

NEC Undergraduate Opera Studio
presents

Henry Purcell's
Dido and Aeneas

Libretto by Nahum Tate

Steven Goldstein, Stage Director
Justin Williams, Music Director
Ga-Young Park, Rehearsal Pianist, harpsichord
Jonathan Fuller, cello
Ellie DeLucia, Costume Designer
Molly Beall, Lighting Designer
Laura McPherson, Scenic Painter
Miguel Ferreira, Technical Director
Em Bonnici, Stage Manager
Spencer Bailen, Assistant Stage Manager
Úna Rafferty, Production and Administrative Director for Opera, Voice and
Collaborative Piano

Michael Meraw, UGOS Artistic Director

Friday and Saturday, March 28 and 29, 2025
7:30 p.m.
Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre

Welcome to the Undergraduate Opera Studio's production of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. This is a time defying drama that has been performed in opera houses both big and small. I always look forward to presenting this work and hope that you fall in love with it as I have. The students always bring something special to this story of the ill-fated love between Dido and Aeneas. The confrontation between them near the end of the opera is one of the most dramatic such confrontations found in any opera of any time. I pray thee, enjoy!!

– Michael Meraw

CAST

Friday

Daniela Pyne	DIDO
Yumeng Xing	BELINDA
Rachel Solyn	SECOND WOMAN
McLain Weaver	AENEAS
Yoomin Kang	SORCERESS
Jialin Han	FIRST WITCH
Nancy Schoen	SECOND WITCH
Valentine Umeh	SAILOR
Baian Chen	SPIRIT

Chorus: Aislin Alancheril, Emelia Boydston-Torres, Xingyan Chen, Yerim Colin,
Molly Knight, Nancy Schoen, Valentine Umeh

Saturday

Anna Poltronieri Tang	DIDO
Gia Cellucci	BELINDA
Anjulie Djearam	SECOND WOMAN
Yerim Colin	AENEAS
Emelia Boydston-Torres	SORCERESS
Ivy Evers	FIRST WITCH
Hannah Miller	SECOND WITCH
Valentine Umeh	SAILOR
Baian Chen	SPIRIT

Chorus: Aislin Alancheril, Xingyan Chen, Yoomin Kang, Molly Knight,
Nancy Schoen, Valentine Umeh, McLain Weaver

Director's Summary

The story of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* has its roots in the events described in the *Aeneid* by Virgil. Dido, Queen of Carthage, still mourning the loss of her first husband, meets Aeneas the Trojan hero on his way to Italy to found the new city of Rome. Dido's lady-in-waiting convinces Dido to allow Aeneas to woo her. In Purcell's opera, we move to a scene of the Sorceress and the Witches who, because of their hatred of all those in power, vow to bring Dido down and Carthage with her. Dido, Aeneas, and their retinue take a break from a hunt in a beautiful spot, and are entertained by a telling of the story of Diana and Actaeon. The Witches conjure a storm to drive Dido back to the palace, and the Sorceress makes her "elf" appear to Aeneas as Mercury who reminds him to follow Jove's command and set sail for Italy. The third act starts with bawdy song of the sailors as they prepare to leave and the Witches enjoyment of their plan. Aeneas enters to tell Dido he must leave, and even after he tells her he'll disobey Jove's command and stay, she tells him to go because he even thought about breaking his promise and leaving her. Aeneas goes, and Dido kills herself with Aeneas' own sword/knife, and then is burned on a pyre, the flames of which Aeneas can see as he sails to Latium.

– *Steven Goldstein*

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