killed herself, although she has done this for their child. In this moment Berenice enters and gives or-

der to destroy the mausoleum. Farnace manages to hide, while the despaired Tamiri shows Berenice her grandson, bidding for mercy. But the Queen rejects her daughter and takes the boy away with her. In the Royal apartments, the child is given to the custody of Aquilio. Selinda begs for the life of her nephew and manages to gain the support of Aquilio and Gilade in this case. She offers Farnace, who has secretly entered the palace, the assistance of the two captains, but he rejects any help.

## Act III

The Roman troops and Berenice's army celebrate their triumph on the plains of Heraclea. The Queen offers Pompeo half of her riches, if he kills her grandson, the heir of Pontus, since his father Farnace could not be captured, but he declines. Selinda succeeds to persuade Gilade to kill Berenice, while she convinces Aquilio to murder Pompeo. Farnace arrives in the moment Gilade and Aquilio are trying to kill the Roman general. But they fail and Farnace's identity is revealed by Berenice and he is imprisoned. Gilade and Aquilio manage to release him and are preparing to kill Berenice. Pompeo, who meanwhile has changed sides, spares the Queen's life and pardons her—at the same time claiming from her to give up her persecution of Farnace. Both reconcile and Berenice embraces him as a son.

# Cast



Max Emanuel CENCIC  
(Farnace)



Ruxandra DONOSE  
(Tamiri)



Mary Ellen NESI  
(Gilade)



Vivica GENAUX  
(Gilade, concert tour and staged production)



Daniel BEHLE  
(Pompeo, concert tour and cd production)



Juan SANCHO  
(Pompeo, concert tour and staged production)

# Cast



George PETROU  
(Musical director)



Lucinda CHILDS  
(Stage Director)



# Concert tour in 2011/2013

Farnace  
Tamiri  
**Max Emanuel CENCIC**  
**Ruxandra DONOSE**  
**Marina DE LISO**  
 (sept. 2011)  
**Sara MINGARDO**  
 (2 june 2012)  
 Gilade  
**Vivica GENAUX**  
**Blandine STASKIEWICZ**  
 (10 jan. 2012)  
 Pompeo  
**Daniel BEHLE**  
**Juan SANGHO**  
 (17 sept. 2011)  
 Berenice  
 Selinda  
**Mary Ellen NESI**  
**Alissa KOLOSOVA**  
 (sept. 2011, 11 dec. 2011)  
**Hilke ANDERSSEN**  
 (10 jan. 2012)  
**Carol GARCIA**  
**Emiliano GONZALEZ-TORO**  
 Aquilio  
**Juan SANGHO**  
 (8 sept. 2011)  
 Musical  
 Director  
 Orchestra  
**Diego FASOLIS**  
**I Barocchisti**

**8 sept. 2011**  
 Le Settimane Musicali di Ascona, Locarno, CH  
**10 sept. 2011**  
 Musikfest Bremen, Oldenburg, DE  
**17 sept. 2011**  
 Festival d'Ambronay, Ambronay, FR  
**11 dec. 2011**  
 Opéra de Lausanne, Lausanne, CH  
**10 jan. 2012**  
 Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris, FR  
**2 june 2012**  
 Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Amsterdam, NL  
**3 april 2013**  
 Opéra de Versailles, Versailles, FR

**CD-recording:** Between 3. July and 10. July 2010. Lugano, Studio of RSI (Radio Svizzera Italiana)  
**Release date:** 5. September 2011

# Staged production in 2012

Farnace  
Tamiri  
Gilade  
Pompeo  
Berenice  
Selinda  
Aquilio  
Musical  
Director  
Orchestra  
**Max Emanuel CENCIC**  
**Ruxandra DONOSE**  
**Karina GAUVIN**  
**Juan SANGHO**  
**Mary Ellen NESI**  
**Carol GARCIA**  
**Emiliano GONZALEZ-TORO**  
  
**George PETROU**  
**CONCERTO KÖLN**

Opéra National du Rhin, Strasbourg

**18 may 2012 - Première**  
 Opéra National du Rhin, Strasbourg, FR  
**20 may 2012**  
 Opéra National du Rhin, Strasbourg, FR  
**22 may 2012**  
 Opéra National du Rhin, Strasbourg, FR  
**24 may 2012**  
 Opéra National du Rhin, Strasbourg, FR  
**26 may 2012**  
 Opéra National du Rhin, Strasbourg, FR  
**8 june 2012**  
 Opéra National du Rhin, Mulhouse, FR  
**10 june 2012**  
 Opéra National du Rhin, Mulhouse, FR

# Contact



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# Partners



# Awards

