

## **Sappho**

Jennifer Condon Music Director

Born in 1983, Jennifer Condon attended her first opera at the age of six. By eleven she had resolved to become an opera conductor and directed her academic and music studies – piano in her home town of Wollongong and in Sydney; operatic conducting in Melbourne, Vienna and Germany – to this end.

In 2001 Condon heard the haunting final aria of Peggy Glanville-Hicks' unpublished opera, *Sappho*. Moved to further research, Condon realised she had uncovered a neglected masterpiece. She spent the following decade, including the six years she worked full time as a prompt at the Hamburg State Opera, obtaining the rights and preparing a performance edition.

In 2012, the centenary of both the composer and the librettist, Lawrence Durrell, Jennifer conducted and produced a recording of the work. All aspects of this enterprise – preparing the scores and parts; securing the Gulbenkian Orchestra and Chorus; persuading the cast to perform for no fee in their summer vacation; arranging coaching, accommodation, travel from Europe and around Lisbon; rehearsal schedules; recording, editing and CD contract and production – were attended to by Condon herself.

Now based in Berlin, Jennifer works as a free-lance vocal coach and opera conductor. She is an inaugural alumnus of The Dallas Opera's Institute for Women Conductors and has been engaged as Assistant Conductor in Europe, Asia and America by some of the world's leading conductors, including Sir Simon Rattle, Simone Young, Franz Welser Möst and Kirill Petrenko. She has a repertoire of over 60 operas. Condon's commitment to *Sappho* will be incomplete until she conducts a world premiere international co-production of the opera.