



LIGHTS ON THEATRE PRESENTS

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# ILLUMINATING ORPHEUS

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Music by Louis Durey

Text by Samuel Herriman

Based on Apollinaire's *Le Bestiaire*

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## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The concept for *Illuminating Orpheus* originally stemmed from Guillaume Apollinaire's illustrated poetry anthology *Le Bestiaire ou cortège d'Orphée* (The Bestiary or the procession of Orpheus). In this set of poems Apollinaire reflects on the story of Orpheus, using the characteristics of a parade of animals to ask questions about the human condition, from the nature of love to creativity, ageing and death. The poems, illustrated by Raoul Dufy, and later set to the music of Louis Durey, make the foundation of this show. This can be seen through the shadow puppetry which takes influence from Dufy's original illustrations to the structure of the work, using the music of Louis Durey to reflect on stories, ideas and emotions presented in the narrative text.

In reflecting on Apollinaire's original poems, we were challenged with questions of how to create something relevant to a modern audience. What can we contribute in re-telling the story of Orpheus? What can we add? In researching both Apollinaire's text as well as the Orpheus story more broadly, we landed on the question of Eurydice. Who is she and what would a modern story from her perspective be like? As a silent character, often painted as a victim we never truly understand her, her motivations or her story more broadly. These questions permeate *Illuminating Orpheus* as we use shadow puppetry, classical music and narrative text to explore, examine and ultimately reinterpret the legend of Orpheus.

Spark Sanders Robinson

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**This production is made possible by the RNCM Creative Innovator Awards 2023.**

Generously supported by Yamaha, this unique award (formerly the RNCM Entrepreneurship Award) recognises students who excel in creative ambition and entrepreneurship. Lights On Theatre was represented in this year's event by Founder & Artistic Director Spark Sanders Robinson, and was named one of four winners to receive financial support and mentoring to help develop their projects.

*Lights on Theatre is committed to making classical music and theatre accessible to all audiences. In order for us to deliver future projects like this, please send us your thoughts and feedback on today's event [here](#).*



## SCENES AND MUSIC

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# ACT I



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### SCENE 1: ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

#### La Tortue

Du Thrace magique, ô délire!  
Mes doigts sûrs font sonner la lyre.  
Les animaux passent aux sons  
De ma tortue, de mes chansons.

#### *The Tortoise*

*Magical Thrace - how delightful!  
My sure fingers pluck the lyre.  
Animals pass by to the sound  
Of my tortoise, of my songs.*

#### Le Cheval

Mes durs rêves formels sauront te  
chevaucher,  
Mon destin au char d'or sera ton beau  
cocher  
Qui pour rênes tiendra tendus à  
frénésie,  
Mes vers, les parangons de toute poésie

#### *The Horse*

*My hard, formal dreams will know just how  
to ride you,  
My destiny in a gold chariot will be your  
handsome driver,  
Who will take for reins, drawn in tight  
frenzy,  
My verses, paragons of all poetry.*

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### La Chèvre du Thibet

Les poils de cette chèvre et même  
Ceux d'or pour qui prit tant de peine  
Jason, ne valent rien au prix  
Des cheveux dont je suis épris.

### *The Goat of Tibet*

*The fleece of this goat and even  
The one of gold for which Jason laboured,  
Are worth nothing compared  
To the locks of hair to which I'm drawn.*

### La Serpent

Tu t'acharnes sur la beauté.  
Et quelles femmes ont été  
Victimes de ta cruauté !  
Ève, Euridice, Cléopâtre ;  
J'en connais encor trois ou quatre.

### *The Snake*

*You sink your teeth into beauty.  
And what women have been  
Victims of your cruelty  
Eve, Eurydice, Cleopatra.  
And I can easily add three or four more.*

### La Chat

Je souhaite dans ma maison:  
Une femme ayant sa raison,  
Un chat passant parmi les livres,  
Des amis en toute saison  
Sans lesquels je ne peux pas vivre.

### *The Cat*

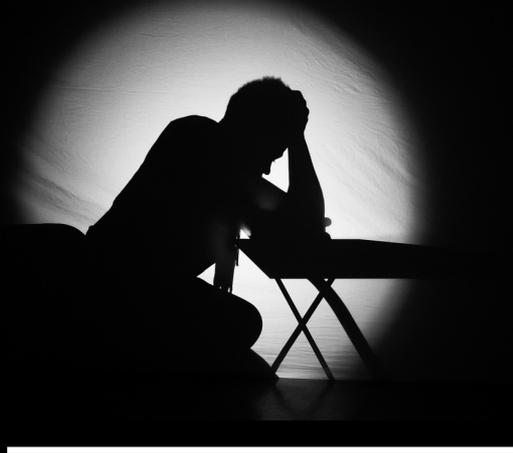
*In my house I want to have:  
A woman making sense,  
A cat tiptoeing among books,  
Friends in every season...  
Without these I can't live.*

### Le Lion

Ô lion, malheureuse image  
Des rois chus lamentablement,  
Tu ne nais maintenant qu'en cage  
À Hambourg, chez les Allemands.

### *The Lion*

*Oh lion, miserable image  
Of kings lamentably fallen,  
Now you're born only in cages  
In Hamburg, among the Germans.*



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## SCENE 2: ORPHEUS WITHIN

### Le Lièvre

Ne soit pas lascif et peureux  
Comme le lièvre et l'amoureux.  
Mais que toujours ton cerveau soit  
La hase pleine qui conçoit.]

### *The Hare*

*Don't be lascivious and fearful  
Like the hare and the amorous.  
But let your brain always be  
A pregnant hare that conveys.*

### Le Lapin

Je connais un autre connin  
Que tout vivant je voudrais prendre.  
Sa garenne est parmi le thym  
Des vallons du pays de Tendre

### *The Rabbit*

*I know another bunny  
That I wish I could take alive.  
Her warren is among the thyme  
in the valleys of Tender land.*

### Le Dromadaire

Avec ses quatre dromadaires  
Don Pedro d'Alfaroubeira  
Courut le monde et l'admira.  
Il fit ce que je voudrais faire  
Si j'avais quatre dromadaires.

### *The Camel*

*With his four dromedaries  
Don Pedro d'Alfaroubeira  
roamed the world and admired it.  
He did what I would do  
if I had four dromedaries.*



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### La Souris

Belles journées, souris du temps,  
Vous rongez peu à peu ma vie.  
Dieu! Je vais avoir vingt-huit ans,  
Et mal vécus, à mon envie.

### *The Mouse*

*Beautiful days, mouse of time,  
Little by little you gnaw away my life.  
God! I'm going to be twenty-eight –  
wasted years badly lived, just as I wished.*

### L'Eléphant

Comme un éléphant son ivoire,  
J'ai en bouche un bien précieux.  
Pourpre mort !.. J'achète ma gloire  
Au prix des mots mélodieux.

### *The Elephant*

*As an elephant his ivory,  
I carry in my mouth a treasure.  
Purple death!... I buy my glory  
At the price of melodious words.*



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## SCENE 3: INTO THE UNDERWORLD

### La Chenille

Le travail mène à la richesse.  
Pauvres poètes, travaillons !  
La chenille en peinant sans cesse  
Devient le riche papillon.

### *The Caterpillar*

*Work leads to riches.  
Poor poets, let's work !  
The caterpillar by his labour  
Becomes a rich butterfly.*

### La Mouche

Nos mouches savent des chansons  
Que leur apprirent en Norvège  
Les mouches ganiques qui sont  
Les divinités de la neige.

### *The Fly*

*Our flies know songs  
Taught to them in Norway  
By the ganique flies,  
The snow goddessess.*

### La Puce

Puces, amis, amantes même,  
Qu'ils sont cruels ceux qui nous aiment!  
Tout notre sang coule pour eux.  
Les bien-aimés sont malheureux

### *The Flea*

*Fleas, friends, even lovers -  
How cruel are those who love us!  
All our blood is spilled for them.  
It's the beloved who are wretched.*

### La Sauterelle

Voici la fine sauterelle,  
La nourriture de Saint Jean.  
Puissent mes vers être comme elle,  
Le régal des meilleures gens.

### *The Grasshopper*

*Look, an exquisite grasshopper  
the nourishment of St. John.  
May my verses be likewise,  
the upper classes' favourite dish.*

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## SCENE 4: ORPHEUS LOOKS BACK

### Le Dauphin

Dauphins, vous jouez dans la mer,  
Mais le flot est toujours amer.  
Parfois, ma joie éclate-t-elle ?  
La vie est encore cruelle.

### *The Dolphin*

*Dolphins, you play in the sea,  
Yet the tide is always bitter.  
At times, does not my joy burst forth ?  
Life is as cruel as ever.*

### Le Poulpe

Jetant son encre vers les cieux,  
Suçant le sang de ce qu'il aime  
Et le trouvant délicieux,  
Ce monstre inhumain, c'est moi-même.

### *The Octopus*

*Spouting his ink heavenwards  
Sucking the blood of his beloved  
And finding it delicious,  
that inhuman monster, that's me.*

### La Méduse

Méduses, malheureuses têtes  
Aux chevelures violettes  
Vous vous plaisez dans les tempêtes,  
Et je m'y plais comme vous faites.

### *The Jellyfish*

*Medusae, miserable heads  
With your violet coat of hair  
You love it, when it storms,  
And I love it, just like you.*



# ACT II



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## CHAPTER 1: UNA & OLIVER

### L'Écrevisse

Incertitude, ô mes délices  
Vous et moi nous nous en allons  
Comme s'en vont les écrevisses,  
A reculons, à reculons.

### *The Crayfish*

*Uncertainty, O my delights  
You and I, off we go  
Just like the lobster,  
Retrograde, retrograde.*

### La Carpe

Dans vos viviers, dans vos étangs,  
Carpes, que vous vivez longtemps!  
Est-ce que la mort vous oublie,  
Poissons de la mélancolie.

### *The Carp*

*In your fish-ponds, in your pools,  
Carp, how long you live!  
Does death forget you,  
Fish of melancholy*

### Les Sirènes

Sachè-je d'où provient, Sirènes, votre  
ennui  
Quand vous vous lamentez,  
au large, dans la nuit?  
Mer, je suis comme toi,  
plein de voix machinées  
Et mes vaisseaux chantants se  
nomment les années.

### *The Sirens*

*Wouldn't I know, Sirens, the origin of your  
lack of spirit,  
When out there  
you moan at night?  
Sea, I'm just like you,  
full of scheming voices  
And my singing vessels are called my years.*

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## CHAPTER 2: ARI

### La Colombe

Colombe, l'amour et l'esprit  
Qui engendrâtes Jésus-Christ,  
Comme vous j'aime une Marie.  
Qu'avec elle je me marie.

### *The Dove*

*Dove, the love and spirit  
That engendered Jesus Christ,  
Just like you I love a Mary.  
May she be the one I marry.*

### Le Paon

En faisant la roue, cet oiseau,  
Dont le pennage traîne à terre,  
Apparaît encore plus beau,  
Mais se découvre le derrière.

### *The Peacock*

*When he spreads his tail, this bird,  
Whose plumage trails on the ground,  
He looks lovelier than ever,  
yet, reveals his bottom.*



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## CHAPTER 3: OUT OF THE UNDERWORLD

### Le Hibou

Mon pauvre coeur est un hibou  
Qu'on cloue, qu'on décloue, qu'on  
recloue.  
De sang, d'ardeur, il est à bout.  
Tous ceux qui m'aiment, je les loue.

### *The Owl*

*My poor heart is an owl  
One pins, unpins, and repins.  
Of blood, of ardour, he's run out.  
All those who love me, I praise.*

### Ibis

Oui, j'irai dans l'ombre terreuse.  
Ô mort certaine, ainsi soit-il !  
Latin mortel, parole affreuse,  
Ibis, oiseau des bords du Nil.

### *Ibis*

*Yes, I will go into the earthly dark.  
Oh certain death, so let it be!  
Deadly Latin, frightful words,  
Ibis, bird of the banks of the Nile.*



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## CHAPTER 4: ILLUMINATING ORPHEUS

### Le Boeuf

Ce chérubin dit la louange  
Du paradis, où, près des anges,  
Nous revivrons, mes chers amis,  
Quand le bon Dieu l'aura permis.

### *The Ox*

*This cherub sings the praise  
Of paradise, where, close to the angels,  
We'll live again, my dear friends,  
When the good Lord will allow it.*



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# CREATIVE CREDITS

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## Spark Sanders Robinson - Director



Spark Sanders Robinson is a mezzo-soprano, puppeteer and director originally from Adelaide, South Australia. She holds a Bachelor of Music from The Elder Conservatorium of Music, and both a Graduate Diploma (Voice/Opera) and a Master of Arts (Performing Arts) from The Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts and a Master of Music from the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM).

Her directing credits include Menotti's *The Telephone*, Barber's *A Hand of Bridge* (RNCM Spotlight Concert 2023) and Argento's *Miss Havisham's Wedding Night* (RNCM Lab Week 2023). The founder of Lights On Theatre, Spark has devised, designed and directed several puppetry/opera shows, including *The Beasts* (2021), *Winter's Light* (RNCM Christmas Family Day 2022) and *Light on Le Bestiaire* (RNCM Lab Week 2022). She is a recipient of RNCM's 2023 Creative Innovator Award with Lights On Theatre.

## Samuel Herriman - Writer



A Perth-born writer, Samuel is interested in telling compelling human stories filtered through a comic, uniquely Australian lens. Samuel cut his teeth at the University of Western Australia where he graduated with first-class honours and in 2019 completed a Masters of Screenwriting at the Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS). He is currently undertaking a PhD in linguistics and screenwriting at the University of Sydney, including a year abroad as a visiting scholar at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Samuel has written the award-winning short films *Elagabalus* and *The End, The Beginning* which are currently screening on ABC iView and focused his research on collaborations as a screenwriter in alternative storytelling cinema. In 2022 he was selected as a member of Perth Festival's emerging artist lab and has previously been a Charlie's Grantee with LA-based Australians in Film. He was longlisted for the short story competition The Best Australian Yarn in 2022 with *Endlings* and working with Lights On Theatre, Samuel has written *The Beasts* (development), *Winter's Light* (2022) and *Illuminating Orpheus* (2023).

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# CAST

*in order of appearance*

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## Matthew Lau - Accompanist



Matthew is an accomplished pianist having been awarded 1st place at the Beethoven Junior Intercollegiate Piano competition to become the first winner of the competition from the Junior Royal Northern College of Music and reaching the final of the prestigious RNCM Gold Medal Competition. He has enjoyed playing in various concert series and recitals across the UK, such as Chester Wesley Church, Chester Music Society, Wigan Music Society, Manchester St Ann's Church, Nantwich, Ealing St Barnabas Church and the Leigh Music Society. Matthew's performances are not just limited to recital settings having played in an RNCM Research forum given by Dr Denis Herlin and for a lecture by the Verdun Allen Music Foundation on the works of Debussy and Ravel.

## Keir Lundy - Oliver Throssell



Keir is a third-year undergraduate musician and actor from London, studying as a baritone under the tuition of Andrew Heggie. His exploration of historical theatre extends beyond his studies in opera, having performed in Shakespeare productions such as *The Duke of Cornwall (King Lear)* and *Dromio of Ephesus (A Comedy of Errors)*. A physical actor, Keir has performed as Les in Berkoff's *East* and more recently the Wolf in Sondheim's *Into the Woods*. Keir is thrilled to be taking on the role of Oliver.

## Aidan McCusker - Orpheus



Aidan McCusker is from Paisley, Scotland and is currently in his 4th year of the BMus Vocal Studies course at the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) studying under the tutelage of Paul Nilon. Recent singing engagements include singing the role of Triquet in Preston Opera's *Eugene Onegin*, Don Ottavio in Oxenfoord international summer festival scenes, one of the 12 Apostles in Elgar's *The Apostles* with the Hallé Orchestra, chorus in RNCM's production of Strauss' *Die Fledermaus* and chorus in Dorset Opera's production of Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* and Mozart's *Magic Flute*.

## Barbara Diesel - Eurydice



Barbara is a Manchester-based creative. In the past, she trained at LAMDA, with the National Youth Theatre and with The Actor's Theatre Company. Recently, she premiered her debut short-play, *Dear Eliza*, at the Greater Manchester Fringe Festival, where she was short-listed for the Best Newcomer Award. She is thrilled to get involved with Lights On Theatre Collective as a shadow puppeteer!

## Rebecca Anderson - Aristeus / Ari



Rebecca Anderson is a Scottish mezzo-soprano and conductor working across the UK. In 2023 she completed a Postgraduate Diploma in performing with distinction at the RNCM. Previously she was the President of the Students' Union at the RNCM having completed an MMus there in 2021. Recent opera credits have included Lady Bertram (*Mansfield Park*), Minskwoman (*Flight*), Lepak (*The Cunning Little Vixen*), Sœur Anne de la Croix (*Dialogues des Carmélites*), Noémie (*Cendrillon*), and Mrs Grose (*The Turn of the Screw*). Rebecca was part of the Young Artists' Programme at Waterperry Opera Festival in 2021 and Buxton International Festival in 2023.

## Anusha Merrin Bobby - La Musique



Indian soprano Anusha Merrin Bobby, native of Kerala and resident of Bahrain, is currently a GREAT scholar at the RNCM, pursuing a Postgraduate Diploma under the tutelage of Elizabeth Ritchie and is generously supported by the Dame Eva Turner Award as well. Some achievements include Finalist of the Dean and Chadlington Festival and the Frederic Cox Award for Singing, RNCM Songsters and Second Prize at the Joyce and Michael Kennedy Award for the Singing of Strauss. Her opera roles include Mary Crawford in Dove's *Mansfield Park*, Geraldine in Barber's *A Hand of Bridge* and Ida in J. Strauss' *Die Fledermaus*.

## Keren Hadas - L'Oiseau



Keren Hadas, an Israeli-German soprano, recently graduated from the Royal Northern College of Music with support from the George Henry Peters Scholarship and the Jane Anthony Memorial Fund. Her operatic journey began with Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* as Belinda. She played Lucy in Menotti's *The Telephone*, and performed scenes from various operas, portraying Sophie in Massenet's *Werther*, Cherubino in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Tel Aviv Summer Opera), Rose in Delibes's *Lakmé*, and Ninetta in Mozart's *La Finta Semplice* at RNCM. In December, she'll perform as Mademoiselle Silberklang in Mozart's *Der Schauspieldirektor* with Hertfordshire Opera.

## Sarah Ampil - Una Derklerk



A recipient of the Opera Australia Opportunity Award and winner of the Joan Sutherland Memorial Award, Sarah's recent stage credits include Sandrina (*La Finta Giardiniera*, Operantics); Ginevra (*Ariodante*, Apollo Opera Collective); and Micaëla (*Carmen*, Central Coast Opera). In 2023, Sarah was a Young Artist with Buxton International Festival and appeared in their critically acclaimed production of *La Sonnambula*. She is an alumna of the Sydney Conservatorium Opera Studio and the Pacific Opera Young Artist Program, and completed further postgraduate studies at the Royal Northern College of Music. This is Sarah's fourth collaboration with Lights On Theatre, joining the team in 2022 as Producer and, most recently, stepping in to perform the titular role in *Miss Havisham's Wedding Night*.

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## ABOUT LIGHTS ON THEATRE

Lights On Theatre is a Manchester-based performance collective that combines opera and art song with modern shadow puppetry to create innovative, impactful and accessible theatre. Our team is comprised of accomplished, early-career musicians and theatre practitioners, dedicated to democratising classical music through unparalleled, live cinematic theatre.

Our 2023 season has centred on the Greek myth of Orpheus, and includes our mainstage production, *Illuminating Orpheus*, as well as *Orpheus & The Animals: Exploring Living Worlds*, a series of children's music and shadow puppetry workshops held at Manchester Museum in partnership with the Olympias Music Foundation.

**Spark Sanders Robinson**  
Founder & Artistic Director

**Sarah Ampil**  
Producer & Creative Consultant

**Anusha Merrin Bobby**  
Marketing & Publicity Co-ordinator

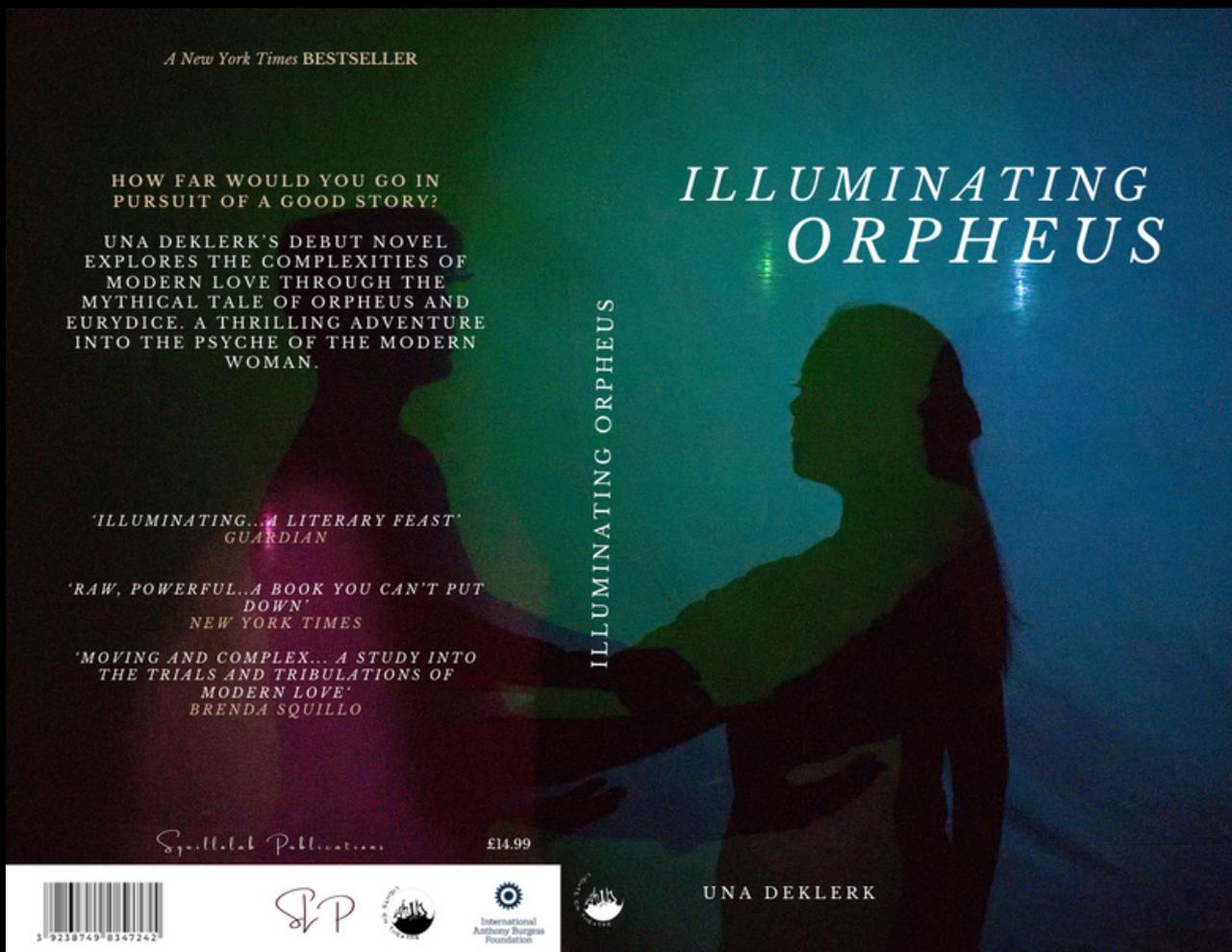


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# Bruno University Guest Lecture Series

6 Nov-11 Nov 2023

6 Nov, 7:30PM

**Brenda Squillo:** Women in Publishing - Breaking New Ground

7 Nov, 7:30PM

**Guillaume Sley-Barn PhD:** The Scourge of Short Stories in the Modern Millenium

8 Nov, 7:30PM

**Ari S Tæus:** Reptiles Reframed - The Role of the Villain in Literature

9 Nov, 7:30PM

**William Apollo-Nair :** Gods and Fleas - Ganique Deities in Art, Literature and Music

10 Nov, 7:30PM

**Priscilla M Theus:** Bearing the Weight of the World - A Study on Heroism

11 Nov, 7:30PM

**Dr Oliver Throssell:** Recontextualising Myth - The Legend of Orpheus

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