

## ARTIST OPEN CALL: OUT OF HER MOUTH 2023

If it would be more accessible to have this information in another format, please email [bridget@mahoganyopera.co.uk](mailto:bridget@mahoganyopera.co.uk)

**Dunedin Consort, Hera and Mahogany Opera** present *Out of Her Mouth*, a new project bringing to life Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre's *Cantates Bibliques*. A set of complete miniature operas, each only 15 minutes long, composed by a woman over 300 years ago, and never performed in the UK.

In 2023, we'll be presenting 'Judith', 'Jacob & Rachel' and 'Susanne': three stories about sex and power in encounters between men and women in atmospheric, accessible settings across the UK.

Each cantata tells a story from the Old Testament, with recitative and 3 or 4 short arias. In each piece the singer, like all the best storytellers, moves between telling us a tale, and taking on the voice and perspective of the different characters: girls, women, husbands, fathers, Kings. Full of character, story and emotion, they are baroque operas but smaller, using only beguiling music and the skill of the performer to draw us in. They have never been presented by an opera company before, and we're excited to develop them for the stage in new English translations by Toria Banks. We are currently in the process of casting the roles of Judith and Susanne, and are looking forward to making an announcement on this soon.

**We're now launching an open call to find a soprano/mezzo-soprano to play Rachel, a continuo player, and the director for this project. Each opportunity comes with additional professional development support for the artist from the producing partners.**

**We value diverse perspectives and would like to receive applications from a broad range of artists, including disabled and neurodivergent people. We are committed to making these opportunities as inclusive and accessible as possible, including – but not only – by budgeting for access costs.**

You can listen to a recording of the cantatas on Spotify [here](#).

**Who are we looking for?****Soprano/Mezzo-soprano:**

playing age in 20s

vocal range: D4-G5

role: Storyteller/Rachel, Jacob, Laban

*Jacob and Rachel is a story of frustration, sexual and otherwise. Jacob has worked for seven years for Rachel's father Laban, to buy Rachel as his wife. But on his wedding night, he is tricked into marrying her older sister Leah instead, and asked to work a further seven years to earn Rachel as a second bride. Rachel, a passionate young woman, is not consulted. Left narrating her own life, her feelings force their way out in music.*

**Continuo player:**

We are looking for an instrumentalist who

- plays cello, viola da gamba, theorbo or harpsichord to a professional standard
- is interested in developing their skills as a continuo player
- would benefit from mentoring or career support (for any reason)

**Director:**

We are looking for a director who

- will bring a distinct style/voice to the project
- with experience of directing in any medium (opera or otherwise)
- is interested in integrating access into performance
- would benefit from mentoring and career support (for any reason)

**Mentoring and Artist Development**

As part of Dunedin Consort's support for early career musicians, the selected continuo player will receive additional mentorship and guidance.

Hera will support the selected singer with coaching from internationally-acclaimed mezzo-soprano Linda Hirst, and by arranging career mentoring tailored to their needs.

Mahogany Opera Group's Artistic Director Frederic Wake-Walker will support the director during the project, and provide career guidance and mentoring.

**Schedule**

**18 – 22 June 2023:** Rehearsals at Lanternhouse, Cumbernauld

**23 June:** Performance at Universal Hall, Findhorn

**24 June:** Performance at Platform, Glasgow

**25 June:** Performance at Assembly Roxy, Edinburgh

**Performances at major UK festivals on 7/8/9 July tbc and 12 July**

*NB Successful candidates will need to guarantee availability for these dates; NAs will not be granted.*

## Fees

Fees are above MU/ITC minimums, and you are welcome to contact us in advance of applying to find out more about our fee proposals. All travel and accommodation will be covered during the project

## How to apply

To apply please submit:

- EITHER a written statement, no more than one side of A4 OR a video/audio recording of up to 3 minutes explaining why you'd like to be part of this project.
- A CV
- **For singers:** one (1) recording of around five minutes of you performing (this can be video or audio and doesn't need to be professionally recorded). We would like to hear something baroque—possible composers could include, but are not limited to, Barbara Strozzi, Francesca Caccini, Claudio Monteverdi, Henry Purcell, George Frideric Handel. We will use these recordings to make a shortlist for live auditions.
- **For instrumentalists:** one (1) recording of around five minutes of you performing (this can be video or audio, doesn't need to be professionally recorded, and could be a standalone work or contrasting movements). We would like to hear something baroque—possible composers could include, but are not limited to, Antonio Vivaldi, Claudio Monteverdi, Henry Purcell, George Frideric Handel, François Couperin. We will use these recordings to make a shortlist for live auditions.
- **For directors:** links to two projects or pieces of work you've been part of that help evidence your working style and methods. This could be video, or other forms of documentation e.g. websites, photos, press.

Please send to Bridget Rennie at Mahogany Opera [bridget@mahoganyopera.co.uk](mailto:bridget@mahoganyopera.co.uk) by **9am on Friday 5 August**. To enable us to monitor the diversity of the candidates we are attracting, we also ask all applicants to complete our anonymous diversity monitoring form; this can be done online here: <https://forms.gle/jpozgtNTLaJA7o858>

- We will make a shortlist, and notify all applicants by the end of Friday 19<sup>th</sup> August.
- Auditions for singers and instrumentalists will take place on Friday 9 September (London) and Monday 12 September (Edinburgh).
  - For singers, we will ask you to prepare two pieces: one baroque aria and recitative (different to the recording sent with your application), and one folk song. One of these pieces should be sung in English.
  - For instrumentalists, we ask will you to prepare two pieces of baroque repertoire of your choice.
  - An accompanist will be provided.

- You can choose the location most convenient to you.
- Some travel bursaries are available.
- Director interviews will take place online on Wednesday 14 September.
- We will hold auditions in accessible venues.
- Please let us know after shortlisting if you have any access queries about the auditions or interviews.

### **About Dunedin Consort**

[Dunedin Consort](#) is one of the world's leading Baroque ensembles, recognised for its vivid and insightful performances and recordings. Its ambition is to allow listeners to hear early music afresh, and to couple an inquisitive approach to historical performance with a commitment to commissioning and performing new music. Under the direction of John Butt, the ensemble has earned two coveted Gramophone Awards, a BBC Music Magazine Award, and a Grammy nomination. In 2021 it was the recipient of the Royal Philharmonic Society Ensemble Award.

### **About HERA**

[HERA](#) shares music and stories you haven't heard before, online and across the UK. Founded in 2018 by Toria Banks, Linda Hirst and Simone Ibbett-Brown, Hera celebrates women and gender-minoritised artists past and present, young and old in inclusive, accessible performances. Recent work includes Amble Skuse's "astonishing" digital opera, 'We Ask These Questions of Everybody' (5\*, The I).

### **About Mahogany Opera**

[Mahogany Opera](#) is a leading commissioner and producer of new opera and music theatre. Since 2014, we have created 19 new commissions and toured them extensively across the UK and internationally, receiving many accolades and awards for our boundary-pushing and inclusive work. Our 2021 co-commission with Dunedin Consort, 'Dido's Ghost' by Errollyn Wallen, was presented at the Barbican, Buxton International Festival and Edinburgh International Festival, receiving 5\* reviews.