

Charity Number: 1183967

OPERA WORCESTER



COX AND BOX

Composer: Arthur Sullivan
Text Writer/Librettist: Francis Cowley Burnand

DIDO AND AENEAS

Composer: Henry Purcell
Text Writer/Librettist: Nahum Tate

Edition by Margaret Laurie & Thurston Dart

By arrangement with NOVELLO & CO LTD

DOUBLE BILL of English Opera

At The Coach House Theatre, Malvern, WR14 3HA

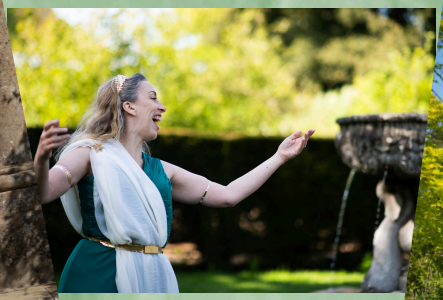
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Programme

13th & 14th June 2025

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Welcome to Opera Worcester's second visit to the Coach House Theatre. I doubt if a more incongruous double bill than Dido and Aeneas and Cox and Box has often been presented in any theatre!

We are delighted to have been working with Garry Bailey and Meriel Ford to bring Dido and Aeneas to you. Purcell is judged by many to have been the greatest of all English composers and his librettist, Tate, was the Poet Laureate. Their joint work Dido and Aeneas is one of the earliest of English operas and is a dramatisation of one of the saddest of love stories, recounted in the Aeneid of Virgil, written in the first century B.C.

Cox and Box is a musical version of the play Box and Cox, by J. Madison Morton. It dates from before Sullivan's collaborations with W.S.Gilbert, but was added to the repertoire of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company from 1921 to 1982.

Paul Thompson



RUNNING ORDER

Cox & Box

INTERVAL

Dido & Aeneas

Refreshments will be available during the interval

Total Running Time: 2.45mins

Whether you are staging a musical, an opera, a play, a concert or a pantomime, as the UK's leading amateur theatre membership organisation, NODA is here for every show, every rehearsal, every curtain call – here for our members every step of the way.

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COX & BOX

Composer: Arthur Sullivan

Librettist: Francis Cowley Burnand

Synopsis

Bouncer, a landlord, is letting the same room to two tenants, Cox, a hatter, who is out at work all day, and Box, a printer, who is out at work all night. Cox and Box are blissfully unaware of Bouncer's deception until Cox comes home very early one day, having been given an unexpected day's holiday.



MUSICAL NUMBERS

1. - Overture
2. - Rataplan - Bouncer
3. - Stay Bouncer Stay - Cox & Bouncer
4. - A Lullaby - Box
5. - My Master is Punctual- Cox
6. - Who are you sir? - Trio
7. - The Buttercup - Cox & Box
8. - Not Long Ago - Box & Cox
9. - Finale



PRODUCER: **JUDI WALTON**

Judi produced this version of Cox & Box many years ago, and has now lost count of how many times it has been performed. Judi has produced, stage managed and appeared in many shows for societies across the UK.

This page is kindly dedicated to all of those involved in the arts!
by Caroline Causier



IAN WALTON as James John Cox - (A Journeyman Hatter)

Ian has been treading the boards for many years now and had such fun and met wonderful friends. I have been fortunate enough to play many roles in all Gilbert & Sullivan operettas as well as other genres.
My relationship with Opera Worcester goes back many years and I'm delighted to be part of the company again for Cox & Box that I have performed many times with Mike & Paul.



PAUL THOMPSON as Sergeant Bouncer - (A Lodging-House Keeper with Military Reminiscences)

Paul Thompson has been a member of Opera Worcester for fifty-five years and has taken more than fifty principal roles with the Society as well as more than a dozen at the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival at Buxton and Harrogate. With Mike Faulkner and Ian Walton, usually accompanied by Joy Reeve, he has been performing Cox and Box for nearly forty years. The show has often won trophies in competitive Festivals.



MIKE FAULKNER as John James Box - A Journeyman Printer

Mike has appeared many times for Opera Worcester over the years, having taken most of the principal tenor roles in G&S operettas as well as playing other roles, such as Danilo (The Merry Widow), Eisenstein (Die Fledermaus), Escamillo (Carmen), Papageno (Magic Flute) and Canio (Il Pagliacci). He is looking forward to appearing as Mr Box for, perhaps, the last time!





DIDO & AENEAS

A Short Baroque Opera in Three Acts

Composer: Henry Purcell, Librettist: Nahum Tate
Edition by Margaret Laurie & Thurston Dart
By arrangement with NOVELLO & CO LTD

Synopsis

Dido and Aeneas, composed by Henry Purcell in 1687, is his only true opera. It premiered at Josias Priest's Boarding School for Girls. Based on Book IV of Virgil's Aeneid, the opera tells the tragic love story of Dido, Queen of Carthage, and the Trojan hero Aeneas.

Their doomed romance is manipulated by a vengeful Sorceress who tricks Aeneas into abandoning Dido. Heartbroken, Dido takes her own life, ending with the poignant aria "When I am laid in earth." The opera blends recitative, arias, choruses, and dances in true Baroque fashion.

Act I

1. Shake the Cloud
2. Ah! Belinda
3. Grief Increases
4. When Monarchs Unite
5. Whence Could so Much Virtue Spring
6. Fear No Danger
7. See Your Royal Guest
8. Cupid Only
9. If Not for Mine
10. Air: Persue Thy Conquest
11. To the Hills and the Vales
12. The Triumphing Dance



I want to wish the cast and crew of Opera Worcester all the very best for this eclectic mix of English Opera - Tammara xxx

Act II

13. Prelude for the Witches
14. Chorus: Harm's Our Delight
15. Recitative: The Queen of Carthage
16. Ho! Ho! Ho!
17. Ruin'd Ere the Set of Sun
18. Ho! Ho! Ho!
19. But, Ere we This Perform
20. In Our Deep Vaulted Cell
21. Echo Dance of Furies
22. Ritornelle
23. Thanks to These Lonesome Vales
24. Oft She Visits
25. Behold, Upon My Bended Spear
26. Haste to Town
27. Stay, Prince

Act III

28. Come Away, Fellow Sailors
29. The Sailors' Dance
30a. See the Flags
30b. Our Next Motion Must Be to Storm
31. Destruction's Our Delight
32. The Witches' Dance
33. Your Counsel
34. But Death, Alas!
35. Great Minds
36. Thy Hand, Belinda
37. When I am Laid in Earth (Dido's Lament)
38. With Drooping Wings

END

CAST:

Shara Parry - Belinda



Shara is more used to being on the other side of the curtain, having trained with the National Youth Theatre and at the University of Birmingham prior to starting her career in London as a theatre technician and designer. Shara moved into the education sector and now directs multiple shows, whilst teaching students up to A level, and hopefully inspiring the next generation of theatre artists. Her first ever operatic solo was in Dido and Aeneas 35 years ago, so performing this year with Opera Worcester feels very much like bringing things full circle!

Catherine Barrett - Dido



Catherine joined Opera Worcester in 2019 after moving back to the area. She played Natalie in The Merry Widow and was last seen on stage as Rosalinde in Die Fledermaus last year. Catherine spent many years involved in musical theatre and soul/pop singing whilst living on the South Coast, but also trained operatically and performed regularly with Bournemouth based Silhouette Opera. Day to day Catherine is neurological physiotherapist and university physiotherapy lecturer, as well as being a dance mum to two performing mad girls.

Caroline Causier - First Lady



Caroline first stepped onto the stage at the age of fourteen in the Malvern Opera and Ballet Club production of Amahl and the Night Visitors, with the encouragement of her first singing teacher. She has loved opera ever since.

Caroline has been blessed travelling the country singing with my late husband who was a concert organist and pianist. She has sung with many companies in the Worcestershire area and joined Great Witley Operatic Society in 1996, singing the role of Eurydice in Orpheus in the Underworld. Caroline has remained with this very happy society ever since.

In 2022 Caroline was thrilled to receive her 40 year NODA award.

Ed Kimberley - Aeneas



Ed started performing as a Worcester Cathedral chorister at the age of 9, and has been in love with church, classical and early music ever since; so the opportunity to take on the role of Aeneas with Opera Worcester this year is a dream come true in many ways.

Ed is a man of many hats, having played previously with The Film Orchestra as a cellist, Worcestershire Youth Orchestra, and has been on the stage with Opera Worcester previously in the role of St Brioche in The Merry Widow. Ed likes to dabble in music composition, sings and plays the cello, and is currently studying for an LRSM exam in piano.

Susan Black - Sorceress



Susan has had a wonderful career in music! Not only as an opera singer, but also a conductor, stage director, stage manager, costume designer and maker and a singing teacher. What a life! Full of hard work, fancy frocks, fun and lovely people!

This splendid opera holds many happy memories for Susan and it is a pleasure for her to be involved in this particular production with Opera Worcester.

Meriel Ford - First Witch



This is Meriel's second show with Opera Worcester, having played Prince Orlofsky in Die Fledermaus, as well as taking part in concerts with the society. She also recently directed The Pirates of Penzance for Worcester Gilbert & Sullivan.

These days she combines her love of performing, innate ability to make a fool of herself and her enthusiasm for problem solving in her day job as a maths teacher.

Meriel is enjoying unleashing her inner witch but is slightly disappointed that there are no broomsticks involved.

Sophie Hutton



This is Sophie's third production with Opera Worcester. She previously played Barbarina in the Marriage of Figaro and was in the chorus for Cavalleria Rusticana and I Pagliacci. She is very much looking forward to playing a witch!

Samuel Taunton - Sailor



Samuel has played several sailors over the years. In HMS Pinafore he has played Ralph Rackstraw, an OR, and Sir Joseph Porter (who, of course, would never never go to sea.) In Ruddigore he played Dick Dauntless, a scurvy seadog! He took to the sea on the SS America as Lord Evelyn Oakleigh in Anything Goes. He enjoyed playing Oberon in Purcell's Fairy Queen and especially loved singing tenor arias as Alfredo in Die Fledermaus last year with Opera Worcester. Maybe he should be thinking of a canal boat holiday after all this naval practice on stage!

Zero Butler - Spirit



Zero has been performing on stage for 8 years. In succession of her mother and her grandparents, who, have been performing on stage for 80 years. Zero has performed with the Worcester Gilbert and Sullivan Society for the majority of that time, but has also had the privilege of performing with Opera Worcester for 3 shows, including Die Fledermaus and hopes to join us for many more!

Joy Reeve - Accompanist



Joy joined the Norbury Theatre in Droitwich in 1967, for their first Gilbert and Sullivan production as a rehearsal pianist. She then joined Great Witley Operatic Society (now Opera Worcester) in 1993 for their production of The Merry Widow and has played for them for the majority of that time. Joy has played for the Cox and Box trio on about five occasions. She was also thrilled to receive my 55 year award from NODA in 2022.
Joy is delighted to be playing for both operas on this double bill.

Garry Bailey - Musical Director



Garry is a musical director and conductor. He started out his career as a baritone studying with the late Greta Corfield, a Royal Academy of Music graduate who taught and studied the Manuel Garcia theories of singing. His musical directing and conductor skills were taught to him in the first instance by the late T. David Hales, B.K Downing and Michael Rose OBE. Moving on from this Garry has studied and espouses the conducting style of Sir Adrian Boult, and was fortunate enough to work with the late William Hayward in furthering this technique.
In 2005 Garry founded, and is Musical Director for the Shropshire Orpheus Savoyards, who specialise in singing light opera and the works of Gilbert & Sullivan. Past appointments include as MD for Whitchurch AODS, TADLOP, Donnington Little Theatre, Tettenhall Operatic Company and Cannock Light Orchestra. In 2021 he was appointed as Musical Director for Aveley Village Band (AVB) and last year he became Artistic and Musical Director for Walsall Gilbert & Sullivan Society.

Garry is delighted to be making his debut with the exceptionally talented Opera Worcester and hopes that you'll enjoy the performance of 'Dido and Aeneas'.

Members of the Opera Worcester Ensemble

Catherine Barrett, Mandy Bartlett, Susan Black, Bev Butler, Zero Butler, Caroline Causier, Paul Ellis, Meriel Ford, Ed Kimberley, Janet Hay, Sophie Hutton, Shara Parry, Michael Pugh, Samuel Taunton



Stage Manager ~ Rebecca Fearnley
Backstage Crew ~ Jim Black, Ellen Fearnley &
Coach House Theatre
Wardrobe ~ Susan Black
Masks ~ Gill Bayliss
Front of House ~ Friends of Opera Worcester
Ticket Manager ~ Malvern Theatres
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Rehearsal Pianist ~ Joy Reeve
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Gail & James Black, Bowbrook House School,
The Coach House Theatre Staff & Volunteers







Opera Worcester attracts singers from all over Worcestershire and surrounding counties. Our repertoire is varied and as well as opera, includes musicals and operetta.

We like to give opportunities to aspiring young singers as well as established local performers but, above all, Opera Worcester seeks to bring passionate singers of all ages together to perform.

Why not join us?
Opera Worcester rehearses on Monday evenings in St Mark's Church Hall, Cherry Street, Worcester WR5 3DW. Rehearsals run from 7.30pm to 10pm.

www.operaworcester.uk **info@operaworcester.uk**

As always our appreciation goes to our Friends - Val Adams, Jill Berry, Jim Black, Janet Emmerson, Douglas Lamb, Jan Venebles, & Catherine Warren

and our Patrons Sue Black, Jane Dodd, Rachael Tovey

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