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UA68/9/1 Antony & Cleopatra

David Gibson
WKU Music
Iota Mu

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Western Kentucky University
and
Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia

present

David P. Gibson's

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

November 21 and 22, 1975
About the Composer:

David P. Gibson is a senior vocal music education major from Valley Station, Kentucky. As a member of the WKU Opera Theater, Mr. Gibson has appeared in the baritone role of Marcello in the 1975 production of Puccini’s La Bohème, as well as the title role of Verdi’s Rigoletto in the Spring 1973 production. Founder of the Bethany Players of Louisville, Mr. Gibson designed and directed both Lerner and Lowe’s Camelot and Gilbert and Sullivan’s The Mikado, for that organization. While at Western, Mr. Gibson has appeared as a soloist with the Western Choir and Choral Union, and has also participated in the Madrigal and Men’s Glee Club ensembles. In the fall of 1974 he was chosen the Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia-WKU Performer of the Semester, and in the spring of 1975 was selected a semi-finalist in the annual N.A.T.S. competition. Mr. Gibson is now serving as president of the Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Professional Music Fraternity. David P. Gibson is the son of Mr. & Mrs. Paul F. Gibson of Valley Station, Kentucky.

A Letter from the Composer

AFTER SILENCE, THAT WHICH COMES NEAREST TO EXPRESSING THE INEXPRESSIBLE IS MUSIC. – Aldous Huxley

Man is, at best, a fragile animal. He is far too often guided by his emotions rather than his senses and this trait has often brought him to inexpressible tragedy. Such is the case in Shakespeare’s magnificent play, ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA. Set against a backdrop of political intrigue, Shakespeare presents one of the greatest love stories of history in a profound work of five acts and thirty-seven scenes. The work which you will witness this evening is a chamber opera in two acts and eight scenes with a libretto composed of extractions from the play. Because of it’s brief chamber form, the opera will put aside the political events of the original play and present the love story only.

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA was commissioned by the Iota Mu chapter of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity on April 22, 1975. Since that time, I have had the task of completing the composition, designing and directing the production and conducting the performances. I have spent the last seven months testing my creative abilities, if there are such anomalies, and I now offer my work to you as an experiment, nothing more.

As you witness the production this evening, involve your imagination, for as Walt Whitman so aptly stated:

All music is what awakes from you when you are reminded by the instruments,
It is not the violins and the cornets, it is not the score of the baritone singer singing his sweet romanza, nor that of the men’s chorus, nor that of the women’s chorus.
It is nearer and further than they.

At this time I would like to express my thanks to the brothers of the Iota Mu chapter of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity for their sponsoring of this production, and to all those who are responsible for it’s presentation. Also, and it is with loving gratitude, I dedicate this opera to my parents, Mr. & Mrs. Paul F. Gibson and to my sister, Phyllis.

Sincerely,

David P. Gibson
The Iota Mu Chapter
of
Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity

Presents

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

An opera in two acts
libretto from the play by William Shakespeare
Music by David P. Gibson
with
additional ballet music by David A. Slinker

This production made possible by a grant from the Iota Mu Chapter of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity and the generous gifts of our patrons.

Conducted by .................................................. .David P. Gibson
Designed and Directed by ......................................... .David P. Gibson
Technical Adviser .................................................. John Campbell
Costume Mistress .................................................. Sherry McCoy
(Assisted by) ....................................................... Cheryl Preston
Stage Carpenter ................................................... Neil Overstreet
Publicity Chairman ................................................ David A. Slinker
Production Assistant ............................................ Dennis J. Preston
Program Cover Courtesy of ..................................... David A. Slinker
Photographs courtesy of ........................................ Alan Baker

Entire production in co-operation with Dr. Virgil Hale and the Western Kentucky University Opera Theater.
The Cast

(in order of appearance)

The Soldiers .................................................. Thomas Baker
                                  John Malone
                                  Dennis J. Preston
                                  Eddie Russell

Eros ............................................................. Larry Bush

Enobarbus ...................................................... Michael R. Dunn

The Women ..................................................... Pam Page
                                  Kathy Pratt
                                  Penny Pratt

Cleopatra ....................................................... Conra Hester

Antony ............................................................ Gerald Baker

Charmian ........................................................ Sherry McCoy

Iris ................................................................. Shelia Harris

Dancers ........................................................... Lucy Roach
                                  Angela Roach

The Messenger ................................................ Neil Overstreet

The Sailors .................................................... Marvin Daniels
                                  Joe Greenwell

THE ORCHESTRA

Flute – Frances Miranda
Clarinet – Deborah Pritchard
Bassoon – Deborah Miller
French Horn – Donald Martin

Trumpet – Robert Hare
          Michael Little

Piano – Beverly Williams

Organ – David Slinker

Percussion – David Small
WHO'S WHO

(in order of appearance)

Michael R. Dunn (Enobarbus) is a senior vocal major from Bowling Green, Kentucky. The bass-baritone is a member of the Western Kentucky University Choir, and Madrigals and has appeared as a soloist with the WKU Choral Union. Spring 1975 found Mr. Dunn semi-finalist in the annual N.A.T.S. competition and performing the role of Colline in the WKU Opera Theatre's production of La Boheme. Michael Dunn is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank R. Dunn of Bowling Green, Kentucky and a member of Phi Mu Alpha Fraternity.

Conra Hester (Cleopatra) is a senior vocal music education major from Louisville, Kentucky. While at Western Kentucky University, the soprano has appeared as a soloist with the WKU Choral Union and Opera Theatre, including solo work in the WKU performances of Handel’s Messiah, R. Vaughan-Williams Hodie and the leading role of Mimi in the 1975 production of Puccini's La Boheme. This past summer found Miss Hester in the cast of The Stephen Foster Story in Bardstown, Kentucky. Past honors include being chosen the Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia - WKU Performer of the Semester, Spring 1974 and placing first in her division at the 1975 N.A.T.S. Competition.

Gerald H. Baker (Antony) is a sophomore music education major originally from Erie, Pennsylvania. While in Pennsylvania, Mr. Baker attended Edinboro State College. 1973, found the baritone touring Europe with the America's Youth in Concert organization. Since becoming a Bowling Green resident in December of 1974, Mr. Baker has attended WKU where he has been a member of the Choir, Choral Union and Madrigals. Mr. Baker was chosen a semi-finalist in the Spring 1975 N.A.T.S. Competition, and has also appeared in the WKU Opera Theatre production of Puccini’s La Boheme. Mr. Baker is a member of Phi Mu Alpha Professional Music Fraternity and is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Alan L. Baker.

Sherry R. McCoy (Charmian) is a senior vocal music education major from Lexington, Kentucky. Miss McCoy is a member of the A Cappella Choir and Madrigals, was the alto soloist in the Choral Union's production of the Haydn Mass in the Time of War and appeared in the WKU Opera Theatre's production of La Boheme. The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil McCoy, the mezzo-soprano is also a member of Delta Omicron Professional Music Fraternity for women.

Sheila Lavern Harris (Iris) is a junior vocal music education major from Franklin, Kentucky. The soprano is a member of the A Cappella Choir, Madrigals and Choral Union and appeared in the Opera Theatre production of La Boheme. Miss Harris was elected a semi-finalist in the Spring N.A.T.S. competition. A member of Delta Omicron music fraternity, Miss Harris is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jessie Harris.
SYNOPSIS

Prologue
The Empire. Enobarbus, friend and comrade in arms of Antony, a Roman General, receives a letter from Caesar, ruler of Rome, condemning Antony’s affair with Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, in Alexandria. Enobarbus calls for Antony to leave his “lascivious wassails” and quickly return to Rome.

Act One
Scene 1
Cleopatra’s Palace. Following a romantic interlude between Antony and Cleopatra, Enobarbus arrives to persuade Antony to leave Alexandria and return to his duties in Rome. Cleopatra, overhearing part of the conversation, feigns illness and then explodes in anger in an attempt to persuade Antony to stay. Anger gives way to melancholy as a touching parting duct follows.

Scene 2
Cleopatra’s Palace. It is a hot Egyptian day and Cleopatra longs to be with her Antony. In the ensuing dialogue, she pictures Antony at war, first standing, then sitting, then walking, and finally on his horse. She believes she hears him calling her, “my serpent of old Nile”. Finally she takes a narcotic drug and calls for music to entertain her. Charmian and Iris, her two hand maidsens, entertain her with their singing, but being restless, Cleopatra soon calls for the dance. Following the dance, a messenger arrives from Rome bearing news of Antony. With great difficulty, Cleopatra learns that Antony has married Caesar’s sister in an attempt to attain peace.

Scene 3
Antony’s Barge. As the scene opens, the men are singing a rousing drinking song. Soon Enobarbus and Eros, Antony’s shield bearer, are left alone standing watch. In the following dialogue, Eros remarks that Antony’s marriage will surely keep him from Cleopatra. Enobarbus states that Antony, in his weakness, will indeed return to Cleopatra. He goes on to describe Antony’s first sight of Cleopatra, sailing up the Nile in all of her glory on her golden barge. Overhearing the dialogue, Antony mentally relives that historic first meeting. As a vision of Cleopatra appears, calling him to her, Antony realizes he must return to Alexandria.

Act Two
Scene 1
The battlefield at Actium. Outside Antony’s tent, his soldiers are gathering on the hillside in preparation for their oncoming battle with Caesar’s troops. Antony and Cleopatra come forth from Antony’s tent at which time he declares that they will fight by sea. Enobarbus attempts to discourage Antony’s insistence upon a sea battle, stating that his men and ships are not seaworthy. At this time Cleopatra offers her own sixty ships to assist him. The couple embrace with a final farewell kiss before the battle.

Intermezzo
During this brief orchestral interlude Antony is defeated at Actium when Cleopatra, afraid of personal defeat, deserts Antony, leaving him easy prey for Caesar’s mighty ships.

Scene 2
Antony’s tent. Alone, Antony despairs in his defeat at Actium. Cleopatra enters greeted by Antony’s wrath. Throwing her to the ground, he curses her for her betrayal.
Astonished, Cleopatra begs Charmian's help. Charmian advises Cleopatra to go to her monument and send Antony word that she has killed herself.

Scene 3

Antony's tent. Antony, disguised by this own actions proclaims that even the land bids him "tread no more upon it." Charmian enters and tells him that Cleopatra has killed herself. Antony states that he will soon join her in death and charges Enobarbus to kill him. Enobarbus and Antony commit suicide as the scene ends.

Scene 4

The Monument. Antony's body has been brought to Cleopatra's monument and she is petrified at the sight. Realizing that it was her own lie which brought this tragedy about, Cleopatra prepares for her suicide. After being dressed in her royal robes, Cleopatra bids farewell to Charmian and Iris. In her grief, Iris dies of a broken heart. Cleopatra removes an asp from a basket and applies it to her breast, calling for Charmian to observe her peace with her "baby at her breast." Drawing a dagger, Charmian kills herself, as Cleopatra falls dead across Antony's body.

PATRONS

Gertrude E. Bale
Mr. and Mrs. Alan L. Baker
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Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Pfanerstill
Edward and Betty Pease
Mr. and Mrs. Doug Van Fleet
Anonymous (In honor of Mr. and Mrs. William L. Miller)

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Dr. Virgil Hale, Director WKU Opera Theatre
Dr. Wayne Hobbs, Department Head-WKU Music Department
Judy Hunt, Costumes — WKU Theatre Department
Dr. William Leonard — WKU Theatre Department