

New England Opera Club



New England Opera Club Newsletter

Logo by Barbara Winston

Date: December 15, 2019
Time: 2:00 - 4:30

Place: Waltham Public Library
735 Main St. Waltham, Massachusetts

Régine Crespin

Speaker: John B. Jarzavek



John Jarzavek will talk about Crespin's career, which started with the singing competition she won after failing at her attempt at a different career: According to Wikipedia, she originally planned on becoming a pharmacist.

John will show videos of her in a number of the dramatic and spinto soprano roles in which she excelled, as well as selections from her song repertory. He will talk about seeing her live in Paris in 1961 and in subsequent performances.

This should be a very dramatic program!



Directions and parking:

From the West (Rt. 128): Take exit 26-Rt. 20 Waltham. (Rt. 20 and Main St. are the same road.) The library is about 1 1/2 miles on the left past the MacDonal'd's and the Post Office.

From the East: Take Rt. 20/Main Street. The library is on the right past City Hall and the intersection with Moody Street.

Parking: There is a (free) metered parking lot behind the library, and metered on-street parking. The Library is fully handicap-accessible



President

Peter McNamara

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Wendy Mandel
info@neoperclub.org

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Mima Leivi
617-983-0310
mleivi@msn.com

**Webmaster and
Newsletter Assistant**

Marion Leeds Carroll
marion@leedscarroll.com

Board

Andrew Altenbach

Maria-Pia Antonelli
617-527-1372

Felice Kahn
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Angelo Mammano
781-777-2178
operangelo@comcast.net

Erika Reitshamer
508-485-1214
erika@reitshamer.com

Noel and Deborah Rose
617-383-5045

To contact NEOC:
operainfo@neoperclub.org

**Letters or Articles to
the Editor:**

NEOC
Mima Leivi
80 Paul Gore St., #1
Jamaica Plain, MA
02130

Annual Membership:

\$40 for each individual
/ \$45 for a couple at
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\$15 student with valid
ID

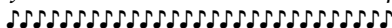
Mail check, payable to
NEOC, to

Mima Leivi, Treasurer
(see address above)

2019 NEOC Programs

(listings are subject to change)

Details of the 2020 season will be sent separately.



The Best of Philip Glass's (Many) Operas After Akhnaten

He has written around 30, depending how you count.

By Seth Colter Walls

Philip Glass began his operatic career in the 1970s and '80s with a trilogy focused on great visionaries of history: *Einstein on the Beach*; *Satyagraha*, a meditation on Gandhi's early activism; and *Akhnaten*, about the Egyptian pharaoh who pioneered monotheism, which runs through Dec. 7 at the Metropolitan Opera.

These are Mr. Glass's most famous operas, by far. But over the next 35 years, this peerlessly productive composer went on to write about 30 more, depending on how you count. Among them are other portraits of notable men of history, including Galileo Galilei and Walt Disney. Mr. Glass has also adapted films by Jean Cocteau and stories by Franz Kafka.

His sound, with its flowing arpeggios and churning rhythms, has remained easily identifiable through the decades. Yet Mr. Glass's best works for the stage — including the eight below, written between 1987 and 2014 — have managed to color that trademark style in fresh hues. Each has been recorded on his Orange Mountain Music label, whose CD editions also include librettos.

The Fall of the House of Usher (1987)

Edgar Allan Poe's gothic tale of friendship and mistaken burial is a natural fit for Mr. Glass's music of roiling portent. But this nimble opera signaled a new interest in dramatic thrust, which had been intentionally absent from long, reflective works like *Einstein*, *Satyagraha* and *Akhnaten*. In this recent release of a stylish performance by Wolf Trap Opera and the Inscape Chamber Orchestra, the two acts speed by in 83 minutes. Yet that's enough time for the opera to luxuriate in its spooky source material.

The Voyage (1992)

The Met commissioned an opera about Christopher Columbus in honor of the 500th anniversary of his landing in America; Mr. Glass delivered one - technically. He pointedly avoided dramatizing Columbus's encounters with Native Americans, and mostly confined the explorer to the second of this opera's three acts.

The rest is given over to a surging sci-fi rumination on the idea of exploration, writ large. A scientist in a wheelchair (inspired by Stephen Hawking) embodies intellectual courage; interplanetary travelers crash-land their spaceship on an ancient Earth, and wonder whether they should have studied law instead. This sprawling concept inspired some of Mr. Glass's most feverish orchestral writing up to that point - and the performance of the conductor Dennis Russell Davies, with the Bruckner Orchester

Past Presidents

William Miranda
NEOC (Founder &
President
Emeritus)
Jack Fiddler
Maria Iantosca
Charlotte Wolfe
John M. Tischio

The mission of this nonprofit association is educational: To promote appreciation of the art of opera; to support performances of quality opera in New England; to encourage talented students in their pursuit of operatic careers.

To subscribe to our newsletter or to join our mailing list, please send your name and email address to neoperclub@gmail.com

Jacopo Peri Award

The NEOC frequently honors a person who has made a significant contribution to the local opera scene.
Eunice Alberts
John Balme
Scott Brumit
Sarah Caldwell
Schuyler Chapin
Carole Charnow
Richard Conrad
Federico Cortese
Patricia Craig and
Richard Cassilly
Phyllis Curtin
Jan Curtis
Sharon Daniels
Janice Mancini Del Sesto
Ron Della Chiesa
D'Anna Fortunato
Randolph J. Fuller
Boris Goldovsky
Donald Gramm
Roland Hayes
Robert Honeysucker
Norman Kelley
Stephen Lord
William Miranda
John Moriarty
Esther Nelson
Martin Pearlman
Bradley Pennington
Jeffrey Rink
Eleanor Steber
Susan Stone
John M. Tischio
Ernest Triplett

Linz finds delirium in the heat.

Orphée (1993)

The first in another trilogy, this one based on Cocteau films, offered Mr. Glass a chance to lighten up. Cocteau's surrealism, by turns sprightly and lightly self-pitying, generates high spirits in the opera, as when jaunty music enlivens the scene of cafe-life bohemia that opens this adaptation of the Orpheus myth. But the conductor Anne Manson and the Portland Opera musicians make sure that Mr. Glass's talent for love music also comes through — as it does in *Akhmaten*.

Galileo Galilei (2001)

Around the turn of the 21st century, some of Mr. Glass's operas had a grimly overdetermined feel. *In the Penal Colony* and *Waiting for the Barbarians* can be safely categorized as only for completists; *Appomattox*, premiered in 2007 and later revised, has streaks of inspiration, but can drag. But this latter-day Glass portrait opera, a throwback to those early great-men works, has an affecting sense of purpose. Beginning with the sentencing portion of Galileo's trial, it moves in reverse chronology, showing the scientist's attempts to make his work palatable, through dialogues and metaphors that Mr. Glass outfits with flashes of humanist optimism.

Kepler (2009)

Another portrait of a 17th-century scientist, this piece is more diffuse than *Galileo*, perhaps better classed as an oratorio. (An available DVD of the premiere staging in Linz, Austria, does not help craft a strong narrative through line.) But the instrumental writing shows Mr. Glass moving farther afield from the music of his early operas and symphonies, and embracing a broader harmonic palette. And in scenes like "Physica Coelestis," in which Kepler works alongside an ensemble of vocalists to craft a "celestial physics," Mr. Glass makes a vision of scientifically informed spirituality seem within humanity's grasp.

Spuren der Verirrten (The Lost) (2012)

The dystopian and absurdist aspects of this libretto — adapted by Rainer Mennicken from a play by the Nobel laureate Peter Handke — inspired one of Mr. Glass's most vivid and peculiar late-period scores. As a stream of isolated, confused or despotic presences mill about the stage — introduced by a character called the Spectator — Mr. Glass reaches for nervy effects, as when a pair of winds join drums and electric bass during the climax of a mad dance that takes place near an eyeless Oedipal character. (The DVD release really helps with this opera.)

The Trial (2014)

Here's where Mr. Glass makes the most of his affection for Kafka. There's a thumping sense of parodic parading as Josef K. is shuttled between institutions by fellow citizens who are, like him, being terrorized by random accelerations in the law's attack. It's a purposely blunt work, a radio-play version of Mr. Glass's operatic style, smartly suited to the fable-like nature of the underlying tale. The brasses of the Music Theater Wales ensemble show off their polish in a recording conducted by Michael Rafferty.

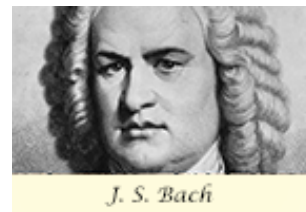
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Local Opera and Classical Music, December 2019

For up-to-date activities, visit FaceBook: <https://www.facebook.com/NEoperaevents/>
Join NEOC! Visit <https://neoperaclub.org/membership.html#form2>

December 1, 10 AM

Emmanuel Music | BWV 140, *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimm*
| emmanuelmusic.org/calendar_tickets/19-20season/caltix19-20_cantatas.html
Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, Boston



J. S. Bach

December 1, 3 PM

Boston Early Music Festival Chamber Ensemble | *La storia di Orfeo: Music of Sartorio, Monteverdi, and Rossi*, Paul O'Dette & Stephen Stubbs, *Musical Directors*; Robert Mealy, *Concertmaster* |
<https://bemf.org/concert-season/boston-concerts/la-storia-di-orfeo/>
Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston

New England Opera Club Newsletter

December 5-7, 8 PM; December 8, 2 PM

Boston Conservatory | *Glory Denied*, Tom Cipullo | <https://bostonconservatory.berklee.edu/events/glory-denied>

Boston Conservatory Theater, 31 Hemenway Street, Floor 2 , Boston

December 6, 8PM

Boston Early Music Festival | *Reflections: Music of Byrd, Victoria, Tallis, Allegri, and others*, The Tallis Scholars

St. Paul Church, Cambridge | <https://bemf.org/concert-season/boston-concerts/the-tallis-scholars/>

December 7, 12 PM

Opera on Tap | *Drunk Opera History: Handel's Messiah*

The Burren, 247 Elm St., Somerville | <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/drunk-opera-history-handels-messiah-tickets-66641363111>



December 7, 8 PM; December 8, 4 PM

Chameleon Arts Ensemble of Boston | *Works by Fauré, Grime, Verbey, Schumann* | <https://www.chameleonarts.org/concerts/december.html>

First Church in Boston, 66 Marlborough Street, Boston

December 8, 10 AM

Emmanuel Music | *BWV 62, Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland II* | emmanuelmusic.org/calendar_tickets/19-20season/caltix19-20_cantatas.html

Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, Boston

December 11, 7-9 PM

NEMPAC | *Handel's Messiah Part I*

Faneuil Hall, The Great Hall, Boston, MA 02110 | <https://nempacboston.org/upcomingperformances/>

December 13, 6-9 PM

Boston Opera Collaborative | *Christmas Opera Party*

Tony's Market, 4381 Washington St., Roslindale | 617.323.7313, <https://www.facebook.com/events/809148579503942/>

December 13 - January 12, varied times

American Repertory Theater | *Moby-Dick* | <https://americanrepertorytheater.org/shows-events/moby-dick/>

Loeb Drama Center at Harvard University, 64 Brattle St, Cambridge,

December 15, 10 AM

Emmanuel Music | *BWV 186a Ärgre dich, o Seele, nicht* | emmanuelmusic.org/calendar_tickets/19-20season/caltix19-20_cantatas.html

Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, Boston

December 15, 2 - 5 PM

Sudbury Opera Lovers Organization | *Barber of Seville vs Figaro by Rossini/ Mozart respectively* -presented by Erika Reitshamer

Sudbury Senior Center, 40 Fairbank Road, Sudbury | 978.443.7262, <https://sudburyoperalovers.org/index.html>

December 21, 7:30 PM; December 22, 2PM

Due Donne Productions | *Hansel and Gretel, Humperdinck* | <https://www.duedonneproductions.com/events-12/21:UnionChurchInWaban,14CollinsRd,Waban>

12/22: Brookline Public Library, 361 Washington St, Brookline

December 22, 10 AM

Emmanuel Music | *BWV 1 Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* | emmanuelmusic.org/calendar_tickets/19-20season/caltix19-20_cantatas.html

Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, Boston

December 24: Christmas Eve, 7 PM

Emmanuel Music | *BWV 151 Süßer Trost, mein Jesus kömmt* | emmanuelmusic.org/calendar_tickets/19-20season/caltix19-20_cantatas.html

Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, Boston