

'Clarges - the opera' takes its story and characters from the 1956 novel 'To Live Forever' by Jack Vance (1916 -2013), acclaimed Grand Master of Science Fiction. In some far future the nation of Clarges is an island of civilization in a world of primitive barbarism. The civilization has been hard won from the chaos and savagery of overpopulation: caused by the discovery of techniques that conquered the aging process and allowed people to live forever. Population is regulated by the rules of the 'Fair Play Act' and the Actuarial computer. Signing up to gain the benefits of anti-aging techniques is a voluntary act that carries with it a surrender to the decision of the computer as to one's time of death. The benefits of longer life are doled out according to meritorious service for the community. The most worthy become 'Amaranth' and are given immortality. Society is a meritocracy par excellence, which produces mental illness for many who fail to succeed.