

SOAR Research Proposal: SUMMER 2013
Preparing a performing edition of the opera
La Spartana generosa, ovvero Archidamia
By Johann Adolph Hasse

Faculty: Dr. Larry Lipkis, Professor, Department of Music

Students: Michael McAndrew '15. B.Mus.
Michael Wisnosky '15. B.Mus.

Dates: May 27, 2013 – August 2, 2013. Ten weeks.

Project Description

The two students will prepare performing editions of arias and choruses from the opera *La Spartana generosa, ovvero Archidamia* by the Johann Adophe Hasse.

This project supports an NEH Institute proposed for summer 2014, which will be directed by Dr. Hilde Binford and feature Dr. Larry Lipkis as one of the lecturers and performers. This workshop, entitled *The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach: Spanning Centuries and Transcending Cultures*, will include a performance of selected scenes from the opera *La Spartana generosa, ovvero Archidamia* (*The Generous Lady of Sparta, or Archidamia*) and by J. A. Hasse.

Hasse (1699-1783) is considered a relatively minor figure today among musicologists, but during his lifetime he was an immensely popular composer of serious operas (*opera seria*). In fact, he and his principal librettist, the well-known Faustino Metastasio, were celebrated as major contributors to this important genre.

In some ways, Hasse was the antithesis of J. S. Bach: he traveled widely (Bach never left Germany), he mainly wrote operas (Bach wrote none), and he secured the plum position of *Kappelmeister* at the Dresden Court (Bach tried unsuccessfully to secure this prestigious post). It is thought likely that Bach met Hasse in Dresden at the premiere of *Cleofide*, one of Hasse's well-known operas, sometime in the 1730's; indeed, Bach's son C.P.E. claimed that his father and Hasse were good friends. (At the 2014 Institute, there will be considerable focus on the life and works of C.P.E. Bach in commemoration of the tercentenary of his birth).

The year 1747 was a critical one in the biography of J. S. Bach. That year, he traveled to Potsdam to meet the Prussian emperor Frederick the Great. The result of that famous encounter was the masterpiece, *Das Musicalische Opfer* (The Musical Offering), now regarded as one Bach's greatest compositional achievements. That same year saw the premiere in Dresden of *La Spartana generosa, ovvero Archidamia*.

A further connection between Bach and Hasse is the celebrated soprano Faustina Bordoni, a true Baroque diva who was wildly popular in Germany, Italy, and England. She married Hasse, settled in Dresden, and performed the leading lady roles in several of his operas. If indeed Bach attended a performance of Hasse's *Cleofide*, in which she had a leading role, he may have had her voice in mind when he wrote the "Laudamus Te" movement of his *Mass in B Minor*, as musicologist George Stauffer speculates.

For the Institute, we are planning a concert or semi-staged performance of selected arias and choruses from *La Spartana generosa*. The choruses will be sung by the institute participants and the arias by a student intern, Rachel Ruisard. An chamber orchestra consisting of a string quartet and keyboard will accompany the singers. As this opera only exists in a handwritten manuscript, it is important to have a modern edition of the work. This will be the work of the two students in the SOAR project.

The two students will be creating a performing edition of the opera, which includes

- Transcribing the music into modern notation
- Creating a complete keyboard part with figured bass
- Translating the libretto from Italian into English
- Writing critical notes, which will include background information on Hasse, his librettist, and the genre of Baroque opera.

In the summer 2014, the edition will be printed and provided to the teachers participating in the Institute. Although the NEH grant will not be finalized until summer 2013, Dr. Binford, the NEH project director, is very optimistic that it will be approved.**

Roles and Responsibilities, Schedule

The summer project will encompass the ten weeks from May 29 – August 3.

May 27 – June 1	Review of resources and planning. Create outline and overview of works considered.
June 4 – July 20	Work on transcriptions and editions, historical background and context.
July 23 – August 2	Prepare final print-ready copy of booklet and performance edition.

The division of labor between Michael McAndrew and Michael Wisnosky will be approximately equal. They will both write critical notes and work on the translation (both have had courses in Italian). Mr. McAndrew will transcribe Act I and half of Act II of the opera, and Mr. Wisnosky will transcribe the second half of Act II and all of Act III. There are 22 arias and 6 choruses in total.

Both students will meet with Dr. Lipkis weekly to review their progress. In the early weeks of the summer, more meetings will be scheduled as necessary.

David Boothroyd, faculty member of the University of British Columbia Opera Ensemble, and Dr. Patrica DeBellis, retired professor of Italian at Muhlenberg College will also assist in this project. I am requesting a fee for the services of Dr. DeBellis, who

will assist in the translation of the libretto. Mr. Boothroyd, who will direct the production of the opera scenes in Leipzig, is volunteering his editorial expertise to the project.

Benefits

The benefits to the two students are many: learning about the genre of Baroque opera, experience editing from original sources, preparing a performing edition of a score and parts, gaining more experience with music notation software.

Budget

Both students will need on-campus housing from May 29 through August 3.

Stipend for each student (40 hours/week, 10 weeks)	\$3,000.00
Fee for professional translator to assist with the libretto	\$300.00
Total expenditures requested	\$6,300.00

**Dr. Binford's received the following correspondence from her NEH liaison in early February:

“Your draft proposal looks great. I have been reading it and enjoying it a lot. I just looked at it again this morning and can't think of any changes you need to make.... This is such a great program and you've really perfected it over the years. Let me know if you have any questions or concerns at this point.”

SOAR Research Proposal: Summer 2013

Preparing a Performing Edition of the Opera *La Spartana generosa, ovvero Archidamia*, by Johann Adolph Hasse

Student: Michael Wisnosky, '15
Major: Music Composition
Faculty: Dr. Larry Lipkis, Department of Music

Project Rationale

For this SOAR project, I feel that I will be able to both use my skills to complete the project and increase my knowledge and proficiency in my major. First and foremost, Baroque music is the entire foundation of music as we know it today. Hands-on experience of working intimately with the art would not only increase my understanding of Baroque music, but also increase my understanding of the whole musical realm. As a composition major, part of the education I receive is learning how to make my music look as nice and professional as possible. Working on this SOAR project would allow me to greatly increase my proficiency in music notation software such as Finale. In addition, this project would require much in terms of editing music, which is a highly viable career path for composition students.

I believe that my experiences and abilities would really benefit this project. I took Italian for two years here at Moravian, which will be very useful when translating the text of these operas. My major is Composition with a concentration in Voice, and working on this project would provide ample opportunities for me to work on developing these skills. For example, I will have the option to provide editor-suggested ornaments on the vocal parts. I can write out an ornamented part, then sing it to make certain it works (doing this will also give me hands-on experience creating vocal ornaments, which is a vitally important skill that every opera singer needs).

Expected Outcomes

The finished product of this SOAR project will be a concert version of a Hasse opera, either *La Spartana generosa, ovvero Archidamia* or *Leucippo*. I will take the chosen opera and, under the guidance of Dr. Lipkis, select several pieces of varying themes (love, loss, victory, etc.) from each act and put them together into a working performing edition. The performing edition will reduce the opera from its current length and magnitude (roughly four hours, with full costuming and orchestra). It will essentially be a broad overview of the opera (approx. an hour and a half run time, with the orchestra reduced to a quartet). In addition, translations of the Italian text will be included, plus a well-researched biography of Hasse. The finished project will be compiled utilizing musical notation software (Finale, Sibelius) and be printed into booklets. These two operas currently only exist as hand-written manuscripts, so it is of vital importance to have modern editions of them.

SOAR Research Proposal: Summer 2013

Preparing a Performance Edition the opera, La Spartana Generos,avvero Archidamia

By Johann Adolph Hasse

Student: Michael McAndrew '15

Major: Music Composition

Faculty: Dr. Larry Lipkis, Director of Composition, Department of Musiccc

Project Rationale

This SOAR project is definitely a brand new experience for myself, but promises to be a great learning experience. This project really gives an overview of how earlier music styles were performed and practiced, something in which I do not have much knowledge. This also provides me an introduction on all of the practices and different types of detail required for opera preparation, again another field I have heard but am not familiar with by any means. This project gives me an inside look on how to prepare manuscripts into performance ready editions for modern audiences, which in turn give me experience in studying older manuscripts, an art not done much anymore in today's society, except by musicologists most of the time. Even though this project isn't much composing, per se, I am deeply excited to really work in this new field, and it still seems like the creation of music to me, which is worthwhile. Also, every composer loves hearing their creations performed, and to have the opportunity to hear it in the 2014 NEH Institute will be an unbelievable experience. Also, it opens up another performance opportunity for another SOAR candidate, Rachel Ruisard ('14).

Expected Outcomes

I expect to obtain a greater understanding of different fields of music history, performance, and preparation that I have not particularly studied in great detail. This will give me a much more rounded understanding of music in general, and a more rounded understanding is a greater skill. In the composition field, I expect to get an opening idea of what the field is really like, for example, working on a deadline, hours a day, and many hours a week which many composers do, its their job. I expect to also obtain many different understandings of opera in general, such as, ornamentation, cadenza options, different instrumentations of the time period, and performance practice. Just the concept of learning something new about my passion of music really drives me to get as much as I can out of this project, and I expect to do just that.