

Season 2013/14

Leonardo Vinci

Artaserse

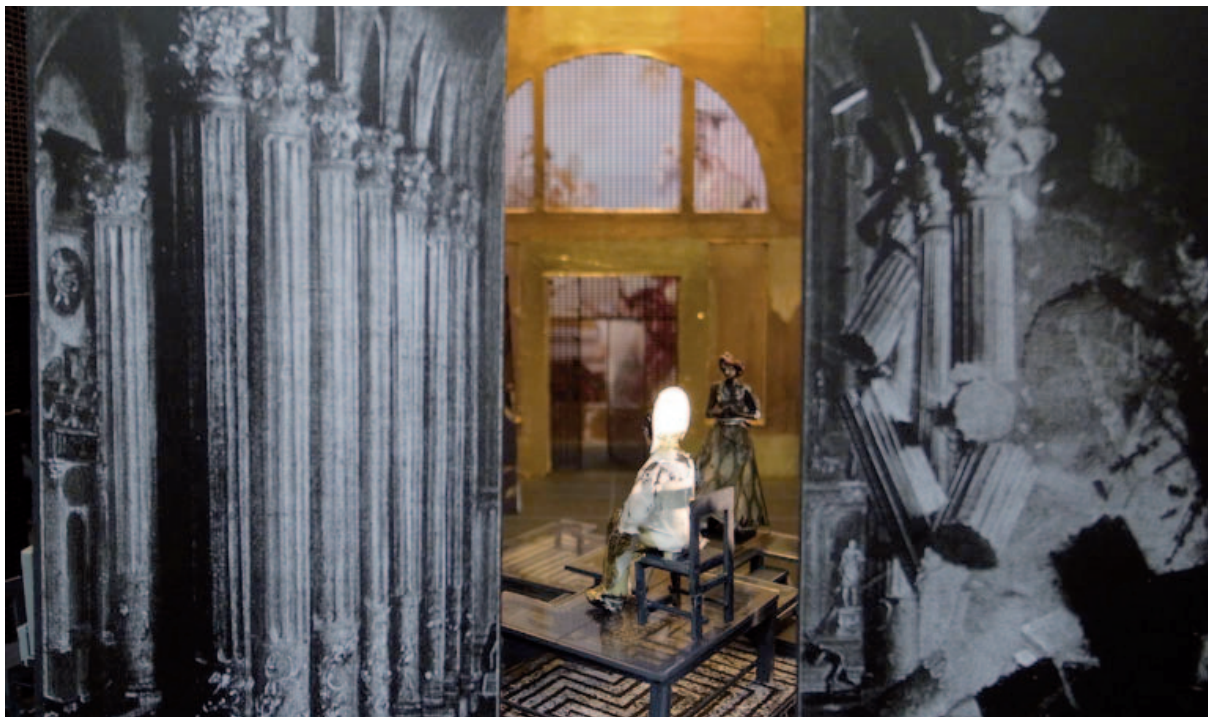
Dramma per musica
Libretto: Pietro Metastasio



New release
by Virgin Classics
in October 2012



Leonardo Vinci Artaserse



Stage set

Following up the resounding success of *Faramondo* and *Farnace*, Parnassus Arts Productions presents another rediscovered gem from the treasure chest of baroque operas, and we are proud to work with the conductor Diego Fasolis. The production of *Artaserse* also marks the beginning of our collaboration with the orchestra Concerto Köln.

One of the main works of nearly forgotten composer Leonardo Vinci, *Artaserse* is a real *trouville* within the baroque opera repertoire. *Artaserse* was Vinci's last oeuvre, as well as his most successful and famous opera composition.

The opera premiered on February 4th, 1730 at the Teatro delle dame in Rome. At the time, all roles were composed for male voices. In fact, a papal ordinance forbade women to perform on Roman stages until 1798. Therefore, all female roles in *Artaserse* were composed for and sung by castrati.

Parnassus Arts Productions will pay tribute to this tradition: In this new production of *Artaserse*, all female parts will be sung by countertenors. The cast shall unite the stars of this fach: MAX EMANUEL CENCIC and PHILIPPE JAROUSKY, among others, will guarantee for vocal virtuosity on the highest level.

Leonardo Vinci Composer

Leonardo Vinci was born 1690 in Strongoli/Italy and received his musical education at the Conservatorio de Poveri di Gesù Cristo in Naples (presumably he was a pupil of Gaetano Greco).

In 1719, he first appeared as a composer before the public. His opera buffa *Lo cecato fauzo*, which was performed at the Teatro dei Fiorentini in Naples, turned out to be such a success that, within a few years, Leonardo Vinci became a composer who was well known and very much sought after.

From 1722 on, he also established himself as a composer of opera seria works that succeeded on the major stages in Rome and Venice (both center points of the Italian opera world at the time).

Leonardo Vinci entertained a close friendship with the influential poet Pietro Metastasio, probably one of the most famous Librettoists of the 18th century. Vinci set some of his libretti into music for the first time - including *Artaserse*.

Only a few months after the premiere, the composer suddenly died. The circumstances of his death still remain unexplained until today, although it is assumed that he was probably poisoned. Leonardo Vinci's body is entombed in Santa Caterina a Formiello in Naples.

Leonardo Vinci is considered to be one of the originators of the Neapolitan style of opera, along with e.g. Nicola Porpora. He was famous for his inventive and beautiful melodies, as well as his orchestrations which both, ideally matched the possibilities of the singing voice,

and also accentuated the verses of the libretto very effectively. The works that originated from his collaboration with Pietro Metastasio are a prime example of his abilities.

Most of Leonardo Vinci's compositions are widely unknown today - wrongly, one might say. His operas are rarely performed and there is no composite recording of his operatic oeuvre.

It is therefore high time for Leonardo Vinci to be rediscovered! The improvement of historically informed performance practice in recent years now offers ideal conditions to do so.



Leonardo Vinci



Teatro Argentina Roma

Artaserse Synopsis

The story of Artaserse was a popular material for opera librettos in the 18th century. In fact, Metastasio's libretto was set to music frequently: apart from Vinci's there also exist compositions by Hasse, Johann Christian Bach, Galuppi and Scarlatti, just to name the most renowned...

The focus of the drama is the historical sovereign Artaxerxes I. (5th century BC), who is depicted as a man of great personal stature.

Artabano confesses to his son Arbace, that he has killed Xerxes, the Persian king. A plan is hatched to overthrow his son and successor Artaserse, in order to bring Arbace to the throne.

Arbace, who was banished by Xerxes because of his love to Artaserse's sister Mandane, does not want to support his own father's intrigue as he has been close friends with Artaserse since childhood. Artaserse, thinking that his brother Dario is the murderer of Xerxes, orders to kill him - but soon this turns out to be a mistake and now Arbace is accused to be the murderer.

In order to protect his father Artabano, Arbace does not defend himself against this allegation and is sentenced to death. However, Artaserse is not convinced of Arbace's guilt and helps him escape from prison.

In the meantime, Artabano has instigated the people against Artaserse, along with his servant Megabise. He prepares a poisoned drink to kill Artaserse. Arbace succeeds in averting the coup by killing Megabise.

Artaserse, now convinced of Arbace's innocence, gives him the (poisoned) drink to confirm on oath. Artabano, who cannot stand



to watch his son getting killed, confesses that he is the traitor and murderer of Xerxes. Artaserse sentences him to death, but Arbace pleads for mercy for his father. Artabano is banished. Arbace reunites with Mandane as his wife, while Artaserse gets married to Semira. Justice and benevolence have triumphed.

Artaserse Cast



Philippe JAROUSSKY
(Artaserse)



Vince Yi
(Artaserse)



Max Emanuel CENCIC
(Mandane)



Franco FAGIOLI
(Arbace)



Juan SANCHO
(Artabano)



Daniel BEHLE
(Artabano)

Artaserse Cast



Valer BARNA-SABADUS
(Semira)



Yuriy MYNENKO
(Megabise)



Concerto Köln
(orchestra)



Diego Fasolis
(conductor)



Stage productions 2012+2014

Artaserse in concert 2012+2014

Artaserse: Philippe Jaroussky | Vince Yi
Mandane: Max Emanuel Cencic
Artabano: Juan Sancho
Arbace: Franco Fagioli
Semira: Valer Barna-Sabadus
Megabise: Yuriy Mynenko
orchestre: Concerto Köln
directeur musical: Diego Fasolis
metteur en scène: Silviu Purcarete
décorateur: Helmut Stürmer

Artaserse: Philippe Jaroussky | Vince Yi
Mandane: Max Emanuel Cencic
Artabano: Daniel Behle | Juan Sancho
Arbace: Franco Fagioli
Semira: Valer Barna-Sabadus
Megabise: Yuriy Mynenko
orchestre: Concerto Köln
directeur musical: Diego Fasolis

2. 11. 2012

Opéra National de Lorraine, Nancy, FR

4. 11. 2012

Opéra National de Lorraine, Nancy, FR

6. 11. 2012

Opéra National de Lorraine, Nancy, FR

8. 11. 2012

Opéra National de Lorraine, Nancy, FR

10. 11. 2012

Opéra National de Lorraine, Nancy, FR

19. 3. 2014

Opéra Royal de Versailles, FR

21. 3. 2014

Opéra Royal de Versailles, FR

23. 3. 2014

Opéra Royal de Versailles, FR

20. 11. 2012

Theater an der Wien, Vienna, AT

23. 11. 2012

Opéra de Lausanne, CH

25. 11. 2012

Opéra de Lausanne, CH

11. 12. 2012

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris, FR

13. 12. 2012

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris, FR

17. 12. 2012

Oper Köln, Cologne, DE

19. 12. 2012

Oper Köln, Cologne, DE

27. 12. 2012

Oper Köln, Cologne, DE

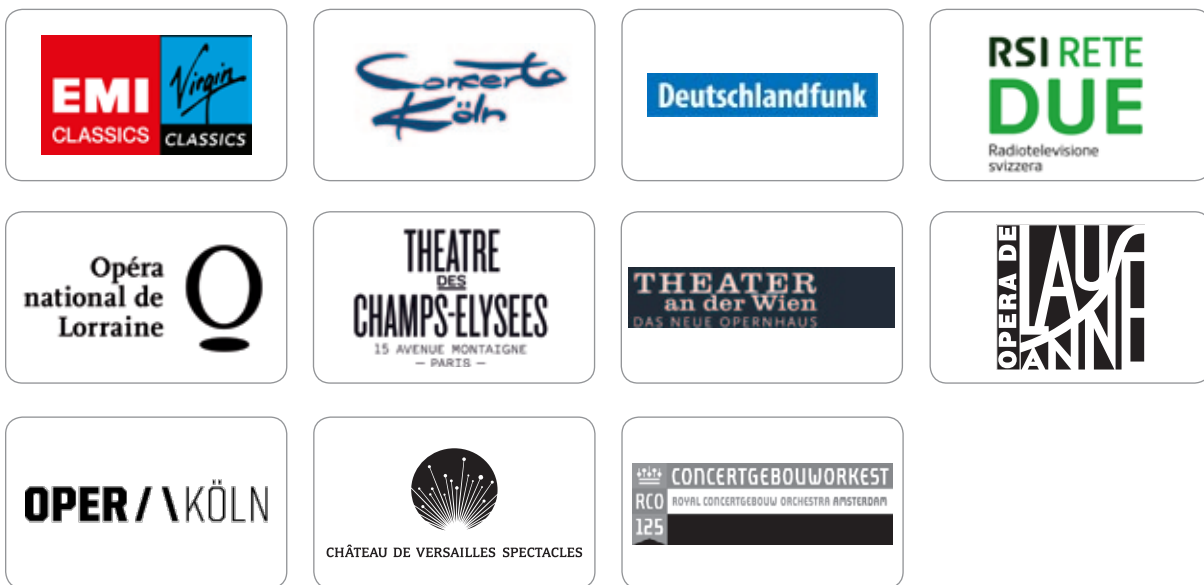
9. 3. 2014

Oper Köln, Cologne, DE

10. 5. 2014

Concertgebouw Amsterdam, NL

Partners



Awards

