Programme of the day

10.00 – 10.20 Welcome from Alexandra Wilson and Anna Barry; coffee

SESSION 1: Instruments and Puppets

10.20 – 10.40 Lewis Jones (London Metropolitan University): 'The Alien and his Instruments: Giuseppe Naldi on Stage, at Home, and in Death'

10.40 – 11.00 Hayley Fenn (Harvard University): 'Voice-Objects: Marionette Opera, Sound Technologies, and the Poetics of Synchronization'

11.00 – 11.15 Discussion

SESSION 2: Personal Possessions

11.20 – 11.40 Anna Maria Barry (Oxford Brookes University): 'Locating Singers in the Archive: Interpreting Personal Possessions'

11.40 – 12.00 Clair Rowden (University of Cardiff): 'Glitter and be Gay: A Singer's Jewels'

12.00 – 12.15 Discussion

12.20 – 13.30 Lunch (own arrangements)

SESSION 3: Notes and Memories

13.30 – 13.50 Carrie Churnside (Birmingham Conservatoire): '"Memorie per la mia pastorale": Personal Accounts of Opera, c. 1700'

13.50 –14.10 Michael Burden (New College, Oxford): 'Ruling the Roost: Louisa Pyne's 'Rules and Regulations' for running an opera company'

14.10 – 14.30 Henrike Rost (Musikwissenschaftliches Seminar Detmold/Paderborn, Universität Paderborn): 'Autograph Albums as Operatic Objects'

14.30 – 14.45 Discussion

14.45 – 15.15 Tea break

SESSION 4: Paraphernalia and Place

15.20 – 15.40 Matteo Paoletti (Genoa) 'A Collection to be Saved: Pipein Gamba, Master of the Italian Belle Époque'

15.40 – 16.00 Mark Tatlow (University of Stockholm): 'The 18th century Theatre of Drottningholm as 21st century Operatic Object'

16.00 – 16.15 Discussion

16.15 – 16.30 Closing comments

Abstracts (in programme order)

Lewis Jones (London Metropolitan University): 'The Alien and his instruments: Giuseppe Naldi on stage, at home, and in death'

Following university education in law and an operatic career throughout Italy (1792-1803) and then in Lisbon (1803-06), Giuseppe Naldi (1770-1820) flourished as *primo uomo buffo* at the King's Theatre, London. Although now perhaps best known for his part in the introduction of Mozart's operas to London, where he was the first Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* (1811), Papageno in *Il flauto magico* (1811, for his benefit), Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro* (1812), and Leporello in *Don Giovanni* (1817), he appeared in nearly 40 operas there, ranging from Piccinni's *La buona figliuola* (1760) to Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (1816).

From 19th June 1806, Naldi appeared frequently in *Il fanatico per la musica*, a London version of Johann Simon Mayr's farsa per musica, *Che originali!* (1798), initially with Elizabeth Billington and then with Angelica Catalani (1807, etc.), in whose conversion to comic opera Naldi and the role of Aristea were crucial, and Teresa Bertinotti Radicati (1811). A capable instrumentalist – also poet, composer, maker of burlettas, and teacher – Naldi delighted in enlivening the role of the eponymous musicomane by displaying his talents on the violoncello, the pianoforte, the guitar, and, in Dublin, the angelica, giving rise to the composition of insertion arias and other additions and adaptations featuring his chosen instruments.

This paper considers the use of instruments on the early nineteenth-century London opera stage, their use by prominent singers, and the significance of Naldi's use of them in the particular case of *Il fanatico.* Naldi's status as a commissioner and collector of instruments of the highest quality is assessed in the context of an exceptionally detailed record of his material possessions.

Hayley Fenn (Harvard University): 'Voice-Objects: Marionette Opera, Sound Technologies, and the Poetics of Synchronization'

The objects traditionally associated with the opera house function primarily as framing devices. From stage machinery and the instruments of the orchestra to program booklets and opera glasses, these all serve to objectify the singer, making them central to both the acoustic and visual experience of opera. What happens, though, when objects take the frame, displacing the singers from their usual spots center-stage? One such example is marionette opera.

As an aesthetic experience, marionette opera is a phenomenological paradox: when marionettes sing opera, *they* of course sing nothing at all. Due to their apparent muteness, scholars have rendered marionettes vehicles of primarily visual expression. To consider the marionette mute, however, is to misunderstand the nature of their vocality. In contemporary performances, the specific human singer is displaced by a multi-part performance network involving several distinct media and material objects: the marionette, an unseen puppeteer, a unique backstage architecture, a recorded singer, and a sound system. Out of this audio-visual assemblage materializes a voice-object that confounds conventional binaries.

In this paper, I unmute the marionette through analyses of recent productions and performances of *Die Zauberflöte* that I attended in Austria and Germany. I argue that the performance network fundamental to marionette opera generates a poetics of synchronization from which the complex vocalities associated with these non-singing singers emerge. In so doing, I provide a novel and necessary lens onto perennially slippery issues in opera studies (such as voice, phenomenology, and staging) that are current touchstones in musicological inquiries concerning music's materiality.

Anna Maria Barry (Oxford Brookes University): 'Locating Singers in the Archive: Interpreting Personal Possessions'

What might personal possessions tell us about the lives and careers of singers? This paper will attempt to answer this question by examining the archives of two British opera singers of the nineteenth-century: John Braham (1777-1856) and Sir Charles Santley (1834-1922).

Both singers left significant archives of operatic objects, which include diaries, albums, jewellery, art works, medals and even (in Santley's case) such personal effects as a smoking pipe. But as well as being interesting curiosities, these objects have the potential to inform a scholarly understanding of Braham's and Santley's careers.

The absence of source material is a problem inherent in the study of historic singers whose careers pre-dated recording technology and, in many cases, photography. Musicologists have instead tended to rely on reviews and written accounts in order to build an understanding of operatic careers. Singers themselves also lamented their inability to leave a concrete legacy to posterity: Charles Santley said that the singer's art was "a picture written on air".

This paper will argue that operatic objects offer us (and offered singers) an opportunity to fill this void. It will analyse a number of objects from the collections in question, demonstrating their ability to shed light on the status, networks and careers of Braham and Santley. It will also consider the limitations and potential problems of working with such items, before concluding with a consideration of how these operatic objects might be best employed in the context of exhibitions.

Clair Rowden (University of Cardiff): 'Glitter and be gay: a singer's jewels'

Beyond the tales of Marguerite drawing from Faust's jewel box a river of diamonds which were a gift to the singer, jewellery was an essential element of the international female singer's career throughout the nineteenth century. Whether received as unofficial part payment, or as a gift from opera subscribers or a local monarch, a diva's diamonds conferred not merely financial wealth but power and status. But what did women do with these treasured gifts and how did they consider them? Did their monetary value outweigh the status symbol? Did they sell them, or pawn them, and in what circumstances? If they retained them, how and why did they keep them? If they wore them, in what fashion did they do so? Did they wear them on stage or merely for society occasions? Inextricably linked to a singer's material wealth, and thus frequently subject

to the turbulent political upheavals of the time when fortunes could be won and lost in a short space of time, jewellery and the way in which it is viewed, used and displayed forms an intriguing case study in the search for operatic objects. Through the study of archival documents, memoirs, letters, press cuttings, biographical writing and images, this paper is a first attempt to bring together some detail of what hides behind the bling.

Carrie Churnside (Birmingham Conservatoire): '"Memorie per la mia pastorale": Personal Accounts of Opera c.1700'

The Bolognese aristocrat Count Pirro Albergati (1663-1735) was an avid fan of music, a *dilettante* composer and important patron. The Albergati archive, now housed in Bologna's state archive, contains a wealth of documents relating to his musical activity. Of particular interest are two diaries, written in his own hand, which detail his experience of staging two operas: his own *Gli amici* (Bologna, 1699) and Pier Paolo Laurenti's *Li diporti d'amor in villa* (Bologna, 1710) (the account for the latter is unfortunately incomplete). These two documents provide a rich source of information on the practicalities of mounting an operatic production at the time, from the large-scale (such as hiring singers and set designers, organising rehearsals and recruiting an audience) to the more mundane, yet equally crucial, considerations of ensuring that there is adequate lighting and someone to guide the audience to their seats. But the documents go beyond simply listing arrangements and costs to provide an insight into Albergati's own experience, charting his feelings about the highs and lows of life as an impresario. As such, these two diaries are objects that allow a unique insight into operatic life at the time.

Michael Burden (New College, Oxford): 'Ruling the Roost: Louisa Pyne's "Rules and Regulations" for running an opera company'

My operatic object is a set of rules, 33 to be precise, that regulated the behaviour of the singers employed by the Royal English Opera Company. The company was founded by the soprano Louisa Pyne, who was a model of gentility and decorum, at least most of the time; when she was present at a railway accident in New Orleans, the Company was staggered when a flask of brandy was produced from her basket to minister to the wounded passenger.

But Pyne was an iron fist inside a velvet glove, or, as illustrations suggest, a lace mitten. Singers contracted received the printed set of rules - in at least one surviving case with their contract stuck to them – which ranged from regulation of lateness, to rehearsal expectations, to behavior during performances. Failure to observe them resulted in financial penalties, sometimes of quite startling severity; addressing the audience without permission, for example, resulted in a three-week docking of salary, or cancellation of the performer's engagement.

This paper will examine Pyne's 'Rules and Regulations' in the context of other such objects, including the only surviving copy of Edmund Waters multi-lingual 1816 'Rules' for London's King's Theatre, and will show the relative importance of such transgressions in the workings of the opera company. *The only surviving copy of Pyne's* Rules and Regulations *(with Charles Santley's contract attached) will be brought to the session.*

Henrike Rost (Musikwissenschaftliches Seminar Detmold/Paderborn, Universität Paderborn): 'Autograph Albums as Operatic Objects: Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient's "Stammbuch"'

Autograph albums – or "Stammbücher" as they are called in German – represent a nineteenth-century practice of cultural and social interaction that was widespread both within and beyond the German-speaking parts of Europe. They should thus be considered a European and transnational phenomenon. Countless pages and albums, in the form of elaborately decorated books, were created as a lasting reminder of shared experiences and social gatherings – also in operatic contexts. They affirmed ties of friendship, and furthermore preserved the most culturally significant social and artistic connections for posterity. Autograph albums were widespread among musicians, artists, poets, composers, singers, and music and art lovers. They were kept by both sexes and, in musical circles, contained hand-written music, music-related comments, and music-related drawings and paintings. I consider the autograph album to be an important attribute of the sociability of the nineteenth century. In biographical research, it represents an invaluable resource for reconstructing musical and cultural networks, one that has up to now been very largely neglected. In my paper, I would like to examine the "Stammbuch" belonging to the German opera singer Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient in its material dimension and meaning as an operatic object.

Matteo Paoletti (Genoa): 'A collection to be saved: Pipein Gamba, master of Italian belle époque'

Illustrator, humorist, costume and set designer, Giuseppe Garuti (1868-1954) is one of the most eclectic and prolific artists of the Italian liberty. Known under the stage-name of Pipein Gamba, he worked for the major theatres in Italy, such as the Teatro alla Scala in Milan, La Fenice in Venice, Carlo Felice in Genoa, and also for the Colón in Buenos Aires. Garuti starts his career at a very young age and soon becomes famous for illustrating the best-selling adventure books of Emilio Salgari. In 1903 Pipein Gamba starts his activity as costume designer for the most important company of operetta of his time, the "Giulio Marchetti", where he collaborates for almost a decade with the celebrity Caramba (Giulio Sapelli). In 1910 Pipein Gamba is engaged by La Scala and links his name to a wide range of operas, from Wagner to Dukas. Shortly after he designs the costumes for the world première of *El sueño de alma* by López Buchardo, the first Argentinian opera to be set in the Colón. Back in Genoa, Pipein Gamba works as designer and stage director for the Teatro Carlo Felice: he describes his job in an unpublished handbook for operatic directors, which represents a rare example of handbook for early "régisseur" in Italy. After the war the aestethics of opera changes and Pipein Gamba is seldom engaged by major opera houses. However the artist keeps living close to the Teatro Carlo Felice, designing costumes for private parties and carnivals until the late 1920s. Gamba also writes an unpublished history of operetta in Italy.

The artist Pipein Gamba produces a wide collection of operatic objects. However, is the man Giuseppe Garuti who surprises for his activity of massive collector: his home-studio becomes a sort of messy museum with thousands of costumes, figures, illustrations and any kind of objects referred to opera and operetta. In 1939 Pipein Gamba donates to the Municipality of Genoa his

collection of 50.000 pieces. Even though a exhibition in the 1980s brought some of them to light, after 77 years the Pipein Gamba collection is still partially inventoried and locked in a warehouse. It can only seldom be visited by scholars due to burocratic issues, indifference of the administration and shortage of funds. The collection represents a treasure for studies in the fields of opera and theatre: the international relevance of the conference organised by Oxford Brookes University may enlight the archive once again and contribute to save one of the most important collections of operatic paraphernalia in Italy.

Mark Tatlow (University of Stockholm): 'The 18th century theatre of Drottningholm as 21st century operatic object'

In 1766 Lovisa Ulrika, sister of Frederick the Great and consort of the Swedish King Adolf Fredrik, commissioned a summer theatre at the Palace of Drottningholm, just outside Stockholm. Her son, Gustav III, made extensive use of the theatre until his assassination at a *ballo in maschera* at the Stockholm Opera in 1792. The Drottningholm theatre gradually fell into disuse and was only rediscovered - as an almost forgotten theatrical object - in 1923. Since then it has achieved iconic status as the only 18th century theatre that has neither been burnt down, nor destroyed, nor successively modernised, even though it has witnessed the vicissitudes of contradictory 20th century performance traditions. In this paper I will suggest that the theatre of Drottningholm, which is both a historical space, an artefact, and an archetypal operatic object, is unique in the quality and quantity of the information encoded within it. Is it possible, or even desirable, to actualise this tacit knowledge today, within a performance culture that rejects many of the practical and aesthetic principles Drottningholm encapsulates? After a brief illustrated introduction to the building itself I will discuss some of the kinds of knowledge the theatre seems to reveal about the performing of the operatic event in the late 18th century. These will include the relationship between stage, pit and auditorium, in terms of singers/actors, musicians and audience. In conclusion I will briefly compare Drottningholm with the faithfully reconstructed theatre at Český Krumlov (Czech republic), also built in 1766.