



CLASSIC
VIENNA
MOZART GLUCK HAYDN
LENA
BELKINA

ORF VIENNA RADIO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ANDREA SANGUINETI

CLASSIC VIENNA

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Così fan tutte, K.588 | Opera in two acts | Libretto: Lorenzo da Ponte

- 1 Overture 4.35

La clemenza di Tito, K.621 | Opera seria in two acts

Libretto: Caterino Mazzolà (after Pietro Metastasio)

- 2 *Aria: Parto, ma tu ben mio (Sesto)* 6.47

Idomeneo, K.366 | Tragédie lyrique in three acts

- 3 *Aria: Il padre adorato (Idamante)* 4.00

- 4 **Ch'io mi scordi di te?, K.505** | Scene and Rondo 10.28

Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714–1787)

Armide, Wq.45 | Drame héroïque in five acts | Libretto: Philippe Quinault

- 5 Overture 4.06

Orfeo ed Euridice, Wq.30 | Azione teatrale per musica in three acts

Libretto: Ranieri de' Calzabigi

- 6 *Aria: Che puro ciel (Orfeo)* 6.30

Paride ed Elena, Wq.39 | Opera in five acts | Libretto: Ranieri de' Calzabigi

- 7 *Aria: Oh, del mio dolce ardor (Paride)* 3.13

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

Acide e Galatea | Festa teatrale (Fragment) | Libretto: Giovanni Ambrogio

Migliavacca after Pietro Metastasio's *La Galatea*

- 8 Sinfonia, Hob.Ia/5 6.30

Joseph Haydn

L'isola disabitata | Azione teatrale in two acts (1779), Hob. XXVIII:9

Libretto: Pietro Metastasio

- | | | |
|----|---|-------|
| 9 | <i>Aria: Se non piange un' infelice (Costanza)</i> | 4.21 |
| 10 | Scena di Berenice: "Berenice, che fai?", Hob XXIVa: 10 | 13.46 |

LENA BELKINA mezzo-soprano/Mezzosopran

ANDREA BACCHETTI piano/Klavier solo (4)

Siegfried Schenner clarinet/Klarinette (2) · **Johannes Maria Bogner** harpsichord/Cembalo (5–10)

ORF VIENNA RADIO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
ANDREA SANGUINETI

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RSO
ORF RADIO SYMPHONIE
ORCHESTER WIEN

 **SONY MUSIC**

STATE OF EMERGENCY

Arias by Mozart, Gluck and Haydn

Rare is the pleasure that manifests itself in just this one aria CD – that of coming face to face with an emotional state of emergency in the dramatic musical works of three composers as different as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Christoph Willibald Gluck and Joseph Haydn. These are emotional states only the operatic genre can fashion into something experiential. And the exhilaration at hearing Gluck's centered internalization of his heroes' emotions is all the greater. Haydn, with his dramatic scene, "Berenice, che fai?" in 1795 celebrated the success as operatic composer still occasionally barred him today, dubiously left to dwell in the shadows of his contemporaries. Mozart's oeuvre leaves no room for question as to his unsurpassable hand for opera. While all three classical composers display a singular magnitude of racing fury, we see the utmost disparity between them in terms of their compositional packaging of the notes. Lena Belkina lends her colourfully rich, unyieldingly expressive voice to Sesto's agonized struggle for composure; to Idamante's thoroughly unsettled insecurity; to the yearning love, even godlike mythicism of Orfeo and Paris; to Haydn's Costanza, who believes herself to be abandoned – and to an equally struggling Berenice.

When Mozart premiered his opera seria *La clemenza di Tito* in Prague in 1791, Gluck had already passed away four years earlier, and the considerably younger Mozart was to follow him that very same year. In the person of Sesto, we see an acute danger to the "mild benevolence of the Roman Emperor Tito"; while he is friend of the emperor, Sesto is also lover of Vitellia, "disdainful" subject of the emperor's amorous attentions, which in turn wrests her into an emotional corset – also as daughter of the previous emperor, Vitellius. It is Vitellia's demand that Sesto murder the emperor, but his attempt fails. The aria "Parto, ma tu ben mio" of the ninth scene of Act 1 recounts in equal measure both Sesto's determined resoluteness and his raging doubts. As so often with Mozart, an instrumental obbligato – in

this case, that of the clarinet – mirrors the emotions of the character on stage. The way Mozart sets the stage allows for an ambiguity of interpretation; it was possible for the listening public present for the premiere at Prague’s Estates Theater on September 6, 1791 – three months prior to Mozart’s death – to regard Mozart’s portrayal of the emperor’s mild benevolence as a foreshadowing nod to the Habsburg ruler Leopold II, crowned king of Bohemia in 1790 before meeting with his own unexpected death.

A similarly dramatic situation is found in Mozart’s tragédie lyrique *Idomeneo*, composed for Munich in 1781. Idomeneo’s son, Idamante, is beside himself for joy to see his father, king of Crete, alive, and he fails to understand his father’s brusque dismissal, even to the point of despair. Idamante cannot possibly know that in order to pacify Poseidon, god of the sea, his father must sacrifice the first living being he encounters on the beach; that is what he has sworn. The panic-stricken horror both felt upon facing one another must have been etched in their faces, with the aria “Il padre adorato” transforming the son’s exuberant feeling of joy into one of pure abhorrence at the abominably barbaric gods.

Mozart conceived of his concert aria “Ch’io mi scordi di te? ... Non temer, amato bene,” KV 505, for his first Susanna in the opera buffa *The Marriage of Figaro*, premiered in Vienna in 1786. The role was sung by English prima donna Nancy Storace. The text, on the other hand, referred to the cast of characters from *Idomeneo* – with Cretian Prince Idamante reassuring imprisoned Trojan Princess Ilia that he would in no case follow the *raison d’état* to leave her for Electra, daughter of Argonaut King Agamemnon. Mozart replaced the violin obbligato composed for an earlier version with one for concert piano. With certitude, it was a farewell concert both fervent and emotional for the diva upon her departure from Vienna. The concert took place on February 23, 1787, in the Theater am

Kärntnertor, with the composer himself – perhaps to some extent secretly smitten – at the piano.

Gluck, setting three libretti by Ranieri de' Calzabigi to music in what is known as his reform operas, fiercely and adamantly wanted to counter the growth of opera seria. The virtuoso singing skills of the vocal stars of his time were decimating the possibilities of any meaningful dramatic progression or indicative expression of the scene. In his foreword to the opera *Alceste*, its Italian version premiered in Vienna in 1767, Gluck's artistic convictions can be read clearly: "It was my striving to lead the music solely to its true calling, namely, that of serving as expression of the word and supporting the most important moments of the plot without interrupting or preventing the plot with superfluous coloration."

Orfeo's astounded entry into Hades in his search for Euridice in *Orfeo ed Euridice*, premiered in 1762 in Vienna, are thus fashioned into moments of true "Glück" (German for "happiness"), as is Paris' impassioned declaration of love at the beginning of *Paride ed Elena*, premiered in the same venue in 1770. Nothing stands in the way to distract from the emotional world of the human soul, expressed through words that are served by the music. Only the correspondingly lyrical voice of the oboe comes alongside Orfeo to join in his amazement at the Elysian light and its brightness, also accompanying Paris in his equally great yearning desire. The absence of the women, Euridice and Helena, at each respective moment only serves to drive the plotline of both operas forward.

Haydn's azione teatrale, *L'isola disabitata*, was premiered on December 6, 1779 in Esterháza. Just a few weeks after a devastating fire at the theater, Haydn was able to make do with just four solo vocalists in a performance of the work. The libretto by Pietro Metastasio follows motives from *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Dafoe. Two sisters find themselves left behind, all alone on the "desert island." Costanza weeps in the aria "Se non piange un' infelice,"

lamenting her absent husband Gernando to an uncomprehending sister, who is full of *joie de vivre* despite their adverse situation.

“She sang very scanty,” were the words Haydn entrusted to his diary in 1795 on the occasion of the premiere of his dramatic scene “Berenice, che fai” in London. The “scanty singing” he criticized was that of Italian soprano Brigida Giorgi Banti, who made her grand appearance at the end of the benefit concert in the King’s Theater on May 4. The libretto by Pietro Metastasio tells the story of Antigonus Gonatus, a king from Macedonia of the antique. He wishes to marry Berenice, who is, however, unfortunately in love with his son Demetrius. Haydn highlights that notable moment in which Berenice falsely assumes the suicide of her beloved Demetrius and anxiously asks herself the question, “Berenice, que fai?” Haydn puts the vocalist through her paces with harsh harmonic changes, beginning with D major in the first of two recitatives and ending with an aria in F minor.

Before each of the blocks of arias, Mozart whisks us away to the “school for lovers” in *Così fan tutte*, his third da Ponte opera, in which it becomes clear that nothing will ever be as it was following an exchange of romantic partners. With *Armide*, his five-act heroic drama, Gluck enters into the running in 1777 to present the enchantress to a controversy-prone Parisian public. In order to attend Haydn’s first Italian opera, the one-act festa teatrale *Acide e Galatea* composed for the wedding of the oldest son of Prince Nikolaus Esterházy I, the wedding guests, anno 1763, traveled to Eisenstadt along a road lit up just for the occasion – likely the same listening public present in Vienna the year prior to hear Gluck’s *Orfeo ed Euridice* and in Schönbrunn to be awestruck at the lively Salzburger wunderkind Mozart on the lap of Maria Theresa.

Ursula Magnes
Translation: Gratia Stryker-Härtel



LENA BELKINA

Lena Belkina grew up on the Crimean peninsula and studied singing at the famous Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Kiev and at the Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy College in Leipzig. At the age of 21 she became an ensemble member of the Leipzig Opera House and then of the Vienna State Opera. In the meantime, she has become an international artist, whose shimmering voice, with a touch of Slavic melancholy, inspires audiences between Vienna and Jerusalem as well as Monte Carlo and Tokyo.

ANDREA SANGUINETI

Andrea Sanguineti from Liguria, studied conducting at the Vienna University of Music and the Conservatorio in Milan where, at the age of 23, became one of the youngest conductor graduates. Soon after he was appointed in Hannover and Würzburg where he worked on a large repertoire, both symphonic and operatic. A rising star, he regularly conducts in France and Italy and is guest at international festivals such as the Beijing Festival. His opera productions as Music Director of Theater Görlitz achieved such a great recognition that he was described as a genius by the German Radio.



ANDREA BACCHETTI

Andrea Bacchetti is an Italian concert pianist, who achieved international acclaim for his award winning recordings of Cherubini 6 Sonatas, Domenico Scarlatti The Scarlatti Restored Manuscript, J.S. Bach Keyboard Concertos, Italienische Sonaten – Scarlatti – Marcello – Cherubini as well as The Italian Bach – exclusively for Sony Classical. He is guest of international festivals (including Salzburg, Lucerne) and in prestigious concert halls.

ORF VIENNA RADIO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra is a top orchestra of world renown; the orchestra defines itself in the Vienna orchestral tradition. Cornelius Meister took over as Principal Conductor and Artistic Director in September 2010. The Vienna RSO is known for its exceptional, bold programming. By combining nineteenth-century repertoire with contemporary pieces and rarely performed works of other time periods, our programming often places Romantic era classics in unexpected contexts.



