

## In The Belly of the Beast

Carolyn Sampson, Mariana Rodrigues, Dunedin

Consort

Sat 27th June | Metronome London

### In The Belly of the Beast (2026)

Three biblical cantatas by Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre (1665–1729)

#### Adam, Jonah, Jephthah

English libretto by Toria Banks after Antoine Houdar de la Motte (1672–1731)

#### Carolyn Sampson

Adam

#### Mariana Rodrigues

Jonah

Carolyn Sampson  
& Mariana Rodrigues  
Jephthah

#### Liam Byrne

Musical Director/Viola da  
Gamba

Lynda Sayce  
Theorbo

Alice Earll  
Violin

Toria Banks  
Librettist

Jennifer Fletcher  
Director

#### Ben Moon

Lighting Designer &  
Projection Artist

#### Ingrid Hu

Scenography & Costume  
Design (Jerwood Opera  
Designer

#### Louis Gulliver King

Production Manager

#### Kylie Skye Sullivan

Company Stage Manager

Chantal Short & Louise  
Frame

Costume Supervisors

#### Alex Crombie-Rodgers

Set Construction

#### Bridget Rennie

Producer

*In the Belly of the Beast* is a co-production between Dunedin Consort, Hera, and Mahogany Opera

## Carolyn Sampson

The 2024 Gramophone Artist of the Year Award Winner Carolyn Sampson has enjoyed notable successes in the UK as well as throughout Europe and the US and is as equally at home on the concert and opera stages. Opera roles include: the title role in *Semele* and *Pamina* in *The Magic Flute* (English National Opera); various roles in Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* (Glyndebourne Festival Opera); and both *Anne Truelove* in *The Rake's Progress* and *Mélisande* in *Pelléas et Mélisande* (Sir David McVicar productions, Scottish Opera). Internationally she has appeared at Opéra de Paris, Opéra de Lille, Opéra de Montpellier and Opéra National du Rhin. She sang the title role in Lully's *Psyché* for the Boston Early Music Festival, which was released on CD and nominated for a Grammy. Carolyn's concert engagements in the UK include appearances at the BBC Proms, and with orchestras including Britten Sinfonia, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, English Concert, Hallé, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, The Sixteen, and Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

## Mariana Rodrigues

*"Singing with a crystalline beauty that would tame any savage beast"* (The Times), Portuguese soprano Mariana Rodrigues holds an MA with Distinction from the Royal Academy of Music in London, where she was awarded a DipRAM for outstanding final recital in 2025. She was a soloist for Academy Song Circle, Resounding Shores, and Bach in Leipzig series. Winner of the Isabel Jay Memorial Prize, Edna Bralesford Vocal Prize, Regency Award and the Flora Nielsen Prize, her recent engagements include a double song recital debut at the Royal Albert Hall with her duo Chantefable, soloist in the *Cripta de la Sagrada Familia* and *Palau de la Música Catalana*.

Young Artist Programmes for the 25/26 season include Leeds Song YA, BREMF Emerging Artist, Vache Baroque James Bowman YA, Bachcelona AKADEMIE, first ever Concertist Fellow with Oxford Bach Soloists, and

Next Generation Artist with Sestina Music.  
Mariana is the recipient of the Salvat Grant for Baroque Music 2026.

[www.mariana-rodrigues.com](http://www.mariana-rodrigues.com)

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## Jennifer Banks

Jennifer originally trained as a dancer at Laban and has worked on creative teams internationally for the last 17 years. She is a director, writer and choreographer working across theatre, opera and film. Selected credits include; Death of a Salesman (Staatstheater Mainz, Germany); The Elixir of Love (English Touring Opera); Wipeout (C-scape/Off the Wall Aerial/ National Maritime Museum); Shirley (Nova/Sherman Theatre); I Am Kevin & Stranger Beasts (Wildworks), The Tempest & Much Ado About Nothing (Grosvenor Park Open Air Theatre); Sorry You're Not a Winner (Paines Plough/TRP/Bristol Old Vic); The Beggar's Opera & Secret Seven (Storyhouse); Don Giovanni (Longborough Festival Opera); Semele (Mid Wales Opera); As Long As the Heart Beats (National Theatre Wales); Outlying Islands (Atticist/Jermyn St Theatre); Anna Bella Eema (Atticist/Arcola Theatre); SAP (Paines Plough Roundabout/Atticist); Little Deaths (Summerhall); The Snow Child and Jason & the Argonauts (Unicorn Theatre).

Alongside her work directing, Jennifer co-writes musicals with composer Harry Blake including The Sandman (Southwark Playhouse); Mermaids (in development with support from Theatre Royal Plymouth & National Theatre Studio); and is currently developing an immersive sound work with Agnieszka Blonska mentored by Gareth Fry. She also works as a dramaturg in dance, most regularly for Cathy Waller Company (You & Us - UK tour and How Much is Enough? - DanceAbility in Baku, Azerbaijan) and Morvell Dance. Jennifer is a double award winning film director for Drog Ew Genev vy. My a'th Kar (Screen Cornwall/ Lightbox Films) & On This Occasion. She was Associate artist at Theatre Royal Plymouth 2023-24 and won the Gorsedh Award for the St. Just Ordinalia alongside the wider team. This summer she has two outdoor dance and aerial productions on tour (Wipeout & The Lost Words) and is choreographing TOTO - a new musical for young audiences at the Polka Theatre, London.

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## Toria Banks

Toria Banks is a writer, dramaturg and producer. She is Producer and Joint Artistic Director of Hera, an inclusive feminist opera company based in Kent, which she co-leads with Linda Hirst.

Toria's recent writing for opera includes: We Ask These Questions of Everybody, a digital opera created with composer Amble Skuse examining the UK disability benefits system; and interactive sci-fi opera Mostly Human, written with composer Alexis Bacon for performance on Twitch. She first created new English versions of the cantatas of Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre for the touring show Out of her Mouth, also co-produced with Dunedin Consort and Mahogany Opera. She was commissioned by Opera UpClose to make a new version of Haydn's Ariadne cantata in 2023, and is currently working on multiple projects with the company, including a new version of an 18th Century opera by a French woman for family audiences (to be announced soon). Earlier writing work in theatre includes three plays for Scottish rural touring (Theatre Hebrides, Rural Nations): "funny, observant, full of humanity" (Aberdeen Press and Journal). From 2006 to 2012 she worked as dramaturg to the renowned physical theatre director and clown teacher John Wright, working collaboratively to shape performance texts in the rehearsal room.

Herself an experienced acting teacher, Toria led the Foundation Acting programme at Arts Educational Schools London for five years (2009-14) and was Resident Director at Trinity Laban Conservatoire, working with opera singers in training, from 2009 to 2021. As a disabled artist and producer, she works to create accessible performances and working practices. Her producing work for Hera also includes Houseplants: a photo opera, commissioned by digital arts specialists The Space, and a UK tour of On an Endless Road by Francesca Le Lohe.

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## Ben Moon

Ben Moon is a live visual artist and lighting designer based in London. Ben studied for a BA in Fine Art and established himself as a live audio-visual artist, blending analogue video techniques with more contemporary programming methods.

Performing and exhibiting throughout Europe, Ben has worked and collaborated with artists including Andrew Weatherall, Loraine James, DJ Winggold, Zahed Sultan, Moon Zero and Cam Deas.

With a keen interest in the collaborative creative process and a fascination for creating abstract visual environments Ben subsequently transitioned to lighting design, working primarily in the world of contemporary dance. As a lighting designer, programmer, and tour re-lighter for dance and theatre productions Ben has worked extensively with choreographers including Léa Tirabasso, Eva Recacha, Lola Maury, Xenia Aidonopoulou, Sharon Eyal, Pagra Dance Company and As We Are Dance Company.

Recent credits include: *estranha forma* by Catarina Barbosa and *Attuning: Sensing Indian Dance* by Meera Patel.

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## Hera

Hera has presented inclusive, accessible opera by women and gender minority artists, past and present, on tour and online, becoming a significant new voice in UK opera. Hera is co-led by writer and director Toria Banks and veteran singer and teacher Linda Hirst. Intergenerational collaboration and support is central to all their work.

In 2021, Hera produced 'We Ask These Questions of Everybody' (Sound Festival, DadaFest), a digital, verbatim opera about the experience of disabled people in the UK, made by an all-disabled team: 'politically important and an artistic triumph' (The i). Since then, they've remained committed to online work. In 2023, 'Houseplants: a photo opera' (commissioned by The Space), explored the power of plants to help in moments of grief and change. Current project, 'Mostly Human', is an interactive, sci-fi opera for Twitch by American composer Alexis Bacon, developed in partnership with Michigan State University. Hera also champions the performance of existing dramatic music by women. Their first live show, 'Generation' (2019) featured a new commission from Cevanne Horrocks-Hopayian alongside the work of nine neglected composers from Wilhelmine von Bayreuth to Gabriella Ferrari. In 2023, they co-produced 'Out of Her Mouth' with Mahogany Opera and Dunedin Consort, touring new English versions of three (of the twelve) Cantates Biibliquies of Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre, in a production that reflected their commitment to daring, accessibility and quality. "Aware, accessible,

generous – and unapologetically foregrounding social and sexual politics, this is opening the gate instead of keeping it." (Art Muse)

A new strategic partnership with Opera UpClose will see a new production of an 18th Century fairytale opera for family audiences, and a major new co-commission for 2029.

[www.wearehera.uk](http://www.wearehera.uk)

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## Mahogany Opera

Mahogany Opera is a leading UK commissioner and producer of new opera and music theatre, working nationally and internationally. Our work focuses on developing high-quality new productions while broadening access to opera for audiences, participants and artists. We have over 25 years' experience of commissioning, producing and touring new work, and have built a strong reputation for artistic quality, collaboration and community engagement. Our work is shaped by a commitment to inclusive practice and to creating environments where people feel welcomed, valued and able to contribute. Since 2014, we have commissioned and toured more than 25 new works across the UK and internationally, partnering with prestigious venues and festivals including Barbican, Britten Pears Arts, Spitalfields Music, Edinburgh International Festival and Copenhagen Opera Festival.

[mahoganyopera.co.uk](http://mahoganyopera.co.uk)  
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