

# *The Art of Gesture for Singers and Actors*

*Helga M Hill OAM*

This is an in depth introductory program that has been used successfully since written in 1998. Presented by Helga Hill at the Early Music Studio (University of Melbourne) from 1999 to 2009, it provided the gestural component of the University's 2006 production of Eccles' *Judgment of Paris*, the *Scarlatti Project* at Sydney Conservatorium in 2010 and the St Michael's Grammar School presentation of Blow's *Venus and Adonis* in 2011. More recently, it has been the foundation of the *Arianna Gesture Project* at the University of South Australia.

## **AIMS OF COURSE**

Essentially, this is not a coaching program. Instead, it aims to provide a thorough grounding in the Art of Gesture. At the conclusion of the course participants are expected to comprehend the spirit and philosophy of the art, to be aware of its basic rules and reasonably fluent in its performance. Practical use of the notation system in Austin's *Chironomia* will be developed. The course will enable participants to plan, notate and present gestured works.

## **ADMISSION**

Prior to admission, intending participants will meet with Helga Hill at Middle Park to discuss aims of the program and the benefits it will offer. Three works (poems or arias including recit. or dramatic excerpts, etc.) should be brought to the meeting for possible use during the course. Shorter works from existing repertoire are recommended. Applicants will be required to sing or recite a small item at the interview.

## **PROGRAM**

Session	1	Introduction to gesture, historical background and sources.
Sessions	2-5	Technique classes.
Session	6	Individual tuition. Times to be arranged.
Session	7	Master class for participants – the whole group to attend.
Session	8	Master class for participants – all to attend.
Session	9	Revision and refinement.
Session	10	Presentation of items prepared by participants.

## **DETAILS 2013/14**

Only four participants are admitted to this program each time. Classes are conducted on ten Saturday mornings at the Early Arts Guild Centre in Middle Park. A fee of \$350 is required to be paid in advance. For dates, times and other information, 'phone **03 9699 8417**. Call the same number to be placed on the course waiting list

## **SOURCES**

This program is based on a wide variety of sources including *Chironomia*, Austin (England, 1806), *The Art of Gesture – the Principles and Practices of 18<sup>th</sup> Century Acting*, Barnett (Germany, 1987), and *Gesticulatie en Mimiek*, Jelgerhuis (Holland, 1827).