Opera: The Art of Emotions

Wyselaskie Auditorium, Parkville
CONFERENCE SCHEDULE:

Thursday 29 September, 6–6.45pm, Registration at Lionel's Bar on Grant Street at the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA), Southbank.

Pre-performance talk 6.45-7.15pm, Grant Street Theatre

A performance of Charpentier's *La descente d'Orphée aux enfers* (1686) will take place at 7:30–8:30pm at the Grant Street Theatre, Southbank. Tickets are free and have already been reserved for presenters. Delegates should make their own dinner arrangements.

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Friday 30th September, Wyselaskie Auditorium, 29 College Crescent, Parkville

9am Welcome: Jane Davidson and Michael Halliwell

Session 1) 9:15–10:45am: *The Opera Singer* (Chair: Erin Helyard)
Margaret Medlyn (Victoria University of Wellington): 'If you've got it, flaunt it: Chest voice exposed!'
Mark Shepheard (University of Melbourne): 'All my emotions are concentrated in that heavenly song': The emotional life of the operatic castrato.'
Linda Barcan (Edith Cowan University): 'The affective performance practice of Pauline Viardot: A case study of the 1859 Berlioz revival of *Gluck's Orphée*.'

Morning tea, 10:45–11am

Session 2) 11am–12:30pm: *Alternative Conceptual Approaches* (Chair: Alan Maddox)
John Carmody (University of Sydney): 'Emotion versus intellect: It's all in the same brain'
Lawrence Mays (Australian National University): 'L'Eroe Minuscolo: Documenting the process of writing a new Italian comic intermezzo.'
Carol Williams (Monash University): 'The expression of emotion in *Robin and Marion* by Adam de la Halle.'

Lunch, 12:30–1:30pm

Session 3) 1:30–3:30pm: *20th-century Opera* (Chair: Michael Halliwell)
Georgia Jamieson Emms (Victoria University of Wellington): 'The last romantic: Emotion, fantasy and melody of Erich Korngold.'
Michael Christoforidis (University of Melbourne): 'Cervantes, Picasso and the neoclassical framing of emotions in Manuel de Falla's *Master Peter's Puppet Show*.'
Elizabeth Kertesz (University of Melbourne): 'How Carmen found her heart: Transforming the emotional landscape of Bizet's *Carmen* in the age of verismo.'
Patrick MacDevitt (University of Melbourne): 'Mona: Opera and fear of the women's vote in 1912 United States.'

Afternoon tea, 3:30–3:45pm
Session 4) 3:45–5:15pm: Opera Beyond the Stage (Chair: Linda Barcan)
Helen Rusak (Edith Cowan University): 'Opera miniseries: Divorce: The soap opera.'
Roger Hillman (Australian National University): 'Italian opera, world cinema.'
Emma Jayakumar (Edith Cowan University): 'Opera for young people: The potential for greater engagement.'

Short break, 5:15–5:30pm

Session 5) 5:30–6:30pm: Keynote Address (Chair: Jane Davidson)
Professor Neal Zaslaw (Cornell University): 'How do we feel about opera?'

7pm Conference Dinner, Naughton's Parkville Hotel, 43 Royal Parade, Parkville. No cost to presenters to attend the dinner; non-presenters will be charged restaurant prices.

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Saturday 1st October, Wyselaskie Auditorium, 29 College Crescent, Parkville

Session 6) 9–10.30am: Issues in the seventeenth century (Chair: David Irving)
Emily Hagen (University of North Texas): 'A new methodology to define the relationship between music and emotion in early Venetian opera.'
Stephen Grant (University of Melbourne): 'Heinrich Schütz: text, music and affective delivery.'
Daniela Kaleva (University of South Australia): 'Performing in stile rappresentativo: The case of 'Lamento d'Arianna.'

Morning tea, 10.30–10:45am

Session 7) 10:45–11:45 Eighteenth-century opera (Chair: Emily Hagen)
Alan Maddox (University of Sydney): 'Eighteenth-century opera and the history of emotions.'
Erin Helyard (University of Melbourne): 'The new attentiveness: Rethinking eighteenth-century audience behaviour at the opera.'

Light lunch, 11:45–12 noon

Session 8) 12:00 noon–2pm: Contemporary productions, contemporary issues (Chair: Daniela Kaleva)
Michael Halliwell (University of Sydney): 'Faith asemotional expression: Jake Heggie's The End of the Affair.'
Paul Smith (University of New England): 'Queer practica and performativity: Exploring queer emotions through operatic performance and interpretation.'
Vincent Plush (University of Adelaide): 'The mystical communion of Voss and Laura in the opera Voss.'
Jane Davidson, Joseph Browning and Frederic Kiernan (University of Melbourne): 'From historical to contemporary emotions in Voyage to the Moon.'

Conference close, 2pm.
ABSTRACTS

’If you’ve got it, flaunt it: Chest voice exposed!’

Margaret Medlyn
Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

Chest voice, or more correctly, chest resonance, when used by a woman, tends to send voice fans of both sexes into paroxysms of delight. What is it about the sound that so excites and satisfies the listener who seeks it? Singers are alternately pilloried for using that particular vocal colour, or else lauded for the “sexiness” and primal quality of the sound. In particular, chest resonance as a vocal colour can carry many emotional interpretations when used judiciously in performance. Using video examples, and singing myself, I will demonstrate the range of frequency and intensity in its usage on the operatic stage.

What is chest resonance and why is it that so many singers categorically deny that they use it, even though they do and there are the recordings to prove it? In this exploration of a much maligned essential part of a singer’s vocal harmonic structure, I investigate the puzzling nomenclature of vocal registers we have inherited from the sixteenth century, and what voice science says about changes in the sound of different parts of the voice, the registers. I investigate the writings of composers, particularly Verdi, whose insistence on emotional authenticity in operatic singing necessitated the use of chest resonance. As celebration of a particular female vocal colour, I conclude with the writings of commentators who have written about the chest voice and its effect on them.

’ "All my emotions are concentrated in that heavenly song": The emotional life of the operatic castrato.’

Mark Shepheard
The University of Melbourne

Contemporary accounts of castrato singers provide ample testimony to the range of emotions that their voices could evoke. For one listener in 1780, for example, the singing of Luigi Marchesi created an ‘indefinable spell of pleasure and delight’ that ‘aroused feelings, inebriated the senses, and put reason to sleep’. In fact, the whole audience responded similarly, ‘every listener affected by the same delightful delirium.’ Not all responses were quite so positive. John Moore found the singing of ‘wretched castratos’ to be no more than ‘artificial trills’, while their very existence was for him an ‘outrage on religion and morality’. Another British commentator saw the castrati in particular and Italian opera in general as having an effeminizing effect on British men; he even went so far as to identify the employment of castrato singers on the London stage as one of his ‘Plain Reasons for the Growth of Sodomy in England’.

This range of reactions exemplifies eighteenth-century audiences’ insecurity with the castrato and his voice: as an emasculated male he was the object of vilification and derision; as a unique singer of exceptional range and power he was also the object of adulation and desire, for both men and women alike. Indeed, the castrato could be seen as the physical embodiment of operatic emotion, a site upon which audience emotions—positive as well as negative—were inscribed. But what of the castrati themselves? What role did emotion play in their own lives, both on and off the stage? Written accounts give us some clues but it is portraiture that best reveals the castrato’s sense of self, his personal and professional identity, and the important role of friendship in the emotional life of the castrato.
Pauline Viardot was one of the great opera divas of the second half of the nineteenth century. She was lauded by audiences, critics and peers alike for her declamatory and dramatic sensibilities, for her deep emotional connection to character and for her ability to affect an audience. Her qualities as both musician and actor are attested to in praise lavished on her by composers like Chopin, Liszt, Brahms, Wagner and Berlioz, and writers such as Georges Sand, Dickens and Turgenev. Viardot's performance practice is representative of two operatic and vocal traditions that co-existed in late nineteenth century France: the French tradition, characterised by a commitment to text and to dramatic interpretation, and the Italian tradition, characterised by an emphasis on vocal sound, technical prowess and ornamentation. A nexus between these two traditions may be perceived in Viardot's contributions, both as arranger and interpreter, to the highly popular revival version of Gluck's Orphée in 1859, in which an adherence to Classical gesture and restraint seemingly co-existed with a desire to improve upon the original with ornamentation drawn directly from the Bel Canto tradition. A combination of secondary and primary sources will be used to investigate the emotional and dramatic aspects of Viardot's interpretation of the character of Orphée, with observations on the interplay between Viardot's dramatic and musical choices and the critical and audience response to these.

Emotion versus intellect: It's all in the same brain.

John Carmody
The University of Sydney

In 1936, Stravinsky wrote, “music is, by its very nature, essentially powerless to express anything at all, whether a feeling, an attitude of mind, a psychological mood, a phenomenon of nature”. By contrast, an Australian composer wrote, “No good writing an opera without feeling”. The fact that different words are commonly employed (“feeling”, “emotion”, “sentiment”) indicates contended philosophical terrain. For musicians (thus, audiences) who, despite the era of modernism, tend to remain under the thrall of Romanticism, sentiment is often the “default”. Thus some operas (e.g. Puccini’s La Bohème and Gounod’s Roméo et Juliette) are unashamedly emotional (or sentimental) while others (Stravinsky’s The Rake’s Progress or Blacher’s Romeo and Juliet) seem objective and unemotional.

Surely a distinction exists between the presentation of emotional states in operatic characters and attempts to engender comparable emotions in audience members (an integral element of the “Dogma of the Affects”). It is partly the contestation between the purely intellectual aspect of human life (the “Apollonian”) and the emotional (the “Dionysiac”). Since the human person should be a balance of all its dispositions and qualities, good art ought strike a comparable balance. If not, is it bad art? Contrariwise, for some aestheticians art is not necessarily representative of “reality”, implying that emotional mimesis or evocation is inopportunite to creativity. As a painter declared in Gerald Murnane’s novel, The Plains (itself an eschewal of overt emotions), “The only merit of so-called real lands was that people of dulled sensibility could find their way about in them by agreeing to perceive no more than did others of their kind.”
The prevalence of pasticci in the eighteenth century could be explained by a number of aspects of the opera “business”. These include time pressure to produce works to a schedule, audience predilections for arias performed by popular singers regardless of context, the absence of intellectual property legislation, and the expectation that an opera was likely to be re-worked and its content appropriated. Handel, for instance, wrote at least nine pasticci, drawing on a limited set of composers and librettists. The closest to a treatise on how to write pasticci may be Giuseppe Riva’s 1727 publication: *Advice to the Composers and Performers of Vocal Musick*.

I began writing the libretto for an Italian comic intermezzo in 2013. This project is allied to my PhD thesis, which is a scholarly edition of an eighteenth-century Italian ‘exotic opera’. These works were written allegorically with the aim of critiquing contemporary society through comparison with a fictitious one. Bukofcer (1957) commented that music analysis is ‘composition in reverse’. I believe that attempting to adapt some of Piccinni’s work to a new libretto facilitates a deeper understanding.

Concepts of classical Greek rhetoric influenced educated thought and pervaded art forms in the eighteenth century. Rhetorical methods used the strategy of recourse to the emotions to attract the audience’s attention and to persuade them of predetermined concepts. My libretto for *L’Eroe Minuscolo* is being written allegorically with a consciousness of the rhetorical processes of *inventio*, *docere*, *movere* and *delectare*. It is a musical fable set on a fictitious planet where insects comprise the dominant society. Females are larger and more powerful, and exhibit the behaviour of sexual cannibalism. An enlightened monarch has outlawed the latter practice, and raised the status of males in the society, allowing them, for example to join the planet’s defence force. The plot centres on the heroic exploits of the first male in the army in thwarting an invasion from a neighbouring planet. The libretto raises obliquely issues from the Enlightenment, such as equality and the roles of women in society, which remain incompletely resolved.

I will show video performances of scenes from the new work. This will be accompanied by a documentation of the compositional process including: guaranteeing correct vernacular Italian; mapping affective states graphically on macro (whole work) and micro (individual movement) levels; and determining appropriate music sources to ensure dramatic unity, musical balance and unity of style.

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Adam de la Halle (c.1245-c.1290) wrote what is often construed as the earliest opera, *Le jeu de Robin et Marion*, by transposing the lyric genre, the *pastourelle*, into theatre. The work falls into two parts, the first (lines 1–396), patterned on the classic *pastourelle*, and the second (lines 397–780), on the *pastourelle-bergerie*. The classic *pastourelle* involves a chevalier out riding on a fine spring morning when he discovers a beautiful shepherdess who inspires an erotic impulse in him. The seduction attempt follows, and to avoid the plot-spoiler I will leave undisclosed which of the possible outcomes Adam de Halle chose for Marion. The *pastourelle-bergerie* is again in the voice of the chevalier who is once more out riding on a beautiful spring day when he observes shepherds and shepherdesses engaged in dances, songs, games and disputes. This paper considers
what emotions such a scenario might evoke and interrogates the text to discover which emotions can be found and to learn how they are expressed.

“The last romantic: Emotion, fantasy and melody of Erich Korngold”

Georgia Jamieson Emms
Victoria University of Wellington

While the twentieth century reacted against Romanticism by refuting overt emotion in music, composer Erich Korngold, known for deeply romantic, lush lyricism, is perhaps best known for his film scores composed during Hollywood's Golden Age. I suggest that, as a true Romantic, his style was firmly founded on diatonic melody and traditional form: he was indeed the “Viennese Puccini.” Together with his mentor, Richard Strauss, Korngold remained committed to the preservation of the technical principles and expressive qualities of Romanticism.

Korngold's most famous opera, Die Tote Stadt (1920), written in his early twenties, could only have come from the Viennese melting pot of late Romanticism and burgeoning Expressionism: a feast of melody, fantasy and high emotion. From this opera comes the aria “Marietta's Lied”, a piece so remarkably beautiful and affecting that it has become a favourite concert aria of every major lyric soprano from Úrsula von der Leyen to Fleming. What was it about Korngold's music that had German opera directors locked in a bidding war to host the world premiere of Die Tote Stadt? How was it that such a sheltered young man was able through the music of Die Tote Stadt to convey emotion to rival the much older and more experienced master composers of Romantic opera?

Furthermore, how is it that we know so little of the man and his works? Was Korngold simply a victim of his time? When should have been in the prime of his career, everything he held dear in terms of Romantic music was challenged by the experimental twentieth-century compositional techniques and fearless new composers; political change was shaking Germany to its core. Or was it a case of sheer snobbery: did the Academy Award that cemented him in Hollywood history tarnish his name in the classical world forever? The forces working against Korngold were of truly operatic proportions. With fascinating information about Korngold, the man, and with reference to and recordings of some of his most rich and extravagant writing for opera, I aim to address these questions, investigating the emotional pull of Korngold’s music, and offering a passionate case for his place as one of the greats, and arguably the last Romantic.

'Cervantes, Picasso and the neoclassical framing of emotions in Manuel de Falla's Master Peter's Puppet Show'.

Michael Christoforidis
The University of Melbourne

Master Peter’s Puppet Show (1918–1922) was arguably the first opera to embrace the emerging stylistic precepts of Neoclassicism in music in the aftermath of World War I. This puppet opera, with a score and libretto by Manuel de Falla (adapted from a passage in the second volume of Don Quixote by Miguel de Cervantes), was the composer’s most original work, and one that marked a dramatic aesthetic shift from his emotionally-charged stage and concert music that drew on flamenco or Southern Spanish themes. Conceived as play within a play, enacted by two sets of puppets, the complex structure of the opera is indebted to Falla’s engagement with and subversion of the levels of artifice
inherent in the original Cervantes text. In his musico-dramatic realization Falla adapted some of the framing devices employed by Pablo Picasso in his theatrical works, which include their contemporaneous collaborations with the Ballets Russes in works such as *The Three-Cornered Hat* (1919) and *Cuadro Flamenco* (1921). He was also influenced by the philosophical musings on this passage of *Don Quixote* by the leading Spanish intellectual José Ortega y Gasset. Both of these interdisciplinary models provided Falla with ideas for the framing of a new emotional landscape in *Master Peter’s Puppet Show*.

In the course of *Master Peter’s Puppet Show*, Falla manages to establish a modernist sense of objectivity and artifice, and then subvert it, primarily through the irrational agency of Don Quixote. This paper will explore how Falla sets up a bipartite expository structure (chant-like narration followed by a more expansive musical evocation to accompany the puppet pantomime) to recount in a supposedly objective manner the medieval Romance at the heart of *Master Peter’s Puppet Show*. However, as the opera progresses, Falla increasingly blurs this structure through the impassioned interjections from the on-stage spectators and the conflation of musical materials drawn from both worlds. In the process there is a gradual alteration in the point of view and the emotional engagement of both the spectators within the opera and the audience at large. The opera culminates with Don Quixote’s destruction of the puppet theatre in a delusional episode that takes the form of an extended finale, which traverses—almost incoherently—a range of emotions.

'B How Carmen found her heart: Transforming the emotional landscape of Bizet’s *Carmen* in the age of verismo.'

Elizabeth Kertesz
The University of Melbourne

Bizet’s most famous operatic character is the Spanish gypsy Carmen, who has come to stand for everything from dangerous sensuality and uncontrolled passion to fiery independence and defiance in the face of domestic violence. But the Carmen written in Meilhac and Halévy’s libretto was a two-dimensional character, who enacted her transgressive behaviour in performative numbers and was not even given her own subjective utterances in the shape of a reflective aria, despite being credited with destroying the life of the male protagonist. It was the performers of this role who gradually embodied the character of Carmen, giving her emotional depth and expression beyond the stereotype of the femme fatale.

Célestine Galli-Marié, the first Carmen, shocked Paris audiences with her sensuality in 1875, but her attempts to introduce a new level of drama on to the Opéra-Comique stage were just the beginning. The lineage of Carmens seeking to transcend convention and lend the character emotional depth leads from Galli-Marié to Minnie Hauk and then, in the early 1890s, to Emma Calvé. Finding inspiration in the new Italian dramatic trends set by Eleanore Duse, Calvé added a fresh sense of realism to the role, and consciously attempted to make the character more authentically Spanish, emphasising her violent temper as well as her exotic charm. But it took the Catalan opera singer Maria Gay in the first decade of the twentieth century, the first Spaniard to achieve international fame as Carmen, to offer a full emotional realisation of Bizet’s gypsy. Schooled in the verismo performance style prevalent at La Scala, she added her own interpretation of Spanish *gracia* and passion, not only acting but envoicing the full emotional range suggested by Bizet’s music.
This paper aims to explore anxieties of gender politics in the early twentieth century United States through an ‘American’ opera—allowing a new and insightful approach to a well-mined controversy. Premiering in 1912, Mona was performed amidst the tumult of political change in the United States progressive era. Women’s suffrage was among the many controversial issues erupting in the early 1900s. The National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), formed in 1890, grew exponentially; from 1893 to 1917 the NAWSA expanded its membership from 13,150 to 2 million people. In 1919, NAWSA was victorious and state and federal governments ratified the 19th amendment granting women the right to vote. This progress was counter-protested by misogynist organizations, and anxieties over the rise of the ‘New Woman’ plagued contemporary culture. Opera did not remain untainted by this new battle. Strauss’ Salome received extensive attention as a symbol of women’s sexual and social liberation, highlighting misogynistic fears of disorder. The Metropolitan Opera House served as a sanctuary of puritanical misogyny and the Real Estate Board, led by conservative tycoon, JP Morgan, cancelled the Metropolitan performances of Strauss’ work after its scandalous premiere.

Parker’s opera presents the heroine, Mona, who rejects the life of hearth and home in order to head an indigenous rebellion. After her insurrection fails, Mona realizes that her abandonment of a traditional gender role for political ambition led to destruction. The thematic admonishment of female political activity aptly reflects the antagonistic emotions and anxieties of those opposed to women’s suffrage only seven years before the ratification of the nineteenth amendment. The opera itself might be seen as conservative backlash to the seductive dance of Strauss’ Salome; unlike Strauss’ masterpiece, the title character of Mona is in many ways overshadowed by her romantic interest, Gwynn, and the opera’s plot presents a ‘pure’ love devoid of the perverse sensuality of the Seven Veils. Mona’s publicity and genesis also reflects the misogynist counter-movement. Critics praised Brian Hooker’s moralistic libretto and some highlighted his engagement, relating it to the opera’s development and production. Mona acts as a mirror in which we witness not only more conservative political views of the period, but the visceral emotion and fear only fully recognized in the flamboyant expression that is opera.

‘Opera miniseries: Divorce: The soap opera.’

Helen Rusak
Edith Cowan University (WAAPA)

Last year saw the screening of Divorce: The Soap Opera on ABC Television. With a score by Elena Kats-Chernin and libretto by Joanna Murray-Smith, the series screened over four consecutive nights December 7–10, 2015. The concept driven by opera Australia’s Artistic Director, Lyndon Terracini revisits television opera which has been a popular genre since the invention of television. Within the genre exists opera produced in television studios; cameras moving into the opera house; or using film techniques developed by the film industry in the 20th century. Luminaries such as Gian Carlo Menotti, Benjamin Britten and Peter Sculthorpe have had some success in composing opera for television. Divorce takes advantage of contemporary film techniques in a collaboration with ABC TV Arts and independent company Princess Pictures for both television and online consumption. This paper will address the composer’s musical
response to the genre and provide a case study on the writing of opera for television. It will interrogate how the emotions relating to the subject of “Divorce” are musically expressed through the television medium.

'Italian opera, world cinema.'

Roger Hillman
The Australian National University

19th and early 20th century Italian opera exemplifies the conference theme. What happens when the emotions of Italian opera are transferred across media to film soundtracks, not just those of Italian films, and not just film narratives primarily driven by the emotions? The corpus here is not ‘opera films’, but films whose soundtrack includes opera excerpts. Michel Chion’s concept of ‘synchresis’ – a fusion of sound and visuals such that neither entity is separable – may not cover the art of opera merging with the art of film, above all the layering of emotions in their different narratives. With examples from Italian, US, German and Australian films, the paper will seek answers to the question posed, while also examining the filtered emotion of patriotism, when Verdi excerpts appear in films made post-World War II.

'Opera for young people: The potential for greater engagement.'

Emma Jayakumar
Edith Cowan University (WAAPA)

Opera lacks a defined presence in Australian children’s sonic worlds. Not generally a medium associated with children, the overwhelming majority of repertoire has, and remains, a genre designed and developed for an audience of adults. However, the vibrant and emotional combination of sonic and dramatic worlds that opera presents is potentially highly compatible with children and children’s entertainment. When presented effectively and age-appropriately, opera arguably has the potential to play a meaningful role in a child’s cultural and artistic development, whilst also being extremely entertaining. This paper will discuss developments within a Practice-led research project involving the composition of an original opera for children.

What then, is effective and age-appropriate? Musical theatre influenced solo and ensemble singing from (primarily) Disney models, as well as classically orchestrated film scores, are just a few of the elements analogous to opera as a genre already present in children’s viewing worlds. The investigation of child developmental literature has informed the development of story, character and presentation of more abstract or challenging emotional concepts. Additionally it has presented the impetus to build upon children’s existing exposure to—and processing of—music drama models, presenting notions of scaffolding children’s understandings beyond the more static developmental stage model. This has been an important conceptual and theoretical underpinning of the project musically and dramatically, and will form the basis of the discussion on this multifaceted issue.

These scaffolding concepts, Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA) literature, Reception studies, Film/Television models and music psychology/emotional response studies also greatly inform the creative practice. The interrogation and practical application of this theory into compositional practice forms the basis of this presentation, and will include the performance of selected excerpts from the work-in-progress score.
I am a trained musician, a trained historian and an ordinarily vulnerable human being. Under the first rubric I was taught to convey to or evoke in audiences (among other things) a range of emotions. Under the second rubric I was taught to study abstract and concrete aspects of the past in an as-systematic-and-objective-as-possible-under-the-circumstances manner. And under the third rubric I was (like everyone else) shaped by the nature-nurture circumstances of my life.

Invited to speak at a conference entitled “Opera: the Art of Emotions,” co-sponsored by a Centre for the History of Emotions, I began my due diligence by searching Cornell University’s library catalogue under relevant subject-headings. Several hundred titles popped up, of which I judged perhaps three-dozen potentially relevant to my task. With those monographs piled dauntingly on my desk, I began to read. What gradually dawned on me was that, worthy as the contents of some of the volumes proved to be, they dealt with matters largely peripheral to my own experiences of listening to, attending, studying, teaching and performing opera. As my unseemly overuse here of the first-person-singular suggests, I will, therefore, interpret my historical and musical data in an unapologetically autobiographical way, but one that, I can only hope, may nonetheless interest my Melbourne audience.

Though operas by Venetian composers such as Claudio Monteverdi and Francesco Cavalli offer today’s listeners emotionally profound moments of love, fury, comedy, and tragedy, scholars have yet to explore the complex codes of meaning connecting emotion (or affect) with music in this repertoire. As listeners, we face difficulties in approaching emotional content in early public operas because most scholars consider the historically and culturally contingent musical markers they use to indicate individual emotions to be inaccessible today. This paper demonstrates a new methodology to identify the specific combinations of elements that communicate each lifelike emotion in this and related repertoire. In re-establishing the musical codes that govern the relationship between text, sound and emotion, I also clarify their conceptual connection in the Venetian artistic worldview of the seventeenth century and illuminate the nuanced emotional language of this music.

Venetians understood action and emotion to be bound together in a reciprocal, causal relationship based in Aristotelian philosophy, and this synthesis was reflected in the way singer-actors performed and audiences apprehended this music. In contrast, post-1660 Baroque operas from France and Italy express affect according to Cartesian musical conventions and aim to present a single, clear emotion for each semantic unit (recitative, aria, or scene). This paradigm does not hold true for operas composed before 1660; thus, this vibrant repertoire requires a new analytical approach that respects its pre-Cartesian musical aesthetics. Early Venetian opera composers express not just one, but many affects in each semantic unit. In their operas, musical sound interacts directly with text and dramatic action on a line-by-line basis to produce an unprecedented fluidity of emotional meaning. Thus, a new, philosophically-informed methodology is required to analyse these operas’ emotional content.
In this paper, case studies drawn from *L'incoronazione di Poppea* demonstrate how this repertoire uses a flexible but well-defined system of musical and textual markers to convey characters' emotions through music. In a methodology developed for this purpose, I mobilize textual analysis to divide the libretto into short sections that demonstrate affective expression. Through musical analysis, I then reveal markers that communicate each specific emotion and remain consistent across this repertoire. My new approach unlocks an aesthetic system that privileges the fluid, real-time emotional reactions of the individual. This paper recaptures the dynamic emotional content that enthralled seventeenth-century listeners and can guide singer-actors to prepare accurate aural, visual and emotive interpretations for today's audiences.

'*Heinrich Schütz: Text, music and affective delivery.*'

Stephen Grant  
The University of Melbourne

Heinrich Schütz's only opera, *Daphne*, based on a Martin Opitz translation of Rinuccini, is lost, yet Schütz remains known for his exquisite depiction of text in his vocal music, albeit in non-operatic contexts. The prefaces to his publications refer to his training period in Venice and to his subsequent visits to Italy in order to better familiarise himself with the latest compositions and with the Italian manner of performing. Throughout his long career he made reference to Italian performance practice as a key to understanding his own music and acknowledged Italian composers and their importance for him, including those who worked with opera. This paper looks at the dramatic/expressive elements in Schütz’s vocal music. The idea of ‘practising emotion’ as defined by Scheer is used to shed light on contemporary approaches to Schütz’s music, which often minimise affective content, despite his own background and writings that highlight the primacy of a dramatic/affective delivery.

'*Performing in stile rappresentativo: The case of "Lamento d’Arianna".*'

Daniela Kaleva  
The University of South Australia

Developed by the pioneers of opera, stile rappresentativo or theatrical style is argued to have been a blend of seconda pratica, commedia dell’arte and rhetorical gesture. However, the specific elements of these historical crafts and their interplay in the performance of early recitative is little known. In this practice-led study I enquire into the visual elements of this theatrical style. Conceived originally for the opera *L’Arianna* (Mantua, 1608) by Ottavio Rinuccini, the monody ‘Lamento d’Arianna’ (Venice and Orvieto, 1623) is a potent experimental piece for the study of stile rappresentativo as a masterful setting in seconda pratica style that has had a long performance practice history which is also short enough to afford low-cost production outlays than an entire opera. This presentation offers the results from three case studies conducted in the period 2012–16, which research the visual elements pertaining to rhetorical gesture and commedia dell’arte and test different artistic approaches to the notion of stile rappresentativo in modern performance. They entail semi-staged performances and the third case study considers the religious contrafactum ‘Il pianto della Madonna’ (Venice, 1640–41). Both monodies epitomise seconda pratica ideals of sophisticated musical expression of rhetorical argument and use amplification of passions as a rhetorical device. The pieces articulate the ardent speeches and intense sorrow of two grieving women—the Cretan princess Ariadne on
the island of Naxos and the Virgin Mary—transiting through the liminal phases of marriage or death.

The first case study features Tessa Miller (soprano), Glenys March (harpsichord), Catherine Finnis (viola da gamba) and Helga Hill (rhetorical gesture choreography) and explores details of rhetorical gestures with a focus on decorum and deixis. In the second case study I took the role of Arianna and self-directed the gestural movements working with Donald Nicholson (harpsichord), commedia dell’arte actress Corinna Di Niro as Arianna’s lady-in-waiting Dorilla and sound artist Phil van Hout who created ambient sound and sound effects and recorded the chorus of fishermen voices. The second case study investigates all visual elements of stile rappresentativo using the idea of tactus as temporal organisation within a reconstruction of the lament scene – the climax in the opera ‘L’Arianna’ and a stage in the process of Arianna’s metamorphosis in librettist Ottavio Rinuccini’s rendition of the Greek myth. The third case study was conducted in collaboration with Jacob Lawrence (tenor), Hannah Lane (baroque harp), Nick Pollock (theorbo) and Dr Calvin Bowman (organ). It draws on Mariology and investigates the application of rhetorical visuality methods to the performance process. This case study offers an opportunity for comparison of stile rappresentativo’s visual elements within a religious narrative and performance context.

‘Eighteenth-century opera and the history of emotions.’

Alan Maddox
The University of Sydney

In western cultures, music has almost universally been understood to convey emotion, and this applies with particular force to early modern music, and above all to opera. The passions or affections were central to both composition and performance. As the composer and theorist Johann Mattheson put it, ‘everything that occurs without affections, means nothing; does nothing, and is worth nothing’ (Mattheson, 1739). We therefore cannot understand early modern operas simply as abstract musical or dramatic compositions without taking into account their expressive aims and the complex ways in which these were realised through processes of production, performance and reception.

In recent years the investigation of emotional expression in 17th and 18th-century music has been developed primarily through studies of musical rhetoric, based on treatises of the period (Bartel, 1997; Ranum, 2001; Tarling, 2005; Maddox, 2012, 2013). This approach offers the prospect of addressing the expressive aims and means of early modern music on its own terms, but in doing so, largely foregoes the potential of using later insights to address historical problems. One way of enriching a historically informed approach is to embed it in a wider perspective on music and the history of emotions, which sees emotions not as psychological states universal to all human cultures and times, but as culturally mediated experiences (Reddy, 2001; Rosenwein, 2002; Scheer, 2012). This kind of understanding is particularly apt for opera, a genre designed to be experienced in the public space of a theatre, and to which the projection and reception of emotions was central: Both performers and audiences understood music as aiming to move the passions, and listeners expected to be moved.

This paper examines the phenomenon of opera as production process, composition, performance and social activity, each framed within the history of emotions. Focusing in particular on eighteenth-century Italian opera, I argue that all of those involved in the creation and reception of operas participated in various ways in the establishment and maintenance of the emotional regime(s) within which they operated, and the emotional practices which they facilitated.
"The new attentiveness: Rethinking eighteenth-century audience behaviour at the opera."

Erin Helyard
The University of Melbourne

When the young Handel arrived in the thriving metropolis of London in the 1710s he would have encountered and experienced theatre environments not unlike those of the Italian capitals he had just left. Noisy, vociferous, social, and notoriously difficult to please, the fashionable opera set (or the Beau Monde, as they were known) had helped maintain a set of theatres and a consequent kind of audience behaviour that was clearly inspired after the Italian models of patronage and display that many of them had encountered on their Grand Tours. And yet when Handel completed his last oratorio in the 1750s, the same theatres at which his oratorios were performed were characterised by a silent solemnity and an almost religious absorption with the music. What had happened? Had oratorio changed engrained opera-going social habits? Is there a link between this growing silence and a growing complexity in Handel’s music? And are there parallels between European trends and those in the English capital? Historians of opera audiences like James Johnson and Patricia Howard have traditionally identified the new attentiveness as spreading outwards from Paris after Gluck’s tenure there.

This paper sketches some thoughts towards a new history of eighteenth-century audience behaviour at the opera and attempts to propose a new chronology for the absorptive posture. Any meaningful history of the emotions in opera must consider the changing emotional behaviour of those for which the entire rhetorical process itself was designed: the audience. I argue that although opera had traditionally appealed to an audience’s sense of delight (delectare) and on moving their passions through performance (moveare), new Enlightenment trends that emphasised music’s capacity to instruct the listener (docere) had the unintended consequences of a new kind of attentiveness in which audiences were encouraged to have “a truce with Dissipation, and Noisy Discourse,” as one 1743 commentator put it.

"Faith as emotional expression: Jake Heggie’s The End of the Affair."

Michael Halliwell
The University of Sydney

Many of the great operas of the past have a strong religious element as part of the emotional trajectory underpinning the drama. In the more secular twentieth century, religion as a defining element of opera receded in importance, a trend that has, if anything, intensified post WWII. But there have been some conspicuous examples of recent operas that have a strong religious component: Saint François d’Assise by Olivier Messiaen springs to mind. Jake Heggie is one of America’s most highly regarded contemporary composers and is renowned for two very successful operas: Dead Man Walking and Moby Dick. Religious elements permeate much of his work, and Dead Man Walking was based on the book by Sister Helen Prejean, a Catholic nun, exploring her faith through her relationship with a death row prisoner. The opera is a searching examination of the nature of religious faith. A lesser-known work of Heggie’s is the adaptation of Graham Greene’s novel, The End of the Affair (2004). Many of Green's works of fiction deal with Catholicism, and this novel, set during World War II and its aftermath, charts the relationship between the central figure of Sarah, and the emotional relationships with four men in her life. A central theme of the opera probes the challenges posed by religious faith and its emotional expression. Heggie's opera enjoyed
a mixed reception at its premiere in Houston in 2004. He later substantially revised it for a series of performances in Seattle in 2005, and it received a new production in San Francisco in 2014. This paper explores the way in which Heggie has represented the struggle for faith in a time of crisis.

'Queer practice and performativity: Exploring queer emotions through operatic performance and interpretation.'

Paul Smith
The University of New England

In 2012 and 2013, a concert series in Sydney called "Swopera" saw singers perform opera favourites with a twist: men and women would trade arias unlocking a surprising number of queer tropes. Queer narratives are still rare in opera, which is in stark contrast, ironically, with the individual artistic disciplines that make up opera. Considerable dramaturgical activity has become increasingly common to help navigate the highly problematic gender representations, especially for women, on the operatic stage, but for the question of sexuality, there are more challenging prescribed plot obstacles. The broad queer community is adept at poaching all manner of cultural artefacts and restructuring them for their own devices. How then can opera make room for the queer interpretations that are happening?

This paper will draw on Eve Kosofsky Sedgewick’s argument surrounding performativity and theatre to help frame the potential queer threads in opera. For Sedgewick, meanings are created in actions, words and performances, not the other way around. Emotion is central to the configuration of meaning, especially for the queer subject who must search and sift through normative narratives in search of, at the very least, the outline of an empathetic emotional figure. This figure often exists outside of gender boundaries. This restructuring is not exclusively dramatic as the music is also changed, bringing with it additional considerations of performativity. Such is the case in duets where only one gender is swapped creating operatic exclamations of love between two men or two women. At Swopera, the communal experience of emotion created in performance, through both music and text, was not a reflection of society but actively created society.

'The mystical communion of Voss and Laura in the opera Voss.'

Vincent Plush
The University of Adelaide

‘I try to catch your music,’ Voss to Laura, in the opera Voss (Act 1, scene 2)

In Patrick White’s novel Voss (1957), as well as the opera by Richard Meale and David Malouf (1986), the two lead roles are taken by an improbable couple. Johann Ulrich Voss, the German explorer modelled on Ludwig Leichhardt, and Laura Trevelyan, the 18-year-old niece of a draper, meet only a handful of times. Their verbal communication is negligible, a mere handful of letters that pass between them. For most of the narrative, they are separated physically by vast distances and emotional states. Voss is delirious in the Outback whilst Laura tosses feverishly in her bed in Sydney. They manage to maintain contact with each other through some kind of ‘mystical communion’, a kind of paranormal dialogue conducted through dreams, visions and music. In this paper, I will attempt to unravel this ‘mystical communion,’ a dimension of the novel that has thwarted the attempts of several film-makers over the past half-century. In Jim Sharman’s
production of the opera, the dual situations of Voss and Laura are co-mingled in dream and ritual, culminating in Laura’s nightmarish role in the decapitation of Voss. There is no literal explanation. At the close of the opera, Laura sings simply but knowingly, “The air will tell us.”

Initially, Meale and Malouf envisaged a different ending, where Voss would return to Laura and a physical reunion might explain some of the mysteries their separation had caused. Eventually, they were persuaded by Sharman to abandon this option and the opera ends with Laura, alone on stage, addressing a statue the colonists have erected as a stone eulogy to the lost explorer. This presentation will include my restoration of this final scene, refurbished with the permission of the composer Richard Meale (my former teacher) on the strict understanding that it not be presented as an alternative version to the ending of the opera we first saw thirty years ago.

'From historical to contemporary emotions in Voyage to the Moon.'

Jane Davidson, Joseph Browning and Frederic Kiernan
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MCM, The University of Melbourne

This paper discusses some of the complexities of re-imagining Baroque opera for modern day audiences through the lens of Voyage to the Moon, a modern day pasticcio opera created 2015–16 as the result of a collaboration between three organisations: Musica Viva, Victorian Opera, and the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions. In particular, it investigates one major creative phase, from the conception of the project to the creation of a “work” as manifested in a score. Because the process involved very tangible engagements with pre-existing music—scores were sourced, recordings listened to, arias selected, musical and textual details changed—the project provides a rich opportunity for analysing what Western Art music histories mean to 21st-century practitioners.

The theoretical approach pivots on the intersection between three key areas: first, analytical approaches that emphasise the collaborative, distributed nature of creativity (Sawyer & De Zutter 2009, Tribble, 2011); second, attention to the historical and cultural specificity of emotional mindsets or communities (Rosenwein 2006; Scheer, 2012); and third, informed by the work of Mary Hunter (2005, 2014), a commitment to the practical and discursive complexities of creative practitioners’ engagements with the musical past. One aria is taken as a case study in order to examine how the Voyage team’s creative choices grew from their affective responses to historical musical materials.

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