

Integrated Historic Arts

Helga Hill OAM

“At an early stage I realized that the performance of early dance music without a team of dancers on stage was an incongruity. Such dancers would have to wear as-original period garments because their design and weight often curtailed dance movements. And, if the dancers were to be in costume, musicians, singers and actors on stage must do the same if the old world panorama, so much appreciated by modern audiences, was to be maintained. For singers and actors there was an additional requirement – fluent and appropriate use of historic gesture. Without gesture, early operas, songs and drama are but pale, and often spiritless, imitations of the past”.



In Melbourne Helga Hill is director of the Early Music Consort of Melbourne (founded in 1973), the Rippon Lea Renaissance Dancers (1976) and the Early Arts Guild of Victoria (1978). These teams are responsible for the following concert series –

Early Music in the Very Round (Bayside City Council) – six programs annually since 2000.

Renaissance Warragul (Early Arts Guild) – three programs annually since 2012.

Ballarat Renaissance (Art Gallery of Ballarat) – two programs, commencing 2016.

The Art of Gesture (Australia)

Helga Hill studied Gesture with the late Dene Barnett at Flinders University (SA) in 1989. She taught Gesture at the Early Music Studio, University of Melbourne, from 1998 to 2009. Her gestured (and directed) Australian projects included Eccles' *Judgment of Paris* (University of Melbourne, 2006), Scarlatti's *Fede, Idolatria e Furore* and *Il ratto di Proserpina* (Sydney Conservatorium, 2008) and Blow's *Venus and Adonis* (St Michael's Grammar School, Melbourne, 2011). She was involved in the filming of Monteverdi's *Lamento d'Arianna with historically informed rhetorical gesture*, directed by Dr Daniela Kaleva (University of South Australia, 2014).

Renaissance and Baroque Dance (Europe and New Zealand)

1977-87 Dance Director, Schloss Breiteneich (Austria) annual Renaissance Summer School.

1978 First of twelve courses in renaissance and baroque dance, New Zealand.

1979 First of eight annual renaissance dance courses in Sweden – various venues.

1987-89 Dance Director, Stift Geras (Austria) annual Renaissance Summer School.

1986-2008 Dance Director and stage movement and gesture advisor for annual early opera productions at Dartington (UK) International Summer School, with subsequent one-off productions being staged at the Festival of Flanders in Bruges, Schola Cantorum in Basle and at Queen Elizabeth Hall at Southbank in London.

In association with Dame Emma Kirkby and Anthony Rooley, Helga Hill has worked on the following operas and masques in Europe or at Wellington University, NZ – *The Squire Masque* (Davenant, 1614), *Britannia Triumphans* (Davenant/Lawes, 1683), *Cupid and Death* (Shirley, Locke, Gibbons, 1653), *Psyche* (Shadwell, Locke, 1675), *Venus & Adonis* (Blow, 1681), *The Fairy Queen* (Henry Purcell, 1692), *Judgment of Paris* (Eccles, 1701), *L'Orfeo* (Monteverdi, 1609), *Semele* (Eccles, 1707), *The Indian Queen* (Henry Purcell, 1695), *Dioclesion* (Henry Purcell, c1622), *Albion & Albanus* (Grabu, 1685), *Don Quixote* (Purcell, Eccles & others, 1690) and the oratorio *L'anime del Purgatorio* (Stradella, 1680).