



Character Builder

Ed Lyon continues his celebrated association with Garsington Opera with title-role performance in new staging of Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* (12 June – 25 July 2026)

British tenor makes his Italian opera house debut at the Teatro dell'Opera di Roma as Tempo in Handel's *Il trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* (7 - 14 April 2026)

'Ed Lyon's traumatised yet gloriously lyrical Orfeo... His epic central performance culminates in a white-hot account of the virtuosic Possente Spirto,'
The Times, five-star review of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* at Garsington Opera (June 2022)

'Lyon has the full range of tone that the Monteverdi demands, from hushed through lustrous to dark, and he decorates the text with formidable assurance,'
The Guardian, five-star review of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* at Garsington Opera (June 2022)

Character matters to Ed Lyon. The acclaimed British tenor's compelling artistry flows from an unwavering determination to reveal the emotional complexity of the individuals he brings to life onstage. His recent interpretation of Grimoaldo in Handel's *Rodelinda* for Garsington Opera was hailed by the *The Guardian* as a 'perfectly judged portrayal full of lightly worn swagger and increasing self-pity', while *Musical America* praised his 'fascinating character study' of the role.

He is set to return to Garsington's elegant Opera Pavilion next summer to take the title-role in Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* (12 June – 25 July 2026). Lyon also makes his Italian opera house debut during the 2025-26 season, to be given at the Teatro dell'Opera di Roma in Robert Carsen's staging of Handel's *Il trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* (7 - 14 April 2026). His status as one of today's leading Handelian tenors is sure to be further enhanced when he returns to the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden to sing the role of Lurcanio in Jetske Mijnsen's new production of *Ariodante* (9 – 21 December 2025).

Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria, Monteverdi's first opera for the Venice stage, unfolds as a moving portrayal of real human beings and the universal desires that drive them. Its epic account of Ulysses' return from the Trojan wars and quest to regain his beloved wife Penelope, based on Books 13 to 23 of Homer's *Odyssey*, offers infinite scope for Ed Lyon to examine the psychology of the homecoming hero. "It's so important with Baroque opera to bring out the genuine human relationships between characters in the drama" he comments. "That can be difficult because of the way the music was conceived for singers who were playing rather than inhabiting a role. I believe there are times when, for the sake of the drama, it's necessary to take risks with the voice in search of the big emotions that are so often present in the text. If a character is in distress, the audience should hear that in the voice. I feel I have only now reached the point where, with roles like Ulysses, I have the vocal and personal maturity to set those emotions free in performance."

Garsington Opera will present *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* in a new staging by John Caird, known not least for his work for the Royal Shakespeare Company, Welsh National Opera and the Lyric Opera of Chicago. The Canadian director's production of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* for Garsington, with sets and costumes by Robert Jones and Ed Lyon in the title-role, proved the five-star sensation of Garsington's 2022 season. Their creative partnership is set to resume next summer. "I adore John and Robert," notes Ed Lyon. "We had such extraordinary success with *Orfeo*. We're of the same mind: that really good work needs to have that special quality of ensemble about it. As you prepare a role, having such detailed dialogue with the director is invaluable. John Caird understands the importance of character and Laurence Cummings, who will direct from the harpsichord, is very much on board with that. The glory of Monteverdi is the primacy of text, where his music serves the words and the emotions they convey. I think *Ulisse* will be a wonderful production."

Monteverdi takes centre stage again when Lyon joins Cummings and the Academy of Ancient Music for 'Songs of Love & War'. The project, devoted to the Italian composer's intensely passionate, timeless *Madrigali guerrieri et amorosi* (*Madrigals of War and Love*), dives deep into the turbulent stream of emotions unleashed by love.

'Madrigals of Love & War' can be heard at West Road Concert Hall in Cambridge on 11 February 2026 and Milton Court Concert Hall in London on 12 February.

Il trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno, Handel's first oratorio, was written in Rome in 1707 during the composer's apprentice years in Italy. Its libretto, a moral allegory created by the art-loving Cardinal Benedetto Pamphili, explores the ancient dilemma posed by the pursuit of short-term satisfaction versus the long-term gain of virtue. Tempo (Time) and Disinganno (Disillusion) offer sage advice to Bellezza (Beauty), steering her away from the worldly temptations of Piacere (Pleasure). Handel's score was revised fifty years later as *The Triumph of Time and Truth* to form his last contribution to the oratorio genre. Ed Lyon took the role of Pleasure in an acclaimed recording by Ludus Baroque of the work's 1757 version for Delphian Records, which was selected as a *Gramophone* Editor's Choice and hailed by the *Telegraph* for its 'glorious line-up of soloists'.

Robert Carsen's staging of the 1707 score received rave reviews following its original production at the 2021 Salzburg Festival. The Canadian director demonstrated the work's relevance to a contemporary audience and, aided by video projections, its suitability for modern theatrical treatment. Gianluca Capuano, who conducted the Salzburg staging, will conduct the Orchestra del Teatro dell'Opera di Roma in the ornate Teatro Costanzi "I have worked with Robert Carsen several times before and look forward to exploring *Il trionfo del Tempo* with him next year," says Ed Lyon. "Tempo is often portrayed as an old man, so it will be interesting to see how Robert sees him. Rome Opera has staged several Handel operas in recent seasons, most recently with the first ever staging of *Alcina* in Rome. It's fantastic to see how keen they are to do these works with their house orchestra."

Ed Lyon's character interpretations are informed by his experience as a practitioner in Compassion Focused Therapy, Cognitive Behavioural Hypnotherapy, and Brainspotting, through which he helps clients overcome performance anxiety and work-related stress. The singer's experience of performing at the top level for more than 20 years has been richly complemented by his studies in psychology and practical application of psychotherapeutic interventions. "Singing requires a feeling of safety and belonging," he observes. "Every successful production I've ever been involved in has been a collaborative effort, where everyone works together as part of an ensemble and feels that they belong. I've found it so liberating to be able to help others, and also to examine whether I feel safe in whatever I happen to be performing. It has made a huge difference to my singing."

[Website](#) - [Instagram](#) - [Groves Artists](#) - [Ed Lyon](#)

The information in this press release was correct at the time of sending. Please check the organisations' websites and social media for the latest updates.

For press enquiries, please contact:

Rita Grudzień / Katherine Blake at Valerie Barber PR

rita@vbpr.co.uk / katherine@vbpr.co.uk

Tel: +44 (0)20 7586 8560 / www.vbpr.co.uk

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Royal Ballet and Opera

9, 11, 14, 17, 19, 21 December 2025

The Royal Opera House, London

[Event page](#)

Emily D'Angelo Ariodante | **Jacquelyn Stucker** Ginevra | **Elena Villalón** Dalinda | **Christophe Dumaux** Polinesso | **Ed Lyon** Lurcanio | **Peter Kellner** Il Re di Scozia | **Emyr Lloyd Jones** Odoardo | **Jetske Mijnsen** Director | **Stefano Montanari** Conductor | **Royal Opera Chorus** | **Orchestra of the Royal Opera House**

Handel *Ariodante*

Teatro dell'Opera di Roma

7, 9, 11, 12, 14 April 2026

Teatro Costanzi

[Event page](#)

Johanna Wallroth Bellezza | **Anna Bonitatibus** Piacere | **Raffaele Pe** Disinganno | **Ed Lyon** Tempo | **Robert Carsen** Director | **Gianluca Capuano** Conductor | **Orchestra del Teatro dell'Opera di Roma**

Handel *Il trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno*

Garsington Opera

12, 18, 21, 23 June, 4, 17, 19, 25 July 2026

Garsington Opera, Buckinghamshire

[Event page](#)

Cecelia Hall Penelope | **Ed Lyon** Ulisse | **Dafydd Jones** Telemaco | **Fiona Kimm** Ericlea | **James Gilchrist** Eumete | **Stuart Jackson** Iro | **Rowan Pierce** Melanto | **Innocent Masuku** Eurimaco | **Claire Lees** Minerva/Amore | **Jessica Cale** Giunone / La Fortuna | **Alberto Miguélez Rouco** Pisandro / L'Humana fragilità | **Benjamin Hulett** Giove / Anfinomo | **James Creswell** Nettuno / Antinoo | **John Caird** Director | **Laurence Cummings** Conductor | **The English Concert**

Monteverdi *Il ritorno d'Ulisse*