



Opera, Orchestral & Ensemble Director

Andrew Lawrence-King

Early Harps & Research

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Russia's top music-theatre prize, the *Golden Mask*,
has been awarded to *Anima e Corpo*
directed by Andrew Lawrence-King.

Emilio de Cavalieri's *Rappresentazione di Anima et di Corpo* (Drama of the Soul & Body) is the earliest surviving opera, first performed in Rome in 1600.

The opera is the first production for the new hall of Moscow's Natalya Satz theatre, in Andrew's musical edition set to Alexey Parin's Russian translation: *Игра о Душе и Теле*.

Anima e Corpo was nominated in four categories: Best Opera, Best Set Design (Valentina Ostankovich), Best Producer (Georgij Isaakian), Best Conductor (Andrew Lawrence-King).

And at the recent award ceremony broadcast live on Russian TV's *Kultura* channel from the Stanivlasky Theatre, Moscow, it was the outright winner of the highest award, the Jury's Special Prize for all genres of music-drama (opera, operetta, ballet, musicals etc).

Chairman of the Music Jury, Eri Klas characterised the opera as "a show which speaks inspirationally with both Body and Soul, speaks to all people, without age limits, to which all ages yield surrender".

[Opera fans will recognise Maestro Klas' allusion to Tchaikovsky's opera on Pushkin's novel *Eugene Onegin*: "to Love all ages yield surrender".]

The cast of *Anima e Corpo* is selected from the theatre's resident company, and the orchestra combines theatre players on modern instruments and baroque sackbuts with guest baroque specialists on cornetto, theorbo, baroque guitar, baroque harp and organ.

Andrew directs from the continuo, playing harp, harpsichord, regal and tambourine.
<http://teatr-sats.ru/igra-o-dushe-i-tele>

The Golden Mask is the Russian Federation's most prestigious prize for all genres of theatrical art, awarded by the Theatre Union in conjunction with the Ministry of Culture and the Moscow Government.
<http://eng.goldenmask.ru/stat.php?id=1>



Golden Mask

Russian Performing Arts Festival and National Theatre Award



***Anima e Corpo* wins the Golden Mask:
Jury's Special Prize for Music-Theatre**

On stage (left to right):

Eri Klas (Jury Chairman), Georgy Isaakian (at microphone: Director of the Natalya Satz Theatre), Valentina Ostankovich (Set Design), Andrew Lawrence-King (Musical Director), Katerina Antonenko (Music Assistant), Alexey Parin (translator), ceremony presenters.

On screen (live TV relay):

Eri Klas, Georgy Isaakian, Valentina Ostankovich.

**Georgy Isaakian holds the Golden Mask trophy
of enamelled gold with diamonds and rubies.**

Georgy Isaakian, Valentina Ostankovich, Katerina Antonenko, Andrew Lawrence-King, Alexey Parin.



"The work of musical director Andrew Lawrence-King deserves the highest praise, showing himself to be not only a highly experienced early music specialist and director, but an outstanding performer on Baroque harp, harpsichord, etc. That true pleasure he and his team experienced, playing authentic historical instruments, communicated well to the public!"

Evgeny Tzodokov *Russian Opera News*



Emilio de' Cavalieri's 1600 *Anima e Corpo* is not only the 'first opera', it is also the earliest surviving example of musical Recitative and Continuo accompaniment. Cavalieri, an aristocrat who directed all kinds of artistic activity from jewellery and sculpture to organ-building, was certainly a musical pioneer, but he was also a thoroughly practical man of the theatre.

Eleven years earlier, directing the last rehearsals for the elaborate spectacle of the Florentine *Intermedi*, Emilio realised that the poetic, philosophical and polyphonic finale lacked theatrical impact. Working through the night, he and his girlfriend created an all-singing, all-dancing showpiece, *Il Ballo del Gran Duca*. Its catchy tunes, easy harmonies and strong rhythms made it Italy's greatest hit for the next century.



Our approach to this *Rappresentatione* (Show) similarly applies the latest insights from historical research (Andrew is Senior Fellow at the Australian Centre for the History of Emotions) to the practical questions of music-theatre for today's audience.

In his *Nuove Musiche* (1601), Giulio Caccini declares the priorities to be text, rhythm and sound – in that order! Jacopo Peri, composer of the next opera in the year 1600, *Euridice*, explains that Cavalieri's Recitative is based on dramatic speech.

Claudio Monteverdi and an anonymous 1630 guide for an Opera Director, *Il Corago*, similarly focus on text and rhythm, characterising *recitativo* as 'music for acting', 'in show style', 'story in music' and 'action in harmony'.

Since text is the priority, we began by translating Agostino Manni's Italian libretto into Russian, and re-fitting this to the music. Poet and dramaturg Alexey Parin worked together with assistant conductor Ivan Velikanov, literary scholar Katerina Antonenko and Andrew Lawrence-King to preserve Cavalieri's detailed 'word-painting'. Like a painter matching colour and form, the composer matches the meaning of each word to the sound of the music. Text and music alike are full of the strong contrast of *opposto*: good and bad, Soul and Body, high and low, heaven and hell.

This done, we worked through the whole text again, to reconstruct in the Russian language the varied rhythms of Italian verse, sometimes walking, sometimes dancing, and with the characteristic strong-weak cadence that propels the action forwards into the next line.

Rehearsals with the singers and musicians concentrated on these same historical, yet practical priorities of text (clear story-telling), rhythm (which the singers make for themselves, there was no stick-waving conductor in 1600!), and sound. The instruments are divided into four independent groups: cornetto and sackbuts (baroque trombones) represent nobility and seriousness; strings suggest the power of music and dance; reeds are martial; and the whole opera is led by the improvising orchestra of the continuo (harps, theorbos, harpsichord, organ, regal, percussion).

As Cavalieri recommends, we have added polyphonic music at the beginning, a Sinfonia by his Florentine contemporary, Malvezzi. Later in there show there is its *opposto*, an improvised baroque *Ciaccona*, associated in the early 17th-century with wild parties and dancing.

Manni's text considers Time according to Platonic philosophy: the present moment is the fleeting instant that connects past, future and all eternity. 17th-century music counts time by the perfect movement of the stars, by the pulse of the human heartbeat, and by the regular swing of a pendulum, or of the singers' hands. As we hear in Time's first speech, musical rhythm, theatrical action and audience reactions join hands and hearts to honour Cavalieri's drama: at once historic and for all time.



Continuo – The Improvising Orchestra

From the renaissance traditions of the 16th-century, Cavalieri's generation inherited the concept of instrumental 'choirs' of similar instruments playing composed polyphony: strings (representing the mythical *cetra*, the lyre of Apollo and Orpheus), reed instruments (associated with city watchmen), the expressive cornetto and noble sackbuts (baroque trombones).

But the new, baroque invention around the year 1600 was an entirely new concept, the colourfully varied ensemble of the continuo band, with many different types of instrument improvising rich harmonies from the written bass-line. Each player creates his own realisation for the particular instrument he plays, according to the period style of harmony, aesthetics and drama.

We read about the continuo style of Cavalieri's time - quite different from that of Bach, Handel and Vivaldi more than a century later- in the preface to *Anima e Corpo* and in several surviving treatises. Viadana (1602) requires organists to play simple, strong harmonies, without additional ornamentation. For plucked instruments, Kapsberger (1604) explains how to make the standard *arpeggio*, 'so as not to leave the instrument empty' (Frescobaldi, 1615). Biancardi (1607) explains how to improvise full harmonies from the single written bass-note, and Banchieri (1611) calls for the kind of strong rhythm that makes you tap your feet.

Peri (1600) explains how the sound of the continuo helps to lead the singers. The anonymous writer of *Il Corago* (c1630) allows the chief continuo player to wave his hands sometimes to help direct large ensembles, but not to conduct recitatives. Monteverdi (1607) shows how to vary the instrumental colours according to the changing emotions of the words. Perhaps the most important writer is Agazzari (1608), who describes the sound, the dramatic effect, and the playing techniques for each type of instrument in this improvising orchestra.

Cavalieri asks for 'a great quantity of instruments', in contrast to the single harpsichord we associate with later baroque music.

Organo di legno

Church organs had metal pipes, whereas the typical accompaniment for chamber music and opera was the wooden organ. Its role is to provide the fundamental, sustaining accompaniment. Like all the continuo instruments, it is tuned in the characteristic early baroque mean-tone temperament, optimising the sweet sound of pure major thirds, whilst making dissonances even more spicy.

Theorbo

Caccini (1601) recommends the theorbo, a long-necked bass lute, as the perfect accompaniment, especially for the tenor voice. The extra-long strings provide a powerful bass, and the characteristic tuning of the normal strings (avoiding high pitches) produces compact harmonies in the tenor/alto range. Monteverdi specifies an ensemble of three theorbos for the most dramatic effects. Both Monteverdi and Cavalieri recommend the combination of organ and theorbo.

Guitar

Cavalieri recommends guitar and tambourine for the charming music of *Pleasure and his Companions*. In contrast to the noble, plucked arpeggios of the lute and harp, the typical baroque guitar sound was rhythmic strumming in dance-metres.



Harp

Agazzari gives the harp two roles – playing the fundamental harmonies or improvising melodic variations with scales and trills (for example in the party-music of the *Ciaccona*). Just as the small renaissance lute was developed into the baroque theorbo, so harps also became larger in Cavalieri's time. The typical Italian baroque harp was called *arpa doppia*, because it was twice as big and had an extended bass range. It was also fully chromatic, with three rows of strings – hence its alternative name Triple Harp, *arpa di tre ordine*.

Harpsichord

Although the wooden organ was the most important keyboard instrument, harpsichords were also used in early continuo, especially where strong rhythms were required.

This particular instrument is typical of Italian harpsichords of Cavalieri's time, optimised for continuo with the 'short octave' arrangement of the bass keys, and with separate keys for D# & Eb, and for G# & Ab, since these notes have subtly different pitches in the historic temperament.

Percussion

The function of the continuo is to provide varied dramatic colours and strong rhythmic structure. So percussion instruments - drums for fanfares and dances, tambourines alongside the guitars, even bird-whistles, bells, ticking clocks and other special effects - are all part of the improvising orchestra of the continuo.

Regal

For scenes in Hell, Monteverdi specifies the Regal, a reed-organ with a bark like Cerberus, the mythical dog at the infernal gates, to accompany the bass singer. The dramatic sound of this instrument was highly prized in Cavalieri's time, but is rare and unusual today.



A Regal was specially built by Katerina Antonenko for this production. Based on a surviving 18th-century German original, this instrument has been reconstructed according to the Italian taste (a louder sound with more 'bite') and with an extended bass register for continuo-playing.

As far as we know, this is the first Regal to be heard in Russia in modern times, perhaps ever!



The Natalya Satz theatre is famous as the birthplace of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*. Satz herself survived five years in Stalin's labour camps in Siberia before returning to Moscow to found in 1965 a musical theatre that would open its doors wide for children and young people, as well as presenting such adult operas as *Love of Three Oranges* (winner of last season's Golden Mask).

Now, as performances of *Anima e Corpo* continue in regular repertoire, audiences are mostly aged under thirty, with a large proportion under twenty.

The production juxtaposes traditional images, baroque art and contemporary life. On a cruciform stage, Soul and Body go through life's rituals of passage together, tempted by Pleasure & Worldly Life, guided by Intellect & Good Counsel, and protected by their Guardian Angel.



RAPPRESENTATIONE DI ANIMA, ET DI CORPO

Nuouamente poſta in Muſica dal Sig. Emilio del Caualliere,
per recitar Cantando.

1617

Data in luce da Aleſſandro Guidotti Bologneſe.



Con Licenza de Superiori.

In Moſca

Andrew Lawrence-King MMXII



Recent

In addition to *Anima e Corpo* Andrew's opera productions last season also included Monteverdi's *Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* at the Wallace Collection (stage & musical direction) complete with 17th-century swordplay according to period rapier treatises; the Finnish *Medieval Kalevala* (compilation, stage & musical direction) with The Harp Consort; Purcell's *Dido & Aeneas* (stage & musical direction) with Concerto Copenhagen and *Rappresentationi* (semi-staged scenes from early operas) for the St Petersburg Early Opera Studio.

Andrew also performs in duo with tenor Marco Beasley, re-telling the story of the first operas in a concert entitled *Favola in Musica*.

Current

All these projects benefit from research and funding support by the Australian Research Council's Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions. Andrew is also Professor of Early Harp at the Guildhall School of Music, London; and tutor for Early Harp & Continuo at the Royal Danish Academy of Music, Copenhagen. He teaches Historical Irish Harp at Scoil na gCláirseach and presents lectures around the world on the History of Emotions and Baroque Gesture.

Andrew Lawrence-King directs The Harp Consort, the opera production company Il Corago and the St Petersburg Baroque Opera Studio. He is Principal Guest Conductor of Concerto Copenhagen, and a regular guest with modern and baroque orchestras, choirs and ensembles in Europe, Scandinavia and Russia.

As harp soloist, his performances this season range from French and Spanish baroque music in Spain, USA, South America & China; Italian baroque in Russia & Germany; and German baroque in Austria & Finland to Irish baroque in Dublin, Glasgow, London, Australia, New Zealand and at the Interceltic Festival in Lorient.

Forthcoming

Andrew Lawrence-King is now directing the earliest surviving Spanish Oratorio, combining the latest research into Historical Action with state-of-the-art Hispanic baroque musical style. In 2006, Andrew directed the first performance in modern times as an AHRC research fellow at Sheffield University, and (in a new production this year) the first modern performance in Spain itself, with The Harp Consort.

In November, Andrew will direct the St Petersburg Baroque Opera Studio in a production of Stefano Landi's *La Morte d'Orfeo* (1619). Meanwhile, Georgy Isaakian's staging of *Anima e Corpo* will continue in repertoire at the Theatre Natalya Satz next season, and Andrew plans a historical staging in Italian for Helsinki in 2014.