La hija de Rappaccini
Daniel Catán
Cynthia Stokes, director
Kristin Roach, guest conductor

Saturday-Sunday, November 10-11, 2018, 7:30 p.m.
UA Environment and Natural Resources, ENR2

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La Hija de Rappaccini

Music by Daniel Catán · Libretto by Juan Tovar

A chamber opera in two acts
based on a play by Octavio Paz
from a short story by Nathaniel Hawthorne

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Saturday & Sunday, November 10 & 11, 2018
The University of Arizona, ENR2

Composer’s Note:
Rappaccini’s Daughter - An opera for the 21st century

Dr. Rappaccini is a creative spirit, an idealist, a visionary, a revolutionary, He is the very spirit of creation. Without that spirit we are not entirely human. It is what makes us want to stand upright and look up to the sky. Rappaccini represents that which is most precious in human beings and makes them come close to the divine. Galileo, Newton, Einstein, they all were outrageous visionaries.

At the same time, there is something deeply disturbing about this. When we reach the boundaries of human knowledge we start into the most profound darkness. We look into the abyss and experience the limit of our humanity. Our journey is defined by uncertainly. A quest may lose its direction. A vision can become perverted. An ideal can be made to serve the most horrific and inhumane causes.

These are issues that have concerned us always and continue to be particularly relevant, perhaps more today than ever before. The 20th century has provided us with more examples than we would ever want. Modern science faces enormous ethical dilemmas when it ventures into areas such as cloning and genetic engineering. A modern geneticist can eradicate certain characteristics of, say, corn, by manipulating its genetic structure. Should we be allowed to do similar things with human beings? How far should we go?

Rappaccini’s final words to Beatriz: “Now you can create the children of gods/you will travel the world, feared and worshipped, bearers of the future/now you will enjoy eternal life…” could be the words of a visionary prophet. Go forth and multiply! Reproduce in my image. Regrettably, they could also be the words of a perverted mind like Hitler’s.

Rappaccini’s Daughter brings up some issues that have more relevance to our world than to 15th-century Padua, for better, and also, unfortunately, for worse.

Opera is not only a great art form. It can also be extremely relevant to our society and uniquely suited to deal with some of the most complicated and important issues of our time.

– Daniel Catán

Cast

Dr. Rappaccini ................................................. Octavio Moreno
A preeminent scholar of medicine at the University of Padua

Beatriz Rappaccini ........................................ Emily Garcia
Dr. Rappaccini’s daughter, a gardener

Giovanni ........................................................ Paul Nicosia
A homesick student from Naples

Isabela ............................................................. Kaitlin Bertenshaw
A housekeeper who may not be who she appears to be

Dr. Baglioni .................................................. Crystal Kachevas
A colleague of Dr. Rappaccini

Flowers ..................................................................
Nannette Avendano, Frannie Barrows, Kristen Lucas,
Bridget Marlowe, Diana Peralta, Sarah Redlhammer,
Rebeckah Resare, Ashley Sova, Juliette Young

Understudies ...................................................
Frannie Barrows: Beatriz Rappaccini
Simon Faddoul: Dr. Rappaccini
Diana Peralta: Isabela

Orchestra

Piano: Michael Dauphinais, Minjun Dong – Harp: Xiaodi Xu
Timpani: Morris Palter – Percussion: Michael Pratt, Jacob Ransom

Place & Time

Various locations in the medieval city of Padua, Italy during the 15th century including: a street, a magical garden, a poor student’s apartment, and several dream locations.

Act 1 – An autumn day in Padua
Prelude: Beatriz and the flowers dream
Scene 1 and 2: a street
Scene 3: an apartment with a view of Dr. Rappaccini’s Garden
Scene 4: Dr. Rappaccini’s Garden
Scene 5: Giovanni’s apartment
Scene 6: Giovanni’s dream

INTERMISSION
(15 minutes)

Act 2 – Some time has passed
Scene 7: A street
Scene 8: Giovanni’s apartment
Interlude: The flowers prepare the garden
Scene 9: The garden
Scene 10: Giovanni’s apartment
Interlude
Scene 11: The garden