



## LA CANTERINA

Joseph Haydn (1732 – 1809)

Libretto adapted by Carl Friberth

Based on Act III of Niccolò Piccinni's opera *L'Origille* (1760)

A Buxton International Festival production

Sung in Italian with English side-titles

First performed in 1767, Pressburg (Bratislava)

### DATES & TIMES

Sunday 7 July	2pm
Thursday 11 July	7.15pm
Thursday 18 July	7.15pm
Saturday 20 July	2pm

### VENUE

Pavilion Arts Centre

### DURATION

1 hour and 10 minutes

### CREATIVES

Conductor  
Director  
Designer  
Lighting Designer

Toby Hession  
Lysanne van Overbeek  
Elliott Squire  
Rachel E Cleary

### CAST

Don Ettore  
Apollonia  
Don Pelagio  
Gasparina

Helen Maree Cooper  
Dominic Mattos  
Jonah Halton  
Jane Burnell

### ENSEMBLE

Violins

Matthew Chin (leader),  
Elizabeth Webb

Viola

Mungo Everett-Jordan

Cello

Tom Pickles

Oboes

Rees Webster, Lizzy Russell

Horns

Emily Douglas, Alex Hocknull



# SYNOPSIS

Haydn's intermezzo *La Canterina (The Songstress)* revolves around a quartet of buffo caricatures. The matronly Apollonia is sung by a man, while the young and wealthy Don Ettore is sung by a woman. Gasparina and her lover (who pretends to be her mother, Apollonia) have been conning the rich to support her singing career, and together live a life of luxury.

A knock is heard; Don Ettore is standing outside begging to be let in. He brings gifts of jewellery for Gasparina – treasures he has stolen from his mother, and he invites the two ladies to meet him for lunch. Before they can set off, another knock is heard announcing the arrival of Don Pelagio, Gasparina's singing teacher and landlord. To prevent a scandal, the ladies pretend that Don Ettore is a fabric merchant and manage to make a quick buck out of Don Pelagio.

Don Pelagio has brought Gasparina a new aria to learn, one he has written especially for her, with recitativo. He performs the dramatic aria for her, and coaches her on how to present it. He uses the lesson to get closer to Gasparina, but Apollonia keeps interfering. Gasparina finally sends Appollonia away, and once alone, Don Pelagio proposes to Gasparina. Gasparina leads him on, encouraging his vanity but never quite agreeing to marry him. Things are about to get out of hand when Apollonia returns, and Pelagio makes a quick exit.

Gasparina and Appollonia ready themselves to invite Don Ettore back in for their lunch date. Pelagio, who has forgotten his wallet, sneaks back in, and overhears their

plans. When he realises that Gasparina has been playing with them both, he takes back all the gifts he has brought her and demands payment for the singing lessons. He instructs a bailiff to remove her furniture and seize her property.

Gasparina begs Pelagio to let her stay, but nothing works. She uses every tactic she has left to save her precious belongings – singing an aria, offering more flattery. Pelagio feels himself weakening but regains his self-control and stands firm. When Gasparina returns, she asks only for her belongings and his forgiveness before she goes and throws herself into a well. Pelagio can no longer resist and allows her to stay in the house. All the excitement leaves Gasparina in such a state that she faints. Pelagio is left astounded and calls Don Ettore and Apollonia back in.

Apollonia, ever cunning, recognises that Gasparina is quite well and makes the men believe that only money and diamonds will revive her. The men offer her all they have available and Gasparina is revived. Gasparina and Apollonia rejoice that their scheme has succeeded and drink a toast to the Maestro and a long and happy life.



**TOBY HESSION**  
*Conductor*

Toby Hession is a British conductor, composer and pianist, currently serving on the music staff of Scottish Opera, where he was formerly an Emerging Artist. He made his mainstage operatic debut conducting performances of *Carmen* for Scottish Opera in 2023, and looks forward to performances of *La Traviata* for Scottish Opera in 2024. Other music staff credits include acclaimed productions at Glyndebourne and Welsh National Opera. Highly in demand as a composer, Toby has had works commissioned and/or recorded by The King's Singers, Voces8, Scottish Opera, The New World Symphony (Miami) and Ensemble Perspectives. He trained at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and is a prize-winning graduate of Clare College, Cambridge (BA and MPhil). He is also a proud alumnus of the Georg Solti Accademia and Chetham's School of Music.



**LYSANNE VAN OVERBEEK**  
*Director*

Lysanne is a Dutch theatre and opera director based in London. Her recent directing work includes: *Iolanta*, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *Rita* (IF Opera), *Tutankhamun's Shoes* (English Touring Opera), *Opera Gala* (Clonter Opera), *Double bill: Orfeo ed Euridice / Zanetto* (Barefoot Opera, Finalist for 2022 OFFIES), *I Capuleti e I Montecchi* (Grimeborn), *La Traviata*, *Rigoletto* (Brent opera), *The Tales of Hoffman*, *The Magic Flute* (Opera Integra), *Lady of Stavoren* (Over the Pond Productions). As assistant, her work includes: *Der Schauspieldirektor*, *Orphée Aux Enfers* (Opera Zuid), *Fedora*, *La Rondine* (IF Opera), *Little Women* (Opera Holland Park), *La Bohème*, *The Golden Cockerel*, *Amadigi*, *ETO at Home* (ETO), *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*, *Anna Bolena*, *Alcina* (LFO), *Street Scene* (Koln Oper), *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* (Kiez Oper), *Das Rheingold*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, *The Cunning Little Vixen* (The Arcola), *Max the Brave* (Britten Sinfonia).



**ELLIOTT SQUIRE**  
*Designer*

Elliott is a Canadian set and costume designer for theatre and opera. He is a graduate of Edinburgh's Scenehouse Programme and he also holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre Design from the University of British Columbia. Opera credits include *Semele* (Set Design), *Candide* (Blackheath Halls Opera), *Rip van Winkle* (Gothic Opera), *Captain Blood's Revenge* (Norfolk Into Opera Festival), *Giulio Cesare* (Bury Court Opera) and *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Xi'an Concert Hall). Theatre highlights include *Midnight: A New Musical* (The Union Theatre & Seoul, South Korea) and *Cartas Vivas* (Cervantes Theatre, London & Teatro de La Abadia, Madrid).



**RACHEL E CLEARY**  
*Lighting Designer*

Rachel has designed lighting for plays, musicals and opera. Credits Include: *The Lucky Stiff* (The Arden at Hope Mill), *Cinderella* (Derby Theatre), *Queen Leer*, *Mary Shelley*, *Bronte*, *Hobson's Choice* and *Spokesong* (Birmingham Conservatoire); *Anthony and Cleopatra*, *Cendrillon* and *Enchanted Pig* (Buxton International Festival); *Petticoat Council* (Steph Hartland Productions); *Little Shop of Horrors* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Canterbury Malthouse Theatre); *This Island's Mine* (The King's Head Theatre, Islington – Ardent Theatre Company); *Bess the Commoner Queen* (King's Head Theatre and UK Tour – Kevin Fegan Productions). Rachel is an alumna of the Association for Lighting, Production and Design's 'Lumière Scheme'.



**HELEN MAREE COOPER**  
*Don Ettore*

Helen recently performed the role of La suora infermiera in Puccini's *Suor Angelica* with Wexford Festival Opera. She also starred in the premiere of Buxton International Festival and Norwich Theatre's new musical *The Land of Might-Have-Been*, playing Debutant, swing and cover Shirley and Stella. Other recent roles include Hänsel *Hänsel und Gretel* as a Westminster Opera Emerging Artist, and Second Witch and Spirit *Dido and Aeneas* (If Opera). She studied at the Royal College of Music and Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. She is a trained dancer and premiered the role of Tinkerbell's animation silhouette in the Welsh National Opera production of Richard Ayres' *Peter Pan*, directed by Keith Warner. She is Artistic Director of OperaEd, and has assisted with the London Handel Festival's learning and participation workshops.



**DOMINIC MATTOS**  
*Apollonia*

Dominic Mattos (countertenor) studied under Jane Irwin at the RNCM, generously supported by the Waverley Fund, Help Musicians and the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation. Recently Dominic has sung Dritte Dame and Monostatos *Die Zauberflöte* (Merry Opera) and Strumpet Ginger in Sir David Pountney's Purcell pastiche *Masque of Might* (Opera North). Other work includes covering Ruggiero *Alcina* (Opera North), Didymus *Theodora* (Essex Baroque), Narciso *Agrippina* (HGO), Orlofsky *Die Fledermaus* (RNCM) and David *Saul* (Aylesbury Opera). Future plans include Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of Four for Northern Opera Group.







**JONAH HALTON**

*Don Pelagio*

British tenor Jonah Halton, a graduate from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama's Opera Programme under the guidance of Amanda Roocroft, has experience in opera, oratorio and recitals, both in the UK and abroad. Recent performances include Oronte Alcina (Guildhall), Second Attendant A

*Full Moon in March* (Royal Opera Linbury), *Father Rentería A Star Next to the Moon* (2024) and *Il Principe Aprile La Bella dormente nel Bosco* (Guildhall).



**JANE BURNELL**

*Gasparina*

British/Irish soprano Jane Burnell studied at the Royal Northern College of Music under the tutelage of Linda Richardson. She was the 2021 Sussex Young Musician of the Year, a 2022 Finalist in the RNCM Strauss Competition and most recently a multiple Award Winner at the 2024 David Clover Festival of Singing. Jane was a

2023 Young Artist at BIF, performing Chorus for *La Sonnambula*. Other opera credits include: Pamina *The Magic Flute*, Due Donne *Le Nozze di Figaro*, La Novizia *Suor Angelica*, Adele *Die Fledermaus*. She has also performed for Clonter Opera in their Opera Gala. Jane is a regular concert soloist with repertoire including Mozart *Exultate Jubilate* (Suffolk Philharmonic Orchestra) and Handel's *Messiah* (Skipton Camerata), as well as a Baroque soloist with Manchester Baroque.

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