

Purcell's Dido and Aeneas to play at the Fugard Theatre Studio

The Cape Consort has announced its first fully staged opera, a production of Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (1688), which is scheduled to perform at the Fugard Theatre Studio in June. The Consort has joined forces with theatre-maker Mari Borstlap for an exciting new rendering of this classical love story under the musical leadership of Hans Huyssen, with the same attention to historically informed musical performance for which the Consort has become celebrated over the past five years.

In this creative staging by Borstlap, the story of a Carthaginian queen and her Trojan hero, an ancestor of Rome's founders, is transplanted to the present day. Dido is a mentally unstable young woman, confined to the Carthage asylum after the loss of her lover Aeneas, who departed for Rome in pursuit of his career. Under the watchful eye of Belinda, matron of the asylum, Dido suffers terrible flashbacks of her lost love and horrible visions of the fateful forces that have so overwhelmed her life. Distraught, Dido is pushed to the precipice, and her emotional turmoil culminates in the famous Dido's Lament.



Dido and Aeneas is the Cape Consort's fifth appearance at the Fugard Theatre's Studio. Previous productions - the four-part Monteverdi Project, included a semi-staged version of John Blow's opera *Venus and Adonis*.

Dido and Aeneas will play from 2 to 4 June, at 8pm and on 5 June at 4pm.

Tickets

Tickets range from R130 to R150 via the Fugard Theatre box office on +27 (0)21 461 4554 or www.computicket.com. All seating is reserved. Great discounts are available to Friends of The Fugard, students, and learners.

Music by Henry Purcell and libretto (in English) by Nahum Tate.

Stage direction and design by Mari Borstlap, and musical direction by Hans Huyssen.

With Lente Louw (Dido), Willem Bester (Aeneas), Elsabé Richter (Belinda), Nick de Jager (Sorceress), Antoinette Blyth (Handmaiden, Witch), and Riaan le Roux (bass).



The Fugard Theatre complex is located within the historic Sacks Futeran building in Cape Town's District Six, with the renovated Congregational Church Hall in Caledon Street as its entrance. Construction of The Fugard Theatre was underwritten by its founding producer Eric Abraham, who continues to underwrite the operational costs.

There is plenty of safe parking in Harrington Street car park, which is located at the corner of Caledon and Harrington Streets and is available for the use of theatre patrons.

Images by Dewet van Rooyen

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