

Seeking Antonia

A constructed opera on a hidden life.



Kallisti

Susan Narucki, Artistic Director
Kyle Adam Blair, Music Director
Adrian Chan, Joseph Garcia, Elizabeth Fisher,
Jonathan Nussman, Kirsten Ashley Wiest,
Hillary Jean Young, Julia Yu

UC San Diego

ARTS AND HUMANITIES
Music

kallisti presents

Seeking Antonia
a constructed opera on a hidden life

May 8, 10 and 11, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.
Conrad Prebys Music Center Experimental Theater

KALLISTI

Susan Narucki, Artistic Director

Kyle Adam Blair, Music Director

Justin Beets, Lighting Design

Nancy Chao, Video Design

Jessica C. Flores, Set Design

Stacie Logue, Costume Design

Peter Herman, Wigmaster

Rita Navarro, Production Stage Manager

Sam Englander, Assistant Costume Design

Arlene Banuelos, Light Board/Projections Operator

CAST

Adrian Chan, baritone

Joseph Garcia, tenor

Elizabeth Fisher, soprano

Jonathan Nussman, baritone

Kirsten Ashley Wiest, soprano

Hillary Jean Young, soprano

Julia Yu, soprano

MUSICIANS

Kyle Adam Blair, harpsichord

Alex Greenbaum, cello

Batya MacAdam-Somer, violin

Healy Henderson, violin

Seeking Antonia

<i>Habbis pieta di me</i>	Hillary Jean Young	Antonia Bembo
<i>Psalm XXXI</i> (excerpt)	Entire cast	Antonia Bembo
<i>Tota pulchra es</i>	Kirsten Ashley Wiest	Antonia Bembo
<i>Amor mio</i>	Kirsten Ashley Wiest Hillary Jean Young	Antonia Bembo
<i>Lungi dal Patrio</i>	Jonathan Nussman	Antonia Bembo
<i>Lamento della Vergine</i>	Kirsten Ashley Wiest	Antonia Bembo
<i>Psalm XXXI</i> (from <i>The Seven Penitential Psalms</i>)	Elizabeth Fisher Julia Yu Joseph Garcia Adrian Chan	Antonia Bembo
<i>Ha, que l'absence</i>	Hillary Jean Young	Antonia Bembo

Program Note

Under Abbess Giulia Marchiori (1673-1676) Antonia Padoani, commoner, wife of the nobleman Lorenzo Bembo, deposited at the convent jewels, pearls, and furniture, of which there is a list. There is nothing remarkable about it, except for a silver-lined reliquary. The inventory was made on March 30, 1685. Antonia had a daughter, Diana Bembo, a nun at Santa Maria dell'Orazione.

Antonia went to Paris, where she died between 1683 and 1685. We do not know what motivated her to go.
- Emmanuele Cicogna,
Delle iscrizioni veneziane (1824)

Antonia Padoani Bembo (1640-1720) was a singer and composer whose remarkable life and work has been largely overlooked. Born in Venice into a family of middle-class professionals, she studied with Francesco Cavalli, one of the most prominent musicians of the day. Bembo demonstrated a remarkable talent for singing, which brought her to the attention of the French aristocracy during her physician father's search for a position at court.

After her tragic marriage to the Venetian nobleman Lorenzo Bembo left her in ruin, she fled to Paris with a group of virtuoso musicians, to seek the patronage of Louis XIV. She was offered protection in a Parisian cloister, and during her decades in residence there, produced a unique body of work for solo and multiple voices that was a direct reflection of music of the high Italian Baroque and which, in later years, incorporated elements of the new *galante* style that was emerging in France.

Despite the fact that Antonia Bembo regularly had her music played at court, and collaborated with some of the most distinguished artists of the day, including the poet Elisabeth Sophie Chéron, none of her works were published during her lifetime.

What little we know about Bembo's life comes to us through indirect evidence: her wedding contract and her petition for divorce, lists of household goods that she deposited at a convent for safe keeping, a schedule of the daily activities of the religious order in which she lived and worked for the last forty years of her life.

We also have a glimpse of Bembo's life through the letters her physician father wrote in order to obtain a position at court, in which her talent for singing is touted as a bargaining chip.

In addition, we have the manuscript of *Produzione Armoniche* (1701). Dedicated to King Louis XIV, *Produzione Armoniche* is an extensive collection of works for voice on both secular and sacred texts, in Latin, Italian and French. It contains short love songs with simple

accompaniment, extended solo arias, and works for multiple voices. In Bembo's inscription, she alludes to the circumstances of her life and offers profuse gratitude.

Through the patronage of King Louis XIV, Bembo, a married woman, abandoned her unhappy marriage and found support for her work as a composer. She could take that risk, but the risk did not extend to bringing her children with her. Bembo left her daughter Diana in the care of Abbess Guilia Marchiori, providing for Diana's support through the eventual sale of goods and jewelry from her household.

Seeking Antonia weaves together texts from family letters, inscriptions from musical manuscripts, and concert works for voice from Bembo's compositions, including her *Produzione Armoniche*, and *Psalms XXXI* for virtuoso vocal quartet, from one of her mature masterworks, *The Seven Penitential Psalms*. In our program, we present of concert works re-envisioned as dramatic, staged works; toward this end, *Seeking Antonia* aligns with the efforts of other opera companies re-envisioning the genre in the 21st century. Finally, I am greatly indebted to the research of the musicologist Claire Fontijn, whose excellent *Desperate Measures: The Life and Music of Antonia Padoani Bembo* was an invaluable resource for the project.

My deepest thanks to the extraordinary group that has made this production a reality: our singers, production and creative team and musicians. It is my hope that *Seeking Antonia* can, in some small way, bring the life and work of this singular composer back into view.

-Susan Narucki

About the Artists

Baritone **Adrian Chan** is a fourth year undergraduate student pursuing a major in vocal performance at UC San Diego. He currently studies under Dr. Hillary Jean Young, and has previously studied under Professor Philip Larson. Adrian has previously appeared onstage as David in Samuel Barber's *A Hand of Bridge*, the Prince in Peter Maxwell Davis's *Cinderella*, and as part of the ensemble in Pedro Calderón de la Barca's *Life is a Dream*. Adrian also directs music for *Duly Noted*, a co-ed a capella group on campus. He would like to thank his friends and family for their support, as well as *kallisti* for this wonderful opportunity.

Soprano **Lizze Fisher** is a second year student of the University of California, San Diego, studying vocal performance and anthropology. Lizze pursues a career in vocal performance and non-profit management and intends to travel around the world to learn about different vocal music styles that people are passionate about. Previous roles in opera include Geradine in Samuel Barber's *Hand Of Bridge* and the Cat in Peter Maxwell Davis's *Cinderella*. Lizze is also the President of UCSD's bold & beautiful, premiere, all-women's acapella group,

Daughters of Triton. She plans to attend the CoOPERative Program at the Westminster Choir College this July to study opera performance and will be singing as La Perichole in the Undergraduate Opera production this June.

Tenor **Joseph Garcia** is a 3rd year undergraduate vocalist, studying under Phil Larson, Susan Narucki, and Dr. Hillary Jean Young. He is a member and frequent soloist with the UCSD Chamber Singers, and member of the La Jolla Symphony Chorus. Joseph is currently preparing for his junior recital on May 18th as well as the role of Léon for the undergraduate opera's production of Pasatieri's *Signor Deluso*. Joseph's interests include choral music, art song, and chamber music for voice.

Jonathan Nussman is a baritone whose varied interests include opera, theater, and art song, with a special emphasis on music from the 20th and 21st centuries. Appearances include San Diego Opera, Opera Boston, Guerilla Opera, Juventas New Music Ensemble, Cape Cod Opera, the Cambridge Symphony Orchestra, Bodhi Tree Concerts, the La Jolla Symphony and soundSCAPE New Music Festival. As a performer of contemporary and experimental works, he frequently premieres pieces by composers from around the world, as well as his own original compositions. In addition to originating prominent roles in over twenty world-premiere operas and theatrical works, he has performed extensively in more traditional repertoire, with notable roles including Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Count Almaviva (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Larry Foreman (*The Cradle Will Rock*), and Sid (*Albert Herring*). He is originally from Charlotte, North Carolina, and is currently a candidate for a doctoral degree in contemporary vocal performance at UC San Diego.

Award-winning coloratura soprano, **Kirsten Ashley Wiest**'s "bright, dazzling vocal technique" (San Diego Story) has captured the attention of composers worldwide, resulting in numerous world premiere performances including works by Gérard Pape, James Erber, Jeffrey Holmes, Jack Van Zandt, and Veronika Krausas, among many others. Kirsten has sung as a soloist with the Grammy-winning Partch ensemble, HEAR NOW Music Festival, La Jolla Symphony, YMF Debut Orchestra, MiraCosta Symphony, the Industry, Musica Vitale, wild Up new music collective, and numerous other groups. She has presented solo recitals on concert series hosted by Harvey Mudd College, MONK Space, and Chapman University, and frequently records for interactive operatic experiences, installations, film scores, and other musical releases. A DMA candidate at UCSD under the guidance

of Susan Narucki, Kirsten holds an MFA from California Institute of the Arts and a BM cum laude from Chapman University's Conservatory of Music. More information: www.kirstenashleywiest.com

Dr. Hillary Jean Young is happiest when they are making music amongst friends. Hillary's eclectic creative practice involves a diverse range of projects, including new opera, contemporary chamber music, devised dance theatre work, experimental pop music, curation, and more. Hillary has performed across North America and Europe in a variety of roles; as a soloist at Zipper Hall (LA), as the title role in *The Cunning Little Vixen* at the Krusnohorske Divadlo Teplice (CZ), as one half of their queercore performance art duo, masc4masc, at Club Didi (Lethbridge, AB), and as the premiere performer of their friends' compositions at the University of California, San Diego, to name a few. Reoccurring themes in Hillary's research and creative work include queerness, gendered and ungendered voices, vocal fry, technological intervention, personal history and queer temporality, and the early Internet. Under the tutelage of Susan Narucki, Hillary recently earned their Doctor of Musical Arts in Contemporary Music Performance from UCSD.

Julia Yu is currently a second year undergraduate student at UC San Diego pursuing majors in both cognitive behavioral neuroscience and vocal performance. She started singing when she was five years old, and when she was 15, she was invited to sing at Carnegie Hall after winning 2nd place in the Golden Voices of America competition. She currently studies under graduate student Dr. Hillary Jean Young, and has also studied under Professor Philip Larson. Julia is very excited to be participating in kallisti's *Seeking Antonia*; at the end of this spring quarter, she will be featured as Celie in Thomas Pasatieri's *Signor Deluso* under the guidance of Kirsten Ashley Wiest in the undergraduate vocal masterclass spring opera production.

Creative Team & Production

Susan Narucki (Artistic Director) For over three decades, American soprano Susan Narucki has forged a unique path; her dedication to the music of our time has led to award winning recordings, critically acclaimed performances with musicians of the first rank and close collaborations with generations of composers. Since joining the faculty at the University of California at San Diego in 2008, she has been deeply engaged in commissioning, producing

and performing chamber operas that illuminate critical issues in society. Her projects have earned major philanthropic support from the MAP Fund /Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, UC MEXUS, Creative Capital Foundation, New Music USA and multiple awards from the National Endowment for the Arts. In December 2018, she was appointed Director of Art and Community Engagement, a new program housed within the Institute for the Arts and Humanities at UC San Diego.

Kyle Adam Blair, (Music Director) D.M.A. is an active pianist, music director, and vocal coach, specializing in the performance of American contemporary art music. His major focuses include the performance of both new works in collaboration with composers and works from the American art music repertory of the 20th and 21st centuries. Blair's passion for text and theatre often leads him into collaborations with actors, singers, and dancers. He has often worked closely with the *kallisti* vocal ensemble in the creation of contemporary operatic projects, most recently the premieres of Lei Liang's *Inheritance* and Stephen Lewis's *Noon at Dusk*. Blair has been a mainstay within the acclaimed Department of Theatre and Dance at UC San Diego for many years; musically directing new faculty-written musicals, composing music for new plays written by graduate student playwrights, or playing a role as an on-stage performer in Lisa Peterson's *An Iliad* and Sarah Ruhl's *Eurydice*.

Justin Beets (Lighting Design) is a Lighting Designer/Painter/Assistant Extraordinaire. This is his first Design in the Music Department, and is ecstatic to join the team. Lighting is a feeling painting. www.JustinBeets.com

Arlene Banuelos (ROLE) is a third-year majoring in Communication and minoring in Theatre. Previous roles include Muir Musical: Stagehand (*Spring Awakening*), ASM (*Jesus Christ Superstar*) and SM (*tick,tick BOOM!*). Other credits: ASM (*Pinkalicious*) as well as various shows for UCSD's Music Dept. as Stage Crew and Light Board Op.

Nancy Chao (Video/Projection Design) is a scenic and video designer, who recently graduated from UCSD. She has designed Set and Video for *Peer Gynt* (2018) and *The Skriker* (2018), Set for *She Kills Monsters* (2017) at UCSD. She was also an Assistant Video Projection and Scenic Designer for Telematics: San Diego, Seoul, NYC (2018), and Video Programmer for *Inheritance* (2018). She is thrilled to be a part of *Seeking Antonia*.

Samantha Englander (Assistant Costume Designer) is a fourth year undergrad student majoring in Clinical Psychology and minoring in Theatre. UCSD Credits: *The Jefferson Middle School Monthly* (CD); *Dry Land* (CD); *Hairspray* (CD); *Our Town* (CD); *The Skriker* (CD); *Jesus Christ Superstar* (CD); *She Kills Monsters* (CD); *Everybody Black* (ACD); *Peer Gynt* (ACD); *Taming of the Shrew(d)* (ACD); *Spring Awakening* (ACD); *Anansi, the Story King* (ACD); *Gruesome Playground Injuries* (ACD). North Coast Rep Theatre: *Spamalot* (CD).

Stacie Louge (Costume Designer) is very happy to be working with the UCSD Music Dept. *Seeking Anotnia* is her first design project with UCSD. Other productions Stacie has designed were for UCSB Music Dept including *The Coronation of Poppea*, *The Tender Land* & *Così fan Tutte*. Stacie works with Opera Santa Barbara as their costume manager. Other companies she has worked for include Central City Opera Festival, The Music Academy of the West, The Rubicon Theatre, The Geffen Theater, The Wallis Annenberg Theatre. Stacie is a native to southern California and graduated from CSULA with a BA in Fine Art.

Rita Navarro (Production Stage Manager) is a recent graduate of UCSD where she studied cognitive science & linguistics. UCSD Credits: *Inheritance* (SM), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (SM), *Spring Awakening* (ASM), *In The Heights* (PA & Props Master) & *Legally Blonde* (Scenic Designer). Other: *Beauty And The Beast* (SM; Moonlight Youth Theater), *In The Heights* (SM; Patio Playhouse) & *Pinkalicious* (SM; Kelrik Productions). She would like to thank her cast and team for all their hard work and hopes you enjoy the performance!

Musicians

Batya MacAdam-Somer is an eclectic violinist, violist and vocalist, involved in classical, avant-garde, folk, and popular music practices. She is an active member of the artistic community in her home base of San Diego, CA and works frequently with organizations San Diego New Music and the Art of Élan. She has also been a guest collaborator with contemporary music ensembles such as wasteLAnd, wildUP, Ensemble Pamplemousse, and the Bang On A Can All Stars. Her festival appearances include the Ojai Music Festival, Lucerne Festival Academy and Aspen Music Festival. Batya is a member of Quartet Nouveau, a string quartet presenting classical and contemporary chamber music throughout Southern California. She is also thrilled to be a founding member of Baby Bushka, an eight piece

all female band celebrating the music of Kate Bush. Batya earned her Bachelors Degree from the Manhattan School of Music and her Masters and Doctorate from the University of California, San Diego.

Born in New York, cellist **Alex Greenbaum** enjoys a diverse and adventurous musical life. As a member of the Hausmann Quartet he is an Artist-in-residence at San Diego State University, where he teaches cello and chamber music. A long-time member of The Knights, he has performed and recorded with the group throughout the U.S. and Europe, including the festivals of Caramoor, Dresden, Ojai, Ravinia, Tanglewood, Salzburg and this season returned to Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie and Vienna's Musikverein. He is a founding member of San Diego Baroque, an affiliated artist with San Diego New Music, a mainstay on the Art of Élan series and appears regularly with Bach Collegium San Diego. His varied interests have led to recordings for film, television and commercials, collaborations with dance companies and performances throughout Mexico. He lives in North Park.

Violinist **Healy Henderson** is a graduate of the Peabody Conservatory. She performs regularly with the San Diego Symphony and Opera and has been Concertmaster for more than 30 theater production in San Diego, including The La Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe and Broadway San Diego. She also maintains a large teaching studio for violin and viola students ranging in age from 5-92.

Special Thanks to:

University of California San Diego

Divisions of Arts and Humanities

Cristina Della Coletta, Dean

Department of Music

David Borgo, Chair

Barbara L. Jackson, Chief Administrative Officer

Linda Higgins, Fiscal Manager

Elizabeth Cuevas, Fiscal Assistant

Brady Baker, Facilities Assistant

Neal Bociek, Facilities Manager

Jessica C. Floers, Production Manager

Jeremy Olson, Theatrical Production Specialist

Peter Ko, Mark Geddes, & Robert Bray, Production Technicians

Andrew Munsey, Recording Engineer

Micheal Butler, Recording Engineer

Recording Assistants: Martin Chapman, Xochilt Khoury, Forest Reid, Christopher

Robinson, & Salvador Zamora

Alexis Negrón, Marketing & Promotions Coordinator

Olivia Baaten & Justin Palor, Box Office Leads

Madison Greenstone, Program Associate

The San Diego Opera Scenic Studio

Contact us for information on upcoming concerts:

Music Box Office: (858) 534-3448 | <http://music.ucsd.edu/concerts>

Audience members are reminded to please silence all phones and noise-generating devices before the performance, and to remain seated during the performance. As a matter of courtesy and copyright law, no unauthorized recording or photography is allowed in the hall. UC San Diego is a non-smoking campus.