



*M^r. DIBDEN in the Character of MUNGO
in the Celebrated Opera of the Padlock.*

“The Black Buffoon in the Seventeenth Century and the Pre-History of Minstrelsy”

A LECTURE BY EMILY WILBOURNE

ABSTRACT: Black and enslaved characters appear with surprising frequency within the comic casts of seventeenth-century Italian operas and music dramas, echoing, in dramatic form, the Black and enslaved entertainers who lived and labored within the Italian court environment. Combining archival work and close readings of theatrical sources, this paper demonstrates the extent to which common tropes of Black minstrelsy rehearsed and re-inhabited long traditions of Black Italian representation.

EMILY WILBOURNE is Associate Professor of Musicology at Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College and of Music and Global Early Modern Studies at the Graduate Center in the City University of New York. Professor Wilbourne specializes in Italian theatrical music and sound during the seventeenth century, and in questions of embodiment, performance, race, gender, and sexuality. She is the author of *Seventeenth-Century Opera and the Sound of the Commedia dell'Arte* (University of Chicago Press, 2016), Editor in Chief of *Women & Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture*, and the recipient of the 2011 Philip Brett Award for excellence in queer music scholarship. The talk that she will deliver at IU is related to a wider project focusing on the ways in which the voices of Europe’s “Others”—Turks, Black Africans, Jews, Romani, and native “savages”—were represented in theatrical sound and music during the seventeenth century.

Friday, February 24, 2023 · 4PM

GAYLE KARCH COOK CENTER AT MAXWELL HALL

Emily Wilbourne’s visit to Bloomington is made possible through the support from the College Arts and Humanities Institute, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Department of Musicology and the Mary-Margaret Barr Koon Fund of the Department of French and Italian. The lecture will be followed by a roundtable of IU scholars featuring **GIOVANNI ZANOVELLO** (Musicology), **MINGFEI LI** (Musicology) and **MASSIMO SCALABRINI** (French and Italian), Q&A, and a reception.