



Thames Valley Network

Study Day

HISTORY OF OPERA

Tuesday 24 November 2015

Rewley House, 1 Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JA



Opera is part of the Western classical music tradition. The opera we know today grew out of the princely courts of 16th century Italy and soon spread through the rest of Europe. The first opera ever written was performed in 1597 in Florence, Italy. Since then it has developed through the Baroque period, to the operas of Mozart, leading to bel canto style. The mid-to-late 19th century was a "golden age" of opera, led and dominated by Wagner and Verdi, followed by verismo era. The 20th century saw many experiments with various modern styles. This study day will explore issues associated with this operatic development.

The speakers will be:

- **Simon Heighes** taught in the Oxford University Music Faculty during the 1990s, and then switched to the BBC - where he scripts and presents programmes for Radio 4 as well as Radio 3 and the World Service. He also has a lucrative side-line writing about the music of James Bond films!
- **Warwick Cole** after graduating from Oxford University, he has divided his time between various musical activities; he contributes to a number of musicological journals, including reviews for books and recordings. As a harpsichordist he has played with a number of the country's leading orchestras and founded the period-instrument Corelli Orchestra. He continues to teach.
- Karen is an Edinburgh-born soprano who qualified as a solicitor before undertaking postgraduate vocal training at Trinity College of Music, London. She enjoys a varied teaching and performing career, with recent roles including the Queen of the Night in Mozart's Magic Flute, Zerbinetta in Richard Strauss' Ariadne auf Naxos, Lauretta in Puccini's Gianni Schicchi, and her first Verdi Requiem. She teaches at the Dragon School and St Edwards School in Oxford.

The programme for the day is:

10:00	Arrive. Registration. Coffee
10:30	Introduction
10:40	Simon Heighes : Emotion, drama and sensuality in Baroque opera
11:45	Warwick Cole: Classical Period Haydn to Beethoven
12:50	LUNCH
13:50	Karen Braden: Verdi - drinking songs, divas, and death
14:55	Simon Heighes : Learning to love 20 th century Opera: top tips for the nervous and sceptical
16:00	"How did such irrational entertainment develop?" Panel discussion.
16:25	Summing up / close
16.30	Finish

The venue for the study day, Rewley House, Oxford. It is conveniently placed in the centre of Oxford with good public transport and Park-and-Ride.

The Study Day Fee is £12.00. This includes participation in the full programme plus coffee/tea on arrival. A baguette lunch is available for £6.00. Members of U3As not affiliated to the Thames Valley Network are welcome at an additional fee.

Further information can be obtained from :

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