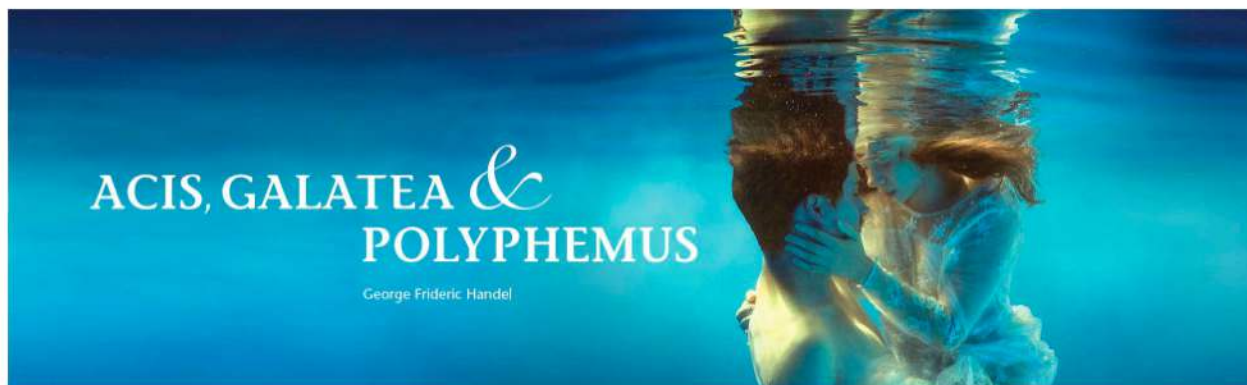


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**ORPHEUS|PDX OPENS ITS THIRD SEASON WITH A JEALOUS
CYCLOPS, A FANTASTICAL LOVE STORY, AND SPECTACULAR
VOCAL FIREWORKS IN HANDEL'S 18TH CENTURY
MASTERPIECE, *ACIS, GALATEA & POLYPHEMUS***



"Unnervingly powerful...music of exquisite beauty."

– The San Francisco Chronicle

"Handel's Italian masterpiece."

– La Scena Musicale

(Portland, Oregon) — Portland's professional opera company OrpheusPDX kicks off its third season with George Frideric Handel's delightful ***Acis, Galatea & Polyphemus*** (*Aci, Galatea e Polifemo*). Based on the timeless myth from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, this soaring opera will be conducted by George Manahan, in his company debut, and directed by Chas Rader-Shieber.

Acis, Galatea & Polyphemus opens on Saturday, August 3, at 7:30 pm with a second performance on Sunday, August 4, at 3 pm. Performances will take place in the Lincoln Performance Hall, praised by *Opera News* as "Portland's

best opera space" because of its superb acoustics. Tickets are available at orpheuspx.org.

"I'm particularly thrilled to be opening the 2024 season with this sublime work by Handel," said Christopher Mattaliano. "It's not only a tremendous love story but a great vocal showcase for each singer—full of show-stopping arias, duets, and trios. It's a musical feast that promises to be a uniquely joyful and celebratory opening to our third season."

"I'm also delighted to bring back Katherine Whyte, who caused a sensation last season in Mozart's *The Royal Shepherd*, and a local favorite, Hannah Penn," Mattaliano continued. "They're joined by the company debut of Douglas Williams, a young bass who is taking the opera world by storm, and the beloved maestro George Manahan, whom local audiences know from his many exciting performances in his previous position as Portland Opera's Music Director. I'm also thrilled to have the internationally renowned theorbo player John Lenti in the orchestra."

"*Acis, Galatea & Polyphemus* was written during the years Handel spent living in Italy as a young man," Manahan said. "Just as Mozart did, Handel combined the warm Italian lyricism and gift for melody with the rich harmonies of his German heritage. In every aria, Handel uses a variety of color from the orchestra to generate tension that helps make the characters come alive as three-dimensional people. It is always a pleasure for me to perform one of Handel's operas, and I very much look forward to presenting this jewel to Portland audiences."

Handel was quite taken with this story and set it to music on three separate occasions. This opera is the first and premiered in 1708 when he visited Naples, probably as a commission from the Duchess of Laurenzano for the wedding of her niece. Polyphemus' dramatic entrance aria "Sibilar gli angui d'Aletto" is one of Handel's most famous and beloved arias. As with many of his Italian compositions, Handel lifted whole arias from this opera for use in later operas—*Agrippina* (1709), *Rinaldo* (1711), *Il pastor fido* (1712), *Teseo* (1713), *Porro* (1733), and *Atalanta* (1736).

ACIS, GALATEA & POLYPHEMUS

George Frideric Handel

Saturday, August 3, 2024, 7:30 pm
Sunday, August 4, 2024, 3 pm

Libretto by Nicola Giuvo, based on the myth from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*
Sung in Italian with English surtitles; 90 minutes with no intermission

The great love between Acis and Galatea has been the subject of poems, paintings, operas, and statues throughout the centuries. When the jealous cyclops Polyphemus becomes crazed by his unrequited love for the sea-nymph Galatea, he kills her beloved, the mortal Acis. Devastated, Galatea transforms Acis into a river, in which she can live with him, forever united. Ultimately, in this timeless myth, love endures and overcomes all, even death. This great love story is infused with Handel's "music of exquisite beauty" (*The San Francisco Chronicle*).

Conductor:	George Manahan (debut)
Director & Set Design:	Chas Rader-Shieber (2022 <i>L'Orfeo</i>)
Costume Design:	Sydney Dufka (2023 <i>The Royal Shepherd</i>)
Lighting Design:	Solomon Weisbard (2023 <i>Dark Sisters</i>)

Cast

Acis:	Katherine Whyte (2023 <i>The Royal Shepherd</i>)
Galatea:	Hannah Penn (2022 <i>L'Orfeo</i> , 2023 <i>Dark Sisters</i>)
Polyphemus:	Douglas Williams (debut)

Full cast biographies, photos, and much more can be found at orpheuspx.org.

TICKET INFORMATION

All performances are at the Lincoln Performance Hall on Portland State University's campus (1620 SW Park Ave, Portland, OR). Tickets are on sale now and start at \$50. Season subscribers save 10%. Students can purchase up to two tickets for \$15 each. Tickets can be purchased at OrpheusPDX.org or by contacting the box office at (503) 308-4828 or boxoffice@orpheuspx.org.

ORPHEUS|PDX

Inspired by the legend of Orpheus and Eurydice, where Orpheus' singing is so beautiful that even the savage beasts of Hades are moved to tears, Portland's new professional opera company, OrpheusPDX, aspires to do the same—to touch the very soul of the community through the power of great music and theater. OrpheusPDX enhances that powerful experience by producing opera in the intimate, 472-seat Lincoln Performance Hall, described as "Portland's best opera space" by *Opera News*. OrpheusPDX is committed to both honoring tradition and exploring new directions by presenting one classic opera from a well-loved 18th century composer and one great modern work by a living composer—thus providing audiences with the best of both operatic worlds each season.

CHRISTOPHER MATTALIANO GENERAL & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Christopher Mattaliano founded OrpheusPDX in 2022 and serves as the company's General and Artistic Director. He was the General Director of Portland Opera from 2003-2019 and the Artistic Director of the Pine Mountain Music Festival from 2001-2003. The highlights of his 16 years at Portland Opera include the expansion of programming and artistic standards, the creation of the young artists residency program, the regular engagement of women conductors, directors, and designers, the company's first bilingual opera production, and wide-ranging collaborations with most of Portland's music, theater, dance, and visual art organizations, as well as groups like Trans Affirming Spaces and Phame. Under his leadership, the company greatly increased its educational and community outreach programs, and provided free access to local communities and thousands of students throughout the state. This led to the company being awarded the 2017 Governor's Arts Award. He was recently named as one of 75 key figures in opera over the last 50 years by OPERA America as part of its 50th Anniversary Oral History project.

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