

On this week's WCPE Opera House, please join me for George Frideric Handel's *Faramondo*, a story about the legendary King of the Franks. Set to a libretto by Apostolo Zeno, *Il Faramondo* was first performed in Venice on December 27, 1698 to music by Carlo Francesco Pollarolo. In 1719 Francesco Gasparini produced a considerably revised version of the opera in Rome, and it was this version, after further removing about half the recitatives, that Handel used. Handel's *Faramondo* was first performed at the King's Theatre, London, on January 3, 1738.

Based on a mythical tale of the early Frankish kingdoms, *Faramondo* concerns Gustavo, King of the Cimbrians (baritone **Peter Castildi**), who believes his son Sveno to have been killed by Faramondo, King of the Franks (mezzo-soprano **D'Anna Fortunato** in a "trouser" role). Gustavo's daughter Rosimonda (mezzo-soprano **Jennifer Lane**) has feelings for Faramondo and his son Adolfo (soprano **Mary Ellen Callahan** in another "trouser" role) has the hots for Faramondo's sister Clotilde (soprano **Julianne Baird**), thus Gustavo's hapless attempts to spur his children into taking revenge for Sveno's death are doomed to failure.

**Rudolf Palmer** conducts the Brewer Chamber Orchestra in this 1996 Vox Classics recording, CD number 7536.

Here's "Caro/cara, tu mi accendi nel mio core," the Act III duet for Clotilde and Adolfo, sung by **Sophie Karthäuser & Philippe Jaroussky**: <https://youtu.be/ldX50GemrM0>.

As a bonus, we'll hear soprano **Dorothea Röschmann** sing "Quel torrente ch s'innalza" from Handel's *Giustino*.

*Bob Chapman*

**W. Robert Chapman, Host of the Thursday Night Opera House**