

CONTACT:
Christina Kellogg 510.643.6714
ckellogg@calperformances.org
Rusty Barnes 510.642.9121
rbarnes@calperformances.org

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**18TH-CENTURY OPERATIC RIVALRY EXPLORED AS
VENICE BAROQUE ORCHESTRA AND COUNTERTENOR
PHILIPPE JAROUSKY PERFORM WORKS OF PORPORA
AND HANDEL, FEBRUARY 7 AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

**Academic discussion of the high male voice in music to be held
at UC Berkeley on the afternoon of Friday, February 7**

BERKELEY, January 15, 2014—Works for *castrati* take the spotlight when Venice Baroque Orchestra and French countertenor Philippe Jaroussky stage “A Legendary Battle: Farinelli & Porpora vs. Carestini & Handel” at [Cal Performances](#) on Friday, February 7, at 8:00 p.m. in First Congregational Church. The concert will explore the period from 1733 to 1736, when Porpora and Handel each led opera companies in London and created new works featuring the *castrato* voice. Porpora composed works for his student Farinelli, while Handel wrote for Giovanni Carestini. The Venice Baroque Orchestra is acclaimed for its “percolating energy and lithe, silvery tone” (*The Washington Post*) and Jaroussky is admired for his “pure, boyishly radiant voice and admirable coloratura technique” (*The New York Times*). This is the orchestra’s first appearance at Cal Performances, and Jaroussky’s first appearance since his 2011 Berkeley debut. Many of the works on this concert appear on “Jaroussky/Farinelli: Porpora Arias,” Jaroussky’s new album featuring the Venice Baroque Orchestra and famed mezzo-soprano Cecilia Bartoli, to be released in the United States on January 28, 2014.

In a related [Education & Community Event](#), professors James Davies and Mary Ann Smart of the UC Berkeley Department of Music will lead a discussion about countertenor repertoire, *castrati* and *travesti* roles, and the high male voice in pop music today. The discussion will be held on Friday, December 7 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 125 of Morrison Hall on the UC Berkeley campus.

The Berkeley program performed by Venice Baroque Orchestra and Philippe Jaroussky will mix purely instrumental works by Porpora and Handel with arias written for *castrati* from several of the composers’ operas. The concert opens with the overture from Porpora’s 1732

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opera *Il Germanico*, followed by Porpora arias from *Arianna e Teseo* (1727) and *Semiramide riconosciuta* (1739). A Handel Concerto Grosso will be followed by two arias from the composer's 1735 opera *Alcina*. After an intermission, two Handel arias—from *Oreste* (1734) and *Ariodante* (1735)—will be followed by a different Handel Concerto Grosso. The concert will conclude with two arias from Porpora's 1735 opera *Polifemo*.

The [Venice Baroque Orchestra](#), founded in 1997 by scholar and harpsichordist [Andrea Marcon](#), is widely praised as one of the world's top period instrument ensembles. The orchestra has presented modern-day premieres of rediscovered works by Cavalli, Vivaldi, Marcello, and Boccherini, made several award-winning recordings, and appeared in concert halls, on radio and television broadcasts, and in films worldwide.

[Philippe Jaroussky](#) began his musical training as a violinist and holds a diploma in violin performance from the Paris Conservatory. He began vocal studies in 1996 and was soon one of the most prominent countertenors on the world stage. In addition to singing with orchestras, ensembles, and opera companies worldwide, Jaroussky has made several award-winning recordings and founded L'ensemble Artaserse, a small period-instrument group that plays and has recorded widely.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for Venice Baroque Orchestra and Philippe Jaroussky, countertenor on Friday, February 7 at 8:00 p.m. in First Congregational Church are \$68.00 and are subject to change. Half-price tickets are available for UC Berkeley students. Tickets are available through the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, at (510) 642-9988, at <http://www.calperformances.org>, and at the door. For more information about discounts, go to <http://calperformances.org/buy/discounts.php>.

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Cal Performances thanks Wells Fargo and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for their major support of the 2013—2014 Season.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Friday, February 7, at 4:30 p.m.
Discussion

125 Morrison Hall, UC Berkeley campus
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley

Program: A discussion of the high male voice in music will be led by professors James Davies and Mary Ann Smart of the UC Berkeley Department of Music.

Tickets: This Discover and Engage event is free and open to the public.

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Friday, February 7, at 8:00 p.m.

First Congregational Church
Channing Way at Dana Street, Berkeley

Early Music

Venice Baroque Orchestra
Philippe Jaroussky, countertenor

Program:

A Legendary Battle: Farinelli & Porpora vs. Carestini & Handel

Porpora/Overture from *Il Germanico*

Porpora/Mira in cielo (from *Arianna e Teseo*)

Porpora/Si pietoso il tuo labbro (from *Semiramide riconosciuta*)

Handel/Concerto Grosso in A minor, Op. 6 No. 4

Handel/Mi lusinga il dolce affetto (from *Alcina*)

Handel/Sta nell'ircana (from *Alcina*)

Handel/Agitato da fiere tempeste (from *Oreste*)

Handel/Scherza infida (from *Ariodante*)

Handel/Concerto Grosso in G major, Op. 6 No.1, HWV 319

Porpora/Alto Giove (from *Polifemo*)

Porpora/Nell'attendere il mio bene (from *Polifemo*)

Tickets are \$68.00 and are subject to change. They are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, at (510) 642-9988, at calperformances.org, and at the door.

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