



THE MOZARTISTS

Recorded at the Church of St Augustine, Kilburn, London from 15 to 17 July 2024

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Orchestra playing on period instruments at A = 430 Hz

This recording is dedicated to the memory of Greta Hemus, a close friend of The Mozartists. Her enduring support and generous legacy played an invaluable role in enabling this project.

We are also extremely grateful to Mark & Sue Allen, Dame Kate Bingham & Jesse Norman MP, Alistair & Linda Buchanan, Anne Bulford CBE & David Smith, William Burt, Philip & Chris Carne, David & Liz Challen, Judith Cobham-lowe OBE, Tom & Felicity Crawley, David & Helen Crowe, Mona Dahdaleh, Lucy & Guy Davison, Kate & Philip Douglas, Kathleen Duncan, Richard Ellington, Sir Vernon Ellis, Andrew & Wendy Gairdner, Peter Goodwin, Julian Hardwick, Steve & Jennie Hoffman, Raymonde Jay, Michael Jeans, The Koukis family, Richard Mansell-Jones, Tom & Tina Maxwell, Clare & Christopher McCann, Sir Robert & Lady Anne Marie Nelson CBE, Graeme Odgers, Ian Odgers, Amanda & Robin Osmond, Mark & Jill Pellew, Michael Pickering, Dyrk & Jane Riddell, Alan Sainer, Laura Servidei, Marilyn Stock, James Stratford, Joe & Christine Swanson, Frances Tait, Paul Taylor, Tina & Victor Vadaneaux, Sir John & Lady Vereker, Raphael & Federica Vermeir, Rosemary Warburg, Iain & Gilly Webb-Wilson, Tim Weston, Peter & Roseanne Williams and those who wish to remain anonymous.

GLUCK ARIAS

ANN HALLENBERG mezzo-soprano

THE MOZARTISTS

Daniel Edgar (Leader)

IAN PAGE conductor



GLUCK ARIAS

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GLUCK ARIAS

The release of this recording marks the tenth anniversary of my first meeting with Ann Hallenberg. During the course of a few months in 2015, several friends and colleagues independently recommended her to me and told me that they thought we would get on particularly well together. Taking advantage of this synchronicity, I first met up with Ann in a café in north-west London while she was in town rehearsing with another orchestra, and it was here that we started planning our first collaboration.

The programme that we presented at Wigmore Hall in May 2016 featured four arias by Gluck and four by Mozart, and its success led to Ann inviting me to conduct Handel's *Ariodante* at the Drottningholms Slottsteater in 2019. Four years later we reunited for an all-Handel programme at Wigmore Hall, but the idea of making a recording together was already moving into focus.

The result is this recording of Italian arias by Gluck. To the four arias that we had performed in 2016 I added another fifteen or so, and we gradually whittled this list down to a final selection. The backbone of the programme is formed by three arias that Gluck wrote for the celebrated castrato Giovanni Manzuoli in *Il trionfo di Clelia*, and the remaining repertoire ranges from music that has already been recorded dozens of times to arias that have never been recorded before.

In an age where so much music of the past is being explored and made available, Gluck nevertheless remains one of the most neglected and undervalued of the great composers, a name that continues to crop up more often in textbooks than in opera houses or concert halls. We very much hope that you will find this music to be of far more than merely historical interest, and that you enjoy listening to this recording.

Ian Page

Beauty and Truth: the operas of Gluck

Christoph Willibald Gluck was one of the primary figures in the reform movement of opera in the third quarter of the eighteenth century. His work was based on “the immutable foundations of beauty and truth” (his own phrase), and his reforms sought to achieve dramatic and emotional verisimilitude through making the music serve the text. This represented a conscious attempt to replace the florid vocal excesses of the late Baroque with a return to the naturalistic and poetic origins of opera; “I sought to restrict music”, he wrote, “to its true purpose of expressing the poetry, and reinforcing the dramatic situation without interrupting the action or hampering it with superfluous embellishments”.

His three great ‘reform’ operas – *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762), *Alceste* (1767) and *Paride ed Elena* (1770) – were written in collaboration with the librettist Ranieri de’ Calzabigi, and date from exactly the same period as when the young Mozart was writing his first operas. These were followed by a highly successful series of French operas (including the two *Iphigénie* operas and *Armide*) written for Paris, which have maintained a fairly regular foothold in the outer peripheries of the repertoire. Gluck’s apprenticeship, however, had been an extensive one, and it comes as a surprise to many that by the time he came to write *Orfeo ed Euridice* he was already a veteran of over twenty-five operas. These were predominantly in the established Metastasian *opera seria* style which his later reforms sought to replace, but the transition and development of his musical language was a gradual one, and many numbers from his early operas anticipate his later style.

Gluck was born in Erasbach – a small village near Berching in mid-Bavaria – on 2 July 1714. His father, a forester in the service of the minor nobility, was extremely strict, and tried to suppress his eldest son’s growing talent and interest in music. As a result, Gluck left home at the age of either thirteen or fourteen, and set off for Prague. Here he carved out a meagre existence as a performing musician (organist, singer, violinist, cellist), but he seems to have received little formal musical training and was predominantly self-taught. In 1732

he enrolled at Prague University, where he studied Logic and Mathematics, but within a couple of years he had moved to Vienna, staying there until 1737, when he met a Lombard nobleman, Prince Antonio Melzi.

Melzi engaged Gluck as a member of his private orchestra in Milan, and here he immersed himself in Italian music and studied with the famous composer Sammartini for the next three years. It was here too that his first opera, *Artaserse*, was premiered, on 26 December 1741. It was a tremendous success, and over the next three years seven further commissions followed, in Venice, Crema and Turin as well as in Milan (only one of these first eight operas, *Ipermestra*, has survived complete). Gluck then went to London, where he wrote two operas for the King's Theatre, Haymarket, and where he also met Handel.

Over the next few years Gluck wrote operas for Dresden, Copenhagen, Prague and Naples, but Vienna gradually became his centre of gravity. This was significantly reinforced when, at the age of thirty-six, he married Maria Anna Bergin, the daughter of a wealthy merchant. She was half Gluck's age, and although no children were forthcoming, theirs seems to have been a happy marriage. As well as providing financial security, Maria Anna was politically well-placed to develop her husband's career, for her eldest sister was married to one of the favourite councillors of the Empress Maria Theresia, while another sister was one of the Empress' ladies-in-waiting. Gluck had already received commissions to write operas in Maria Theresia's honour, and following his appointment as Kapellmeister to the Prince of Saxe-Hildburghausen and the arrival of Count Giacomo Durazzo to run the two opera houses in Vienna, he became an increasingly important figure in Viennese musical circles.

In 1752 Count Durazzo established a French theatre company in Vienna, whose repertoire included not only drama but also ballet and *opéra comique*. Initially works were imported from Paris, but Gluck was hired, at first to adapt existing works but increasingly to write his

own – he composed a total of eight *opéras comiques* between 1758 and 1764. It was during this period that Durazzo introduced Gluck to Calzabigi, a flamboyant writer and businessman who came to Vienna in 1761 from Paris, where he had set up a lottery with his brother and the famed womaniser Casanova.

In truth, Calzabigi was the main driving force behind the reforms for which Gluck became renowned, and it was he who identified Gluck as the composer best suited to give musical expression to his new operatic ideals. They collaborated first, with the choreographer Angiolini, on the ballet *Don Juan*, and then, the following year, on *Orfeo ed Euridice*. Meanwhile Gluck continued with other engagements, both in Vienna and elsewhere, writing *Il trionfo di Clelia* for the inauguration of the Nuovo Teatro Pubblico (now the Teatro Comunale) in Bologna in 1763. The sequence of *opéras comiques* for Vienna, however, ended in 1764 with Durazzo's resignation. Two further collaborations with Calzabigi followed in 1767 (*Alceste*) and 1770 (*Paride ed Elena*), and by now Gluck enjoyed an international reputation, buying a luxurious house in the outskirts of Vienna in 1768. But his productivity was waning, and he needed new challenges.

In the early 1770s Gluck seems to have decided that his future lay in Paris, and he hoped to secure the patronage of his former student in Vienna, the Austrian Princess Marie Antoinette, who was now married to the Dauphin. In 1773 he made a commitment to write five operas for the French capital. *Iphigénie en Aulide* was followed by *Armide* as well as new French versions of *Orphée et Euridice* and *Alceste*, but his greatest success was *Iphigénie en Tauride*. His music caused a tremendous sensation in Paris, and the intellectual press organised claque both for and against him. Niccolò Piccinni, an Italian composer whose reputation was previously founded on comic opera, was engaged as a rival to Gluck, and heated exchanges developed between the Gluckists and the Piccinnists.

During rehearsals for *Echo et Narcisse* in September 1779, Gluck suffered a stroke, and following the failure of the new opera he decided to leave Paris for good and return to Vienna. His career was virtually over, and when he was commissioned to write a new opera for Vienna he passed it on to his protégé Salieri. His final two musical projects were a German revision of *Iphigénie en Tauride* and the composition of a *De Profundis*, which was directed by Salieri at Gluck's funeral. Following further strokes in 1781 and 1783, Gluck died on the afternoon of 15 November 1787, at his town house in Vienna. He was seventy-three.

Until the revival of interest in the Baroque period during the second half of the twentieth century, Gluck was the earliest composer to hold a regular place in the operatic repertoire. His central role in the operatic reforms of the 1760s and 1770s led his name to become synonymous with the birth of modern opera, but in truth, of course, he was part of an ongoing and partially cyclic evolution. His music sought a directness of utterance, a dramatic honesty and rawness, and a simplicity that was far from artless. His contribution is beautifully summarized in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*: “Gluck’s historical importance rests on his establishment of a new equilibrium between music and drama, his greatness on the power and clarity with which he projected this vision. He dissolved the drama in music instead of merely illustrating it.”

“Resta, o cara” from *Il trionfo di Clelia*

Gluck’s *Il trionfo di Clelia* was written for the inauguration of Bologna’s Teatro Comunale on 14 May 1763. This magnificent opera house was designed by the celebrated architect Antonio Galli Bibiena; originally called the Nuovo Teatro Pubblico, it was the first opera house to be constructed with public funds and owned by the municipality. The first night was a major social and artistic event, and was deemed a great success by everyone except Gluck himself, who expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of the Bologna orchestra. In spite of these misgivings the opera ran for a total of twenty-eight performances, selling over thirty thousand tickets (more than the entire population of Bologna).

The opera’s libretto, which had been written by Pietro Metastasio the previous year for a setting by Johann Adolph Hasse in Vienna, is set in Rome in 508 B.C. Clelia is a Roman noblewoman engaged to the ambassador Orazio. Together – and seemingly single-handedly – they resist the treacherous schemes of Tarquinio and the invading Etruscan King Porsenna, ultimately securing peace and their own happiness as well as protecting Rome’s independence. The work required lavish sets, and the original staging fully exploited the new theatre’s technical capabilities.

The illustrious cast was headed by the soprano Antonia Maria Girelli-Aguilar as Clelia and the celebrated castrato Giovanni Manzuoli as Orazio; eight years later these two singers were to create the roles of Silvia and Ascanio respectively in Mozart’s *Ascanio in Alba* in Milan. After the success of *Il trionfo di Clelia*, Manzuoli was engaged to appear at the King’s Theatre Haymarket in London for the 1764-65 season, during which he appeared in the pasticcio opera *Ezio* and the première of J. C. Bach’s *Adriano in Siria*. His stay in London coincided with that of the young Mozart, and Manzuoli is thought to have given Mozart singing lessons during this time.

In “Resta, o cara”, his opening aria in *Il trionfo di Clelia*, Orazio urges Clelia to place the greater good of Rome above her own wishes and interests. Gluck’s resplendent music fulfils a dual purpose, not only evoking a vitality and splendour commensurate with the spectacular new Bologna opera house but also providing a powerful vehicle for Manzoli to announce his vocal and dramatic gifts.

1 ORAZIO:

Resta, o cara; e per timore
Se tremar mai senti il core,
Pensa a Roma e pensa a me.

È ben giusto, o mia speranza,
Che t’inspirino costanza,
La tua patria e la mia fè.

HORATIO:

Stay, my dear, and if you ever
feel your heart tremble with fear,
think of Rome and of me.

It is completely right, my darling,
that your country and my faith
should inspire loyalty in you.



“O del mio dolce ardor” from *Paride ed Elena*

Paride ed Elena was the third and final collaboration between Gluck and the librettist Ranieri de' Calzabigi, and was premiered on 3 November 1770 at the Burgtheater, Vienna. Unlike its two predecessors, Gluck did not create a French adaptation of the work during his time in Paris later in the 1770s, and indeed *Paride ed Elena* has perhaps languished in the shadow of *Orfeo ed Euridice* and *Alceste* – the composer himself acknowledged that it lacked the “tragic situations” of those operas – but it contains some charming and beautiful music.

According to Homer, it was the love of Paride (Paris), a Trojan, for Elena (Helen, wife of Menelaus of Sparta and allegedly the most beautiful woman in the world) which prompted the Trojan Wars. Gluck and Calzabigi's opera entirely disregards the political framework and presents a simple love story, focusing almost exclusively on the two main protagonists. At the beginning of the opera, Paride and his followers have just landed on the shores of Sparta, and he sings of his joy and relief at being able at last to breathe the same air as Elena.

2

PARIDE:

O del mio dolce ardor bramato oggetto!
L'aure che tu respiri, alfin respiro.
Ovunque il guardo io giro,
le tue vaghe sembianze
Amore in me dipinge:
il mio pensier si finge
le più liete speranze;
e nel desio che così m'empie il petto
cerco te, chiamo te, spero, e sospiro!
O del mio dolce ardor bramato oggetto!
L'aure che tu respiri alfin respiro.

PARIS:

O longed-for object of my tender passion,
at last I breathe the air that you breathe!
Wherever I turn my gaze,
Love paints in my mind
your beautiful face,
and my imagination conjures up
hopes of the utmost bliss.
And in the desire which thus fills my breast
I search, I call, I hope and I sigh for you!
O longed-for object of my tender passion,
at last I breathe the air that you breathe!

“No, che torni sì presto... lo non pretendo, o stelle” from *Ipermestra*

Ipermestra was Gluck's sixth opera, and the earliest to have survived complete. Metastasio's libretto was originally written for Johann Adolph Hasse, whose setting was first performed in Vienna on 8 January 1744; Gluck's was premiered at the Teatro di San Giovanni Grisostomo in Venice on 21 November of that same year.

Hypermnestra, daughter of Danaus, King of Argos, is engaged to Lynceus, son of Aegyptus, but her father has been warned by an oracle that he will meet his death at the hands of one of Aegyptus' sons; he has therefore ordered Hypermnestra to murder Lynceus on their wedding night. Unable to countenance such a deed, she instead pretends that she no longer loves Lynceus and rejects him, wrongly believing that this will satisfy her father. In the final aria of Act One, a bemused Lynceus reluctantly accepts her rejection but refuses to give up hope. Gluck's setting, with its doggedly insistent harmonic patterns and relentlessly active accompaniment, evokes his resolute determination and loyalty but also his inner turmoil.

3 LINCEO:

No, che torni sì presto
A serenarsi il ciel l'alma non spera:
La nube che l'ingombra è troppo nera.

4 lo non pretendo, o stelle,

Il solito splendor:
Mi basta in tanto orror
Qualche baleno.
Che se le mie procelle
Non giunge a tranquillar;
Quai scogli a questo mar
Mi mostri almeno.

LYNCEUS:

No, this soul does not hope that you
will return so soon to brighten the sky;
the cloud which obscures it is too black.

I do not expect, o stars,
your usual splendour;
a few lightning flashes amid such despair
are enough for me.
For if they do not come
to placate my torments,
they will at least reveal to me
where the rocks are in this sea.

Dance of the Blessed Spirits from *Orfeo ed Euridice*

Orfeo ed Euridice was the first of the three so-called 'reform' operas that Gluck wrote in collaboration with Calzabigi. It was premiered at the Burgtheater on 5 October 1762, and the following day the six-year-old Mozart arrived in Vienna for the very first time. The coincidence seems curiously symbolic, and it was certainly bold of Gluck to choose for his new opera the subject of mythology's greatest musician, requiring him as it did to create music that could depict Paradise and placate the Furies.

Gluck and Calzabigi's reforms were in fact not entirely new, and in many respects they involved adopting French rather than Italian models. These included giving priority to the concept of the scene, rather than individual numbers, the rejection of the 'da capo' arias beloved by Italian *opera seria*, the use of the orchestra throughout, and the rejection of empty virtuosity in the vocal writing. The one important Italian tradition that still prevailed, however, was the need for a happy ending – in this version of the myth, Cupid eventually saves the day, and Orpheus and Eurydice are reunited for a second time.

Calzabigi's libretto seeks a rarified simplicity, paring the drama down to its bare bones. Aside from the chorus there are only three characters, and unlike other settings of the story, Eurydice has already died by the time the opera begins. The famous Dance of the Blessed Spirits opens the second part of Act Two, when Orpheus – having placated the Furies by the power of his music and the depth of his love for Euridice – suddenly finds himself transported to the ineffable beauty of the Elysian Fields. It is scored for two bucolic flutes and strings (the original version is relatively brief, but for his 1774 French version of the opera Gluck wrote a new extended middle section), and it leads directly into the equally celebrated "Che puro ciel".

“Che puro ciel” from *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1769 Parma version)

In keeping with Gluck’s twin objectives of clarity and simplicity, the vocal line of “Che puro ciel” is effectively recitative, reflecting Orpheus’ stupefied wonder at the paradise he has entered, and it is left to the orchestra to conjure a soundscape that reflects the rapturous serenity and other-worldliness of Elysium. It is easy to underestimate the skill with which the composer accomplished such a challenge, creating a remarkably unified whole from a profusion of disparate elements – a beguiling oboe solo soaring above a finely balanced accompaniment of gurgling 1st violin triplets, trilling flute and 2nd violins, divided violas and pizzicato bass.

Gluck originally composed the role of Orfeo for the castrato Gaetano Guadagni, who thirteen years previously had created the role of Didymus in Handel’s *Theodora*, but when he revived the work in Parma in 1769, as part of his triptych *Le feste d’Apollo*, he adapted the part for another castrato, Giuseppe Millico, whose voice lay slightly higher than Guadagni’s. Much of the music was accordingly transposed, but for “Che puro ciel” Gluck retained the original key of C major and instead rewrote parts of the vocal line to sit more comfortably for Millico; he also made several minor changes to the orchestral accompaniment.

6 ORFEO:

Che puro ciel, che chiaro sol,
Che nuova serena luce è questa mai!
Che dolce lusinghiera armonia
Formano insieme
Il cantar degli augelli,
Il correr de' ruscelli,
Dell'aure il sussurrar!
Questo è il soggiorno
De' fortunati Eroi!
Qui tutto spira un tranquillo contento,
Ma non per me.
Se l'idol mio non trovo,
Sperar non posso!
I suoi soavi accenti,
Gli amorosi suoi sguardi, il suo bel riso,
Sono il mio solo, il mio diletto Eliso!
Ma in qual parte ei sarà?
Chiedasi a questo
Che mi viene a incontrar stuolo felice.
Euridice dov'è?

[CORO:]

Giunge Euridice.

ORPHEUS:

What pure sky, what bright sun,
what new and serene light is this!
What sweet, enchanting harmony
is created by the mingling of
the singing of the birds,
the cascading of the streams
and the whispering of the breezes!
This is the dwelling place
of the blessed heroes.
Here everything breathes a calm
contentment, but not for me.
If I cannot find my beloved
there is no hope for me!
Her sweet words,
her loving glances, her beautiful smile
are my only, my blissful paradise!
But where can she be?
Let me ask this happy crowd
which comes to meet me.
Where is Eurydice?

[CHORUS:]

Eurydice is approaching.

“Misera, dove son!... Ah, non son io che parlo” from *Ezio*

Despite the composer’s Bohemian origins, *Ezio* was the only opera which Gluck wrote for Prague. It was first performed by the Italian impresario Giovanni Locatelli’s resident opera company there in 1750, and Gluck clearly thought highly of it, for in 1763 he revised the opera for performance in Vienna. Metastasio’s popular libretto had been written in 1728 for a setting by Porpora, and during its first hundred years it was to be set by over forty composers, including Hasse, Handel, Jommelli, Traetta and Paisiello.

The action is set in A.D. 451 in Rome, where the Emperor Valentiniano’s army, under its general Ezio, has just defeated Attila the Hun. Ezio is betrothed to Fulvia, whose father Massimo plots to assassinate the Emperor. When the attempt fails, suspicion mistakenly falls on Ezio, who is sentenced to death but refuses to implicate his beloved’s father. Fulvia’s solo scene in the final act, in which she laments and bewails her seemingly irredeemable fate, is one of Metastasio’s finest – Mozart subsequently set it as a concert aria soon after completing *Idomeneo* – and Gluck’s setting admirably showcases his ability to convey heightened emotional situations in music of searing intensity.

7

FULVIA:

Misera, dove son! L’aure del Tebro
Son queste ch’io respiro?
Per le strade m’aggio
Di Tebe e d’Argo; o dalle greche sponde
Di tragedie feconde
Le domestiche furie
Vennero a questi lidi
Della prole di Cadmo e degl’Atridi?

FULVIA:

Wretched me, where am I? Is this
the air of the Tiber that I breathe?
Or do I roam the streets
of Thebes and Argos; or from those Greek
shores, scene of multiple tragedies,
have the household Furies
of the offspring of Cadmus and the Atreidae
come to these shores of ours?

Là d'un monarca inguisto
L'ingrata crudeltà m'empie d'orrore;
D'un padre traditore
Qua la colpa m'agghiaccia;
E lo sposo innocente ho sempre in faccia.
Oh immagini funeste!
Oh memorie! Oh martiro!
Ed io parlo infelice, ed io respiro?

8 Ah, non son io che parlo,
È il barbaro dolore
Che mi divide il core,
Che delirar mi fa.

Non cura il Ciel tiranno
L'affanno in cui mi vedo;
Un fulmine gli chiedo
E un fulmine non ha.

There the cruelty of an evil monarch
fills my soul with horror;
here the deed of a treacherous father
makes my blood run cold; and I always
see before me my innocent beloved.
Oh dreadful imaginings!
Oh memories! Oh torment! And I,
unhappy woman, still live and breathe?

Alas, it is not I who speak,
but the barbarous grief
which breaks my heart in two
and makes me delirious.

Tyrannical Heaven is insensible
to the distress in which I find myself;
I beg it for a thunderbolt
but it has none to send.



“Saper ti basti, o cara” from *Il trionfo di Clelia*

In “Resta, o cara”, his opening aria in *Il trionfo di Clelia*, Orazio had sought to persuade his beloved Clelia to place the needs of her homeland above her own personal interests, and in his second aria, which draws Act One of the opera to a close, he is obliged to follow his own advice.

Orazio has just had an audience with the invading Etruscan King Porsenna, who has suddenly announced that he will agree to relinquish his treacherous claims on Rome if Orazio is prepared to surrender Clelia to him. Reeling from the shock of such an ignoble proposition, Orazio is unable to convey this news to Clelia. This dramatic context lends an added poignancy to his declaration of undying love to her, and enabled Gluck to take full advantage of the plangent lyrical qualities of Manzuoli’s voice.

9 ORAZIO:

Saper ti basti, o cara,
Che sei, che fosti ognor,
E che il mio solo amor
Sempre sarai.

Che sempre, e in ogni sorte,
Lo giuro a’ sommi dei dèi,
De’ puri affetti miei
L’impero avrai.

HORATIO:

It is enough for now, my dear,
for you to know that you are,
you have always been, and you
will always be my only love.

And I swear to the highest Gods
that whatever fate decrees,
you will always have command
of my undying affection.

“Di questa cetra in seno” from *Il Parnaso confuso*

Il Parnaso confuso was the first of two operas that Gluck composed for the celebrations in Vienna of the marriage of the Archduke Joseph (subsequently Emperor Joseph II) to Princess Maria Josepha of Bavaria. The 67-year-old court poet Pietro Metastasio was commissioned to write a short libretto (although Gluck had set several of his texts previously this was the first time that the two masters had actually collaborated) and it was presented at the Schönbrunn Palace on 24 January 1765 as a surprise for the newly-wedded couple. The performance was directed by the bridegroom’s younger brother Leopold, who in 1790 was to succeed him as Emperor, and the four roles were sung by four of Maria Theresa’s daughters; the youngest daughter, the future Marie Antoinette, was presumably considered too young, for the only thing she was allowed to do was to eat cake.

The decidedly slight plot takes place in the sacred groves of Mount Parnassus, home of the Muses. The god Apollo arrives with news of the impending earthly marriage of Joseph to the “star of Bavaria”, and he seeks the help of Melpomene (the Muse of Tragedy), Erato (the Muse of Poetry) and Euterpe (the Muse of Music) in creating an entertainment in honour of the wedding. They are initially horrified that they only have until the following morning to complete their work, but Apollo flatters them into complying with his wishes.

After Melpomene has retired to the forest to seek inspiration for her dramatic verses, Erato admires Euterpe’s beautiful lyre and claims that she can draw exquisite harmonies from it. Gluck’s scoring of “Di questa cetra in seno” is indeed exquisite, with the melodic interest given to two separate viola parts, accompanied by plucked violins, cello and bass and a mellifluous solo bassoon.

10 ERATO:

Di questa cetra in seno
Pien di dolcezza, e pieno
D'amabili deliri,
Vieni e t'ascondi, Amor.

E tal di questa or sia
La tenera armonia,
Che immerso ognun sospiri
Nel tuo felice ardor.

ERATO:

Within the heart of this lyre,
full of sweetness and full
of loving rapture,
come and hide yourself, o Cupid.

And let its tender harmony
now be such
that all may sigh, absorbed
in your happy yearning.

“Maggior follia non v’è” from *La Semiramide riconosciuta*

La Semiramide riconosciuta was the first opera that Gluck composed for Vienna, and was written for the reopening of the renovated Burgtheater on 14 May 1748, the birthday of the Empress Maria Theresia. The drama of Semiramide, who had disguised herself as her son and ruled Babylon as King Ninus, had been performed five years earlier as part of the celebrations for Maria Theresia’s coronation. Metastasio’s libretto for *La Semiramide riconosciuta*, however, which had been written in 1729 and had already been set by such composers as Vinci, Porpora, Jommelli and Hasse, focuses less on the title character than on the princess Tamiri and her three suitors. These are Ircano, Mirteo and Scitalce, who are princes of Scythia, Egypt and India respectively.

When Mirteo criticises Ircano’s haughty and belligerent attitude, the Scythian prince defends his approach and impatiently suggests that they each follow their own methods and philosophies. Gluck’s unyielding and harmonically irregular music beautifully captures Ircano’s misplaced and unbecoming arrogance, the relentless tread of the accompaniment suggestive of a character who talks rather more than he listens.

11 IRCANO:
Maggior follia non v’è,
Che per godere un dì,
Questa soffrir così
legge tiranna.

Io giuro amore e fè
A più d’una beltà;
Nè serbo fedeltà,
Quando m’affanna.

IRCANO:
There is no greater folly
than to ‘enjoy’ even for one day
enduring like this
such a tyrannical law.

I therefore swear love and fidelity
to more than one beauty;
nor do I remain loyal
when it vexes me to do so.

“L’augellin da’ lacci sciolto” from *Le nozze d’Ercole e d’Ebe*

Le nozze d’Ercole e d’Ebe was composed in Dresden in the summer of 1747 as part of the celebrations relating to two royal weddings, both of which involved a member of the Bavarian royal family; on 13 June Elector Maximilian Joseph of Bavaria married the daughter of Elector Frederick Augustus II of Saxony, Maria Anna, while a week later the Bavarian Princess Maria Antonia Walpurga, herself a distinguished musician, married Elector Prince Frederick Christian of Saxony. The associated festivities lasted from 10 June until 3 July, and unfolded on a scale that was rarely seen in Germany; full-length new operas by Scalabrini and Hasse were performed in Dresden before the court and its entire entourage moved to the royal castle in Pillnitz, in whose gardens an open stage was built for the occasion. It was here that *Le nozze d’Ercole e d’Ebe* was premiered on 29 June, performed by Pietro Mingotti’s resident troupe with the composer in attendance.

The finest of the work’s nine arias is the second of three sung by Hebe, a minor deity who, under the guidance of Jupiter and Juno, is about to marry Hercules. As she describes the tranquillity of a bird released from its chains, pairs of flutes and oboes unite and coo in contentment, directly reflecting the wished-for happiness of the two wedding couples.

12

EBE:

L’augellin da’ lacci sciolto
Torna appena al nido antico,
Che del carcere nemico
Gli affanni si scordò.

Quando giugne al fin bramato
Al suo ben si scorda accanto
Il tremar, l’angosce, il pianto,
Chi d’amore sospirò.

HEBE:

The bird released from its chains
has scarcely returned to its old nest
than it has forgotten
the torments of prison.

When it reaches the desired end
beside its beloved, it has forgotten
the trembling, the anguish, the crying
of one who suffered because of love.

“De’ folgori di Giove” from *Il trionfo di Clelia*

For the final aria in *Il trionfo di Clelia*, Gluck again wrote a mesmerising showpiece for Giovanni Manzuoli. As the narrative reaches its conclusion, Orazio has come to the Etruscan King Porsenna and the treacherous Tarquinio disguised as a Roman messenger. When Porsenna declares that he is at last fully resolved to attack and conquer Rome, Orazio defiantly stands up to him, boldly warning him of the consequences of such an attempt. The dazzling virtuosity of the vocal writing and the inclusion of trumpets and drums bring a military swagger and confidence to his declamations, which ultimately persuade Porsenna to relent.

13 ORAZIO:

De’ folgori di Giove
Roma pugnando al lampo
Trarrà compagni in campo
Tutti gli Dei con se.

Sarà per tutto altrove
A’ posterì d’esempio
Il memorando scempio
Di chi tradi la fè.

HORATIO:

Rome, fighting under the illumination
of Jove’s lightning flashes,
will attract all the Gods
as its companions on the battlefield.

For everyone elsewhere,
the memorable massacre
of those who betrayed the faith
will serve as an example for posterity.

Notes and translations © Ian Page, 2025

GLUCK'S OPERAS

- Artaserse (Milan, 1741)
Demetrio (Venice, 1742)
Demofoonte (Milan, 1743)
Il Tigrane (Crema, 1743)
La Sofonisba (Milan, 1744)
Ipermestra (Venice, 1744)
Porò (Turin, 1744)
Ippolito (Milan, 1745)
La caduta de' giganti (London, 1746)
Artemene (London, 1746)
Le nozze d'Ercole e d'Ebe (Dresden, 1747)
La Semiramide riconosciuta (Vienna, 1748)
La contesa de' numi (Copenhagen, 1749)
Ezio (Prague, 1750)
Issipile (Prague, 1752)
La clemenza di Tito (Naples, 1752)
Le cinesi (Vienna, 1754)
La danza (Vienna, 1755)
L'innocenza giustificata (Vienna, 1755)
Antigono (Rome, 1756)
Il re pastore (Vienna, 1756)
La fausse esclave (Vienna, 1758)
L'île de Merlin (Vienna, 1758)
La Cythère assiégée (Vienna, 1759)
Le diable à quatre (Vienna, 1759)
L'arbre enchanté (Vienna, 1759)
L'ivrogne corrigé (Vienna, 1760)
Tetide (Vienna, 1760)
Le cadì dupe (Vienna, 1761)
Orfeo ed Euridice (Vienna, 1762)
Il trionfo di Clelia (Bologna, 1763)
La rencontre imprévue (Vienna, 1764)
Il Parnaso confuso (Vienna, 1765)
Telemaco (Vienna, 1765)
La corona (1765, not performed)
Il prologo (Florence, 1767)
Alceste (Vienna, 1767)
Le feste d'Apollo (Parma, 1769)
Paride ed Elena (Vienna, 1770)
Iphigénie en Aulide (Paris, 1774)
Orphée et Euridice (Paris, 1775)
Alceste (Paris, 1776)
Armide (Paris, 1777)
Iphigénie en Tauride (Paris, 1779)
Echo et Narcisse (Paris, 1779)



The Mozartists

Violin 1

Dan Edgar (Leader)
Andrew Roberts
Claudia Norz
George Clifford
Gabriella Jones
Naomi Burrell

Violin 2

James Toll
Nia Lewis
Stephen Rouse
Karin Björk
Kirsten Klingels

Viola

Max Mandel
Hannah Shaw
Francesca Gilbert
Elitsa Bogdanova

Cello

Andrew Skidmore
Gavin Kibble
Bianca Riesner

Bass

Cecelia Bruggemeyer
Carina Cosgrave

Flute

Katy Bircher
Eva Caballero

Oboe

James Eastaway
Leo Duarte

Bassoon

Philip Turbett

Horn

Gavin Edwards
David Bentley

Trumpet

Paul Sharp
Phillip Bainbridge

Timpani

Ben Hoffnung

Harpichord

Steven Devine



Ann Hallenberg

Ann Hallenberg (mezzo-soprano) appears regularly in the world's major opera houses and festivals, including Teatro alla Scala in Milan, Teatro La Fenice in Venice, Teatro Real in Madrid, Theater an der Wien, Opéra National de Paris, Théâtre de La Monnaie in Brussels, Bayerische Staatsoper München, Staatsoper Berlin, the Salzburg Festival, the BBC Proms and the Edinburgh International Festival. Her operatic repertoire includes a large number of roles in operas by Rossini, Mozart, Gluck, Handel, Vivaldi, Monteverdi, Purcell, Bizet and Massenet.

Throughout her career she has specialised in Baroque music, and her other repertoire includes Berlioz's *Les Nuits d'Été*, *La Damnation de Faust* and *L'enfance du Christ*, Mahler's *Rückert Lieder*, *Kindertotenlieder* and *Das Lied von der Erde*, Brahms' *Alto Rhapsody*, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* and Symphony No. 9 and Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*.

She has worked regularly with such conductors such as Fabio Biondi, William Christie, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Emmanuelle Haïm, Daniel Harding, Marc Minkowski, Riccardo Muti, Sir Roger Norrington, Sir Antonio Pappano and Christophe Rousset, and with many of the world's leading orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Royal Concertgebouw, London Symphony and Royal Stockholm Philharmonic. She has also enjoyed long-term partnerships with the ensembles such as Les Talens Lyriques, Il Complesso Barocco, Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique and Europa Galante, and in 2019 she was name Artist in Residence at Drottningholm, where she sang the title roles in Handel's *Ariodante* and *Agrippina*. In 2021 she was appointed a Royal Court Singer by the King of Sweden, and in 2022 she became a Member of the Swedish Academy of Music.

Ann has recorded more than forty CDs and DVDs, and has twice won the award for 'Best Operatic Recital' at the International Opera Awards. This is her first recording with Ian Page and The Mozartists.



Ian Page

Ian Page (conductor) is the founder, conductor and artistic director of The Mozartists, and has established an outstanding reputation as a leading interpreter of the music of Mozart and his contemporaries. He began his musical education as a chorister at Westminster Abbey, and subsequently studied English Literature at the University of York before completing his studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London. At the start of his career he worked on the music staff at Scottish Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera and Drottningholm.

With The Mozartists, he has conducted nearly all of Mozart's operas, including the world premières of the 'original' version of *Mitridate, re di Ponto* and a new completion of *Zaide*. He has also conducted the UK premières of Gluck's *La clemenza di Tito*, Jommelli's *Il Vologeso*, Telemann's *Orpheus*, Hasse's *Piramo e Tisbe* and Haydn's 'Applausus' cantata, and the first new staging for 250 years of Johann Christian Bach's *Adriano in Siria*. He made his début at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden conducting his own new performing edition of Thomas Arne's *Artaxerxes*, which he subsequently recorded, and other engagements have included English Touring Opera's 25th anniversary production of *Le nozze di Figaro*, the opening two concerts at the 2016 Eisenstadt Haydn Festival, and Handel's *Ariodante* – with Ann Hallenberg in the title role – at the 2019 Drottningholm Festival in Sweden. He recently made his débuts at La Seine Musicale in Paris, the Schleswig-Holstein Festival in Germany and Bozar in Brussels.

Ian is the creative driving force behind The Mozartists' MOZART 250 project, which between 2015 and 2041 is exploring the chronological trajectory of Mozart's life, works and influences, and this series has already incorporated dozens of UK and modern day premières. His recordings include an ongoing complete cycle of the Mozart operas, the first three volumes of a 'Sturm und Drang' series, 'Mozart in London', 'The A-Z of Mozart Opera', Jommelli's *Il Vologeso*, 'Blessed Spirit – a Gluck retrospective' and recital discs with soprano Sophie Bevan and tenor Allan Clayton.



The Mozartists

Under the direction of conductor Ian Page, The Mozartists (formerly Classical Opera) have established themselves among the most exciting period-instrument ensembles in Europe, attracting particular recognition for their fresh, dramatic and stylish performances, their imaginative and innovative programming, and their ability to discover and nurture outstanding young artists.

On stage and in concert, they have performed many of Mozart's operas, and they have given the UK premières of operas by Gluck, Telemann, Jommelli and Hasse. They appear regularly in London at such venues as Wigmore Hall, Southbank Centre, Cadogan Hall and the Barbican Centre, and they presented Mozart's *La finta semplice* and *Il re pastore* and Arne's *Artaxerxes* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. They have also performed at many of the UK's leading festivals and in France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Greece and the Czech Republic.

In 2015 the company launched MOZART 250, a ground-breaking 27-year project following the chronological trajectory of Mozart's life, works and influences. Each year MOZART 250 explores the music being composed and performed exactly 250 years previously, thereby placing the composer's life and music in context, and this major initiative has already incorporated music by over thirty composers.

The Mozartists' extensive discography has attracted widespread acclaim. In 2012 they embarked on a major new recording cycle of the complete Mozart operas on Signum Classics, and the first seven releases in the series have all received outstanding reviews. 'The A-Z of Mozart Opera' (Signum Classics) and 'Blessed Spirit – a Gluck retrospective' (Wigmore Hall Live) were both selected for Gramophone magazine's annual Critics' Choice, and their solo recital discs with tenor Allan Clayton ('Where'er You Walk') and soprano Sophie Bevan ('Perfidio!') were both shortlisted for the International Opera Awards.

What the critics said about previous recordings by The Mozartists

"A superb journey. Here is a new achievement that confirms our enthusiasm for The Mozartists, a group whose programmes are always original, committed and exhilarating."

Classique News (Sturm und Drang, Volume 1)

"Page and his players once again demonstrate their total identification with this music in playing of dizzying drive and accuracy... Once again, high artistry conspires with scholarship and strength of concept to create a programme that scintillates from start to finish."

Gramophone (Sturm und Drang, Volume 2)

"A recording that would effortlessly sweep the boards even if the score's discography were less underwhelming."

Voix des Arts (Mozart: Zaide)

"Beautifully paced and balanced, the ensemble is both directed and sung to near perfection."

Opera (Mozart: Il re pastore)

"Early Mozart gets a characteristically committed and compelling performance from the ever-impressive Ian Page... This is minor Mozart, done supremely well."

Gramophone (Mozart: Il sogno di Scipione)

"A remarkable evening of arias sung with passion, urgency and drama... This is a terrific, unmissable disc."

Gramophone ('Blessed Spirit' – a Gluck retrospective)



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