

NEWSLETTER of the American Handel Society

Volume XXXVII, Number 1

Spring 2022

HANDEL HOUSE RESTORATION

Ellen T. Harris

Handel & Hendrix in London, encompassing Handel's house, Jimi Hendrix's flat (apartment), and exhibition and event space, closed its doors at the end of September 2021 for the final restoration of Handel's house. This will include the ground floor with Handel's front and back parlors, the basement kitchen with lightwell onto Brook Street, the restoration of the brick façade to the sidewalk (pavement in British terminology), and the use of the front door on Brook Street to enter the museum. It is projected that this renovation will be completed in time to reopen the museum in spring of 2023 as a celebration of the 300th anniversary of Handel's moving in. I like to refer to this restoration as "opening Handel's front door." Handel & Hendrix calls it "The Hallelujah Project," which gives some sense of the road that led to this moment over the course of the museum's twenty-year history.

When the Handel House Museum opened its doors in 2001, it had been able to acquire only the upper floors of Handel's house (25 Brook Street) and the attached house on its east side (23 Brook Street). The opening up of these adjoining houses on the second and third floors (American style) allowed Handel's rooms to be restored to their original form, using the highest level of historical restoration, while 23 Brook Street was used for rotating exhibits, a costume room, and, in the garret, the museum offices without impinging on the rooms in which Handel lived. The inventory of Handel's house, taken in the summer after Handel died, provided information about more



Handel's bedroom in Handel House. Photo courtesy of Handel House Trust.

continued on p. 2

THE ENGLISH CONCERT PERFORMS *ALCINA*

Graydon Beeks

In early November 2021 LA Opera hosted the English Concert under the direction of Harry Bicket in two performances of *Alcina* as part of their return to America following cancellations caused by the COVID pandemic. These performances were what might be termed "lightly staged," with the singers in concert dress performing from memory, acting with complete engagement, and interacting with each other as they would on stage. The result was an outstanding musical and dramatic interpretation of Handel's opera, with a single *caveat* that will appear at the end of this review.



*Karina Gauvin as Alcina and Paula Murrihy as Ruggiero.
Photo credit: Lawrence K. Ho / LA Opera.*

continued on p. 3

IN THIS ISSUE

Handel House Restoration – Ellen T. Harris
The English Concert Performs Alcina – Graydon Beeks
From The President's Desk – Graydon Beeks
The J. Merrill Knapp Research Fellowship Winner
Handel Prize Winner 2002
New Website
Call For Papers & Call For Applications
Recent Publications & Upcoming Events