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CLASSICS

# MOZART IN LONDON

THE MOZARTISTS  
IAN PAGE



# MOZART IN LONDON

a musical exploration of Mozart's  
childhood visit to London, 1764-65

Rebecca Bottone, Eleanor Dennis, Anna Devin, Martene Grimson,  
Ana Maria Labin sopranos Helen Sherman mezzo-soprano  
Ben Johnson, Robert Murray tenors  
Steven Devine harpsichord

THE MOZARTISTS  
Daniel Edgar (leader)

IAN PAGE conductor

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† *première recordings*

*Orchestrations for CD 1 tracks 13-15 and CD 2 tracks 10-11 by Roy Mowatt, Steven Devine and Ian Page*

# The Mozartists

## Violin 1

Daniel Edgar (leader)  
Alice Evans  
Andrew Roberts  
Julia Kuhn

## Violin 2

Jill Samuel  
William Thorp  
Nia Lewis  
Camilla Scarlett

## Viola

Simone Jandl  
Oliver Wilson

## Cello

Catherine Rimer  
Andrew Skidmore

## Double bass

Cecelia Bruggemeyer  
Timothy Amherst

## Flute

Katy Bircher  
Elizabeth Walker

## Oboe

James Eastaway  
Rachel Chaplin

## Clarinet

Sarah Thurlow  
Julian Wheeler

## Bassoon

Zoe Shevlin  
Inga Maria Klaucke

## Horn

Gavin Edwards  
Nick Benz

## Harpsichord

Steven Devine

The recordings featured in this set are taken from a weekend of concerts held at London's Milton Court in February 2015. This 'Mozart in London' festival was one of the flagship projects in the first year of conductor Ian Page's ground-breaking MOZART 250 series, and represented the first ever extensive retrospective of the music that was being written and performed in London during Mozart's childhood stay in the English capital.

MOZART 250 is an ambitious 27-year project which seeks to retread the steps of musical history and explore the trajectory of Mozart's life, music and influences in chronological sequence. Each year Ian Page and his ensemble are devoting part of their programme to an exploration of the music that was being composed by Mozart and his contemporaries exactly 250 years previously. The series will incorporate historically-informed performances of all Mozart's significant vocal and orchestral works, including all his operas and concert arias and most of his symphonies and concertos, each performed during the year of its 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

It will also explore the music being written by Mozart's contemporaries – not only those works which inspired and influenced him but also those with which he was probably not familiar but which nevertheless represent significant landmarks or intriguing byways along the path of musical history during Mozart's lifetime. MOZART 250 was launched in January 2015, and will continue until 2041, the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mozart's death.



## Mozart in London – an introduction

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart arrived in London with his father, mother and sister on 23 April 1764, and remained there for fifteen months. During this period he gave numerous public concerts in addition to three private performances for King George III and Queen Charlotte, and he was exposed to a wide variety of other people's music, some of which (unsurprisingly) had an important effect on the evolution of his own compositional style. It was while he was in London that Mozart composed his first symphonies and his first aria.

The London to which he came was of course vastly different from the modern city. It was the largest, busiest and wealthiest city in the world, and the recent 1761 Westminster Paving Act, which provided street lamps that burned throughout the night, merely added to the impression of a metropolis that never slept. It was the London of Dr Johnson and Horace Walpole, of David Garrick and Pitt the Elder. Handel, who lived in London for the last forty-seven years of his life, had died only five years previously, and Hogarth passed away during the Mozarts' stay. Only two bridges – London and Westminster – spanned the Thames (Blackfriars Bridge was under construction but was not opened to the public until 1766), and Buckingham Palace (or Buckingham House, as it was then called), had been built by the Duke of Buckingham as recently as 1703, and had only been bought by the Crown in 1720.

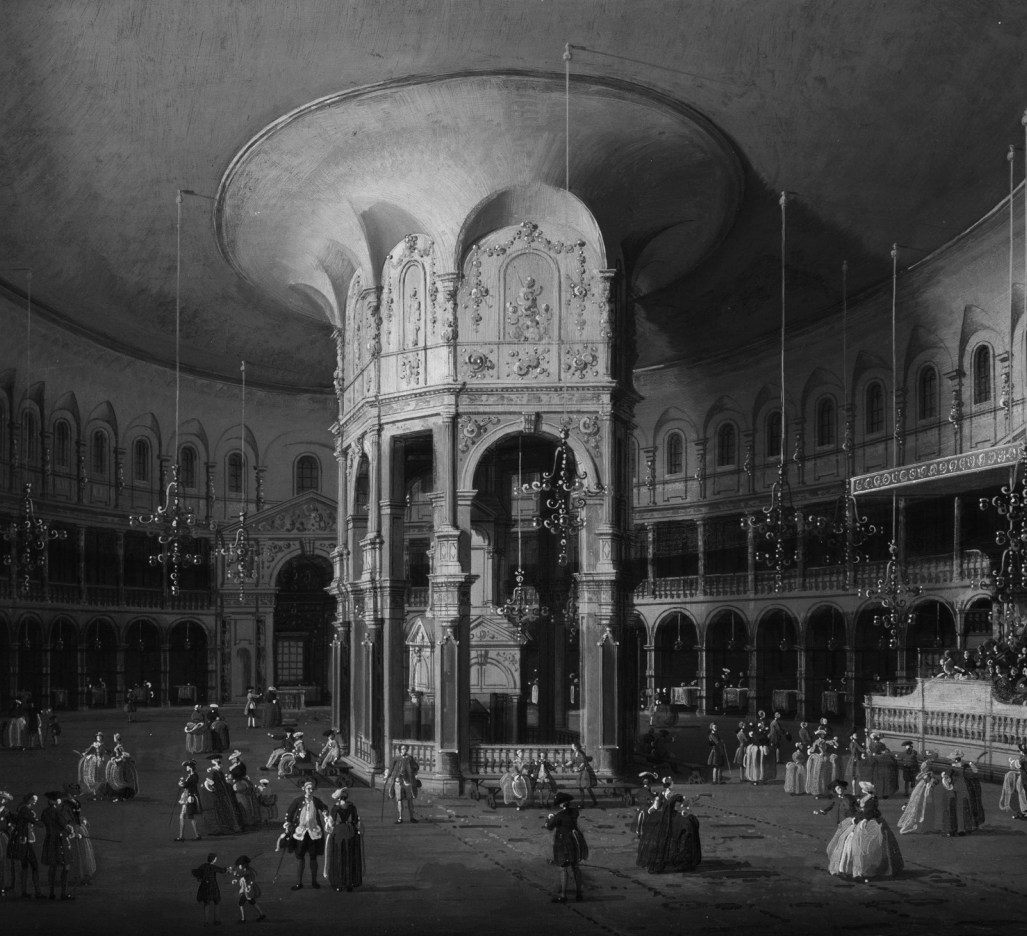
Mozart's father, Leopold, was a violinist and composer at the court of the Archbishop of Salzburg, but his name was known beyond Salzburg and Augsburg (the town of his birth) only as a result of his highly-regarded treatise on the art of violin-playing, which had been published in 1756. In 1747 he had married Maria Anna Pertl, who bore him seven children; of these only the fourth, Nannerl, and the last, Wolfgang, survived infancy. Leopold soon realised that both these children had exceptional gifts, and he started to devote all his energies and spare time to their musical education – a task for which he was eminently qualified.

Following a highly successful visit to Munich and Vienna – where the children played for the Empress Maria Theresia at Schönbrunn Palace – Leopold and his family set off on a Grand Tour, departing from Salzburg on 9 June 1763. Their ensuing itinerary included Munich (again), Augsburg, Ludwigsburg, Schwetzingen, Mannheim, Mainz, Frankfurt, Cologne, Brussels and Paris, where they stayed for six months (including a fortnight at Versailles). They had not originally intended to travel any further north but, in Leopold's own words, "everyone, even in Paris, urged us to go to London". They left Paris on 10 April 1764, arriving in Calais on 19 April. It was the first time that they had seen the sea.

The crossing to Dover, in a small chartered boat which they shared with four other passengers, was a torrid affair – in a letter to his landlord in Salzburg Leopold wrote: "Thank God we have safely crossed the Channel. Yet we have not done so without making a heavy contribution in vomiting" – and after spending one night in Dover they finally arrived in London on 23 April. Mozart's father was forty-four, his mother forty-three, and his sister Nannerl (whom many considered to be an even finer keyboard player than her brother) twelve. Wolfgang was eight.

The Mozarts spent their first night at the White Bear Inn on Piccadilly, and the next day they moved into lodgings above a barber's shop owned by a John Cousins on Cecil Court, just off St Martin's Lane. It was a bad time of year to arrive in London – the opera season had finished and many potential patrons had retired to the countryside for the summer months – but within three days, on 27 April, Wolfgang and Nannerl were performing for the King and Queen at Buckingham House. This seems to have been a great success, with Leopold observing that "here our welcome surpassed all others", and they were invited to return on 19 May. On this second visit Wolfgang sight-read keyboard works by Abel, J. C. Bach and Handel before accompanying Queen Charlotte singing an aria. "Lastly", his father reported, "he took the bass part of some Handel arias, which happened to be lying there, and above this plain bass he improvised the most beautiful melody, in such a manner that everyone was astonished."

On 5 June the children gave their first public concert in the city, at the Great Room in Spring Garden (near St James's Park), and on 20 June Wolfgang performed in a charity concert at Ranelagh Pleasure



Gardens, situated in what are now the grounds of the Royal Chelsea Hospital. The following month, however, Leopold Mozart caught a chill on the way home from a concert at the Earl of Thanet's house in Grosvenor Square. His letters again provide colourful detail:

"In England there is a kind of native complaint, which is called a 'cold'. That is why you hardly ever see the people here wearing summer clothes. In the case of those whose constitution is not strong, this so-called 'cold' becomes so dangerous that in many cases it develops into a 'consumption', as they call it here... and the wisest course of action for such people to take is to leave England altogether and to cross the sea. Indeed, many cases can be found of people recovering their health on leaving this country."

Leopold's own prescription was not quite so drastic, but he was advised to withdraw to the cleaner air of the countryside. As a result the Mozart family moved to Chelsea on 6 August, to a house belonging to a Dr Randal in Five-Fields Row (now 180 Ebury Street). It seems hard to believe now that this location was sufficiently removed from the city to have the desired effect, but the street-name suggests that the area was far more rural in the 1760s than it is now. It was here that Mozart composed his first symphony, and the family remained there until late September, when they returned to the centre of town, taking up lodgings at the house of Mr Thomas Williamson, corset-maker, at 15 Thrift Street (on the site of what is now 20 Frith Street). The Mozart children performed for the third and final time at Buckingham House on 25 October, the fourth anniversary of the King's accession to the throne, and Wolfgang subsequently composed a set of six keyboard sonatas (with optional parts for violin and cello), which were completed on 18 January 1765, published on 20 March, and dedicated to Queen Charlotte.

The artistic and social whirl of the city was now in full swing too, and there were numerous opportunities for the children to continue their unique education. They visited many of London's most celebrated landmarks, including Westminster Abbey, St Paul's Cathedral, the Foundling Hospital, the Royal Observatory at Greenwich and the recently founded Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew. At the Tower of London, whose menagerie housed various exotic animals, Wolfgang was terrified by the roaring of

the lions, while Nannerl was bemused by “a donkey with coffee-coloured stripes” (in reality a zebra). They met composers such as Johann Christian Bach (with whom Mozart formed a lasting bond), Karl Friedrich Abel, Thomas Arne and his son Michael, Samuel Arnold, George Rush and Mattia Vento, singers such as Giovanni Manzuoli (who is thought to have given the young Wolfgang singing lessons), Ferdinando Tenducci, Teresa Scotti, Ercole Ciprandi and Charlotte Brent, and various counts, duchesses and other aristocrats. This last category included Lady Clive, at whose home Wolfgang and Nannerl gave a recital in March 1765; it was in this same house that her husband, Lord Clive of India, was to commit suicide ten years later.

More important than any of these visits and meetings, however, was the vast array of music that the young Mozart was discovering – at the theatres at Covent Garden, Drury Lane and the Haymarket, at the Pleasure Gardens at Ranelagh, Vauxhall and Marylebone, and at the newly launched Bach-Abel concert series and various other house concerts. He was also developing rapidly as a composer in his own right, and a concert which he and his sister gave at the Little Theatre on the Haymarket on 21 February advertised that “all the Overtures [a term which at the time was interchangeable with ‘symphonies’] will be from the Composition of these astonishing Composers, only eight Years old”. The use of the plural was probably a mistake – certainly no compositions credited to Nannerl have survived, and an advertisement for the Mozart’s final public concert in London, which took place at Hickford’s Great Room in Brewer Street on 13 May 1765, promised “all the OVERTURES of this little Boy’s own Composition”.

Leopold Mozart seems to have overestimated the potential to make money, though, in a city where so many other highly capable musicians were trying to do the same thing. Unlike in the other musical centres with which he was familiar, the musical scene in London was based on commercial entrepreneurship rather than courtly favour, and as such the market-place was overcrowded. With the lengthy and expensive return journey to Salzburg looming, and wealthy interest in his children’s remarkable talents waning, Leopold resorted to increasingly desperate means of earning money. Between April and June visitors were invited to call on the Mozarts’ lodgings in Thrift (Friith) Street,

where for five shillings they could have the chance to put Wolfgang's talents "to a more Particular Proof, by giving him any Thing to play at Sight", and by July, when he rented a room at the Swan and Hoop tavern in Cornhill (then, as now, in the financial centre of the city), the price for hearing the children perform had dropped to two shillings and sixpence.

A far more thorough and reputable examination of Wolfgang's prodigious gifts was carried out by the Honourable Daines Barrington, an esteemed scientist, lawyer and music lover, who in 1769 submitted his findings to the Royal Society in London. This report has become one of the most valuable documents relating to Mozart's uniquely precocious gifts, and extracts from it can be found on pages 46 and 52-53 of this booklet. Another important event from the Mozarts' final weeks in England was their visit to the British Museum. Children were officially prohibited, but Wolfgang was invited to present to the museum printed copies of the sonatas dedicated to Queen Charlotte (K.10-15), a family portrait and one of his musical manuscripts – this was a short unaccompanied anthem, "God is our Refuge", K.20, which proved to be his only full setting of the English language.

The Mozarts left London on 24 July 1765, travelling to Canterbury and staying for several days at the nearby Bourne Place as guests of a certain Horace Mann. From there they proceeded to Dover, and at ten o'clock on the morning of 1 August they set sail for Calais. Although Wolfgang maintained a lifelong allegiance to England – in a letter of 1782 he described himself as an "out-and-out Englishman" – he was never to return.

Ian Page

## *A Description of London*

*Houses, Churches, mix'd together;  
Streets, unpleasant in all weather;  
Prisons, Palaces, contiguous;  
Gates; a Bridge; the THAMES irriguous.*

*Gaudy Things enough to tempt ye;  
Showy Outsides; Insides empty;  
Bubbles; Trades; mechanic Arts;  
Coaches, Wheelbarrows, and Carts.*

*Warrants, Bailiffs, Bills unpaid;  
Lords of Laundresses afraid;  
Rogues that nightly rob and shoot men;  
Hangmen, Aldermen, and Footmen.*

*Lawyers, Poets, Priests, Physicians;  
Noble, Simple, all Conditions;  
Worth beneath a threadbare Cover;  
Villainy – bedaub'd all over.*

*Women, black, red, fair, and grey;  
Prudes, and such as never pray;  
Handsome, ugly, noisy, still;  
Some that will not, some that will.*

*Many a Beau without a Shilling;  
Many a Widow not unwilling;  
Many a bargain, if you strike it:  
This is LONDON! How d'ye like it?*

*John Banks, 1738*



## Mozart: Symphony No.1 in E flat major, K.16

- 1 1. Molto allegro
- 2 2. Andante
- 3 3. Presto

Mozart's first symphony was composed in August or September 1764 in Chelsea, where the family were staying while his father recuperated from a chill he had caught on the way home from a night out in London. Leopold wrote to Lorenz Hagenauer, his landlord back home in Salzburg:

"I am now in a spot outside the town, where I have been carried in a sedan-chair in order to develop a stronger appetite and renewed strength from the clean air. It has one of the most beautiful views in the world. Wherever I turn my eyes I see only countryside, and in the distance the finest castles, and the house in which I am living has a lovely garden."

The one drawback of this idyllic setting was that Wolfgang and Nannerl, on account of their father's grave illness, were not allowed to make any noise, not even music. Nannerl was to recall in her memoirs many years later that "our father lay dangerously ill; we were forbidden to touch the keyboard, and so, in order to occupy himself, Mozart composed his first symphony with all the instruments of the orchestra, especially trumpets and timpani". Whether the work described by Nannerl is the symphony K.16 is debatable (it does not call for trumpets or drums), but it is at any rate the first of Mozart's symphonies to survive, and it certainly constitutes an auspicious arrival on the compositional scene for the young prodigy. In London he had already encountered an extremely cosmopolitan group of composers, headed by two Germans, Karl Friedrich Abel and Johann Christian Bach (son of the great Johann Sebastian), and the first symphony, which was probably first performed at a concert given by Wolfgang and Nannerl at the Little Theatre, Haymarket on 21 February 1765, shows how completely the young Mozart was able to assimilate and recreate each of the styles with which he came into contact.

Like the symphonies of Abel and Bach, it has three short movements (fast, slow, fast), and it captures the early symphonic vocabulary – alternations of loud and soft, tremolos, rapid scales – with remarkable confidence. Yet in the ethereal suspensions that immediately follow the opening unison fanfare there is already an originality and otherworldly beauty in the music, as well as the sense of an impetuous youth testing how far he can push and challenge the rules he has been taught. In the second movement, which similarly plays with texture and colour rather more than with melody, the first horn plays the same four-note pattern that twenty-four years later was to open the last movement of Mozart's final symphony, the 'Jupiter'; much significance has been made of this, but it is surely no more than a tidy coincidence.

The work concludes with a short but ebullient finale in which cascading violins and braying horns dominate. Some of the writing for second violins in particular is surprisingly taxing, and a brief unison figure in the strings explores chromaticism which would doubtless have raised a few eyebrows among early audiences. On the whole, however, this is an astonishingly accomplished and assured début, and the listener quickly forgets that this is the work of an eight-year-old – indeed no adjustment of expectation is required.

## Arne: Two Airs from *Judith*

The Mozarts' concert that eventually took place at the Little Theatre, Haymarket on 21 February 1765 had originally been scheduled for 15 February, but it was postponed on account of a performance being given that evening at the King's Theatre, Haymarket of Thomas Arne's oratorio *Judith*. This work had first been performed at a Lenten concert at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane on Friday 27 February 1761, and the cast had comprised several of the luminaries of the London musical scene with whom Mozart would subsequently come into contact; these included the celebrated castrato Ferdinando Tenducci (whose participation had been in some doubt because his renowned profligacy had led him to debtor's prison; he needed to secure permission from his plaintiff to take part in the performance), the renowned socialite and former courtesan Theresa Cornelys, who from 1765 was to host the fashionable Bach-Abel subscription concerts at Carlisle House, Soho Square, and, in the title role, Arne's mistress and muse Charlotte Brent.

The libretto of *Judith* was written by the young Irish dramatist Isaac Bickerstaffe, who also collaborated with Arne on *Thomas and Sally* and *Love in a Village*. The plot is based on a story from the apocryphal *Book of Judith*, chapters 7-15, in which Judith liberates the besieged city of Bethulia from its Assyrian aggressors by courageously entering the enemy camp and beheading their general, Holofernes. Bickerstaffe may well have been familiar with Metastasio's libretto based on the same story, *La Betulia liberata*, which had also been set by Reutter (Vienna, 1734), Jommelli (Venice, 1743), Bernasconi (Munich, 1754) and Holzbauer (Mannheim, 1760), and it is worth noting that Mozart himself was to set Metastasio's text in 1771, perhaps recalling Arne's London oratorio.

Judith's "Sleep, gentle cherub!" comes towards the end of the second of the oratorio's three parts, as the heroine is lulling Holofernes to sleep before finally executing him, and it belongs to the tradition of bewitching 'sleep' arias typified most famously, perhaps, by Handel's "O sleep, why dost thou leave me?" from *Semele*. Arne reveals himself to be a master at evoking mood and atmosphere, the walking bass-line underpinning a serenely unfolding web of harmony.

- 4 JUDITH (*sung by Miss Brent*):  
Sleep, gentle cherub! Sleep descend!  
Thy healing wings protective spread,  
And o'er his sacred temples bend,  
O bend their salutary shade.

"O torment great" is the oratorio's opening aria, and is assigned in the libretto to an unspecified Israelite woman, although in practice it was written for and performed by Charlotte Brent, who was also singing the title role. This serves to establish Judith's horror and frustration at the siege of Bethulia, and the text is full of references to both metaphorical and literal thirst (Holofernes' first act of aggression has been to cut off the city's water supply). The aria successfully captures this vehemence and desperation, with scurrying violins and wailing oboes reinforcing the sense of oppression, while the contrasting middle section depicts the slow drops of longed-for water.

- 5 AN ISRAELITE WOMAN (*sung by Miss Brent*):  
O torment great, too great to bear!  
Parch'd up with thirst I burn, I rage;  
Distraction, horror and despair,  
Give me this fury to assuage;  
One drop from some yet moist'ned bowl  
To cool the fever in my soul!

## Arne: Two Airs from *Artaxerxes*

Thomas Arne's *Artaxerxes* was one of the most important and successful of all English operas. It remained in the London repertoire almost continuously from its première in 1762 until the 1830s, and received a documented one hundred and eleven performances before 1790. Haydn later became acquainted with the work, reportedly saying that he "had no idea we had such an opera in the English language", and Mozart almost certainly saw the opera while he was in London – it was revived at the Theatre Royal in April and May 1764 and January, March, April and May 1765.

Arne was born in Covent Garden on 12 March 1710, and was to spend the vast majority of his life and career within the same square mile of the city centre. He is best known today as the composer of "Rule, Britannia!", but his output was immense. Between 1733 and 1776 he wrote music for about ninety stage works, including plays, masques, pantomimes, and opera. Many of his dramatic scores are now lost, mostly in the disastrous fire at Covent Garden in 1808, and indeed the original manuscript of *Artaxerxes* was also burnt in this fire; the overture, arias and duets had already been published, and so survive intact, but the finale and all the recitatives were lost.

*Artaxerxes* represented a deliberate attempt to create an all-sung, Italian-style opera in the English language, and Arne himself was responsible for translating and adapting Metastasio's hugely popular libretto for *Artaserse*, which had already been set fifty times, including by Gluck (Milan, 1741) and J. C. Bach (Turin, 1760). The opera was premièred at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden on 2 February 1762. As with *Judith* the previous year, the cast was headed by Charlotte Brent as Mandane and Ferdinando Tenducci as Arbaces, with the role of Artabanes being created by the celebrated English tenor John Beard; he had previously sung many leading roles in Handel's operas and oratorios, and was also by now the manager of the Covent Garden Theatre. These three soloists all retained their roles when *Artaxerxes* was revived during Mozart's time in London, and it is interesting to note that after he left London Mozart's first three concert arias (K.23, 78 and 79) were all settings of texts from Metastasio's original libretto of *Artaserse*.

The opera is set in Persia in 465 BC. Arbaces is in love with Mandane, the daughter of King Xerxes, as a result of which he has been banished from the kingdom (the union was deemed to be unsuitable). At the start of the opera, Arbaces is accosted by his father Artabanes, who informs him that he has just assassinated the king and begs him to dispose of the incriminating murder weapon. Arbaces is horrified, particularly when he learns that Artabanes has carried out the deed on his account, and in “Amid a thousand racking woes” he gives expression to his sense of shock and foreboding in an aria of tremendous visceral energy and vibrancy.

**6** ARBACES (*sung by Mr Tenducci*):

Amid a thousand racking woes,  
I pant, I tremble, and I feel  
Cold blood from ev'ry vein distil,  
And clog my lab'ring heart.

Arbaces, however, is soon caught in possession of the incriminating murder weapon. Refusing to implicate his father, he resorts to silence, but when even his beloved Mandane starts to doubt his innocence he laments his sad plight. In “O too lovely, too unkind”, divided violas and pizzicato violins and bass weave a magical spell which must surely have impressed the young Mozart.

**7** ARBACES (*sung by Mr Tenducci*):

O too lovely, too unkind;  
If my lips no credit find,  
Pierce my breast, my heart shall prove  
Strong in virtue, firm in love.  
Guiltless, wretched, left forlorn,  
And worse than murder'd by thy scorn.

## J. C. Bach: Harpsichord Concerto in D major, Op.1, No.6

- 8 1. Allegro assai
- 9 2. Andante
- 10 3. Allegro moderato

Johann Christian Bach, whom Mozart met and befriended in London, was to prove arguably the most significant influence on the development of the young composer's compositional style. The youngest, and in his time by far the most famous of the sons of the great Johann Sebastian Bach, Johann Christian had moved to Berlin following his father's death to live and study with his brother Carl Philipp Emanuel, but four years later he had moved to Italy, where he studied with the celebrated pedagogue Padre Martini in Bologna. In 1760 he had been appointed organist at Milan Cathedral, but in 1762 he had successfully applied for leave of absence to travel to London, where he had been commissioned to write two new Italian operas for the King's Theatre, Haymarket. He was never to return to Italy, and spent virtually the rest of his life in England.

As a native German living in London and steeped in the language of Italian and opera, Bach represented an ideal fusion of the influences which the young Mozart was seeking during his sojourn in the English capital, and their friendship was based on a mutual admiration and respect. When the two composers met again in Paris in 1778, Mozart wrote to his father: "I love him with all my heart, as you well know, and hold him in high esteem".

J. C. Bach's set of six harpsichord concertos, Opus 1 was published in March 1763 and dedicated to the eighteen-year-old Queen Charlotte, to whom Bach had recently started giving singing lessons. Princess Charlotte Sophie of Mecklenburg-Strelitz had married King George III on 8 September 1761. She was a passionate music lover, and must have valued the opportunity to have lessons in her own language with a musician of Bach's calibre. Several of her children were also to receive tuition from

Bach, including the future kings George IV and William IV, and Queen Charlotte remained a life-long supporter, even arranging for the return journey of Bach's wife to her native Italy after his death in 1782.

Because they were conceived on an intimate scale, to be played to the Queen as chamber music in the privacy of Buckingham House, the Opus 1 concertos are scored for the modest forces of two violins, cello and harpsichord. They enjoyed huge popularity in England and abroad for over a century, and when they were performed in public concerts it was not uncommon for violas (an octave higher) and double-bass (an octave lower) to double the cello line, and for horn parts to be added, although these were frequently inauthentic – even in those concertos where Bach specifically wrote for horns he evidently considered them optional.

Four of the concertos in the set employ the two-movement format favoured in the chamber music of the period, with an opening *allegro* being followed by a graceful minuet, but in the D major concerto which concludes the set Bach inserts after the elegant opening *allegro* a charming middle movement, in which the harpsichord's lilting melody is accompanied by pizzicato strings. The finale is indeed a minuet of sorts, but his choice of theme on which to build a relatively unassuming set of variations would no doubt have amused as well as curried favour with the queen to whom the concertos were dedicated. 'God Save the King', whose musical provenance is unclear, had been established as England's unofficial national anthem as recently as 1745, when it was first published (in *Gentleman's Magazine*) and sung on the stages of London's leading theatres as an expression of loyalty to the Hanoverian King George II in defiance of the looming threat from Charles Stuart in Scotland.



## J. C. Bach: “Non so d’onde viene” from *Ezio*

The King’s Theatre, Haymarket was London’s principal venue for Italian opera from 1708 until the 1840s, and it would have been his experiences in this theatre that led Samuel Johnson to form his famous definition of opera as “an exotic and irrational entertainment”. Originally built by Sir John Vanbrugh, and opened in April 1705, it was called the Queen’s Theatre until the death of Queen Anne in 1714, and between 1711 and 1738 Handel wrote many of his greatest operas for this theatre, including *Rinaldo*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Rodelinda*, *Orlando* and *Serse*. In the 1750s and early 1760s the venue struggled financially, but the arrival of Johann Christian Bach, who was commissioned to write *Orione* and *Zanaida* for the theatre in 1763, led to a period of greater stability, and when Mozart came to London it had a resident Italian company comprising some of the leading singers of the day. These included the soprano Teresa Scotti and the celebrated castrati Ferdinando Tenducci and Giovanni Manzuoli. Of the seven operas that were presented during the theatre’s 1764-65 season only J. C. Bach’s *Adriano in Siria* has survived complete, and two of them – Felice Giardini’s *Il re pastore* and Arne’s *Olimpiade* – have not survived at all.

The first two operas of the season were both ‘pasticcio’ operas – that is, works made up of various pieces from different composers and sources and adapted to an existing (or occasionally new) libretto; the Italian word ‘pasticcio’ literally means ‘hotch-potch’ or ‘jumble’. The first of these, *Ezio*, opened on 24 November 1764, and nine arias were published in a volume of ‘Favourite Arias’ from the opera, with music by Vento, Pescetti, De Majo and Galuppi as well as two arias by J. C. Bach. The first of these, “Non so d’onde viene”, was borrowed from Bach’s *Alessandro nell’Indie*, which he had written in 1762 for the Teatro San Carlo in Naples. It had originally been composed for the celebrated tenor Anton Raaff (who was subsequently to create the title role in Mozart’s *Idomeneo*), but in London it was sung by Ercole Ciprandi, who was a member of the King’s Theatre company from 1764 to 1766. The celebrated music historian and commentator Charles Burney reported that Ciprandi was “very deservedly applauded and generally encored in Bach’s charming Air ‘Non so d’onde viene’”.

For Ezio J. C. Bach slightly changed the aria's orchestration and composed an entirely new 'B' section with different text; this was the version with which Mozart was familiar, and it clearly left an indelible mark on the young composer. In 1776, having just composed a new concert aria in Mannheim for his beloved Aloysia Weber, he wrote to his father: "I have set to music the aria "Non so d'onde viene", which has been so beautifully composed by Bach. Just because I know Bach's setting so well and like it so much, and because it is always ringing in my ears, I wished to try to see whether in spite of this I could not write an aria totally unlike his." This letter serves as a telling indication of how influential Mozart's time in London was, for it is unlikely that he subsequently heard a performance of Bach's aria elsewhere.

11

MASSIMO:

Non so d'onde viene  
Quel tenero affetto,  
Quel moto che ignoto  
Mi nasce nel petto,  
Quel gel che le vene  
Scorrendo mi va.

Di stringerti al seno  
Mi ottengano il vanto  
Quel sangue, quel pianto,  
L'affano, il dolore  
Che costa al mio core  
La mia fedeltà.

MASSIMO (*sung by Signor Ciprandi*):

I do not know from where comes  
this tender emotion,  
this feeling that, unknown,  
rises in my breast,  
this chill that surges  
through my veins.

Let holding you in my arms  
be the boast obtained by  
that blood, those tears,  
that suffering and that sorrow,  
which are the price to my heart  
of my faithfulness.

## J. C. Bach: “Confusa, smarrita” from *Berenice*

The ‘pasticcio’ opera *Berenice* was first performed on New Year’s Day 1765. It was based on Antonio Salvi’s 1709 libretto which had been set by Handel twenty-eight years earlier, and the plot concerns Berenice’s love for the Macedonian prince Demetrio, and her relentless but unsuccessful attempts to separate him from the woman he loves. When she realises that she cannot succeed in this endeavour, she instead chooses another suitor, Alessandro, as her king. The original cast was headed by Scotti as Berenice, Manzuoli as Demetrio and Tenducci as Alessandro, and only five arias have survived – by Farradini, Vento, Hasse, J. C. Bach and Galuppi.

Bach’s “Confusa, smarrita” was again borrowed from an opera he had written for Naples, this time *Catone in Utica*, which he had composed for the Teatro San Carlo in 1761. With its hauntingly sentimental melody – spread across three octaves, with flutes and first and second violins – it became hugely popular in London, and was inserted into the second act of *Berenice*, as she laments her lovesick plight.

**12** BERENICE:  
Confusa, smarrita,  
Spiegarti vorrei  
Che fosti, che sei.  
Intendimi, oh Dio;  
Parlar non poss’io,  
Mi sento morir.

Parlando, se mai  
Di me ti rammenti,  
Io voglio lo sai  
Che pene gli accenti  
Confonde il martir.

BERENICE (*sung by Signora Scotti*):  
Confused, bewildered,  
I would like to explain to you  
what you were, what you are.  
Understand me, oh God;  
I cannot speak,  
I feel like dying.

In talking, if ever  
you remember me,  
I want you to know  
that my sufferings are  
confounded by strokes of pain.



## Arne: “O Dolly, I part” from *The Guardian Outwitted*

London’s theatre life at the time of Mozart’s visit was dominated by three venues. The King’s Theatre, Haymarket was reserved exclusively for Italian opera, but there were two theatres – the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane and the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden – which were licensed to stage plays and operas in English.

At the time of Mozart’s visit to London, the Drury Lane theatre was run by the celebrated Shakespearean actor David Garrick, who gradually attempted to challenge and change the prevailing theatrical attitudes; he was to cause general alarm and consternation by announcing that to play Macbeth he should wear a different costume from the one he wore to play Shylock. Despite Garrick’s predilection for plays, opera still featured prominently in Drury Lane’s programming as he sought to win audiences from rival venues.

The Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, meanwhile, was being run by the popular tenor John Beard, a former favourite of Handel, who transformed the theatre’s financial footing while at the same time turning it into a predominantly opera-producing venue. He had sung the role of Artabanus there in the première of Arne’s *Artaxerxes* in 1762, and he continued to play this role during Mozart’s time in London. It was during a performance of this opera in 1763 that the audience had rioted in protest against Beard’s abolition of a tradition whereby late-comers were permitted half-price entry for the final act. These riots had resulted in £2,000 worth of damage, a huge sum in those days, but by the time Beard retired in 1767 he was able to sell the theatre’s patent for a staggering £60,000.

Thomas Arne’s *The Guardian Outwitted* was premièred at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden on 12 December 1764 with a cast that included Beard and Charlotte Brent, the composer’s mistress and muse (two years later, though, she was to marry Thomas Pinto, who led the orchestra at Drury Lane). Arne also wrote the libretto, which features a colourful cast of characters including Sir Liquorish Trapgold, Lord Planwell, Flirtilla and Dolly Pinup.

Both music and text have an easy grace and charm, with a peculiarly English slant that is poignantly naïve and unassumingly touching while at the same time tapping into the ability to mock itself. This is nowhere more evident than in the delicious duet for Roger and Dolly, which at one and the same time manages to celebrate and parody operatic convention.

**13** ROGER (*sung by Mr Dyer*):

O Dolly, I part  
With a hole in my heart.

PINUP (*sung by Miss Miller*):

Ah cease to complain,  
For I'll mend it again.

ROGER:

With what?

PINUP:

With a kiss.

ROGER:

Do you love me?

PINUP:

O yes!

BOTH:

For wounds of the jealous, no med'cine so sure  
As kindness, that balsam alone is the cure.

## Duni: “To speak my mind of womankind” from *The Maid of the Mill*

*The Maid of the Mill* was premièred at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden on 31 January 1765. As with so many operas of the period it was a ‘pasticcio’, and the libretto was written by Isaac Bickerstaffe, who had previously written the texts for Arne’s *Judith* and *Love in a Village*. The music was assembled and prepared by Samuel Arnold, who at the start of the 1764-65 season had replaced Jonathan Battishill as the theatre’s music director.

Arnold had been born in London on 10 August 1740, and received his early musical education as a chorister of the Chapel Royal. On leaving he soon established a reputation as a prolific composer, as well as an excellent organist and teacher, and following his appointment to Covent Garden he assembled and contributed his own music to dozens of English-language ‘pasticcio’ operas. Later in life he was to combine his theatrical commitments with prestigious positions as an organist, firstly at the Chapel Royal (from 1783) and then at Westminster Abbey (from 1793), and he led plans for a complete edition of Handel’s works, 180 parts of which were published between 1787 and 1797. In autumn 1798 he fell from his library steps, sustaining injuries which eventually led to his death, and he was buried in Westminster Abbey on 29 October 1802.

*The Maid of the Mill* was based on Samuel Richardson’s hugely popular 1740 novel *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, which had already been turned into a very successful Italian opera – Piccini’s *La buona figliuola* – in 1760 (it had also been bitingly parodied, as *Shamela*, by Henry Fielding). Arnold drew on music attributed to a variety of composers, including Philidor, Galuppi, Pergolesi, Vinci, Scarlatti and Hasse.

“To speak my mind”, which appeared in Act 3, scene 1 of the opera, is an effective patter song borrowed from a 1758 opera, *La fille mal gardée*, by Egidio Duni (1708-1775). Duni was an Italian who had settled in Paris in the late 1750s, and during the third quarter of the eighteenth century he became one of the most important composers of *opéra comique*, writing over twenty works in the genre. The Mozarts met him in Paris in early 1764 (his name is listed in Leopold Mozart’s travel notes).

14 SIR HARRY SYCAMORE (*sung by Mr Shuter*):

To speak my mind of womankind

In one word, 'tis this:

By nature they're design'd

To say and do amiss.

Be they maids, be they wives,

Alike they plague our lives;

Wanton, headstrong, cunning, vain,

Born to cheat and give men pain.

Their study, day and night,

Is mischief, their delight,

And if we should prevent

At one door their intent,

They quickly turn about,

And find another out.



## Arnold: “Hist, hist! I hear my mother call” from *The Maid of the Mill*

The score that Samuel Arnold gathered for *The Maid of the Mill* comprised an overture and no fewer than thirty-seven numbers. Most of these were lifted from pre-existing works, many of which cannot now be identified, but Arnold did write four new numbers himself – two finales and two airs. “Hist, hist! I hear my mother call” enjoyed particular popularity, and shares marked similarities (they have the same key, the same tempo marking and the same dramatic context of whispered, conspiratorial subterfuge) with the short duet for Susanna and Cherubino from Act 2 of Mozart’s *Le nozze di Figaro*, composed twenty-one years later. Of course we cannot say with any certainty that Mozart recalled this air when writing *Figaro*, but it would come as no surprise if he had, given the impressionable age at which he was exposed to such a wide range of music during his time in London.

### 15 THEODOSIA (*sung by Miss Miller*):

Hist, hist! I hear my mother call!  
Prithee be gone,  
We’ll meet anon.  
Catch this, and this,  
Blow me a kiss,  
In pledge of promis’d truth, that’s all.

Farewell, and yet a moment stay;  
Something beside I had to say...  
Well, ‘tis forgot,  
No matter what.  
Love grant us grace,  
The mill, the mill’s the place.  
She calls again; I must away!

## Mozart: Symphony No. 4 in D major, K.19

- 16 1. Allegro
- 17 2. Andante
- 18 3. Presto

When the Austrian musicologist, writer, composer, publisher and botanist Ludwig Ritter von Köchel made his comprehensive catalogue of Mozart's complete works in 1862, he listed as Symphonies Nos. 2 and 3 two works which we now know were not composed by Mozart at all – 'No. 2' was a symphony in B flat major which had been stored in the archives of the Lambach Monastery in Upper Austria under the name of 'Mozart' (this is now supposed to have been the work of Mozart's father, Leopold), while 'No. 3' was a symphony by Karl Friedrich Abel with which Mozart had become acquainted while he was in London (see p.50 and CD 2, tracks 14-16); he had been so impressed with the piece that he wrote out a fair copy (hence Köchel's assumption that it was Mozart's own composition). Rather confusingly, Mozart's second surviving symphony is therefore still known today as his Symphony No. 4.

This and the Symphony in F, K.19a both date from 1765 and, although we have no categorical proof, it seems highly likely that they were composed before Mozart left London in July. K.19 closely follows the three-movement prototype which characterises the symphonies by J. C. Bach and Abel that were current in London at the time (it would be a mistake, incidentally, to ascribe any individual significance to the fact that Mozart's final symphonies were three times the length of his earliest ones; this is purely a reflection of the general and uniquely rapid evolution of the genre across this quarter of a century). An opening unison fanfare introduces a vivacious *allegro* which is redolent of the bustling city life that the Mozarts were savouring. This is followed by an elegant *andante* in G major, scored for strings and horns, and the work is rounded off by a lively *presto*, crammed full with bustling vigour and high spirits.

## Pescetti: “Caro mio bene, addio” from *Ezio*

*Ezio*, the ‘pasticcio’ opera which opened the Italian opera season at the King’s Theatre, Haymarket on 24 November 1764, was based on one of Metastasio’s most popular and well-known texts. The very nature of ‘pasticcio’ operas meant that only the basic skeleton (specifically the recitatives) of the original libretto was retained, but the inclusion of arias whose texts originally belonged in a different setting and context was not as great a problem as it might initially seem, given how generalised and stereotypical many of these aria texts were.

Giovanni Manzuoli, the celebrated castrato who was singing the title role, was a particular admirer of the Venetian composer Giovanni Battista Pescetti, and it was presumably his decision to include in *Ezio* an aria by Pescetti for him to sing. Born in the first decade of the eighteenth century, Pescetti had actually come to London in 1736, replacing Nicola Porpora as director of the Opera of the Nobility, the company which had been set up in direct competition to Handel (it was Porpora, incidentally, who had first set Metastasio’s *Ezio*, in 1728, and Handel premièred his own setting of the libretto in London four years later). He enjoyed some success in London, and Charles Burney wrote that “though he never had much fire or fertility of invention [he] was a very elegant and judicious writer for the voice”. After his company was forced to move to a smaller theatre and shrink its budgets he was reduced to arranging ‘pasticcio’ operas, and around 1745 he returned to Venice, where he died in 1766.

His aria “Caro mio bene, addio” was sung by Manzuoli in Act 2, scene 5 of *Ezio*, and the young Mozart was certainly familiar with the aria – his father brought a handwritten copy of it back home to Salzburg, where it remained in his library. The Roman Emperor Valentinian III has wrongly accused his illustrious general Ezio (conqueror of Attila the Hun) of attempting to assassinate him, and has now discovered that his own wife Fulvia and Ezio are in love with each other. Valentinian furiously denounces Fulvia, and orders Ezio to be dragged off to suffer his malicious vengeance. Before being led away, Ezio bids an anguished but stoical farewell to his beloved Fulvia.

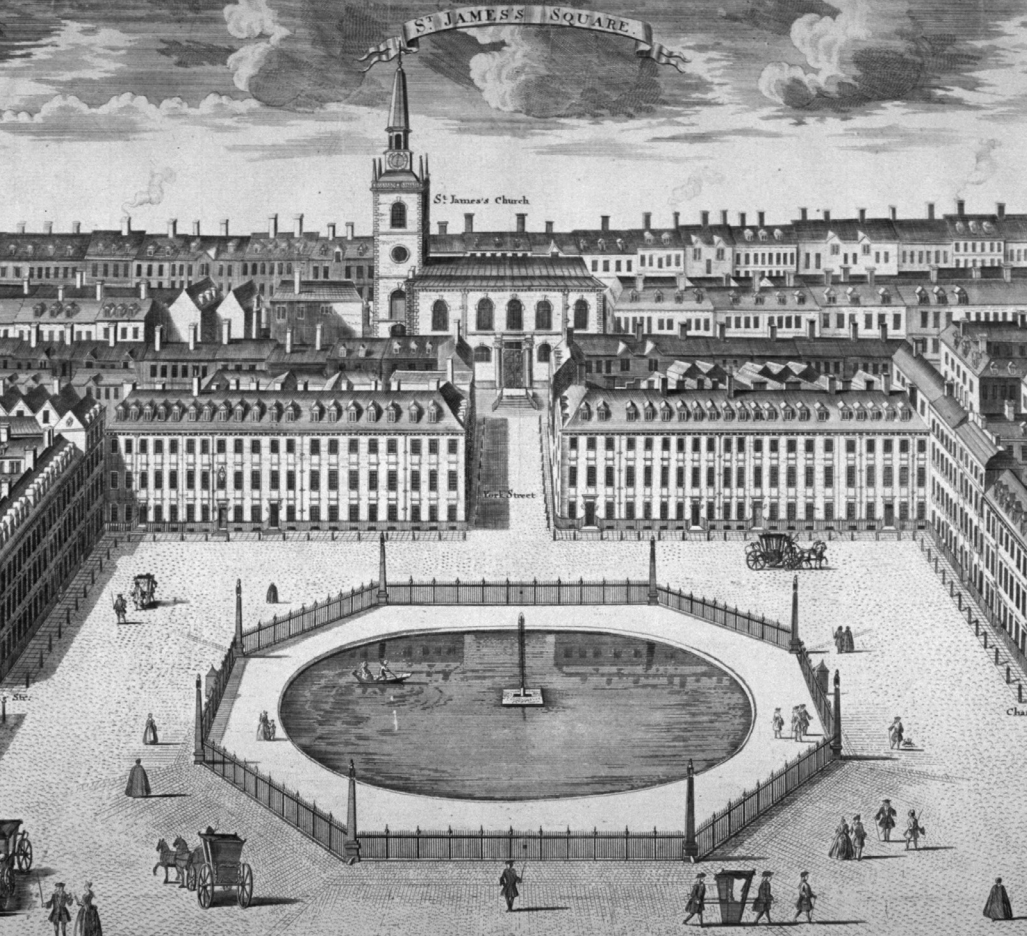
19 EZIO:

Caro mio bene, addio:  
Perdona a chi t'adora.  
So che ti offesi allora  
Ch'io dubitai di te.

Ecco alle mie catene,  
Ecco a morir m'invio.  
Sì, ma quel core è mio,  
Sì, ma tu cedi a me.

EZIO (*sung by Signor Manzuoli*):  
My darling beloved, farewell.  
Forgive the one who adores you.  
I know that I caused you offence  
when I doubted you.

Here I am in my chains;  
here I am going to my death.  
But still her heart is mine,  
and you, Valentinian, must yield it.



## Mozart: Symphony in F major, K.19a

- 1 1. Allegro assai
- 2 2. Andante
- 3 3. Presto

This F major symphony counts among both the oldest and the newest works in Mozart's output; oldest because it was one of Mozart's earliest compositions, written in 1765, and newest because the music was for a long time thought to be lost, and was only rediscovered as recently as 1981. It was known to have existed, because its opening few bars had been notated on the wrapper of another early Mozart manuscript, and it was also assumed from its inclusion in an early nineteenth-century manuscript catalogue that it was a completed work rather than a fragment. The music only came to light, though, when a set of parts (written in the hand of Mozart's father) was found among some private documents in Munich in February 1981. Although the work cannot be dated exactly, it seems likely that it would have been performed at one of Mozart's public concerts in London held on 21 February and 11 March 1765.

During Mozart's fifteen-month sojourn in London, the young composer of a handful of harpsichord pieces developed into a composer fully conversant with the musical style of the day. The effervescent verve of the F major symphony's outer movements, the facility and joy with which figures are thrown around the orchestra, and the charming middle movement, which already reveals Mozart's lifelong predilection for interesting and independent viola parts, all support Leopold Mozart's claim in a letter from London to his landlord in Salzburg: "What he knew when he left Salzburg is a mere shadow compared with what he knows now. It exceeds all that one can imagine... In a word, my boy knows in this his eighth year what one would expect only from a man of forty."

## J. C. Bach: “Deh lascia, o ciel pietoso” from *Adriano in Siria*

Johann Christian Bach's *Adriano in Siria* was premièred on Saturday 26 January 1765, the evening before Mozart's ninth birthday. The performance attracted an even larger attendance than the opening night of the season, with barely a third of those assembled able to find seats, and the auditorium was so packed that many were obliged to stand behind the scenes throughout the performance. Despite, or perhaps because of, the eager anticipation and high expectations of the first-night audience, the evening was reportedly not a great success, with Charles Burney writing that “every one seemed to come out of the theatre disappointed”, although Horace Walpole described the performance as “prodigious”.

The libretto derived from the text which Pietro Metastasio had written for Antonio Caldara in 1732, which by 1765 had already been set by over forty composers, but for Bach's setting less than half of Metastasio's original text was retained. The plot is based on historical fact, and is set in 117 AD in Antioch, the easternmost point of the Roman Empire. The Roman general Hadrian has just overthrown the belligerent Parthian king Osroa, but despite already being engaged to Sabina, a Roman aristocrat, he has fallen in love with Osroa's daughter Emirena, who is herself happily betrothed to a Syrian prince, Farnaspe. News arrives that Hadrian has been declared the new Roman Emperor, but he stalls his return to Rome in the hope of being able to take Emirena with him. Meanwhile, when Osroa sets fire to the imperial palace in an attempt to kill Hadrian, Farnaspe risks his life in attempting to save Emirena, thereby implicating himself in the crime. He is imprisoned, but at the start of Act Two Sabina helps him to escape, and he and Emirena prepare to elope together.

As Emirena nervously awaits the arrival of her beloved, she becomes increasingly convinced that he will not come, and her aria, “Deh lascia, o ciel pietoso”, demonstrates the melodic beauty that the young Mozart so admired in Bach's music, its harmonic richness allied to a noble simplicity of utterance. Charles Burney was not entirely kind in his assessment of Teresa Scotti, who first sang the role of Emirena, writing: “Scotti, the *prima donna*, with an elegant figure, a beautiful face, and a feeble voice, sung in a very good taste, and, though in want of power, she possessed great flexibility and expression.”

4 EMIRENA:

**Recitativo accompagnato**

Ah, come mi balza il cor!  
Non mi credea che tanto  
Affannasse un piacer. Eccolo. Ahi, folle!  
Il desio mel dipinge; e m'ingannai.  
Fin or sì gran tormento io non provai.  
Qual' angustia! Ma questo  
È un eterno aspettar! Io più non posso  
Tranquilla in questa guisa  
Qui rimaner. Che fò? Ne cerco? Ah, forse  
Avventuro me stessa! In tanto rischio  
Custoditelo, oh Numi! Ah! Sì, clementi,  
Vi basti il mio dolore.  
Che volete di più da questo core?

5 **Aria**

Deh lascia, o ciel pietoso,  
In così gran dolore  
Il povero mio core  
Almeno respirar!

Sì, rendi questo petto  
Con placid riposo  
Tal violento affetto  
Capace a sopportar.

EMIRENA (*sung by Signora Scotti*):

**Accompanied recitative**

Ah, how my heart is pulsating! I would not have believed that something pleasurable could cause so much anxiety. Here he is. Ah no! Desire makes me imagine him; I was mistaken. I've never before experienced such torment. So much apprehension! But this is an eternal wait! I can't remain here calmly in this way any longer. What shall I do? Shall I go in search of him? Ah, perhaps I would be endangering myself! In such great peril, protect him, oh gods! Ah yes, merciful ones, my suffering should be enough for you. What more do you require from this heart?

**Aria**

O pitying heaven,  
in such acute grief  
let my poor heart  
at least breathe!

Yes, with peaceful repose  
render this breast  
capable of enduring  
such violent hardship.



## J. C. Bach: “Cara la dolce fiamma” from *Adriano in Siria*

With Sabina’s help, Farnaspe does indeed manage to escape from prison and keep his rendezvous with Emirena. In “Cara, la dolce fiamma”, the musical and emotional centrepoint of Act Two, he expresses his undying love in music of beguiling beauty and eloquence. Mozart was clearly an admirer of *Adriano in Siria*, and of “Cara, la dolce fiamma” in particular, for he subsequently wrote his own set of vocal embellishments for the aria.

Giovanni Manzuoli, who first sang the role of Farnaspe, was perhaps the leading castrato of his generation, and having been engaged by Farinelli in 1749 to sing in Madrid his fame was already well established throughout Europe. He had made his London début in the ‘pasticcio’ *Ezio* on 24 November 1764, and played the *primo uomo* roles in all seven of the Italian operas presented at the King’s Theatre during the 1764-65 season. While in London he befriended the young Mozart, and six years later he was to come out of retirement to create the title role in Mozart’s *Ascanio in Alba* in Milan.

6

FARNASPE:

Cara, la dolce fiamma  
Dell’alma mia tu sei;  
E negli affetti miei  
Costante ognor sarò.

Serena il tuo bel core;  
Il lungo suo rigore  
fatto già cangiò.

FARNASPE (*sung by Signor Manzuoli*):

Beloved, you are the sweet flame  
of my soul,  
and in my affections  
I will always be constant.

Calm your lovely heart  
its long period of hardship  
Fate has already changed.

## Rush: Overture to *The Capricious Lovers*

- 7 1. Allegro
- 8 2. Allegretto
- 9 3. Allegro

*The Capricious Lovers* was premièred at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane on 28 November 1764. The music was composed by George Rush to a libretto that had been written by a Robert Lloyd from the Fleet Prison (where he had been incarcerated for debts). Less than a month after the opera opened, but seemingly unrelatedly, Lloyd committed suicide in prison.

Rush was active in London during the 1760s and 1770s, having previously travelled and studied in Italy, and he had enjoyed great success earlier in 1764 with *The Royal Shepherd*, based on a libretto adapted from Metastasio's *Il re pastore* (the following year Mozart may well have heard Felice de Giardini's setting of *Il re pastore* at the King's Theatre, Haymarket, but the score of this opera has not survived).

The plot of *The Capricious Lovers* is based on one of the most popular French opera libretti of the time, Favart's *Ninette à la Cour*: a disguised prince attempts to prise an innocent country girl, Phoebe, from her country lover, and carries her off to court; he hopes to make a fine lady of her, but fails. Rush's music is unostentatious but accomplished, and it captures effectively the playful and light-heartedly sentimental spirit of the English drama of the period.

The three-movement overture is the only part of *The Capricious Lovers* to have survived with complete orchestral parts. It is a brief but charming piece, its effervescent outer movements framing a beguilingly melancholy *allegretto* in D minor. It was popular as an isolated concert piece, and serves as a reminder that the symphony as a form evolved directly from the three-movement Italianate opera overture of the mid-eighteenth century.

## Rush: “Thus laugh’d at, jilted and betray’d” from *The Capricious Lovers*

As with nearly all of the English operas from this era, the score for *The Capricious Lovers* does not survive complete (although the libretto does). Generally all that remains of these works is either a complete vocal score (without the recitatives in the case of all-sung operas) or a selection of ‘Favourite Songs’, likewise printed with just the voice part and a simple keyboard reduction of the orchestral parts. Instead of a title, each of these songs was headed with a specification of who sang the aria in the theatre, and from these we are able to chart the career of many of London’s leading singers of the period.

The air “Thus laugh’d at, jilted and betray’d” occurs in Act 1, scene 8, and its expression of a scorned man’s furious rantings is typical of the theatrical comedy of the day. The air was sung by Joseph Vernon, a tenor who had been born in Coventry in approximately 1737. He had married a fellow singer in 1755, but the marriage had soon been invalidated and he was required to give evidence against the officiating clergyman, as a result of which he had repeatedly been hissed off the stage during the following season. Vernon was a regular member of the Drury Lane company from 1762 until 1781, and he died in London on 19 March 1782.

**10** COLIN (*sung by Mr Vernon*):  
Thus laugh’d at, jilted and betray’d,  
I stamp, I tear, I rave;  
Capricious, light, injurious maid,  
I’ll be no more thy slave.

I’ll rend thy image from my heart,  
Thy charms no more engage;  
My soul shall take the juster part,  
And love shall yield to rage.

## Bates: “In this I fear my latest breath” from *Pharnaces*

Following *The Capricious Lovers*, the next new opera to be presented at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane was *Pharnaces*, which received its first performance on 15 February 1765 and was the latest in a long line of attempts to replicate the tremendous popularity of Thomas Arne’s *Artaxerxes* down the road at Covent Garden. The text was by the actor Thomas Hull and the music by William Bates.

We know even less about William Bates than we do about George Rush, and unlike Rush and Samuel Arnold he was not even mentioned among the hundred and twenty or so people whom Leopold Mozart listed as having met during their time in London. He was active in London between 1750 and 1780, and wrote instrumental works as well as copious songs for London’s theatres and pleasure gardens.

The story of *Pharnaces* would have been familiar to at least some of the original audience, for six years previously the King’s Theatre, Haymarket had presented an Italian setting, *Farnace*, with music predominantly by Davide Perez. Virtually all the characters are hell-bent on revenge, with the Roman general Athridates attempting to capture and murder Pharnaces’ young daughter. When he does eventually capture her, though, he soon discovers that the child’s mother, Tamiris, is in fact his own long-lost daughter. The child’s earlier lament, “In this I fear my latest breath”, in which she begs her mother to save her from an early death, is particularly touching, but Roger Fiske, the distinguished scholar and chronicler of this period of English music theatre, was clearly hedging his bets when he wrote that the music of *Pharnaces* “is not worse than most of its kind”.

- [11] CHILD (*sung by Miss Rogers*):  
In this I fear my latest breath;  
Hear me, dearest mother, hear me.  
From a sad and early death  
Spare me, dearest mother, spare me.

## Mozart: Concert Aria, “Va, dal furor portata”, K.21

This is Mozart's earliest surviving aria, and was written in London in the early part of 1765. That Mozart was already steeped in the technical aspects of operatic style and practice is borne out by a fascinating report submitted to London's Royal Society by one of its Fellows, Mr Daines Barrington, who had the opportunity in London to examine and test Wolfgang's prodigious musical talents:

“Happening to know that the little Mozart was much taken notice of by Manzoli, the famous singer, who came over to England in 1764, I said to the boy that I should be glad to hear an extemporary Love Song, such as his friend Manzoli might choose in an opera. The boy on this (who continued to sit at his harpsichord) looked back with much archness, and immediately began five or six lines of a jargon recitative proper to introduce a love song.

“He then played a symphony [introduction] which might correspond with an air composed to the single word, *Affetto*. It had a first and a second part, which, together with the symphonies, was of the length that opera songs generally last; if this extemporary composition was not amazingly capital, yet it showed the most extraordinary readiness of invention.

“Finding that he was in humour, and as it were inspired, I then desired him to compose a Song of Rage, such as might be proper for the opera stage. The boy again looked back with much archness, and began five or six lines of a jargon recitative proper to precede a Song of Anger. This lasted also about the same time as the Song of Love, and in the middle of it he had worked himself up to such a pitch that he beat his harpsichord like a person possessed, rising sometimes in his chair. The word he pitched upon for this second extemporary composition was *Perfido!*”

The text of “Va, dal furor portata” is taken from Metastasio’s *Ezio*, which Mozart had probably seen at The King’s Theatre in the autumn of 1764 in a ‘pasticcio’ setting which incorporated music by such composers as Vento, Pescetti, De Majo, Galuppi and J. C. Bach, but no record survives of the aria having been performed during Mozart’s lifetime.

Prior to the London version, Metastasio’s libretto for *Ezio* had already been set by numerous composers, including Handel and Gluck. It is set in the fifth century AD, shortly before the fall of the Roman Empire. The Roman patrician Massimo has just made an unsuccessful attempt on the life of the emperor, but has diverted suspicion onto Ezio, who is the beloved of Massimo’s daughter Fulvia. When Fulvia threatens to disclose her father’s crime, he defiantly questions whether she is capable of betraying her own father.

12

MASSIMO:

Va, dal furor portata,  
Palesa il tradimento;  
Ma ti sovenga, ingrata,  
Il traditor qual’è.

Scopri la frode ordita,  
Pensa in quel momento,  
Ti donai la vita,  
Che tu la togli a me.

MASSIMO:

Go ahead, driven by your fury,  
and disclose my treachery;  
but remember, ungrateful one,  
who the traitor is.

Reveal the plotted deception,  
but consider in that moment  
that I gave you life, and that  
you would be taking it from me.



## Perez: “Se non ti moro a lato” from *Solimano*

The final production of the 1764-65 Italian opera season at the King’s Theatre, Haymarket was another ‘pasticcio’ opera, *Solimano*. The plot concerns romantic intrigue and treachery during the ancient war between Turkey and Persia, but only five arias, all of which had been lifted from existing works, have survived – by Vento, Pescetti, De Majo, Pergolesi and Perez.

Davide Perez was born in Naples, to parents of Spanish descent, in 1711. Having spent his early career in Italy, he moved in 1752 to Lisbon, where he became Kapellmeister to King José I, and where he worked with the celebrated castrato Manzuoli. He came to London in 1755 for a ‘pasticcio’ of *Ezio* to which he had contributed some arias, but he soon returned to Lisbon, where he died in 1778. It was presumably Manzuoli’s decision to incorporate “Se non ti moro a lato” into *Solimano*. This noble, tender aria is actually a setting of text from Metastasio’s *Adriano in Siria*, which had been presented at the King’s Theatre just four months previously in J. C. Bach’s setting.

### 13 SELIMO:

Se non ti moro a lato,  
Idolo del cor mio,  
Col tuo bel nome amato  
Fra labbri io morirò.

Addio, mia vita, addio,  
Non pianger il mio fato.  
Misero non son io;  
Sei fida, ed io lo so.

SELIMO (*sung by Signor Manzuoli*):

If I cannot die by your side,  
idol of my heart,  
I will at least die with your  
beautiful, beloved name on my lips.

Farewell, my life, farewell;  
do not weep at my fate.  
I am not unhappy,  
for you are faithful, and I know it.



## Abel: Symphony in E flat major, Op.7, No.6

- 14 1. Allegro
- 15 2. Andante
- 16 3. Presto

Karl Friedrich Abel was born in Köthen – forty-five miles north of Leipzig – on 22 December 1723. He initially studied the viola da gamba – an instrument of which he became a leading exponent – with his father, who had been a chamber violinist and viol player in Köthen when Johann Sebastian Bach was appointed Kapellmeister there in 1717. Following his father's death in 1737, Karl Friedrich went to study in Leipzig, perhaps maintaining the link there with the Bach family, and by 1743 he was a viol player in the court orchestra in Dresden under Hasse. During the 1758-59 season he went to London, and he gave his first public concert there on 5 April 1759, just nine days before the death of Handel. Apart from a brief return to Germany in the early 1780s, Abel was to remain in London until his death in 1787, and in 1760 he was granted a royal privilege for the publication of his music in London.

His association with Johann Christian Bach began in 1763, and continued the friendship that had existed between their two fathers. They gave their first concert together on 29 February 1764, and at around that time they were both appointed chamber musicians to Queen Charlotte, posts they were to hold until their deaths. They also befriended the Mozart family during their visit to London, and served as mentors to the young Wolfgang.

Abel wrote his six symphonies, Opus 7 in 1764, and the young Mozart was so impressed with the last symphony of the set that he wrote out a copy of the work, at the same time giving himself transposition practice by replacing Abel's oboe parts with clarinets. Because this copy survived, the music was for a long time thought to be Mozart's own, and it is only relatively recently that the true authorship has emerged.

It is easy to see why the young Mozart was so impressed with the Symphony Op. 7, No. 6. It is written in the key of E flat major, a key in which Mozart was to set some of his warmest and noblest compositions, and the harmonic richness and textural variety are particularly advanced for the period. The writing for oboes and bassoon in all three movements is especially vivid and soloistic, and the sombre middle movement, in C minor, also anticipates some of Mozart's own E flat major masterpieces such as the 'Jeunehomme' Piano Concerto, K.271 and the Sinfonia Concertante, K.364.

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## *From Daines Barrington's Report on Mozart, submitted to the Royal Society, London, 28 November 1769*

SIR,

*If I was to send you a well attested account of a boy who measured seven feet in height, when he was not more than eight years of age, it might be considered as not undeserving the notice of the Royal Society.*

*The instance which I now desire you will communicate to that learned body, of as early an exertion of most extraordinary musical talents, seems perhaps equally to claim their attention. Joannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus Mozart, was born at Saltzbourg in Bavaria, on the 17<sup>th</sup> [sic] of January, 1756...*

*At seven years of age his father carried him to Paris, where he so distinguished himself by his compositions, that an engraving was made of him...*

*Upon leaving Paris, he came over to England, where he continued more than a year. As during this time I was witness of little Mozart's most extraordinary abilities as a musician, both at some publick concerts, and likewise by having been alone with him for a considerable time at his father's house; I send you the following account, amazing and incredible almost as it may appear.*

*I carried to him a manuscript duet, which was composed by an English gentleman to some favourite words in Metastasio's opera of Demofonte.*

*The whole score was in five parts, viz. accompaniments for a first and second violin, the two vocal parts, and a base. I shall here likewise mention, that the parts for the first and second voice were written in what the Italians stile the Contralto cleff...*

*The score was no sooner put upon his desk, than he began to play the symphony in a most masterly manner, as well as in the time and stile which corresponded with the intention of the composer. I mention this circumstance, because the greatest masters often fail in these particulars on the first trial.*

*The symphony ended, he took the upper part, leaving the under one to his father. His voice in the tone of it was thin and infantine, but nothing could exceed the masterly manner in which he sung.*

*His father, who took the under part in this duet, was once or twice out, though the passages were not more difficult than those in the upper one; on which occasion the son looked back with some anger pointing out to him his mistakes, and setting him right...*

*As many of those who may be present, when this letter may have the honour of being read before the society, may not possibly be acquainted with the difficulty of playing thus from a musical score, I will endeavour to explain it by the most similar comparison I can think of...*

*Suppose then, a capital speech in Shakespeare never seen before, and yet read by a child of eight years old, with all the pathetic energy of a Garrick.*

*Let it be conceived likewise, that the same child is reading, with a glance of his eye, three different comments on this speech tending to its illustration; and that one comment is written in Greek, the second in Hebrew, and the third in Etruscan characters.*

*Let it be also supposed, that by different signs he could point out which comment is most material upon every word; and sometimes that perhaps all three are so, at others only two of them.*

*When all this is conceived, it will convey some idea of what this boy was capable of, in singing such a duet at sight in a masterly manner from the score, throwing in at the same time all its proper accompaniments.*

*When he had finished the duet, he expressed himself highly in its approbation, asking with some eagerness whether I had brought any more such music.*



## Classical Opera and The Mozartists

Classical Opera was founded by conductor Ian Page in 1997 to present historically-informed performances of the works of Mozart and his contemporaries. The company has attracted widespread acclaim, not only for the high quality of its performances but also for its imaginative programming and its ability to discover and nurture outstanding young singers, and in 2017 it launched The Mozartists, a new brand under which it will present its ever-expanding concert work. In 2012 the company embarked on an ongoing recording cycle of the complete Mozart operas, and in 2015 it launched MOZART 250, a ground-breaking 27-year project following the chronological trajectory of Mozart's life, works and influences.

The company has performed regularly at many of London and the UK's leading venues, including Wigmore Hall, the Barbican, Cadogan Hall, St John's Smith Square, Birmingham Town Hall and Buxton Opera House, and it has toured to Italy, France and Germany. In 2016 it opened the prestigious Haydn Festival in Eisenstadt, Austria with a three-concert residency. It has mounted staged productions of many of Mozart's operas, and in 2009 presented The Royal Opera's new production of Thomas Arne's *Artaxerxes*. It has also given the world première of the 'original' version of Mozart's *Mitridate, re di Ponto*, and the UK premières of Gluck's *La clemenza di Tito*, Telemann's *Orpheus* and Jommelli's *Il Vologeso*.

Classical Opera's first two recordings – 'The A-Z of Mozart Opera' (Sony BMG, 2007, re-released on Signum Classics, 2014) and 'Blessed Spirit – a Gluck retrospective' (Wigmore Hall Live, 2010) – were both selected for Gramophone magazine's annual Critics' Choice. The first six releases in the company's ongoing Complete Mozart Opera Cycle have also earned outstanding reviews, as have 'Where'er You Walk' – a recital disc with tenor Allan Clayton of music written for John Beard – and The Mozartists' début recording, 'Perfidio!', a programme of Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven concert arias sung by soprano Sophie Bevan.



## Ian Page

Ian Page is the founder, conductor and artistic director of Classical Opera and The Mozartists. He began his musical education as a chorister at Westminster Abbey, and studied English Literature at the University of York before completing his studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Before founding Classical Opera in 1997 he worked on the music staff at Scottish Opera, Opera Factory, Drottningholm and Glyndebourne, working with such conductors as Sir Alexander Gibson, Nicholas McGegan, Mark Wigglesworth, Ivor Bolton and Sir Charles Mackerras.

With Classical Opera he has conducted most of Mozart's early operas, including the world premières of the 'original' version of *Mitridate, re di Ponto* and a new completion of *Zaide*, as well as *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte* and *La clemenza di Tito*. He has also conducted the UK premières of Gluck's *La clemenza di Tito*, Telemann's *Orpheus* and Jommelli's *Il Vologeso*, and the first new staging for 250 years of Johann Christian Bach's *Adriano in Siria*. In 2009 he made his Royal Opera House début conducting his own new performing edition of Arne's *Artaxerxes* at the Linbury Studio Theatre, and his studio recording of the work was released in 2011 on Linn Records.

He devised and conducted Classical Opera's recordings of 'The A-Z of Mozart Opera' (Signum Classics), 'Blessed Spirit – a Gluck retrospective' (Wigmore Hall Live) – both of which were selected for Gramophone magazine's annual Critics' Choice – 'Where'er You Walk' with Allan Clayton, and The Mozartists' début recording, 'Perfidio!', with Sophie Bevan (both Signum Classics). His other recordings with Classical Opera include Mozart's *Die Schuldigkeit des ersten Gebots*, *Apollo et Hyacinthus*, *Mitridate, re di Ponto*, *Il sogno di Scipione*, *Il re pastore* and *Zaide*. He is also the driving force behind MOZART 250, the company's ground-breaking 27-year journey through Mozart's life and works, which launched in January 2015 to critical acclaim.



## What the critics said about our previous recordings

*"My personal pick for giving this year is Classical Opera's glorious 'The A-Z of Mozart Opera', which is fresh, diverse, insightful and illuminating... an auspicious début recording of intelligence, finesse and quality."*

### **Gramophone (The A-Z of Mozart Opera)**

*"Conductor, instrumentalists and singers alike make sound the servant of the sense, with stylish, eloquent and dramatic music-making of the highest order."*

### **International Record Review (Blessed Spirit – a Gluck retrospective)**

*"What Signum Classics' and Classical Opera's recording of Il re pastore offers is, simply put, an account of the piece that comes as near to perfection as any performance might ever hope to do."*

### **Voix des Arts (Mozart: Il re pastore)**

*"Of course the orchestral playing under the ever-musical direction of Ian Page is incomparable."*

### **Limelight (Where'er You Walk)**

*"Ian Page conducts an excellent orchestra with an ideal combination of elegant poise and mercurial sparkle... Who could fail to be charmed by such gorgeous music, so stylishly executed?"*

### **The Daily Telegraph (Mozart: Zaide)**

*"The series of Mozart operas being recorded under the direction of Classical Opera's director Ian Page has already established him as one of the most stylishly authoritative interpreters of the composer working today."*

### **Opera**