

counter codex in association with The Tank presents

# ERATO

a baroque fetish fantasia

June 16, 7:00 pm | June 17, 9:30 pm

Jordan Rutter-Covatto, countertenor

Kevin Devine, harpsichord

Adam Young, cello

Jeremy Rhizor, violin

Nadir Aslam, violin

Margrét Hjaltested, viola



Prelude: La follia  
Arcangelo Corelli (1653–1713)

Overture from *La caduta dei Decemviri*  
Alessandro Scarlatti (1660–1725)

*La Calisto*: Act II, Scene 1  
Francesco Cavalli (1602–1676) & Giovanni Faustini (c. 1615–1651)

*La Cetra*: sonata number 10 for two violins and bass continuo  
Giovanni Legrenzi (1626–1690)

Quarto scherzo delle ariose vaghezze: “Si dolce è’l tormento”  
Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643) & Carlo Milanuzzi (c. 1590–1647), arr. Jordan Rutter-Covatto

Sonata for Lord “Billiards” Aylesford: II. Grazioso  
Felice de Giardini (1716–1796)

*Germanico in Germania*: “Qual turbine che scende”  
Nicola Porpora (1686–1788) & Nicola Coluzzi

intermission

“Ancor che col partire” alla bastarda  
Riccardo Rognoni (c. 1550–1620) after Cipriano de Rore (c. 1515–1565) & Alfonso d’Avalos (1502–1546)

*Rodelinda*: Act I, Scene X  
George Frideric Handel (1685–1759) & Nicola Francesco Haym (1678–1729)

Sonata no. 492  
Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757)

*Il Giustino*: “Vedrò con mio diletto”  
Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741) & Nicolò Beregan (1627–1713)

*L’arte del violino*: “Il labirinto armonico” I. Allegro  
Pietro Locatelli (1695–1764), arr. Jordan Rutter-Covatto

*Ariodante*: “Dover, giustizia, amor”  
George Frideric Handel & Anonymous

the artists

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Promotional photography by Austin Ruffer

Lighting design by Julian Singer-Corbin

Supertitles operation by Garrett Eucker

counter codex is:

Jordan Rutter-Covatto, co-founder and artistic director

Vincent Rutter-Covatto, co-founder and producer

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## ARTIST STATEMENT

During my time in New York's leather community, I've had the pleasure of meeting other leather folks who share my interest in the fine arts or professional colleagues who also find empowerment in the gestures of kink, leather, and sex positivity. For years, I've wanted to present work which expresses an axiom that is obvious to many: the beauty of the sacred and profane exists in both our sexual identities and in our art.

ERATO was originally inspired by the *Classic Meets Fetish* concert series in Berlin, in which local members of the leather and BDSM community would participate wearing gear from their personal collections. I wanted a more directly curated program that reflects not only members of New York City's LGBTQIA+ community but also speaks to the nature of desire and its relationship to identity, self-expression, and artistic vocation.

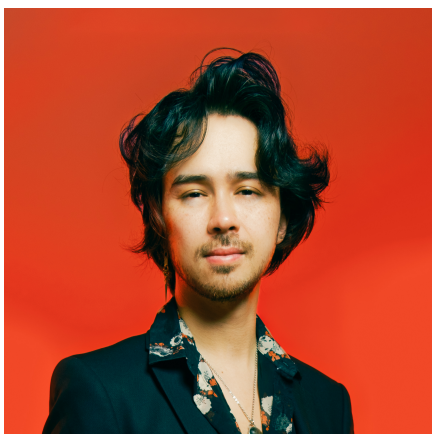
The decision to focus on Italian Baroque repertoire began as an aesthetic connection: many pieces of leather gear and equipment for kink play draws on Greco-Roman traditions from Centurion and Spartan imagery to implements like floggers and crosses. Additionally, aesthetics of Roman hedonism and violence appear frequently in histories of sexuality and in cultural representations like Jarman & Humfress's 1976 film *Sebastiane* and Frankie Goes to Hollywood's infamous music video for "Relax."

Conversely, Baroque music and particularly opera takes a fascination with duty over pleasure. For centuries, musicians working in the Western European tradition have worked to preserve stylistic convention, technical knowledge, and cultural values like restraint and devotion. These tensions make up many of the original plot lines of the works excerpted: Endymion vows to preserve Artemis's chastity at the expense of his mortal identity; Perctarit returns to his homeland to rescue his wife and son; Germanicus subdues his rival into relinquishing his territory.

Yet the tensions between duty and desire are represented artistically in opera itself. The gods Apollo and Dionysus - constantly at odds with one another in mythology - were said to rule over music and theater respectively. Similarly, the characters's desires burst out of the music that they express with weeping rhythms and melismatic flourishes of anger. It is this duality - Apollo and Dionysus, the head and the heart, the superego and the id - that drives us in our day to day lives.

Our internal contradictions are manifested outwardly in leather culture with its overt sensuality and iconography of discipline, pain and allure. It is for these reasons, notably beyond simple physical pleasure, that the aesthetics and practices of kink have continued to fascinate and inspire us cross-culturally and throughout human sexual history. However, while advances in sociopolitical standing for LGBTQIA+ Americans have granted us limited protections in polite society, our sexuality continues to be treated as something to be feared. Our bodies and desires cannot be separated from us; they are the source of the pain and pleasure that define who we are. ERATO invites you to experience desire as it exists: a multi-faceted embodiment of the peaks and valleys of life and love.

## THE ARTISTS



JORDAN RUTTER-COVATTO is an American countertenor based in New York City. Rutter-Covatto's practice combines virtuosic vocal technique with method acting processes and Baroque gesture to create performances lauded as "riveting ... frightening to behold" (Opera News, *The Turn of the Screw*, 1/5/20) and "[t]he best operatic moments" (WQXR, *Three Way*, 6/16/17).

Rutter-Covatto is a sought-after collaborator for contemporary operas and new music. They have worked as a soloist in the development of projects with The American Opera Project, Beth Morrison Projects, and American Lyric Theater in New York City. Rutter-Covatto created the role of Kyle in Robert Paterson's opera *Three Way* at Nashville Opera and Brooklyn Academy of Music, and can be heard on the original cast recording. A recent highlight of Rutter-Covatto's work was their company and role debut as Doodle in the second production of *The Scarlet Ibis* by Stefan Weisman and David Coté at Chicago Opera Theater. Additionally, Rutter-Covatto has worked in as a guest artist since 2018 in NYU Tisch's Opera Lab in which musical theater composers and librettists compose short operas based on contemporary topics including women's rights, climate change, the Stonewall riots, and reproductive rights.

A passionate performer of Baroque repertoire, Rutter-Covatto has performed in major works including Handel's *Messiah*, Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, and Scarlatti's *La Giuditta*. Rutter-Covatto has performed the role of the Sorceress in *Dido & Aeneas* with Hawaii Performing Arts Festival, covered it with Heartbeat Opera, and was set to perform it again with Cerddorion before the production's cancellation due to COVID-19. Additional highlights include selections of Schütz and Colonna in a holiday concert with La Fiocco, and scenes from Händel's operas in a series of pastiches co-curated with operamission.

Rutter-Covatto has also appeared in New York City's theater scene, working off-Broadway as an onstage musician for the English-language premiere of Lot Vekemans's *POISON* with Origin Theater Company in 2016 and creating the principal role of Clark in Johnny Lloyd's *birthday birthday birthday* with Columbia University's New Plays Festival in 2022.

Rutter-Covatto prides themselves on bringing classical music outside of its traditional boundaries, working with MET LiveArts in Mingwei Lee's *Sonic Blossoms*, singing Schubert Lieder for museum patrons. In 2017, Rutter-Covatto performed all four volumes of William Bolcom's *Cabaret Songs* at the historic cabaret in the Duplex bar in the West Village. They have worked with artists in residence at performance spaces including HERE Arts Center and FiveMyles in Brooklyn. In 2018, Rutter-Covatto was seen on the High Line as an artist in *the mile long opera* by David Lang.

Rutter-Covatto is a proud Vietnamese-American and member of the LGBTQ+ community and seeks to bring communities together through storytelling and shared experience.



New York-based violinist and violist NADIR ASLAM has built a diverse musical career both domestically and internationally. Nadir was named one of “The Innovators” in 2016 by Musical America and was nominated by 21st Century Medicine as a 2017 POP Pick for his work as co-founder of Mount Sinai Concerts, the baroque and classical music series at Mount Sinai Hospital in Manhattan. Nadir has performed with many early music groups, including La Fiocco, Grande Harmonie, Early Music Alberta, and MusicSources. He has also performed as part of the Anchorage Symphony Orchestra, Marin Symphony, and the United Philharmonic Orchestra in Vienna, along with multiple chamber music groups around the world. Committed to educational outreach, Nadir was awarded a grant from the U.S. State Department to serve as the music director of Proyecto Arte Antigua in Antigua, Guatemala for three years. He also served as guest artist and lecturer for Early Music Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta. Nadir

studied at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Vienna, earning his B.Mus. and M.Mus. degrees.

#### DR. KEVIN DEVINE

harpsichordist /hurdy-gurdyist /anti-capitalist

A passion for early music led Devine to the harpsichord and a passion for high fantasy brought him to the hurdy-gurdy. Among his most personal projects are recitals given in honor of Scott Ross commemorating 30 years since the luminary died from AIDS related complications and his work with ChamberQueer, which aims to queer the classical canon and humanize classical musicians.

Kevin is also looking to expand his work by stepping into the world of LGBTQIA+ advocacy, community engagement and support.



Violist MARGRÉT HJALTESTED enjoys a diverse career as a performer and teacher. Born in Reykjavík, Iceland, she is currently based in New York City. She is a founding member and co-director of the baroque ensemble, The Queens Consort, and a founding member of the Icelandic chamber group, Trió Fókus. As a baroque violist, Margrét has performed with The American Classical Orchestra, Concert Royal, Bach Vespers at Holy Trinity, and La Fiocco. She has played with many orchestras, including the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, the American Composers Orchestra, the Albany Symphony. Margrét has toured internationally with the New York Symphonic Ensemble on its annual tour of the Far East, the Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Luciano Pavarotti’s International Farewell Tour and the award-winning Icelandic pop artist Björk. Margrét is on the faculty of Queens College and

SummerKeys in Lubec, Maine. She maintains a private violin/viola studio for adults in Queens, New York. She is a graduate of the Juilliard School and the Mannes College of Music.



JEREMY RHIZOR plays the baroque violin and founded the Academy of Sacred Drama, an organization inspired by Baroque academies that champions the performance and research of sacred drama. Noted for playing “virtuosically but with fluid grace” by *The New York Times*, Jeremy performs with early music organizations throughout North America such as Aureas Voces in Nova Scotia, Alchymy Viols in Indiana, Ensemble VIII in Texas, Mountainside Baroque in Maryland, the Washington Bach Consort and Opera Lafayette in Washington, DC, and Bach Vespers, Brooklyn Baroque, and the American Classical Orchestra in New York. He is currently exploring the relationship between music and prayer and is learning about user interface design. Jeremy lives in North Salem, NY.

ADAM YOUNG received his Master’s degree in viola da gamba from The Juilliard School where he studied with Sarah Cunningham. A finalist in the 2018 Bach/Abel Wettbewerb in Köthen, Adam has performed with many NYC-based early music ensembles as well as concerts in Canada, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Kosovo and Russia.





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2022 TANK INSTITUTIONAL FUNDERS

This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

The Tank’s programming is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

CyberTank programming is made possible by the NYC COVID-19 Response and Impact Fund and The New York Community Trust.

Additional Rehearsal Space pre-COVID-19 made possible by the A.R.T./New York Creative Space Grant –supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

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# counter codex

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counter codex creates innovative concert experiences featuring a wide range of repertoire and an emphasis on the social element of concertgoing.

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Jordan Rutter-Covato  
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## Texts & Translations

*Translations by Jordan Rutter-Covatto.*

From LA CALISTO (Venice, 1651)

Francesco Cavalli (1602–1676) • Giovanni Faustini (1615–1651)

Erme e solinghe cime  
Ch'al cerchio m'accostate  
Delle luci adorate  
In voi di novo imprime  
Contemplator secreto  
Endimione l'orme.  
Le variate forme  
De la stella d'argento  
Lusingando e bacciando  
Di chiare notte tra i solinghi orrori  
Sù la terra e sù i sassi i suoi splendori.

Steles and solitary peaks  
That I approach to search  
For that light that I adore,  
In you are the new imprints  
Of the secret astronomer:  
Endymion's footsteps.  
The varying shapes  
Of silver stars  
Charming and kissing  
On clear nights among the solitary horrors  
Cast over the earth and stones their splendors.

Lucidissima face  
Di Tessaglia le note  
Non sturbino i tuoi giri  
E la tua pace.

Brightest face,  
May the notes of Thessaly  
Never disturb your gyrations  
And your peace.

Dagli Atlantici monti  
Traboccando le rote  
Febo, del carro ardente  
Omai tramonti.

Over the Atlantic mountains  
Knocking down the wheels  
Of Phoebus, the fiery chariot  
Who now sinks.

Il mio lume nascente  
Illuminando il cielo  
Più bello a me si mostri  
E risplendente.

My light is born  
Illuminating the sky  
To make it more beautiful to me  
And reveal its resplendence.

Astro mio, vago e caro  
Di tuoi raggi di gelo  
Nel petto amante a nutrir  
Fiamme imparo.

My star, beautiful and precious  
From your icy beams  
To nourish the breast of your lover  
Impart your flames.

Qual sopor repentino  
A dolce oblio m'invita  
Sù quest'erta romita?  
Sonno, cortese Sonno,  
Deh fa tù, che dormendo  
Amorosi fantasmi  
Mi felicitin l'anima svegliata.

Bacciatrice bacciata  
Mandami in sen la diva mia crudele  
E stringendo i tuoi lacci in dolci inganni  
Fà che morto in tal guisa io viva gl'anni.

### SI DOLCE E' L TORMENTO (1624)

Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643) • Carlo Milanuzzi (c. 1590–c. 1647)

Sì dolce è' l tormento  
Ch'in seno mi sta,  
Ch'io vivo contento  
Per cruda beltà.

Nel ciel di bellezza  
S'accreschi fierezza  
Et manchi pietà:  
Che sempre qual scoglio  
All'onda d'orgoglio  
Mia fede sarà.

La speme fallace  
Rivolgam' il piè,  
Diletto ne pace  
Non scendano a me,

E l'empia ch'adoro  
Mi nieghi ristoro  
Di buona mercè:  
Tra doglia infinita,  
Tra speme tradita  
Vivrà la mia fè.

What sudden drowsiness  
Invites me to sweet oblivion  
On this remote cliff?  
Somnus, courteous Somnus,  
If to your charms I am quickly rent  
Please make, upon sleeping  
Phanstasmic lovers  
Celebrate my awakening soul.  
You who kisses me and is kissed,  
Bring to my breast my cruel goddess  
And your laces grasping in sweet deception  
Make death in this way how I live for years.

So sweet is the torment  
That stays in my breast  
That I gladly live  
For the cruel beauty:

Under a beautiful sky  
Vanity grows  
And pity withers,  
Yet always as a cliff  
Against the waves of pride  
My faith will be.

The foolish hope  
Turns my feet,  
The delights of peace  
Do not come down to me.

And the impious one I adore  
Denies me the restoration  
Of kind mercy:  
Among infinite dolor,  
Among betrayed hope  
My faith will live.

Per foco e per gelo  
riposo non ho  
nel porto del Cielo  
riposo haverò...

se colpo mortale  
con rigido strale  
il cor m'impiegò  
cangiando mia sorte  
col dardo di morte  
il cor sanerò...

Se fiamma d'Amore  
Già mai non senti  
Quel rigido core  
Ch'il cor mi rapì,

Se nega pietate  
La cruda beltate  
Che l'alma invaghì:  
Ben fia che dolente,  
Pentita e languente  
Sospirimi un dì.

From GERMANICO IN GERMANIA (Rome, 1732)  
Nicola Porpora (1686–1788) & Nicola Coluzzi

Qual turbine che scende  
Sull'orrida pendice  
L'ira vendicatrice  
Il capo suo cadrà.

E l'ira mia possente  
Qual fulmine stridente  
Tutto distruggerà.

Because of fire and ice  
I have no repose;  
At the gates of Heaven  
I will have repose...

If mortal strikes  
From rigid arrows  
Will wound my heart  
By changing my fate  
With darts of death  
My heart will be healed...

If the fires of Love  
Will never be felt  
By the rigid heart  
That has stolen my heart,

If I am denied pity  
By the cruel beauty  
That enchanted my soul:  
It is better they suffer,  
Regretful and languishing  
Mourning me one day.

Like the whirlwinds that rise  
Over horrid mountainsides  
The ire of revenge  
Will fall on his head.

And my ire's power  
Like strident thunderbolts  
Will destroy everything.

From *RODELINDA* (London, 1725)

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759) & Nicola Francesco Haym (1678–1729)

Pompe vane di morte,  
Menzogne di dolor, che riserbate  
Il mio volto e il mio nome, ed adulate  
Del vincitor superbo, il genio altiero,  
Voi dite ch'io son morto  
Ma risponde il mio duol che non è vero.  
“Bertarido fù Re;  
Da Grimoaldo  
Vinto fuggì, presso degl'Unni giace.  
Abbia l'alma riposo e il cener pace.”

Pace al cener mio? Astri tiranni!  
Dunque fin ch'avrò vita  
Guerra avrò con gli stenti  
E con gli affanni?

Dove sei, amato bene?  
Vieni l'alma a consolar.

Son oppresso da tormenti  
Ed i crudi miei lamenti  
Sol con te posso bear.

From *IL GIUSTINO* (Rome, 1724)

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741) & Nicolò Beregan (1627–1713)

Vedrò con mio diletto  
L'alma dell'alma mia,  
Il core del mio cor,  
Pien di contento.

E se del caro oggetto  
Lungi da me che sia,  
Sospirerò penando  
Ogni momento.

Vain pomp of death,  
Lies of dolor, that still hold onto  
My face and my name, and laud  
The proud victor, the high genius,  
You say that I am dead  
But my sadness responds that it is not true.  
“Perctarit was King;  
From Grimwald  
Defeated he fled, and fell pressed by the Huns.  
May his soul find rest and his ashes peace.”

Peace for my ashes? Tyrannical stars!  
Then for as long as I live  
I will be at war with hardship  
and with troubles?

Where are you, my dear beloved?  
Come to console this spirit.

I am oppressed by torments  
And my crude laments  
Can only be satisfied by you.

I will gladly see  
The spirit of my spirit,  
The heart of my heart,  
Fully contented.

And if from the dear object  
I must remain distant,  
I will sigh painfully  
Every moment.

From ARIODANTE (London, 1735)  
George Frideric Handel & Anonymous

Dover, giustizia, amor  
M'accendono nel cor  
Desio di gloria.

Se a brame così belle  
Arridono le stelle  
Abbiam vittoria.

Duty, justice, love  
Ignite in my heart  
Desire for glory.

If to embrace such a beauty  
The stars have smiled on me  
I will be victorious.