

Verdi

ERNANI

Meli · Siri · Frontali · Kowaljow
Tziouvaras · Dahdah · Piva

Orchestra e Coro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino
James Conlon



Giuseppe
VERDI

(1813–1901)

Ernani

Dramma lirico in four acts (1844)

Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave (1810–1876) after Victor Hugo

Ernani	Francesco Meli, Tenor
Carlo	Roberto Frontali, Baritone
Silva	Vitalij Kowaljow, Bass
Elvira	Maria José Siri, Soprano
Giovanna	Xenia Tziouvaras, Mezzo-soprano
Riccardo	Joseph Dahdah, Tenor
Jago	Davide Piva, Bass

Handmaids, Servants, Bandits, Knights, Ladies

Coro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino

(Lorenzo Fratini, Chorus master)

Orchestra del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino

James Conlon

Act I: Il bandito	46:33	Act II: L'ospite	34:04
1 Prelude	3:04	16 Scene 1 Introduction –	2:45
2 Scene 1 Chorus of Introduction: Evviva!... – Scene 2 Ernani pensoso! <i>(Chorus)</i>	3:49	Galop with Chorus: Esultiamo! <i>(Ladies, Knights)</i>	
3 Recitative: Mercè, diletti amici – Cavatina: Come rugiada al cespite d'un appassito fiore <i>(Ernani, Bandits)</i>	4:36	17 Scene 2 Recitative: Jago, qui tosto il pellegrin adduci – Scene 3 Vedi? <i>(Silva, Ernani, Elvira)</i>	2:10
4 Cavatina: O tu che l'alma adora <i>(Ernani, Bandits)</i>	3:04	18 Trio: Oro, quant'oro ogni avido <i>(Ernani, Elvira, Silva)</i>	2:56
5 Scene 3 Recitative: Surta è la notte <i>(Elvira)</i>	2:17	19 Scene 4 Tu, perfida... <i>(Ernani, Elvira)</i>	2:14
6 Cavatina: Ernani!... Ernani, involami <i>(Elvira)</i>	2:32	20 Duet: Ah, morir potessi adesso! <i>(Elvira, Ernani)</i>	2:16
7 Scene 4 Chorus: Quante d'Iberia giovani te invidieran, signora! <i>(Handmaids, Elvira)</i>	1:24	21 Scene 5 Scellerati, il mio furore non ha posa – Scene 6 Alla porta del castello giunse il re con un drappello – Scene 7 Trio: Morte invoco or io da te <i>(Silva, Jago, Ernani, Elvira)</i>	3:21
8 Cavatina: Tutto sprezzo che d'Ernani non favella a questo core <i>(Elvira, Handmaids)</i>	3:33	22 Scene 8 Grand Scene: Cugino, a che munito il tuo castel ritrovo? <i>(Carlo, Silva)</i>	3:26
9 Scene 5 Recitative: Fa che a me venga... – Scene 6 Perché Elvira rapì la pace mia? – Scene 7 Duet: Sire!... <i>(Carlo, Giovanna, Elvira)</i>	3:02	23 Scene 9 Aria: Lo vedremo, veglio audace <i>(Carlo, Silva)</i>	2:21
10 Duet: Da quel di che t'ho veduta – Scene: Non t'ascolto... – Scene 8 Fra quei fidi io pur qui sto <i>(Carlo, Elvira, Ernani)</i>	4:24	24 Scene 10 Chorus: Fu esplorata del castello ogni latebra più occulta – Scene 11 Grand Scene and Aria: Deh, cessate... <i>(Knights, Carlo, Elvira, Silva, Chorus)</i>	2:48
11 Trio: Tu se' Ernani!... – Scene 9 Finale: Che mai vegg'io! <i>(Carlo, Ernani, Elvira, Silva)</i>	4:00	25 Vieni meco, sol di rose <i>(Carlo, Giovanna, Handmaids, Riccardo, Knights, Silva, Elvira)</i>	3:02
12 Infelice!... e tuo credevi sì bel giglio immacolato! <i>(Silva)</i>	3:01	26 Scene 12 Recitative: Vigili pure il ciel sempre su te – Scene 13 Esci... – Duet: A te... scegli... seguimi <i>(Silva, Ernani)</i>	2:45
13 Infin che un brando vindice – Scene 10 Il regale scudiero Don Riccardo <i>(Silva, Chorus, Ernani, Carlo, Jago, Riccardo, Giovanna, Servants, Elvira)</i>	3:07	27 Duet: Nel momento in che Ernani vorrai spento – Scene 14 Finale: Salvi ne vedi <i>(Ernani, Silva, Knights)</i>	4:00
14 Finale: Vedi come il buon vegliardo or del cor l'ira depone <i>(Carlo, Riccardo, Silva, Giovanna, Jago, Servants, Elvira, Ernani)</i>	3:24		
15 Mio signor, dolente io sono <i>(Silva, Carlo, Elvira, Ernani, Jago, Riccardo, Giovanna, Knights, Handmaids)</i>	4:18		

Act III: La clemenza	23:00	Act IV: La maschera	20:04
28 Prelude – Scene 1 È questo il loco? (Carlo, Riccardo)	3:39	36 Scene 1 Dance Party: Oh come felici – Scene 2 Chi è costui che qui s’aggira – Scene 3 Sol gaudio (Chorus)	3:35
29 Scene 2 Gran Dio! costor sui sepolcrali marmi (Carlo)	1:28	37 Scene 4 Grand Scene: Cessaro i suoni – Scene 5 Tutto ora tace intorno – Scene 6 T’arresta (Ernani, Elvira, Silva)	5:10
30 Cavatina: Oh, de’ verd’anni miei (Carlo)	3:14	38 Ecco il pegno (Silva, Ernani)	2:42
31 Scene 3 The Conspiracy: Ad augusta! – Scene 4 Ad augusta! (Chorus, Silva, Ernani, Jago, League)	4:50	39 Scene 7 Finale: Trio: Ferma, crudele; estinguere perché vuoi tu due vite? (Elvira, Silva, Ernani)	8:37
32 Si ridesti il Leon di Castiglia (Chorus)	1:39		
33 Scene 5 Qual rumore!! – Scene 6 L’elettoral consesso v’acclamava (Ernani, Silva, Jago, Chorus, Carlo, Riccardo)	2:22		
34 Finale: Io son conte, duca sono (Ernani, Carlo, Elvira)	1:41		
35 O sommo Carlo (Carlo, Silva, Elvira, Giovanna, Ernani, Riccardo, Jago, Chorus)	4:07		

Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901)

Ernani

Ernani in Brief

La bataille d’Hernani was one of the most clamorous cultural events in the France of the first half of the 1800s. To defeat cabals and conspiracies, at the beginning of the 1830s Victor Hugo had decided to recruit an irresistible ‘*armée romantique*’. Gautier would say about it: ‘In the *armée romantique*, like in the *armée d’Italie*, they were all young, some not even of age.’ And, called to theatrical arms from the *ateliers* of painters and sculptors, taken from among the students of music and literature, they dressed eccentrically, had long and messy hair, used an outrageous and gruesome language. Each received a personal invitation for a *création* that was going to be ‘the battle for ideas and progress’. On 25 February 1830, the premiere of *Hernani* is a success, anticipated yet stormy. The ovations prevail; the author is carried home in triumph.

More than ten years later, Verdi would be strongly attracted by it, despite *la bataille* being virtually forgotten. ‘Oh, how wonderful if we could make *Hernani*!... All we would have to do is cut and tighten: the action is already there, and the interest is huge’, he wrote from Milan on 5 September 1843 to Count Alvise Francesco Nani Mocenigo, director of Venice’s Teatro La Fenice. Rehearsals began on 15 February 1844, the premiere was scheduled for

9 March. The interpreters were Carlo Guasco, Antonio Superchi, Antonio Selva, Sophie Löwe. Despite bouts of hoarseness and various colds and hitches, reviews speak of unreserved success. The *Gazzetta privilegiata* states that ‘The music made such a big impression that on Sunday, coming out of the theatre, people were already singing Guasco’s and Superchi’s catchy tunes. [...] Few scores have made a stronger, more powerful impression than this magnificent *Ernani*.’

Hugo’s drama, as a matter of fact, had been strongly tempered, from a rhetorical point of view, and adapted to the composer’s needs. What came out of it was Verdi’s first tenor *maudit*, Ernani: Arturo and Gualtiero, Edgardo and Gerardo are his Bellini and Donizetti precursors, while he is the elder brother of Jacopo Foscari, Corrado, Manrico, Carlo Moor, Don Alvaro. The portrait he gives of himself is true to life: ‘Mille guerrier m’inseguono siccome belva i cani... Sono il bandito Ernani, odio me stesso e il di’ (‘A thousand warriors pursue me, hounds chase me down... I am the bandit Ernani, I hate myself and life itself!’). Byron is just around the corner, but not ‘Risorgimento’. Indeed, he ignores the triad God-Home-and-Family. And were it not for the ‘jealous, scorned love’ for his beloved woman – a woman loved by more than one – he would be a simulacrum of self-destructive selfishness. Elvira takes the place of Hugo’s more complex Doña Sol: her writing is that of a dramatic-agility soprano, no longer that of the Po Valley Armida, Abigaille, nor of the yet to come rebellious Lucrezia Contarini, and it is wonderful not only when she flaunts power but also in the ‘finely worked’ passages. The latter are reserved for his dear Ernani and for the cloak of dreams that wraps them up, the former for the gallant advances of the King and the sinister ones of the Duke; a character, this, which, freed from the verbal embellishments that weighed him down in *Hernani*, shows some similarities with Enrico VIII from *Anna Bolena* or Alfonso d’Este from *Lucrezia Borgia*, but has also a touch of Scapigliatura *ante litteram*, almost an Alvisé Badoero for his vampire-like traits, demonic will to give death, and persecutory love for Elvira. Lastly, Carlo d’Asburgo. Verdi had to build him from scratch, discarding most of the cynical and political inflections of Hugo’s original character and basing himself on some bass-baritone precedents (the boundaries between these two voices, then, were less marked), precedents that were illustrious and well-fitting: first of all Donizetti, with Alfonso XI of *La favorite*, but also Belisario or Lusignano or Chevreuse; then, Mozart’s Don Giovanni, and Conte Rodolfo of *La sonnambula*. Characters and vocal types whose *bel canto* frame is out of discussion, and for whom the seductor’s aspect is entrusted to cantabile writing that is nuanced and insinuating, while the authoritarian and sometimes outright arrogant regality is rendered through a style that is broad, grandiose, eloquent, often dramatic.

Such are the characters. After an intense and expressive Prelude, the opera opens with Part One, ‘The Bandit’, a scene that is absent from Hugo’s original, set on the mountains of Aragon. Rebels and bandits extol drinking and gambling, ‘Evviva! Beviam!’; then Ernani enters, coming down from a solitary rock. ‘Mercé diletti amici...’, and his vocal line is delicate, even ecstatic as is expected of a 20-year-old in love, in the aria ‘Come rugiada al cespite’ and then in the cabaletta ‘O tu che l’alma adora’, to be performed with light, poetic lyricism.

With the Scene and cavatina in Elvira’s apartment, the opera returns to follow Hugo’s drama. Elvira is given the most famous aria of the opera, that ‘Ernani!... Ernani involami’, ‘where the ascending leaps of sixth, the smooth but passionate rise and fall of the melody, full of spontaneity and warmth, the dotted and hammered notes that underline the syllables, the hops of the small instruments prepare the liveliness of the cabaletta, with its cheerful bolero rhythm’ (Gallarati). The entrance of Don Carlo produces first a nervous duet with Elvira (‘Qui mi trasse

amor possente!) then to a new erotic yearning, the third from the beginning of the opera, the *Andantino cantabile* 'Da quell dì che t'ho veduta'. The arrival of Ernani through a secret door transforms the duet into a short but explosive trio. Ernani is ready to challenge the rival, Carlo to call his men, Elvira with a dagger in her hand. Silva's majestic irruption, his aria (at the end of an 'aside' of exceptional workmanship, which includes a monologue Hugo entrusted to Silva in the next Act), and the following cabaletta leads to the complex concerted stretta that closes the act. Part Two, 'The Guest', puts in the limelight Silva's authority and exacerbated jealousy, Ernani's and Elvira's will to die, and Don Carlo, bursting into the castle as if he were its master. 'Lo vedremo o veglio audace' has already the power that will be of Conte di Luna in *Trovatore*, but the invitation to Elvira 'Ah! Vieni meco, sol di rose' evokes Donizetti's Gardens of Alcazares. The sweeping ending, after the Death Pact, is entrusted to the vindicative fury of Ernani, Silva, and his men. Part Three, 'Mercy': the scene of Carlo d'Asburgo alone at the tomb of Charlemagne gives rise to one of the founding passages of Verdi's literature for baritone, the recitative and aria 'Gran Dio!... Oh, de' verd'anni miei'. The initial bitter meditation gradually gives way to lyricism and eloquence of superb *grandeur*. The conspiracy is entirely played on mysterious and shady tinges, up the famous chorus 'Si ridesti il Leon di Castiglia', perhaps not the most refined passage of the opera but able to arouse a simple and popular feeling, the yearning for freedom. The *coup de théâtre* of the cannon shot and of the three knocks on the bronze door makes Carlo once again the scene's protagonist. After the threats and the sentences, the new emperor spreads mercy with open hands and sings the prayer 'Oh, sommo Carlo', and all join in until the curtain closes. The entire last part, 'The Masked Man', is one of the best of the opera and perhaps of Verdi's entire output between *Nabucco* and *Macbeth*. The distant sounds of the wedding celebrations for Ernani and Elvira's union is run through by a shiver provoked in the guests by the figure of a man dressed in black ('Spettro che un incanto dalle tombe invocò'). Once the dances have ended and the guests left, a very short duet shows the newlyweds' joy, brusquely counteracted by the sound of Silva's horn, with the theme of the Death Pact. The trio, which Ernani begins with a beautiful 'Solino, errante, misero' and Elvira completes with her vehement 'Ferma! Crudele estinguere' is developed with masterful economy, balance, and wisdom of musical means, especially when we consider the intense dramatic effect they achieve. Ernani gives himself death, the 'fine death' of romantic tenors; Silva exults, evoking the demon of vengeance; Elvira passes out, compelled to go on living by her beloved's last words: 'D'amarmi e vivere... cara t'impongo... Addio!' ("Love me and live... my dearest, I bid you... farewell!").

Maurizio Modugno

Courtesy of the Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino

Translation: Daniela Pilarz

Synopsis

Act I

The Bandit

Spain, 1519. Ernani, who is in reality Don Giovanni d'Aragona, is the leader of a group of bandits seeking to overthrow the King, Don Carlo, and avenge the murder of his father. He arrives at the castle of Don Ruy Gomez de Silva to see Silva's niece, Elvira, whom he loves; Elvira reciprocates Ernani's feelings, but she has been promised to old Don Ruy. Don Carlo, who is also in love with Elvira, has arrived at the Silva castle in disguise. Elvira recognises him as the King of Spain but rejects his advances; when Don Carlo insists on taking her away with him, the girl draws the dagger from his belt, ready to defend her honour. Ernani steps out of a secret door to protect Elvira. The King recognises the bandit and invites him to leave. Silva bursts in; he is enraged at the offence to his honour but recognises the King and pays him homage. Generously, Don Carlo allows Ernani to leave.

Act II

The Guest

The rebellion led by Ernani has failed: the bandit, disguised as a pilgrim, seeks hospitality at Silva's castle. Silva takes him in and informs Ernani that he is about to marry Elvira. Beside himself, Ernani reveals his true identity and offers his head to his rival as a wedding gift. Meanwhile Don Carlo arrives at the castle and demands that the bandit be handed over to him, but Silva is bound by the laws of hospitality and hides Ernani, refusing to let the King have him. The King has the castle searched but to no avail and he now obliges Elvira to follow him. At this point Ernani tells Silva of the King's love for the girl, urging him to avenge the slight to his honour. The two men make a pact, which to seal Ernani gives Silva a hunting horn: Silva need only blow it three times and Ernani will take his own life.

Act III

Clemency

In Aix-la-Chapelle, among the underground tombs where the mortal remains of Charlemagne rest, the conspirators gather under the leadership of Ernani. They are unaware of having been preceded by Don Carlo, who has entered the crypt in secret. When they learn that the King aspires to the imperial throne, the conspirators condemn him to death; they draw lots to see who will carry out the sentence and Ernani is chosen. As they take their oath, three cannon shots announce the election of Don Carlo as Emperor. The King now steps out with his men and orders that the rebels be killed; however, on Elvira's insistence, he spares Ernani's life and allows him to marry the girl, while Silva meditates his revenge.

Act IV

The Masked Man

In the palace of Don Giovanni d'Aragona, in Saragossa, the wedding celebrations are underway. Among the guests, a masked man, dressed in black, is noticed. While Ernani and Elvira give themselves over to joy, a horn sounds three times in the distance. Silva removes his mask and reminds Ernani of their pact. Elvira tries to move Silva to pity, but the old man remains adamant. Ernani has no other choice than to keep his word and take his own life. Elvira falls in despair over his lifeless body.



Photo: © Victor Santiago

Francesco Meli

Tenor Francesco Meli (b. Genoa, 1980) studied at the Conservatorio Niccolò Paganini, continuing his education with Vittorio Terranova and going on to gain recognition at numerous prestigious competitions. He has a repertoire of over 50 roles, and has performed under the world's most eminent conductors, regularly working with Riccardo Chailly, Myung-Whun Chung, Riccardo Muti, Christian Thielemann and Antonio Pappano. Recent engagements include *La traviata* at the Arena di Verona and Tokyo Bunka Kaikan, *I due Foscari* at Teatro La Fenice, and *Don Carlo* at Teatro alla Scala. Meli is artistic director and one of the tutors at the Academy of Advanced Professional Training for opera singers at Genoa's Teatro Carlo Felice. www.francescomeli.it



Photo: © Michele Monasta

Maria José Siri

Internationally acclaimed soprano Maria José Siri has a repertoire spanning from *bel canto* to *verismo*, and is a lauded interpreter of the most famous heroines of Verdi and Puccini. Uruguayan born of Italian origin, Siri's career has rapidly taken off, especially since 2016, when she opened Teatro alla Scala's season as Madama Butterfly. In 2017 she was the recipient of the prestigious International Opera Awards Oscar della Lirica. Siri has established an abiding connection with the major theatres of the world, and has been highly praised by both the public and critics. Her discography boasts a large collection of both audio and audiovisual recordings on major labels including Naxos, Decca and Dynamic. www.mariajosesiri.com



Roberto Frontali

Baritone Roberto Frontali began his career singing the *bel canto* roles of Rossini, Bellini and Donizetti, later performing the repertoire of Verdi, and more recently appearing in *verismo* roles. He made his debut in the United States at the New York Metropolitan Opera House in *L'elisir d'amore*, and in Europe at Teatro alla Scala in the early 1990s. Career highlights include working with Claudio Abbado (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Zubin Mehta (*La forza del destino*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Falstaff*), Myung-Whun Chung (*Don Carlo*, *Rigoletto*), Semyon Bychkov (*La Bohème*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Don Carlo*) and Riccardo Muti, with whom he worked for a decade at La Scala. Recent engagements include *La traviata* at Teatro Massimo, Palermo and *Rigoletto* at the New National Theatre in Tokyo. www.robertofrontali.it



Photo: © Susie Ahlburg

Vitalij Kowaljow

Praised for the depth and richness of his voice, Vitalij Kowaljow has established himself in recent years as one of the leading basses of the opera scene. Kowaljow has appeared in over 40 roles, with past performances including appearances in operas by Verdi (Filippo II in *Don Carlo*, Zaccaria in *Nabucco*, Ramfis in *Aida*); Russian language roles (*Prince Igor*, Pimen in *Boris Godunov*, Prince Gremin in *Eugene Onegin*) and numerous productions of Wagner's operas, with highlights including the *Ring* cycle conducted by James Conlon at LA Opera, *Die Walküre* at Teatro alla Scala for the season opening with Daniel Barenboim, and *Die Walküre* and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Salzburg Easter Festival under the baton of Christian Thielemann. www.vitalij-kowaljow.com



Photo: © Michele Monasta

Xenia Tziouvaras

Greek-American mezzo-soprano Xenia Tziouvaras was born in Southern California and lives in Florence, where she is a young artist with the Accademia del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino. Among her more recent engagements are *Ayda, amore fatale* (Amneris), *I due Foscari* (Pisana) and *Roméo et Juliette* (Gertrude) at Maggio Musicale Fiorentino; *Ernani* (Giovanna), *La finta semplice* (Giacinta), *Carmen* (Mercédès) and Mozart's *Coronation Mass* at the Teatro del Maggio, Florence; 'Giovani voci alla Fenice' at Teatro La Fenice, Venice; and Vaughan Williams's *Serenade to Music* at Carnegie Hall, Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Hermia), Rota's *I due timidi* (Signora Guidotti), *La Cenerentola* (Tisbe), *Così fan tutte* (Dorabella and Despina) and Rorem's *A Childhood Miracle* (Emma), all in New York.



Photo: © Michele Monasta

Joseph Dahdah

Tenor Joseph Dahdah (b. Lebanon, 1992) studied with Raina Infantino and at the Istituto superiore di studi musicali di Terni 'Giulio Briccialdi' under the guidance of Ambra Vespasiani. He has also taken masterclasses with Richard Barker, Luca Salsi, Eva Mei and Tatiana Chivarova, among others. Dahdah has appeared in operas, oratorios, concerts and festivals in Lebanon, Italy, Germany, Venezuela, the Czech Republic and Bulgaria, and joined the Accademia del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino in 2020. Recent appearances include Giordano's *Siberia* at the Teatro del Maggio under the baton of Gianandrea Noseda; *I due Foscari* alongside Plácido Domingo during the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino 2022 season and Venti Lucenti's children's production of *Aida* in the cavea of the Teatro del Maggio.



Photo: © Michele Monasta

Davide Piva

Bass Davide Piva studied at the Conservatory of Trento with Daniela Longhi, and joined the Accademia del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino in 2021. His repertoire ranges from Mozart (Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Simone in *La finta semplice*, and Leporello and the title role in *Don Giovanni*), to Rossini and *bel canto* roles. In 2019 he won the Riccardo Zandonai and Public Awards at the Concorso Lirico Riccardo Zandonai. He has appeared in several productions at the Teatro del Maggio including *Rigoletto*, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *La serva padrona*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Il trovatore*, *Ernani*, *Don Carlo*, *La finta semplice*, *Ariadne auf Naxos* conducted by Daniele Gatti and Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy*, and *Il barbiere di Siviglia* at the Teatro Coccia in Novara.



Coro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino

Formed in 1933 – the inaugural year of the Festival of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino – under the guidance of Andrea Morosini, the Coro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino is one of the most prestigious Italian vocal ensembles across both opera and symphonic repertoire. The chorus has also explored the fields of chamber and contemporary music, giving important premiere performances of works by Penderecki, Dallapiccola, Petracchi, Nono and Bussotti. In recent years the chorus has expanded its repertoire to include major choral symphonies, classical and modern works, and has participated in international tours both as an independent ensemble and with the Orchestra del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino. The willingness and ability to interpret works of different periods and styles in their original language have made the Coro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino one of the most flexible and appreciated ensembles of conductors and international critics.

Orchestra del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino

Founded in 1928 by Vittorio Gui as Stabile Orchestrale Fiorentina, the Orchestra del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino has performed in the concert and operatic seasons of the Teatro Comunale of Florence since its inception. Gui was succeeded as permanent conductor by Mario Rossi and Bruno Bartoletti; Riccardo Muti and Zubin Mehta have also served as principal conductors. Throughout its history the Maggio Musicale Orchestra has been led by conductors such as Victor de Sabata, Antonio Guarnieri, Gianandrea Gavazzeni, Tullio Serafin, Wilhelm Furtwängler, Bruno Walter, Otto Klemperer, Issay Dobrowen, Erich Kleiber, Artur Rodziński, Dimitri Mitropoulos, Herbert von Karajan, Leonard Bernstein, Thomas Schippers, Claudio Abbado, Lorin Maazel, Carlo Maria Giulini, Georges Prêtre, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Carlos Kleiber, Georg Solti, Riccardo Chailly, Giuseppe Sinopoli, Seiji Ozawa and Fabio Luisi, who was its musical director from April 2018 to July 2019. Daniele Gatti is currently principal conductor, and Zubin Mehta is Honorary Conductor for Life.

www.maggiofiorentino.com/orchestra-del-maggio-musicale-fiorentino



James Conlon

James Conlon, one of today's most versatile and respected conductors, has cultivated a vast symphonic, operatic and choral repertoire. Since his 1974 debut with the New York Philharmonic, he has conducted virtually every major American and European symphony orchestra. Through worldwide touring, an extensive discography and filmography, numerous writings, television appearances, and guest speaking engagements, Conlon is one of classical music's most recognised figures. Conlon is music director of LA Opera and artistic advisor of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. He has served as music director of the Ravinia Festival, summer home of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and is music director laureate of the Cincinnati May Festival. He has led more than 270 performances at the Metropolitan Opera. Conlon is a noted advocate for composers suppressed by the Nazi regime. Among his prizes are four GRAMMY Awards, a 2002 Légion d'honneur from then-President of the French Republic Jacques Chirac, and a 2018 Commendatore Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana from Sergio Mattarella, president of the Italian Republic. www.jamesconlon.com

Victor Hugo's 1830 stage drama *Hernani* won overwhelming admiration, and over a decade later Verdi's attention was drawn to it as an operatic vehicle that would give him opportunities for full dramatic unity. Its subject is the nobleman-turned-brigand Ernani who loves Elvira, herself the object of two other men's desires. *Ernani's* success was immediate and it became Verdi's most popular opera until he composed *Il trovatore*. This production won critical acclaim, as did conductor James Conlon for his 'superb support of the singers and the flexible elasticity he brought to his tempi' (*Opera Traveller.com*).

Giuseppe
VERDI
(1813–1901)
Ernani

Dramma lirico in four acts (1844)

Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave (1810–1876) after Victor Hugo

Ernani..... Francesco Meli, Tenor
Carlo..... Roberto Frontali, Baritone
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Riccardo..... Joseph Dahdah, Tenor
Jago..... Davide Piva, Bass



Maggio Musicale Fiorentino
fondazione

Coro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino

(Lorenzo Fratini, Chorus master)

Orchestra del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino

James Conlon

Act	Duration	Act	Duration	Playing Time
1–15 Act I	46:33	28–35 Act III	23:00	2:06:43
16–27 Act II	34:04	36–39 Act IV	20:04	

This performance is also available on Dynamic DVD (DYN-37972) and Blu-ray (DYN-57972)

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet

The Italian libretto and an English translation can be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/660534.htm

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