



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 27, 2007

Cornish Music Series Presents *Dido & Aeneas*

SEATTLE, WA – Cornish College of the Arts Music Series in collaboration with the Performance Production Department presents *Dido and Aeneas*, an opera by the English Baroque composer Henry Purcell. The opera tells the story of Dido, the legendary Queen of Carthage, and Aeneas, the Trojan refugee, who fall in love when Aeneas and his crew become shipwrecked in Carthage. Stage direction and choreography is provided by Cornish Dance Professor Gérard Théorêt and musical direction is provided by Cornish Associate Music Professor Natalie Lerch. Cornish students Vanessa Ament and Sage Price play the roles of Dido and Aeneas.

Dido & Aeneas

March 29 - 31, 8 pm

PONCHO Concert Hall at Kerry Hall, 710 East Roy Street, Seattle

Tickets: \$15 general; \$7.50 students, alumni and seniors

For tickets contact Ticket Window at (206) 325.6500, www.ticketwindowonline.com or at Ticket Window box offices located at Pacific Place, Broadway Market, Pike Place Market, Bellevue's Meydenbauer Center

About Gérard Théorêt

Cornish Professor Gérard Théorêt has been performing, teaching, choreographing and directing classical and contemporary styles of theatre and dance for over 25 years. He has worked for stage, film and television and has worked with world renowned directors and choreographers including Hal Prince, Agnes de Mille, Hans van Manen, John Neville, Ann Reinking, and Gillian Lynne. Théorêt has danced in principal roles with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and has acted on London's Young Vic Theatre and Canada's Stratford Festival stages. He served as Ballet Master for the International Opera Federation in Japan and also served as Associate Resident Director for *The Phantom of the Opera* for six years. He is on faculty and has been Associate Director on productions of The Banff Centre's *Opera As Theatre Program*. In Seattle, he has choreographed for Spectrum Dance Theatre, ARC Dance Productions and the *Festival of Men In Dance* of which he is also a founding member and co-producer. Professor Théorêt teaches Ballet, Ballet Partnering, Male Technique and Jazz at Cornish College of the Arts.

About Natalie Lerch

Associate Cornish Professor Dr. Natalie Lerch received her doctorate from the Eastman School of Music in May 2002, focusing on Voice Performance and Literature with an emphasis in Opera Direction. She began teaching at Cornish in Fall 2001, where her classes range from Musical Theatre Workshop, English, Italian, French and German diction for singers. She was the vocal coach for *Into the Woods* (2002), and provided musical direction for *Closer Than Ever* (2003) and *Hansel and Gretel* (2004). Lerch has performed a variety of roles onstage including Mrs. Grose in *The Turn of the Screw*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, Miss Pinkerton in *The Old Maid and the Thief*, Lenny in *Crimes of the Heart* and Nancy in *Oliver*. She has also performed professionally with Columbus Light Opera, Opera!Columbus, The Reality Theatre, the Norman Luboff Touring Choir and Spotlight Dinner Theatre. Masterclass performances include singing for Renee Fleming, Julianne Baird and Dale Moore. Natalie has sung in Monteverdi's *Orfeo* in Italy and with the Jazz Ensemble at the Federal University in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. This summer, Lerch will be singing with the Berkshire Choral Festival in Canterbury, England. And, currently Natalie Lerch is an Associate Professor at Cornish and teaches Voice, Diction, Musical Theater and Opera.

About Cornish College of the Arts

Cornish College of the Arts provides aspiring artists with the educational opportunities to become professionals in their fields. The College offers Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees in Art, Dance, Design, Performance Production and Theater, and a Bachelor of Music degree. It is one of three private colleges in the United States focusing on both the performing and visual arts, and the only college of its kind in the Northwest. The College is accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, and the National Association of Schools of Art and Design and has a national reputation for its faculty, curriculum, and student performance and exhibition opportunities.

Since its founding by Nellie Cornish in 1914, Cornish College of the Arts has contributed to the nation's cultural and intellectual heritage through its alumni and faculty. Historically, these figures include choreographers and dancers Merce Cunningham, Martha Graham, Syvilla Fort and Bonnie Bird; composer John Cage; painters Mark Tobey, William Cumming, and William Ivey; photographer Imogen Cunningham; educator Calvin B. Cady and broadcaster Chet Huntley, to name just a few. More recently these figures are joined by Brendan Fraser (film actor), Patrick Haskett (painter), Steve Jenson (sculptor), Paul Owen Lewis (illustrator), Lois Rathvon McCarter (dancer/choreographer), Eyvind Kang (violinist/composer), Jarrad Powell and Joshua Kohl (composers). And, the College continues to represent the Northwest's largest concentration of professional artists dedicated to instruction.

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