

CHAN 3103(2)



CHANDOS

OPERA IN
ENGLISH

MOZART
IDOMENEO

PETER MOORES FOUNDATION



Lebrecht Collection

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Idomeneo, King of Crete

Dramma per musica in three acts
Libretto by Giovanni Battista Varesco after Antoine Danchet’s *Idomenée*
English translation by David Parry

Idomeneo, King of Crete.....	Bruce Ford <i>tenor</i>
Idamante, his son.....	Diana Montague <i>mezzo-soprano</i>
Ilia, Trojan princess, daughter of King Priam.....	Rebecca Evans <i>soprano</i>
Electra, princess, daughter of Agamemnon.....	Susan Patterson <i>soprano</i>
Arbace, the King’s confidant	Ryland Davies <i>tenor</i>
High Priest of Neptune	Nicolai Gedda <i>tenor</i>
Voice of Neptune	Clive Bayley <i>bass</i>

Orchestra and Chorus of Opera North
Philip Sunderland assistant conductor/chorus master
David Parry

The version of *Idomeneo* to be found on this recording is exactly that which Tim Albery and I prepared for the production at Opera North in 2002. We aimed for a theatrically tight version while trying to remain close to Mozart's apparent intentions. It is absolutely clear that there is no authenticity in producing a complete version of the opera: Mozart made severe cuts for the first production. It could be argued that some of these were necessitated by the poor quality of some of the singers, in particular the Idamante, who, from Mozart's description, appears to have been wooden and boring. It is clear, however, that most of the cuts were made to produce a compelling and convincing dramatic whole.

We accordingly cut most of the arias that Mozart did, including Idamante's aria in Act II, Arbace's aria in Act III and Idomeneo's final aria. In the case of the latter two we retained the accompanied recitatives, as Mozart seems to have done. This lends an almost Wagnerian quality to passages in the opera, where narration and conversation take precedence over formalised arias. The preponderance of intensely dramatic and beautifully inflected recitative is indeed a startling feature of the work, a feature which is lost if too much of the more formalised music is restored. Unlike

Mozart, we also omitted Arbace's first aria, feeling that it was probably retained for diplomatic rather than purely artistic reasons: without it the role of Arbace becomes, as it should, truly secondary.

We retained, however, Electra's final aria, which Mozart cut. Mozart's observation was that it was dramatically crass for the rest of the cast to leave the stage before the aria only to reappear as soon as it is over for the final scene. There is truth in this; but Tim Albery solved the problem brilliantly by keeping the other characters on stage to watch Electra's descent into madness in horrified silence, a deeply disturbing moment which helped us, the audience, to understand and empathise with her plight. In addition, it is one of the most thrilling arias that Mozart wrote. And, in its closing passage, technically very demanding. Perhaps it was beyond the first Electra?

We also departed from Mozart's decisions by omitting the ballet after the action is over. Surely there can be few artistic grounds on which to quibble with in such a decision.

What you will hear is a rendition of *Idomeneo* as a compelling music-drama, not as an over-long museum piece.

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Costume design for *Idomeneo* by Lorenzo Quaglio

COMPACT DISC ONE

	Time	Page
[1] Overture	4:33	[p. 74]
Act I		
[2] 'When will the gods release me'	3:59	[p. 74]
[3] 'Father, my brothers, forgive me!'	3:31	[p. 74]
<i>Ilia</i>		
[4] 'Ah! He is coming'	2:34	[p. 74]
<i>Ilia, Idamante</i>		
[5] 'I am guiltless and yet you blame me'	5:42	[p. 75]
<i>Idamante</i>		
[6] 'Here are the few wretched Trojan victims'	0:45	[p. 75]
<i>Ilia, Idamante</i>		
[7] 'The war is over'	2:23	[p. 76]
<i>Chorus</i>		
[8] 'Prince, my lord, you insult the Greek nation'	2:34	[p. 76]
<i>Electra, Idamante, Arbace, Ilia</i>		
[9] 'The King dies... and I am friendless!'	1:51	[p. 77]
[10] 'I feel you writhe inside me'	3:18	[p. 77]
<i>Electra</i>		
[11] 'Relent! Heaven, relent!'	1:05	[p. 77]
<i>Chorus</i>		
[12] Pantomime		
'We have been saved at last'	3:18	[p. 77]
[13] 'The ghost of my victim'	3:58	[p. 78]
<i>Idomeneo</i>		

	Time	Page
[14] 'This lonely shore'	4:37	[p. 78]
<i>Idamante, Idomeneo</i>		
[15] 'The father I love dearly'	2:49	[p. 79]
<i>Idamante</i>		
Intermezzo		
[16] March –		
'May Neptune be honoured'	4:12	[p. 79]
<i>Chorus</i>		
Act II		
[17] 'We are alone; listen, Arbace'	3:58	[p. 80]
<i>Idomeneo, Arbace, Ilia</i>		
[18] 'My father was taken'	5:31	[p. 81]
<i>Ilia</i>		
[19] 'How should I interpret words so ambiguous and disturbing?'	2:10	[p. 81]
[20] 'Saved from storms, the storm within me rages'	6:02	[p. 82]
<i>Idomeneo</i>		
[21] 'What pleasure could be deeper than mine is?'	1:29	[p. 82]
[22] 'Dearest creature, that I know you love another cannot hurt me'	6:09	[p. 82]
<i>Electra</i>		

TT 76:46

COMPACT DISC TWO

	Time	Page
[1] 'You shores of Crete' <i>Electra</i>	0:51	[p. 82]
[2] 'Calmly the sea is calling' <i>Chorus, Electra</i>	4:02	[p. 82]
[3] 'You must set sail, Prince' <i>Idomeneo, Idamante</i>	0:31	[p. 83]
[4] 'If I must leave, I beg you' <i>Idamante, Electra, Idomeneo</i>	3:43	[p. 83]
[5] 'The storm winds are howling' <i>Chorus</i>	1:31	[p. 84]
[6] 'I am the one, merciless Neptune, the culprit' <i>Idomeneo</i>	1:50	[p. 84]
[7] 'Disaster! Run faster to flee such a horror!' <i>Chorus</i>	1:28	[p. 84]

Act III

[8] 'Here, alone but not lonely'	0:56	[p. 84]
[9] 'Heav'nly breezes, soft and gentle' <i>Ilia</i>	5:44	[p. 84]
[10] 'Noble princess, if I dare to seek you out again'	3:25	[p. 85]
[11] 'At the moment such words were uttered' <i>Idamante, Ilia</i>	2:53	[p. 86]
[12] '(What do I see here?)' <i>Idomeneo, Ilia, Idamante, Electra</i>	2:00	[p. 86]
[13] 'Alone the earth I wander' <i>Idamante, Ilia, Idomeneo, Electra</i>	5:28	[p. 87]

	Time	Page
[14] 'Most unfortunate land!' <i>Arbace</i>	3:22	[p. 88]
[15] 'Raise your eyes for a moment, your highness' <i>High Priest, Idomeneo</i>	4:31	[p. 88]
[16] 'Oh, oh vow past redemption' <i>Chorus, High Priest</i>	4:47	[p. 88]
[17] March	1:27	[p. 89]
[18] 'Oh mighty ocean god, we beg you hear us' <i>Idomeneo, Chorus</i>	3:07	[p. 89]
[19] 'Highness, our hero, the prince Idamante' <i>Arbace, Idomeneo</i>	1:13	[p. 89]
[20] 'Father, my dearest father...' <i>Idamante, Idomeneo, Ilia, High Priest</i>	5:47	[p. 89]
[21] 'Your love has triumphed: Idomeneo shall rule no more' <i>Voice of Neptune</i>	2:32	[p. 90]
[22] 'The gods show mercy!' <i>Idomeneo, Idamante, Ilia, Arbace, Electra</i>	1:11	[p. 91]
[23] 'The woes of my brother invade and destroy me' <i>Electra</i>	3:08	[p. 91]
[24] 'Cretans: this shall be the last decree Idomeneo will pronounce' <i>Idomeneo</i>	5:41	[p. 91]
[25] 'Bless their love, bless their devotion' <i>Chorus</i>	1:23	[p. 91]

TT 72:49

Mozart: Idomeneo

Idomeneus, in Greek legend, son of Deucalion, grandson of Minos and Pasiphaë, and King of Crete. He courted Helen and took part in the Trojan War. According to Homer's *Odyssey*, he returned home safely with all his countrymen who survived the war. In later tradition, having been overtaken by a violent storm, he vowed to sacrifice to Poseidon [Neptune] the first living thing that met him when he reached home. This proved to be his son, whom he slew in accordance with his vow; whereupon a plague broke out and Idomeneus was driven out...

So says my thirty-five-year-old copy of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, and that was the basis for an opera by Campra to a libretto by Antoine Danchet, first presented at the Paris Opéra in 1712. At the end of Campra's opera *Idoménée*, Idomeneus, a bass, goes mad, slays Idamantes, his son, and is prevented from suicide only by the intervention of his retinue. Recently revived by the baroque conductor William Christie, it has been revealed as a masterly *tragédie lyrique* in its own terms, and probably influential on Mozart.

That work was certainly the principal source of the libretto to Mozart's work, first

given in Munich on 29 January 1781. Mozart's librettist, the Salzburg pastor, Giovanni Battista Varesco, simplified Danchet's plot and changed the ending from tragic to happy. Five acts were reduced to three to conform to the 'reformed' operas of Gluck. Indeed the influence of that composer's *Alceste* can be felt in the more high-flown, hieratic passages of *Idomeneo* while the arias owed much to the style of Italian lyricism.

Mozart received the commission from the Munich Intendant [Director], Count Seeau, during the summer of 1780. It is thought that the aging tenor Anton Raaff, for whom Mozart conceived the title part, may have been instrumental in gaining the commission for Mozart. Most of the singers and players were known to the composer from his time in Mannheim where he had recently spent four-and-a-half happy and rewarding months at the court theatre. It was a city, the Palatine capital, where the arts flourished. Under the benign influence of the enlightened theatre director Carl Theodor, music was the thing at Mannheim. It was said at the time: 'It would be hard to find another great man who has

woven music into his life so tightly as this one.' There Mozart made many musical friends who were to take part in *Idomeneo*. He began work on the opera before leaving Salzburg on 5 November. His writing of the score is documented in letters home to his father, who sometimes acted as an intermediary between the composer and his librettist.

Mozart reported home on the singers' reactions – predominantly favourable – and on the local Elector's approval of the music that he heard in rehearsal. The premiere, attended by Leopold Mozart, was well received. It had evocative designs by Lorenzo Quaglio, then a noted figure in his field. At sixty-six, Raaff may have found his music, involving a great deal of *coloratura*, somewhat taxing, although Mozart was careful not to take him too high too often. The Wendling sisters-in-law, who had worked with Mozart in Mannheim, took the two female roles: Dorothea was Ilia, Elisabeth took Electra. Idamante was written for a castrato (for Vienna Mozart re-wrote the part for a tenor); the role was taken by a relatively inexperienced singer, Vincenzo dal Prato, whom Mozart had to nurse. Domenico de Panzacchi, who sang the tenor part of the confidant Arbace, insisted on two arias. Neither is memorable, and they are frequently,

as here, omitted. For a private performance in Vienna in 1786, Mozart made appreciable revisions, mostly shortening the score.

At this early stage in his career – he was twenty-five at the time – he was still learning his craft. He was most anxious to ensure the opera worked in theatrical terms so that, in the course of its preparation for the stage, he made a number of cuts. Their restoration in recent times, when authenticity has been much to the fore, has been the subject of much discussion and some controversy. Mozart, oddly, kept Arbace's arias and the concluding ballet at Munich, but excluded Electra's final and amazingly original aria in which she goes berserk; it has been sensibly restored here.

The piece, which is now readily acknowledged as Mozart's first fully-fledged masterpiece in the opera house, lay for many years in neglect. Contemporaneously, Mozart was, naturally enough, keen for more performances in different places, but it was not until five years after the premiere that it was taken up, in Vienna, then only for one concert performance given by amateurs at the Auersperg Palace. As already mentioned, Idamante became a tenor resulting in changes in the ensembles. He was also given a long new aria with violin *obbligato* (not, of course,

included here) and a shorter and musically different duet with Ilia in Act III.

When the opera was revived early in the twentieth century in German-speaking lands, it was often in deleterious adaptations by such as Richard Strauss and Bernard Paumgartner. It only came into its own, praised in all quarters, when Glyndebourne staged it famously in 1951, thanks largely to the inspiration of the conductor Fritz Busch and the director Carl Ebert. They employed a tenor Idamante and conflated the editions. Most recently (2003) Simon Rattle performed it there with every bar Mozart first composed for Munich, a questionable decision as it means the work lasts almost as long as a Wagner opera.

Elsewhere it has gradually gained respect in many houses although even today its place in the regular repertory is not wholly ensured: it is more often performed at festivals. That may have something to do with the static nature of the story and the fact that the genre of *opera seria* into which it falls is not always to popular taste. In a way, it ought to be a piece for special occasions on account of its greatness in terms of projecting raw emotions in music of depth and surpassing beauty, also for its affecting orchestration. As the eminent Mozart scholar Daniel Heartz wrote in a notable essay on the

work in *The Musical Times*: 'Once Mozart became involved in re-creating the drama through his art, it called forth some of the most personal and passionate music he ever wrote.'

The central aria for Ilia, 'Se il padre perdei' ('My father was taken', CD1, track [18]) in Act II, is a long, sensuous outpouring for a lyric soprano of the utmost beauty in terms of line and feeling, in which strings support wonderful wind solos. No wonder Dorothea Wendling expressed herself 'arcicontentissima' (overwhelmingly contented) with her music.

As Electra, Elisabeth was equally pleased with her music, as well she might be, given the variety of moods in which she shows her conflicting emotions. The main singers were more cause of concern. As already noted, Raaff's age was a problem, and he had a very conservative outlook. Dal Prato (Idamante) was compared by Mozart to a choirboy, ever ready to go wrong vocally and dramatically.

Mozart's concept goes far beyond the pleasures and whims of his first cast. In every aspect, the writing is new-minted, long-breathed in structure and consequence, and it probes psychological depths unheard of in most of its predecessors, the best of Monteverdi and Gluck possibly apart. Mozart finds the appropriate music for each character's

feelings at the relevant moment in the construct. The outsider Electra is portrayed as that, never quite integrated into the musical or dramatic texture. Ilia develops during the course of the opera from a lovelorn, sad girl into an almost heroic woman willing to sacrifice her life to her beloved Idamante: the prolonged episode in which he is prepared for sacrifice and her timely intervention never fails to move the heart in any decent performance. To almost as great an extent Idamante travels from boy to man in a series of forthright arias and duets. Arbace, in spite of, or perhaps because of being deprived of his arias, is a sympathetic adviser to the King, and has an accompanied recitative of inward reflection in the centre of the work.

At the centre of things is the titular ruler. After relief at his safe delivery from the storms and Neptune, he becomes a tortured soul on meeting his son on the seashore. He is quite unable, till almost the last, to decide on the sacrifice of his son that he has undertaken to make through his injudicious vow. His music graphically portrays the agony within the man. A tenor such as Bruce Ford with a mind as well as a voice, can create a figure who is at once deeply troubled and vulnerable but also noble.

There is still more to the score's extraordinary novelty, and that is to be found in its ensembles. Never before in opera have such extended pieces depicting the varied feelings of the participants been so lengthily and unerringly expressed. I am thinking in particular of the trio, 'Pria di partir' ('If I must leave' CD2, track [21]) in Act II and the surpassingly eloquent quartet 'Andro ramingo e sol' ('Alone the earth I wander' CD2, track [19]) in Act III. In each the separate lines of the characters run their course independently yet provide a coherent unity. These foretell the similar wonders of the da Ponte operas.

Then there are the magnificent choruses, in which the confused populace expresses its changing emotions. Most original of all is that at the end of Act II 'Corriamo, corriamo' ('Disaster! Run faster to flee such a horror!' CD2, track [7]) in which the crowd reacts desperately to Idomeneo's confession. It doesn't come to a true cadence, leaving the audience as concerned as the participants – a masterstroke. Then the intervention of both the High Priest and Neptune, the latter as a *deus ex machina* in Act III are both striking and original, Mozart bringing in the trombones for the first time in the latter.

So the ear is constantly stirred by fresh sounds and ideas.

In purely musical terms, the instrumental invention is as apt as one would expect from Mozart. Harmonic daring is of the essence in depicting the starkness of the drama, and key relationships seem to be arranged to accommodate the development of the story. Even the construction of the recitative is more varied and striking than in earlier *opera seria*.

Such a complex yet immediate work always has new things to reveal to the attentive listener. In all cases of my long experience of the work, it has never failed to stimulate the ear and move the heart, culminating in the unbearably raw, tender emotions of Act III.

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Synopsis

COMPACT DISC ONE

[1] Overture

Act I

[2] – [3] Ilia, daughter of the defeated King Priam of Troy, is among the Trojan prisoners being held captive on Crete. She is torn

between her hatred of the Cretan enemy and her burgeoning love for Idamante, son of the absent Idomeneo. However, she fears that he already loves Electra, daughter of Agamemnon, who is living in exile on Crete. [4] – [7] Idamante sets free Ilia and the prisoners and confesses his love for her, but she hides her own feelings towards him. [8] Arbace arrives with news of Idomeneo's death in a storm at sea. [9] Electra, who had hoped that Idomeneo would, on his return, choose her to marry Idamante, is despairing. [10] – [11] especially when she observes Idamante's love for Ilia.

[12] – [13] Idomeneo has survived the storm by vowing to Neptune that he will sacrifice the first living being he should meet on reaching land. [14] – [15] Idamante, searching for the body of his father among the shipwrecked, encounters him, but neither recognises the other. Idomeneo knows only that, in accordance with his vow, this man must be the promised sacrifice. Eventually, the truth of their identity emerges, and Idomeneo pushes his son away in despair, leaving Idamante bewildered and unhappy.

[16] The people of Crete celebrate the safe return of the fleet.

Act II

[17] Idomeneo tells Arbace of his vow to Neptune. Arbace advises the king to send both Idamante and Electra to her homeland, Argos. With Idamante out of the way, another means might be found to placate the angry Neptune.

[18] Ilia comes to thank Idomeneo for her freedom, asking him to take the place of her dead father. [19] – [20] The king realises that Idamante and Ilia are in love with each other. He decides that his son must be to blame for Neptune's wrath because of his love for Ilia and his freeing of the Trojan prisoners.

[21] – [22] Electra is happy to leave Crete, hoping that once Idamante is separated from Ilia, he will be willing to accept her love.

COMPACT DISC TWO

[1] – [4] Before their ship can set sail a violent storm breaks out. [5] Believing that Neptune must still be punishing them, the Cretans demand to know who has angered him.

[6] – [7] Idomeneo admits that he is guilty, and challenges Neptune, demanding that he himself should be the one to die. Out of the storm a monstrous creature emerges.

Act III

[8] – [10] Idamante has decided that the only way to stop the devastation which is being wreaked by the monster is to destroy it. Fearing that he will not survive, Ilia confesses her love for him. [11] As the couple celebrate their love, [12] – [13] Idomeneo arrives with Electra and orders his son to leave Crete immediately, although he does not reveal to him the reason for this apparently unloving behaviour.

[14] Arbace laments that the gods have forsaken Crete. [15] – [17] The High Priest describes the devastation of the island: the streets running with blood, littered with the dead and dying. Idomeneo at last admits that his own son, Idamante, is the one who must be sacrificed.

[18] As the sacrifice is being prepared, sounds of rejoicing are heard. Idamante has triumphed over the monster. [19] Idomeneo, realising that this will enrage Neptune still further, knows that he can no longer prevent the death of his son. [20] Idamante accepts that he must die in order to fulfil his father's vow. Idomeneo is about to sacrifice him when Ilia demands that she should be killed in his place. [21] At this, the voice of Neptune is heard, declaring that love has prevailed: Idomeneo

must give up his throne and install Idamante as the new ruler, with Ilia at his side. [22] – [23] Electra rages at the foundering of her hopes. [24] – [25] Idomeneo commends Idamante and Ilia to the people.

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Bill Cooper



American tenor **Bruce Ford** is firmly established as one of today's most outstanding singers. He has earned high praise for his extraordinary vocal beauty and range, textual vividness, authoritative style, and technical prowess, as well as for his expressive acting ability. He is a regular guest in major houses throughout North America and Europe, where he specialises in highly demanding works of Mozart and the *bel canto* composers. For more than a decade Bruce Ford has been instrumental in the re-evaluation of many *bel canto* operas, both on disc and in live performances. Many venues have revived unjustly neglected operas

especially for him, including The Royal Opera (Rossini's *Otello*) and the festivals of Glyndebourne (*Ermione*) and Pesaro (Zelmira, Rossini's *Otello*). He has also appeared at La Scala, the opera houses of Naples, Florence, and Bologna; and Maggio Musicale Fiorentino and the Salzburg Festival. Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* – the role he has performed most frequently in his career to date – was the vehicle for his debuts at The Royal Opera, the Metropolitan Opera, Los Angeles Opera and Dallas Opera.

His concert appearances have included performances in such renowned venues as La Scala, the Edinburgh Festival, Carnegie Hall and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, and he is a sought after recitalist. Conductors he has worked with include Claudio Abbado, Riccardo Muti, Sir Charles Mackerras, Richard Bonyngue, Sir Roger Norrington, Sir Colin Davis and David Parry, to name but a few.

Bruce Ford has documented much of his repertoire on disc, with performances including the original version of *Lucia di Lammermoor* under Sir Charles Mackerras; three solo operatic recitals (Romantic Heroes and Serious Rossini on Opera Rara and Great Operatic Arias for Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation); and Opera Rara's releases of rare

operas of Mayr, Donizetti, Pacini, and Rossini, for which he receives consistently favourable reviews. Ford's triumphant portrayals of Mozart's *Mitridate* (The Royal Opera) and Oreste in *Ermione* (Glyndebourne) can be seen on video/DVD. After nearly two decades on stage, the tenor's repertoire is still expanding, and he has recently added the title roles in Mozart's operas *La clemenza di Tito* and *Idomeneo*.

For Chandos' Opera in English series he has recorded two discs of Great Operatic Arias and a disc of Viennese Operetta.



Washington Opera (*Tosca*), Baltimore Opera (Mimì and Aida), Opera Company of Philadelphia (Violetta, Donna Anna, and the

Susan Patterson has taken her place as a new leading *lirico spinto* soprano with highly successful performances with English National Opera (Dvořák's *Rusalka*, Violetta, Marguerite and Helen in Boito's *Mefistopheles*),

four heroines in *The Tales of Hoffmann*). She made her Metropolitan Opera debut in 1998 as the Italian Singer in Strauss's *Capriccio*.

La traviata has been a particularly dominant opera in Susan Patterson's career and she has performed it with many companies including San Francisco Opera, New York City Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Palm Beach Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Baltimore Opera and in Vancouver and Montreal. It was as Violetta that she made her European debut with Welsh National Opera under Sir Charles Mackerras. Other performances include *Manon Lescaut* (Spoleto Festival Opera USA); *Falstaff* (Atlanta Opera); *Ernani* (Netherlands Reisopera); Mozart's *Fiordiligi* and *Constanze*, Donna Anna, Donna Elvira, Anne Trulove; Marguerite (*Faust*) (San Francisco Opera); Rosalinde (*Die Fledermaus*), Musetta and Gilda. In Europe she has sung at La Scala, Milan (Cherubini's *Lodoïska* under Riccardo Muti); the Netherlands Opera (*Le Comte Ory* and *Mitridate*); Aix-en-Provence (Constanze); Cologne Opera and the Opéra Comique in Paris (*L'occasione fa il ladro*). Recordings include Carolina (*Il matrimonio segreto*) and Elvira in *Ernani* for Chandos.

Susan Patterson appears regularly in concert in repertoire including works by Handel, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Rossini, Poulenc,

Szymanowski and Mahler. She also sang the Verdi Requiem with the Washington Opera under the baton of Plácido Domingo on the 100th anniversary of the composer's death.



Rebecca Evans was born in South Wales and studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. She has already established a major operatic career in America where she has sung Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) for the Santa Fe Opera; Adele

(*Die Fledermaus*) for the Chicago Lyric Opera; Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Anne Trulove (*The Rake's Progress*) and Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*) for San Francisco Opera; and both Susanna and Zerlina for the Metropolitan Opera, New York. In Europe, her roles have included Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Zdenka (*Arabella*), Servilia (*La clemenza di Tito*), Ilia (*Idomeneo*) and, most recently, Nanetta (*Falstaff*) for the Bayerische Staatsoper; Ilia for Opera de Lausanne; the title role in *The Cunning Little Vixen* for Scottish Opera; Susanna, Ilia,

Marzelline (*Fidelio*), Norina (*Don Pasquale*) and Hero (*Beatrice and Benedict*) for Welsh National Opera; Romilda (*Xerxes*) for English National Opera; and Zerlina and Nanetta at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

Her concert experience includes appearances at the BBC Proms and Edinburgh International Festival. She has performed the Bach *Magnificat* with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas, Brahms' *Requiem* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jeffrey Tate, and Schumann's *Faust Szenen* and Brahms' *Requiem* at the Ravinia Festival. She has also appeared in Australia at the Melbourne International Festival and on a concert tour with the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Recitals include the Wigmore Hall, London; and the Barcelona, Ravinia, Buxton and Belfast Festivals. Recordings include *The Marriage of Figaro*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *HMS Pinafore* and *Trial by Jury*, all under Sir Charles Mackerras; for Chandos Nannetta (*Falstaff*), *Hugh The Drover*, a solo recording of Italian songs, Delius' *Requiem*, and Finzi's *Dies natalis*.

Diana Montague was born in Winchester and studied at the Royal Northern College of Music. Since her debut as Zerlina with



Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires and the Bayreuth and Salzburg Festivals.

Her repertory includes the major roles for mezzo-soprano in operas by Mozart, Gluck, Strauss, Rossini, Bellini and Berlioz, and her frequent concert engagements include performances under Georg Solti, James Levine, Riccardo Muti, John Eliot Gardiner, Seiji Ozawa, Jeffrey Tate and Andrew Davis. Engagements have included *Iphigénie en Tauride* in Buenos Aires, Madrid and with Welsh National Opera; *Le Comte Ory* in Lausanne, Rome and Glyndebourne; Andromaca in Rossini's *Ermione* at Glyndebourne; Proserpina in Monteverdi's *Orfeo* in Amsterdam; *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* in Amsterdam and Sydney; Sesto in

Glyndebourne Touring Opera she has appeared in such venues as the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, the Metropolitan Opera in New York, the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels, the Opéra national de Paris-Bastille,

Madrid; the Composer (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) for Scottish Opera and in Lisbon; Meg Page (*Falstaff*) for the reopening of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Octavian (*Der Rosenkavalier*) in Naples, Bilbao and at the Teatro Real in Madrid; and Marguerite in Vienna.

Diana Montague's many recordings include Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, *Norma*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*, for Opera Rara *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*, *Zoraida di Granata* and *Il crociato in Egitto*, and, for Chandos' Opera in English series, *Cavalleria rusticana*, Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier* (highlights), *Faust*, and two discs of Great Operatic Arias (CHAN 3010 and 3093).

Nicolai Gedda is internationally acknowledged as one of the greatest artists of our time and has been acclaimed for his command of a repertoire which encompasses almost every style and period in the field of opera, oratorio, operetta, song or orchestral works.

Born in Stockholm,



Clive Barda

the son of a Russian bass and a Swedish mother, he made his professional début at the Royal Opera Stockholm in 1952 in *Le Postillon de Longjumeau*. In the audience was Herbert von Karajan, who immediately engaged him to sing in his recording of Bach's B minor Mass. Thus the year 2002 marked fifty years of recording for Nicolai Gedda. In 1953 he made his debut at La Scala, Milan followed in 1954 by his debut at the Paris Opera and in 1957 with his Metropolitan Opera debut (in the title role of Gounod's *Faust*). Since his debut with The Royal Opera in 1965 (as the Duke of Mantua in Verdi's *Rigoletto*) he returned to sing Benvenuto Cellini, Alfredo, Gustavus III in *Un ballo in maschera*, Nemorino and Lensky. He created leading roles in Barber's *Vanessa* and Menotti's *The Last Savage* at the Metropolitan Opera.

His operatic triumphs have ranged from the works of Haydn and Mozart to Stravinsky, Orff, Barber and Menotti, while in recital he is regarded as an outstanding interpreter of lieder. He also has the distinction of being the most recorded tenor in the world with 200 recordings to his credit. These include complete opera performances of *Guillaume Tell*, *La Bohème*, *Faust*, *Werther*, *Manon*, *Così fan tutte* and *Benvenuto Cellini*.



Born in South Wales **Ryland Davies** studied at the Royal Manchester College of Music where he was made a Fellow of the College in 1971. His many roles with Glyndebourne Festival Opera include Belmonte (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Lensky (*Eugene Onegin*) and Flamand (*Capriccio*). He made his operatic debut in with Welsh National Opera in 1964 as Count Almaviva (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) and his Royal Opera House debut in 1969 where his many roles have included Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Ernesto (*Don Pasquale*), Fenton (*Falstaff*) and Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

Other engagements have included *Turandot* (Geneva Opera); *La finta giardiniera* (Welsh National Opera); Arbace (*Idomeneo*) for the Metropolitan Opera and at Garsington; Le Duc (*Chérubin*) for The Royal Opera and in Monte Carlo; Aumonier (*The Dialogues of the Carmelites*) for Netherlands Opera;

Monostatos (*Die Zauberflöte*) at Santa Fe; Basilio (*Le nozze di Figaro*) for Nice Opera, New Israeli Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, English National Opera and at Glyndebourne; Dr. Caius (*Falstaff*) in Israel; Horace Adams (*Peter Grimes*) in Florence, at English National Opera and the Saito Kinen Festival, Japan; Albazar (*The Turk in Italy*), Gaudenzio in Leoncavallo's *La Bohème*, and Dr Caius (*Falstaff*) and *War and Peace* for English National Opera.



Clive Bayley sings regularly with the major opera companies in a repertoire ranging from Monteverdi to Verdi, Puccini, Berg, Britten and Birtwistle. He made his debut with the Royal Opera, Covent

Garden, in the world premiere of Harrison Birtwistle's *Gawain* and subsequently appeared as Colline (*La bohème*), Hans Foltz (*Die Meistersinger*) and Castro (*La fanciulla del West*). Other roles include Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*), Raleigh (*Gloriana*), and the title

role in *Le nozze di Figaro* for Opera North; Cadmus (*Semele*), the four Villains (*The Tales of Hoffmann*), Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Hunding (*The Valkyrie*), and Narbal (*The Trojans*) for English National Opera. He has also appeared with Glyndebourne Festival and Touring Operas. Abroad Clive Bayley has sung with Netherlands Opera, Seattle Opera, in Lisbon, Lausanne, Toulouse, Munich and in concert with Les Arts Florissants and William Christie.

Clive Bayley also has a very busy concert career which includes highlights such as Leonard Bernstein's *Candide* with the London Symphony Orchestra, Walton's *The Bear* with the Northern Sinfonia, and Don Fernando in concert performances of *Fidelio* with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under Walter Weller. His recordings in the Opera in English series include the Bonze in *Madam Butterfly*, Ferrando in *Il Trovatore*, the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*, Pistol in *Falstaff*, and Timur in *Turandot*.

Opera North is the national opera company for the North of England and is committed to producing high quality work that informs, excites, challenges and entertains. Over twenty-four years Opera North has established

itself as one of England's leading arts organisations and one of the most imaginative opera companies in Europe. It is a vibrant organisation which actively challenges perceptions of opera as an art form. Breathing new life into the classics, the company is also a strong advocate of lesser-known works and champion of music theatre. The critically acclaimed Chorus and versatile Orchestra also perform independently, constantly revitalising their approaches to music-making. Recordings for Chandos include Walton's *Troilus and Cressida* and, for the Opera in English series, highlights from Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*.



David Parry studied with Sergiu Celibidache and began his career as Sir John Pritchard's assistant. He made his debut with English Music Theatre, then became a staff conductor at Städtische Bühnen, Dortmund and at Opera North. He was Music Director of Opera 80 from 1983 to

1987 and since 1992 has been the founding Music Director of Almeida Opera.

He works extensively in both opera and concert, nationally and internationally. He has conducted several productions at English National Opera and Opera North and appears regularly with the Philharmonia and London Philharmonic Orchestras. In 1996 he made his debut at the Glyndebourne Festival conducting *Così fan tutte*, following it in 1998 with the world premiere of Jonathan Dove's *Flight*.

He is a frequent visitor to Spain where he has given concerts with most of the major Spanish orchestras. He conducted the Spanish premiere of *Peter Grimes* in Madrid and in 1996 the first Spanish production of *The Rake's Progress*. He has appeared in Germany, Switzerland, and The Netherlands, at the Pesaro Festival in Italy, the Hong Kong International Festival, in Japan with a tour of *Carmen*, and in Mexico with the UNAM Symphony Orchestra. Recent new productions he has conducted include *Fidelio* at the New Zealand Festival, *Lucia di Lammermoor* at New Israeli Opera and *Don Giovanni* at Staatsoper Hannover.

His work in the recording studio includes the BBC Television production of Marschner's *Der Vampyr* and twenty-eight complete opera

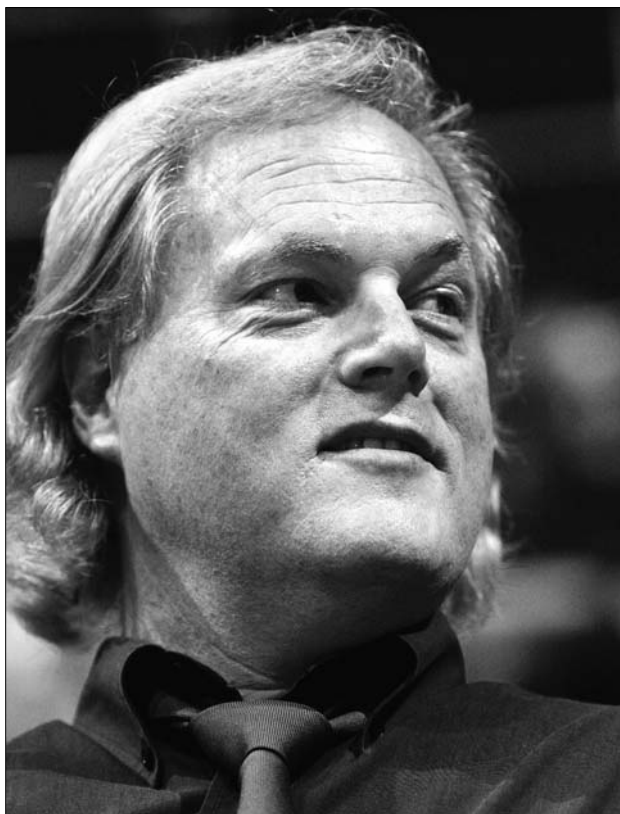
recordings under the sponsorship of the Peter Moores Foundation. Among these are numerous discs for the Opera Rara label which have won several awards, including the Belgian Prix Cecilia for Donizetti's *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*. For Chandos he has conducted a series of recitals of operatic arias – with Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill,

Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson, Della Jones, Alan Opie and Andrew Shore – as well as *The Thieving Magpie*, *Carmen*, *Don Giovanni*, *Don Pasquale*, *The Elixir of Love*, *Lucia of Lammermoor*, *Ernani*, *Il trovatore*, *Aida*, *Faust*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *La bohème*, *Turandot*, the award-winning *Tosca* and highlights from *Der*



Clive Barba

On session: Sir Peter Moores, Brian Couzens, Ralph Couzens and Michael Common



On session: Bruce Ford

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Clive Barda

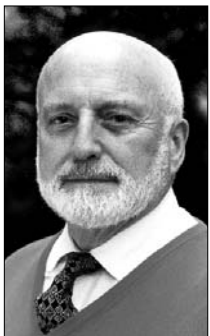


On session: Susan Patterson

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Clive Barda

Bill Cooper/PMF



SIR PETER MOORES, CBE, DL

Sir Peter Moores was born in Lancashire and educated at Eton College and Christ Church, Oxford, where he studied Italian and German. He had a 'gap year' at Glyndebourne working as a behind-the-scenes administrator before going to Oxford, then studied for three years at the Vienna Academy of Music, where he produced the Austrian premiere of Benjamin Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* and was a production assistant with the Vienna State Opera working as assistant producer of performances by Viennese artists at the San Carlo Opera House, Naples, at the Geneva Festival and at the Rome Opera.

In 1957 he joined his father's business, Littlewoods, becoming Vice-Chairman in 1976, Chairman from 1977 to 1980 and remaining a director until 1993. His public appointments include from 1981 to 1983 Governor of the BBC, Trustee of the Tate Gallery from 1978 to 1985 and from 1988 to 1992 a Director of Scottish Opera. He received the Gold Medal of the Italian Republic in 1974, an Honorary MA from Christ Church, Oxford in 1975, and was made an Honorary Member of the Royal Northern College of Music in 1985. In 1992 he was appointed Deputy Lieutenant (DL) of Lancashire by HM Queen Elizabeth II. He was appointed a Commander of the British Empire (CBE) in 1991 and received a Knighthood in the New Year's Honours List for 2003 in recognition of his charitable services to the arts.

PETER MOORES FOUNDATION

Peter Moores' philanthropic work began with his passion for opera: in his twenties he identified and helped a number of young artists in the crucial, early stages of their careers, several of whom – Dame Joan Sutherland, Sir Colin Davis and the late Sir Geraint Evans amongst them – became world-famous. He set up his eponymous Foundation in 1964 when he was thirty-two, in order to develop his charitable aims, not only in music and the visual arts, but also in education, health,

youth, social and environmental projects. To date, because of his initiatives and life-long commitment to these causes, he has disbursed more than £85 million of his own money through the Foundation and the Peter Moores Charitable Trust – 'to get things done and to open doors'.

Projects to help the young have ranged from a scheme to encourage young Afro-Caribbeans to stay on at school to the endowment of a Faculty Directorship and Chair of Management Studies at Oxford University (providing the lead donation in 1991 for the new School of Management Studies). In 1994 a permanent Transatlantic Slave Trade Gallery, initiated by Peter Moores, opened at the Merseyside Maritime Museum, with the aim of fostering discussion about the heritage and true history of the slave trade. Substantial help was given to the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Development Trust, whilst through annual PMF Scholarships established in 1971 well over two hundred young singers have received practical support at the outset of their careers, enabling a significant number to become international opera stars.

In 1993 the Foundation acquired Compton Verney, an eighteenth-century mansion, and established the Compton Verney House Trust, an independent charity which it funded in order to transform the mansion into an art gallery designed especially to encourage newcomers to the visual arts. Alongside major international touring exhibitions, it will house permanent collections of North European art, Neapolitan paintings and one of the finest collections of archaic oriental bronzes in the UK, as well as a British Portrait Collection and a British Folk Art Collection. The gallery is scheduled to open in Spring 2004.

Opera has given the Foundation its most public 'face'. Since Peter Moores initiated the live recording of the 'Goodall Ring' at the London Coliseum in the 1970s, the Foundation has enabled some eighty recordings to be produced: Chandos Records' Opera in English series – 'Opera that speaks your language' – is now the largest recorded collection of operas sung in English whilst Opera Rara's recordings of rare *bel canto* operas have opened up an immensely rich repertory previously only accessible to scholars. In live performance, the Foundation has encouraged the creation of new work and schemes to attract new audiences, financing the publication of scores and enabling rarely heard works to be staged by British opera companies and festivals.

Mozart: Idomeneo

Idomeneus, Gestalt der griechischen Legende, Sohn des Deucalion, Enkel von Minos und Pasiphaë, König von Kreta. Er warb um Helena und kämpfte im Trojanischen Krieg. Nach Homers *Odyssee* kehrte er unverehrt nach Hause zurück, begleitet von all seinen verbliebenen Landsleuten, die den Krieg überlebt hatten. Einer späteren Tradition zufolge geriet er in einen heftigen Sturm und schwor, Poseidon [Neptun] das erste Lebewesen zu opfern, das ihm bei seiner Heimkehr begegnen würde. Wie sich herausstellte, war dies sein Sohn, den er seinem Schwur gemäß erschlug; daraufhin brach eine Seuche aus und Idomeneus wurde vertrieben

Soweit meine 35 Jahre alte Ausgabe der *Encyclopædia Britannica*, und auf dieser Geschichte basierte eine Oper von André Campra nach einem Libretto von Antoine Danchet, die 1712 an der Pariser Opéra erstaufgeführt wurde. Am Schluß von Campras Oper *Idoménée* verliert der Titelheld, der von einem Baß gesungen wird, den Verstand und erschlägt seinen Sohn Idamantes, woraufhin seine Gefolgsleute durch ihr Einschreiten gerade noch seinen

Selbstmord verhindern können. Das in jüngerer Zeit von William Christie, dem bekannten Dirigenten barocker Opern, wieder zum Leben erweckte Werk hat sich als meisterhafte *tragédie lyrique* erwiesen, die Mozart wahrscheinlich zu seinem eigenen Werk inspirierte.

Sicherlich diente das Werk als Hauptquelle für das Libretto, das Mozart seiner am 29. Januar 1781 in München uraufgeführten Oper zugrundelegte. Mozarts Librettist, der Salzburger Pastor Giovanni Battista Varesco, vereinfachte Danchets Handlung und ersetzte das tragische Ende durch eine glückliche Wendung. Die ursprünglich fünf Akte der Vorlage wurden gemäß der Opernreform Glucks auf drei reduziert. Überhaupt ist der Einfluß von Glucks *Alceste* in den erhabeneren, wehevollen Passagen von *Idomeneo* zu spüren, während die Arien eher dem lyrischen italienischen Stil verpflichtet waren.

Den Kompositionsauftrag erhielt Mozart im Sommer 1780 vom Intendanten der Münchner Oper Graf SeEAU. Man nimmt an, daß der alternde Tenor Anton Raaff, für den

Mozart die Titelrolle schrieb, sich dafür verwendete, daß er den Auftrag erhielt. Die meisten Sänger und Musiker waren ihm aus seiner Zeit in Mannheim bekannt, wo er kurz zuvor viereinhalb glückliche und erfolgreiche Monate am Hoftheater verbracht hatte. In der pfälzischen Residenz blühten die Künste. Unter dem wohlwollenden Einfluß des aufgeklärten Theaterdirektors Carl Theodor wurde der Musik in Mannheim eine Vorrangstellung eingeräumt. Von Theodor hieß es: "Es fielen schwer, einen anderen großen Mann zu finden, der die Musik so eng mit seinem Leben verwoben hat wie dieser." In Mannheim gewann Mozart zahlreiche musikalische Freunde, die in *Idomeneo* mitwirken sollten. Er begann mit der Arbeit an der Oper noch bevor er am 5. November Salzburg verließ. Seine Arbeit an der Partitur ist in Briefen nach Hause an seinen Vater dokumentiert, der gelegentlich als Kontaktperson zwischen dem Komponisten und seinem Librettisten fungierte.

Mozart berichtete nach Hause über die Reaktion der Sänger – überwiegend positiv – und über die wohlwollende Aufnahme der Musik seitens des bayerischen Kurfürsten, der gelegentlich die Proben besuchte. Die

Premiere, bei der auch Leopold Mozart anwesend war, fand ein positives Echo. Das eindrucksvolle Bühnenbild stammte von Lorenzo Quaglio, seinerzeit ein bekannter Vertreter seines Faches. Mit 66 Jahren mag Raaff seinen Part, der mit zahlreichen Koloraturen gespickt war, als sehr anspruchsvoll empfunden haben, obwohl Mozart darauf achtete, ihn nicht allzu häufig in große Höhen zu führen. Die Schwägerinnen Wendling, die mit Mozart in Mannheim zusammengearbeitet hatten, übernahmen die beiden weiblichen Rollen – Dorothea sang die Ilia und Elisabeth die Elektra. Idamante war für einen Kastraten geschrieben (für Wien schrieb Mozart den Part für Tenor um); die Rolle wurde von dem noch recht unerfahrenen Vincenzo dal Prato gesungen, den Mozart unter seine Fittiche nehmen mußte. Domenico de Panzacchi, der den Tenorpart des Vertrauten Arbace sang, bestand darauf, zwei Arien zu erhalten. Keine der beiden ist besonders herausragend und sie werden oft ausgelassen (so auch in der vorliegenden Aufnahme). Für eine private Aufführung in Wien im Jahre 1786 nahm Mozart Änderungen vor, die dem Werk zuträglich waren; diese bestanden vor allem in Kürzungen.

In dieser frühen Phase seiner Laufbahn war der Fünfundzwanzigjährige noch dabei, sein Handwerk zu erlernen. Ihm war besonders daran gelegen, daß die Oper auch in dramatischer Hinsicht erfolgreich war, daher unternahm er während der Bearbeitung des Werks für die Bühne eine Reihe von Streichungen. Die Wiederherstellung dieser Passagen in jüngster Zeit hat angesichts des großen Werts, den man heute auf Authentizität legt, zu ausführlichen Diskussionen sowie einigen Kontroversen geführt. In München behielt Mozart eigentümlicherweise Arbaces Arien und das abschließende Ballett bei, während er Elektras überaus originelle Schlußarie, in der sie außer sich gerät, wegließ; sie wurde hier dankenswerterweise wieder aufgenommen.

Die Komposition, das heute allgemein als Mozarts erstes ausgewachsenes Meisterwerk für die Oper gilt, wurde viele Jahre lang kaum beachtet. Mozart war seinerzeit verständlicherweise auf weitere Aufführungen an anderen Orten erpicht, doch erst fünf Jahre nach der Premiere wurde die Oper in Wien erneut aufgegriffen, allerdings lediglich für eine konzertante Laienaufführung im Auersperg-Palais. Wie schon erwähnt, wurde die Rolle des Idamante für Tenor umgeschrieben,

woraus sich Änderungen in den Ensembles ergaben. Er erhielt außerdem eine ausgedehnte neue Arie mit obligater Violine (die hier natürlich nicht enthalten ist) sowie ein kürzeres, musikalisch geändertes Duett mit Ilia im dritten Akt.

Als die Oper Anfang des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts im deutschen Sprachraum wiederbelebt wurde, geschah dies meist in entstehenden Bearbeitungen durch Komponisten wie Richard Strauss und Bernhard Paumgartner. Zu ihren – allseits gefeierten – wirklichen Ehren kam sie erst wieder anläßlich der berühmten Inszenierung von 1951 in Glyndebourne, die der Inspiration des Dirigenten Fritz Busch und des Intendanten Carl Ebert zu verdanken ist. Bei dieser Aufführung wurde die Rolle des Idamante von einem Tenor übernommen und die beiden Fassungen miteinander vermischt. In jüngster Zeit (2003) führte Simon Rattle die Oper erneut in Glyndebourne auf, diesmal taktgetreu in der von Mozart ursprünglich für München komponierten Fassung – eine fragwürdige Entscheidung, da das Werk in dieser Form fast so lange dauert wie eine Wagner-Oper.

Auch anderswo hat das Werk mittlerweile Anerkennung gewonnen, doch auch heute

noch ist sein Platz im gängigen Repertoire nicht völlig gesichert und es wird vor allem auf Festivals aufgeführt. Das mag etwas mit dem statischen Charakter der Handlung zu tun haben, aber wohl auch damit, daß die Gattung der *opera seria*, unter die *Idomeneo* fällt, nicht sonderlich beliebt ist. In gewissem Sinne sollte das Stück besonderen Anlässen vorbehalten bleiben, schon wegen der hier mit tief bewegender Musik von herausragender Schönheit zum Ausdruck gebrachten großen Emotionen, aber auch wegen der effektvollen Orchestrierung. Der eminente Mozart-Forscher Daniel Heartz schrieb in einem vielbeachteten Essay über das Werk in *The Musical Times*: „Als Mozart sich an die Neuschöpfung des Dramas mittels der ihm eigenen Kunst machte, entlockte dieses ihm einige der persönlichsten und leidenschaftlichsten Kompositionen, die er je schrieb.“

Die zentrale Arie der Ilia, „Se il padre perdei“ („My father was taken“, CD1, Band 18) im Zweiten Akt, ist ein langer sinnlicher Gefühlsausbruch für lyrischen Sopran mit wunderschöner Melodieführung und Emotionalität, in dem die Streicher herrliche Bläsersoli begleiten. Kein Wunder, daß Dorothea Wendling sich mit ihrer Musik

„arcicontentissima“ (höchlichst zufrieden) zeigte.

Elisabeth Wendling war in der Rolle der Elektra gleichermaßen von ihrer Musik angetan, und dies mit gutem Grund angesichts der wechselnden Stimmungen, in denen sie ihren widerstreitenden Gefühlen Ausdruck verleiht. Die Sänger in den Hauptrollen gaben schon eher Anlaß zur Besorgnis. Wie bereits erwähnt, war Raaffs Alter ein Problem, außerdem vertrat er sehr konservative Ansichten. Den jungen Dal Prato (Idamante) verglich Mozart mit einem Chorknaben, der ständig Gefahr lief, sich stimmlich und schauspielerisch zu verirren.

Doch Mozarts Konzept geht weit über die Freuden und Eigenheiten seiner ersten Besetzung hinaus. Die Komposition ist in jeder Hinsicht neuartig, ausladend in Struktur und Wirkung, und sie erreicht psychologische Tiefen, die die meisten ihrer Vorgänger kaum jemals berührten – ausgenommen vielleicht die besten Werke Monteverdis und Glucks. Für die Emotionen einer jeden Figur findet Mozart im richtigen Moment der Handlung die angemessene Musik. So wird die Außenseiterin Elektra als ebensolche dargestellt, niemals so recht in das musikalische oder dramatische Geflecht

integriert. Ilia entwickelt sich im Verlauf der Oper von einem liebeskranken traurigen Mädchen zu einer fast heroischen Frau, die bereit ist, für ihren geliebten Idamante ihr Leben hinzugeben – die ausgedehnte Episode, in der dieser für das Opfer vorbereitet wird, und ihr rechtzeitiges Einschreiten sind in jeder guten Inszenierung herzergreifend. In ähnlicher Weise entwickelt Idamante sich in einer Reihe von geradlinigen Arien und Duetten vom Knaben zum Mann. Arbace, obwohl oder vielleicht gerade weil man ihm seine Arien weggenommen hat, ist ein sympathischer Berater des Königs; ihm fällt in der Mitte des Werks ein Accompagnato-Rezitativ voller tiefer Reflektion zu.

Im Zentrum des Geschehens befindet sich der Titelheld. Nach der Erleichterung, den Unwettern und Neptun unversehrt entkommen zu sein, begegnet er am Ufer seinem Sohn und stürzt in tiefe Seelenqualen. Fast bis zum Schluß ist er unfähig, sich zum Opfer seines Sohnes zu entschließen, zu dem er sich durch seinen unbesonnenen Schwur verpflichtet hat. Seine Musik zeigt ausdrucksstark die von ihm erlittenen Qualen. Einem Tenor wie Bruce Ford, der ebenso geistreich wie stimmungsgewaltig ist, gelingt hier die Darstellung eines Charakters, der tiefe

Verstörung und Verletzlichkeit, zugleich aber auch Edelmut vermittelt.

Die außergewöhnliche Neuheit des Werks erstreckt sich auch auf die Ensembles. Niemals zuvor in der Geschichte der Oper gab es derartig ausgedehnte Stücke, in denen die unterschiedlichen Gefühle der am Geschehen Beteiligten so ausführlich und getreu dargestellt wurden. Ich denke hier besonders an das Trio “Pria di partir” (“If I must leave”, CD2, Band [4]) im Zweiten und das überragend eloquente Quartett “Andrò ramingo e sol” (“Alone the earth I wander”, CD2, Band [13]) im dritten Akt. In jedem dieser Stücke entwickeln sich die Melodielinien der Protagonisten separat, zugleich schaffen sie aber eine zusammenhängende Einheit. Hier zeichnen sich bereits die vergleichbaren Wunder der Da-Ponte-Opern ab.

Dann gibt es noch die großartigen Chöre, in denen das verwirrte Volk seine wechselnden Emotionen zum Ausdruck bringt. Am originellsten ist der am Ende des Zweiten Akts stehende Chorsatz “Corriamo, corriamo” (“Disaster! Run faster to flee such a horror!” CD2, Band [7]), in dem die Menge Idomeneos Bekenntnis mit Verzweiflung aufnimmt. Der Satz schließt nicht mit einer vollen Kadenz,

wodurch die Hörer ebenso betroffen zurückgelassen werden wie die Handelnden – ein Meisterzug. Auch die Intervention des Hohepriesters und Neptuns – letzterer als *deus ex machina* – im dritten Akt ist überraschend und originell, zumal Mozart hier die Posaunen zum ersten Mal in diesem Akt einsetzt. Auf diese Weise werden ständig neue Klänge und Ideen zu Gehör gebracht.

Auch die Behandlung der Instrumente entspricht Mozarts außerordentlicher Erfindungsgabe. Der harmonische Wagemut ist zur Vermittlung der extremen Dramatik unabdingbar, und die Tonartenverhältnisse scheinen der Entwicklung der Handlung angepaßt zu sein. Selbst die Struktur der Rezitative ist abwechslungsreicher und eindrucksvoller als in früheren *opera seria*.

Ein derart komplexes und zugleich unmittelbar anrührendes Werk vermittelt dem aufmerksamen Hörer immer wieder neue Eindrücke. In meiner langen Beschäftigung mit dieser Oper hat sie immer wieder mein Ohr wie auch mein Herz berührt, besonders intensiv in den fast unerträglich direkten und zugleich zärtlichen Emotionen des dritten Akts.

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Synopsis

COMPACT DISC ONE

[1] Ouvertüre

Erster Akt

[2] – [3] Ilia, Tochter des in Troja unterlegenen König Priamus, befindet sich unter den trojanischen Häftlingen, die auf Kreta gefangen gehalten werden. Sie ist zerrissen zwischen ihrem Haß auf den kretischen Feind und ihrer aufblühenden Liebe für Idamante, den Sohn des abwesenden Idomeneo. Sie fürchtet jedoch, daß er bereits Elektra liebt, die auf Kreta im Exil lebende Tochter Agamemnons. [4] – [7] Idamante gibt Ilia und den übrigen Gefangenen die Freiheit und gesteht ihr seine Liebe, doch sie versteckt ihre Gefühle vor ihm. [8] Arbace trifft ein mit der Nachricht, daß Idomeneo in einem Sturm auf dem Meer umgekommen sei. [9] Elektra, die gehofft hatte, Idomeneo würde sie bei seiner Rückkehr als Gemahlin für Idamante wählen, ist verzweifelt, [10] – [11] besonders als sie Idamantes Liebe zu Ilia bemerkt.

[12] – [13] Idomeneo hat den Sturm überlebt, indem er Neptun gelobte, das erste ihm bei seiner Landung begegnende Lebewesen zu

opfern. ^[14] – ^[15] Idamante, der unter den Schiffbrüchigen nach seinem Vater sucht, begegnet ihm, doch sie erkennen einander nicht. Idomeneo weiß nur, daß seinem Schwur gemäß dieser Mann das versprochene Opfer sein muß. Schließlich stellt sich ihre wahre Identität heraus und Idomeneo stößt seinen Sohn voller Verzweiflung von sich; Idamante bleibt verwirrt und unglücklich zurück.

^[16] Das kretische Volk feiert die sichere Rückkehr der Flotte.

Zweiter Akt

^[17] Idomeneo erzählt Arbace von seinem Gelöbnis an Neptun. Arbace rät dem König, Idamante und Elektra in ihr Heimatland Argos zu schicken. Wenn Idamante erst einmal aus dem Weg sei, finde sich schon ein anderes Mittel, den verärgerten Neptun zu besänftigen.

^[18] Ilia naht, um Idomeneo für ihre Freiheit zu danken, und bittet ihn, die Stelle ihres toten Vaters einzunehmen. ^[19] – ^[20] Der König begreift, daß Idamante und Ilia einander lieben. Er entscheidet, daß sein Sohn wegen seiner Liebe zu Ilia und der Befreiung der trojanischen Gefangenen die Schuld an Neptuns Zorn zu tragen habe.

^[21] – ^[22] Elektra ist glücklich, Kreta zu verlassen, da sie hofft, Idamante werde ihre Liebe annehmen, wenn er erst einmal von Ilia getrennt ist.

COMPACT DISC TWO

^[1] – ^[4] Bevor ihr Schiff die Segel hissen kann, bricht ein heftiger Sturm aus. ^[5] Da sie glauben, Neptun bestrafe sie noch immer, verlangen die Kreter zu wissen, wer ihn erzürnt habe. ^[6] – ^[7] Idomeneo gesteht seine Schuld ein und fordert Neptun heraus, indem er bestimmt, daß er selbst zu sterben habe. Aus dem Sturm tritt eine monströse Kreatur hervor.

Dritter Akt

^[8] – ^[10] Idamante hat beschlossen, daß der einzige Weg, die Zerstörung durch das Ungeheuer zu beenden, dessen Vernichtung ist. In der Angst, daß er nicht überleben werde, gesteht Ilia ihm ihre Liebe.

^[11] Während das Paar seine Liebe feiert, ^[12] – ^[13] taucht Idomeneo mit Elektra auf und befiehlt seinem Sohn, Kreta sofort zu verlassen; den Grund für dieses scheinbar lieblose Verhalten nennt er ihm jedoch nicht.

^[14] Arbace beklagt, daß die Götter Kreta verlassen haben. ^[15] – ^[17] Der Hohepriester beschreibt die Zerstörung der Insel: Durch die Straßen voller Toter und Sterbender rinne das Blut. Idomeneo gesteht schließlich ein, daß sein eigener Sohn, Idamante, geopfert werden müsse.

^[18] Während das Opfer vorbereitet wird, hört man Freudenklänge. Idamante hat das Ungeheuer geschlagen. ^[19] Idomeneo, der begreift, daß dies Neptun nur noch mehr erzürnen wird, weiß, daß er den Tod seines Sohnes nicht länger verhindern kann. ^[20] Idamante akzeptiert, daß er sterben muß, um das Versprechen seines Vaters einzulösen. Idomeneo will ihn gerade opfern, als Ilia verlangt, an seiner Stelle getötet zu werden. ^[21] In diesem Moment erklingt die Stimme Neptuns, der erklärt, die Liebe habe gesiegt; Idomeneo müsse seinen Thron abtreten und Idamante als den neuen Herrscher einsetzen, mit Ilia an seiner Seite. ^[22] – ^[23] Elektra tobt angesichts ihrer zerplatzten Träume. ^[24] – ^[25] Idomeneo empfiehlt Idamante und Ilia seinem Volk.

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Übersetzung: Stephanie Wollny

Der amerikanische Tenor **Bruce Ford** ist zweifellos einer der herausragenden Sänger unserer Zeit. Die außergewöhnliche Schönheit und der Umfang seiner Stimme, sein lebhafter Textausdruck und souveräner Stil, sein hohes technisches und schauspielerisches Können haben die Kritik zu größtem Lob veranlasst. An den berühmten Opernhäusern Nordamerikas und Europas gastiert er regelmäßig in den anspruchsvollen Rollen Mozarts und der Belcanto-Komponisten. Seit über einem Jahrzehnt hat Bruce Ford maßgeblich zu einer Neubewertung zahlreicher Belcanto-Opern beigetragen, sowohl auf Schallplatte als auch in Livedarbietungen. Vielerorts sind zu Unrecht vernachlässigte Opern speziell für ihn inszeniert worden, so etwa an der Royal Opera Covent Garden (Rossinis *Otello*) und bei den Festspielen von Glyndebourne (*Ermione*) und Pesaro (Zelmira, Rossinis *Otello*). Er ist auch an der Scala, den Opernhäusern von Neapel, Florenz und Bologna, beim Maggio Musicale Fiorentino und bei den Salzburger Festspielen aufgetreten. Als Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (die von ihm am häufigsten verkörperte Rolle) debütierte er an der Royal Opera, Metropolitan Opera, Los Angeles Opera und Dallas Opera.

Bruce Ford hat Konzerte an der Scala, bei den Edinburgher Festspielen, in der Carnegie Hall und dem Concertgebouw Amsterdam gegeben und ist als Recitalkünstler vielgefragt. Dirigenten wie Claudio Abbado, Riccardo Muti, Sir Charles Mackerras, Richard Bonyng, Sir Roger Norrington, Sir Colin Davis und David Parry haben mit ihm zusammengearbeitet.

Bruce Ford hat einen großen Teil seines Repertoires auf Schallplatte festgehalten, so etwa *Lucia di Lammermoor* in der Originalversion unter Sir Charles Mackerras, drei Solo-Opernrecitals ("Romantische Helden" und "Rossini serio" auf Opera Rara und "Große Opernarien" für die Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation) sowie auf Opera Rara selten aufgeführte Opern von Mayr, Donizetti, Pacini und Rossini. Diese Aufnahmen werden immer wieder von der Kritik gewürdigt. Seine Triumphe als Mozarts *Mitridate* (Royal Opera) und *Oreste* in Ermione (Glyndebourne) sind auf Video/DVD zu sehen. Selbst nach zwei Jahrzehnten auf der Bühne erweitert er ständig sein Repertoire, so etwa kürzlich durch die Titelrollen in den Mozart-Opern *La clemenza di Tito* und *Idomeneo*.

In der Chandos-Serie "Opera in English" hat er zwei Einspielungen Große Opernarien und eine von Operettenarien aufgenommen.

Susan Patterson hat sich als eine der neuen führenden *lirico-spinto*-Sopranen einen Namen gemacht mit überaus erfolgreichen Auftritten an der English National Opera (Dvořáks *Rusalka*, *Violetta*, *Marguerita* und *Helen* in Boitos *Mefistopheles*), der Washington Opera (*Tosca*), der Baltimore Opera (*Mimi* und *Aida*) sowie der Opera Company of Philadelphia (*Violetta*, *Donna Anna* und die vier Heldinnen in *Hoffmanns Erzählungen*). Ihr Debüt an der Metropolitan Opera feierte sie 1998 als die Italienische Sängerin in Strauss' *Capriccio*.

La traviata hat in Susan Pattersons Laufbahn eine besonders herausragende Rolle gespielt, und sie hat das Werk an vielen Häusern aufgeführt, darunter die San Francisco Opera, die New York City Opera, die Lyric Opera of Chicago, die Palm Beach Opera, das Michigan Opera Theatre, die Baltimore Opera sowie in Vancouver und Montreal. Als *Violetta* feierte sie ihr europäisches Debüt mit der Welsh National Opera unter Sir Charles Mackerras. Weitere Auftritte umfassen *Manon Lescaut* (Spoleto Festival Opera USA); *Falstaff* (Atlanta Opera); *Ernani* (Netherlands Reisopera); Mozarts *Fiordiligi* und *Constanze*, *Donna Anna*, *Donna Elvira*, *Anne Trulove*; *Marguerite* in

Faust (San Francisco Opera); *Rosalinde* (*Die Fledermaus*), *Musetta* und *Gilda*. In Europa hat sie an La Scala in Mailand gesungen (Cherubinis *Lodoïska* unter Riccardo Muti); an der Netherlands Opera (*Le Comte Ory* und *Mitridate*); in Aix-en-Provence (*Constanze*); an der Kölner Oper und der Opéra Comique in Paris (*L'occasione fa il ladro*). Zu ihren CD-Einspielungen zählt die Rolle der *Carolina* (*Il matrimonio segreto*), und *Elvira* (*Ernani*) für Chandos.

Susan Patterson tritt zudem regelmäßig im Konzertsaal auf; zu ihrem Repertoire gehören Werke von Händel, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Rossini, Poulenc, Szymanowski und Mahler. Anlässlich des hundertsten Todestages des Komponisten sang sie zudem Verdis *Requiem* in einer Aufführung der Washington Opera unter dem Dirigat von Plácido Domingo.

Rebecca Evans wurde in South Wales geboren und studierte an der Guildhall School of Music and Drama. In Amerika hat sie bereits eine große Opernkarriere begründet und dort folgende Rollen gesungen: *Susanna* (*Le nozze di Figaro*) an der Santa Fe Opera, *Adele* (*Die Fledermaus*) an der Chicago Lyric Opera, *Zerlina* (*Don Giovanni*), *Anne Trulove* (*The Rake's Progress*) und *Adina* (*L'elisir*

d'amore) an der San Francisco Opera sowie *Susanna* und *Zerlina* an der Metropolitan Opera in New York. In Europa umfaßten ihre Rollen *Sophie* (*Der Rosenkavalier*), *Zdenka* (*Arabella*), *Servilia* (*La clemenza di Tito*), *Ilia* (*Idomeneo*) und in jüngster Zeit *Nanetta* (*Falstaff*) an der Bayerischen Staatsoper; *Ilia* an der Opera de Lausanne; die Titelrolle in *The Cunning Little Vixen* an der Scottish Opera; *Susanna*, *Ilia*, *Marzelline* (*Fidelio*), *Norina* (*Don Pasquale*) und *Hero* (*Beatrice and Benedict*) an der Welsh National Opera; *Romilda* (*Xerxes*) an der English National Opera; sowie *Zerlina* und *Nanetta* am Royal Opera House in Covent Garden.

Ihre Konzerttätigkeit umfaßt Auftritte bei den BBC Proms und dem Edinburgh International Festival. Sie sang Bachs *Magnificat* mit dem San Francisco Symphony Orchestra unter der Leitung von Michael Tilson Thomas, Brahms' *Requiem* mit dem Boston Symphony Orchestra unter Jeffrey Tate und Schumanns *Faust-Szenen* sowie Brahms' *Requiem* auf dem Ravinia Festival. Ferner ist sie in Australien auf dem Melbourne International Festival aufgetreten und hat an einer Konzerttournee mit dem Australian Chamber Orchestra teilgenommen.

Recitals gab sie in der Londoner Wigmore Hall sowie auf den Festivals von Barcelona, Ravinia, Buxton und Belfast. Ihre CD-Einspielungen umfassen *The Marriage of Figaro*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *HMS Pinafore* und *Trial by Jury*, sämtlich unter der Leitung von Sir Charles Mackerras; für Chandos Nannetta (*Falstaff*), *Hugh The Drover*, eine Soloeinspielung italienischer Lieder, Delius' *Requiem* und Finzis *Dies natalis*.

Diana Montague wurde in Winchester geboren und studierte am Royal Northern College of Music. Seit ihrem Debüt als Zerlina mit der Glyndebourne Touring Opera ist sie in zahlreichen Opernhäusern aufgetreten, darunter das Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, die Metropolitan Opera in New York, das Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brüssel, die Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, das Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires sowie die Festspiele in Bayreuth und Salzburg.

Zu ihrem Repertoire gehören die großen Rollen für Mezzosopran in den Opern von Mozart, Gluck, Strauss, Rossini, Bellini und Berlioz, und ihre regelmäßigen Konzertauftritte umfassen Aufführungen unter der Leitung von Georg Solti, James Levine, Riccardo Muti, John Eliot Gardiner, Seiji Ozawa, Jeffrey Tate und

Andrew Davis. Zu ihren bisherigen Engagements zählen *Iphigénie en Tauride* in Buenos Aires und Madrid sowie mit der Welsh National Opera; *Le Comte Ory* in Luzern, Rom und Glyndebourne; Andromaca in Rossinis *Ermione* in Glyndebourne; Proserpina in Monteverdis *Orfeo* in Amsterdam; *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* in Amsterdam und Sydney; Sesto in Madrid; der Komponist (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) für die Scottish Opera sowie in Lissabon; Meg Page (*Falstaff*) anlässlich der Wiedereröffnung des Royal Opera House in Covent Garden; Octavian (*Der Rosenkavalier*) in Neapel und Bilbao sowie am Teatro Real in Madrid und schließlich Marguerite in Wien.

Diana Montagues zahlreiche CD-Einspielungen umfassen Monteverdis *Orfeo*, *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, *Norma*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*, für Opera Rara *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*, *Zoraida di Granata* und *Il crociato in Egitto*, und für die Chandos-Serie "Opera in English" *Cavalleria rusticana*, Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier* (Ausschnitte), *Faust* sowie zwei CDs mit "Great Operatic Arias" (CHAN 3010 und 3093).

Nicolai Gedda ist international als einer der größten Künstler unserer Zeit anerkannt und wurde für seine Beherrschung eines

Repertoires gefeiert, das nahezu jeden Stil und jede Epoche in Oper, Oratorium, Operette, Lied und Orchesterwerk umfaßt.

Der in Stockholm gebürtige Sohn eines russischen Bassisten und einer schwedischen Mutter feierte sein Debut 1952 an der Königlichen Oper Stockholm in *Le Postillon de Longjumeau*. Im Publikum befand sich damals Herbert von Karajan, der ihn umgehend für seine Aufnahme von Bachs H-Moll-Messe engagierte. Somit konnte Nicolai Gedda 2002 auf fünfzig Jahre Aufnahme-tätigkeit zurückblicken. 1953 hatte er sein Debut an der Mailänder Scala, gefolgt 1954 von ersten Auftritten an der Pariser Oper und 1957 an der Metropolitan Opera (in der Titelrolle von Gounods *Faust*). Seit seinem Debut an der Royal Opera 1965 (als Herzog von Mantua in Verdis *Rigoletto*) hat er dort Benvenuto Cellini, Alfredo, Gustavus III in *Un ballo in maschera*, Nemorino und Lensky gesungen. An der Metropolitan Opera schuf er führende Rollen in Barbers *Vanessa* und Menottis *The Last Savage*.

Seine Operntriumphe erstrecken sich von den Werken Haydns und Mozarts bis hin zu Stravinsky, Orff, Barber und Menotti, und in Recitals wird er als herausragender Lied-Interpret geschätzt. Außerdem zeichnet er sich

dadurch aus, mit 200 Einspielungen der meistaufgenommene Tenor zu sein. Hierzu zählen vollständige Opernaufführungen von *Wilhelm Tell*, *La Bohème*, *Faust*, *Werther*, *Manon*, *Così fan tutte* und *Benvenuto Cellini*.

Ryland Davies wurde in South Wales geboren und studierte am Royal Manchester College of Music, wo man ihn 1971 zum Fellow of the College machte. Seine zahlreichen Rollen an der Glyndebourne Festival Opera umfassen unter anderem Belmonte (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Lensky (*Eugene Onegin*) und Flamand (*Capriccio*). Sein Operndebüt feierte er 1964 an der Welsh National Opera als Graf Almaviva (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), und sein Debüt am Royal Opera House im Jahr 1969; hier umfaßten seine zahlreichen Rollen Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Ernesto (*Don Pasquale*), Fenton (*Falstaff*) und Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

Zu seinen weiteren Engagements zählen *Turandot* (Genfer Oper); *La finta giardiniera* (Welsh National Opera); Arbace (*Idomeneo*) an der Metropolitan Opera und in Garsington; Le Duc (*Chérubin*) an der Royal Opera und in Monte Carlo; Aumonier (*The Dialogues of the Carmelites*) an der Netherlands Opera;

Monostatos (*Die Zauberflöte*) in Santa Fe; Basilio (*Le nozze di Figaro*) an der Oper von Nizza, der New Israeli Opera, der Lyric Opera of Chicago, der English National Opera sowie in Glyndebourne; Dr. Caius (*Falstaff*) in Israel; Horace Adams (*Peter Grimes*) in Florenz, an der English National Opera sowie auf dem Saito Kinen Festival in Japan; Albazar (*The Turk in Italy*), Gaudenzio in Leoncavallos *La Bohème* und schließlich Dr. Caius (*Falstaff*) sowie *War and Peace* an der English National Opera.

Clive Bayley tritt regelmäßig in den großen Opernhäusern auf, mit einem Repertoire, das von Monteverdi bis Verdi, Puccini, Berg, Britten und Birtwistle reicht. Sein Debüt an der Royal Opera in Covent Garden feierte er mit der Weltpremiere von Harrison Birtwistles *Gawain*; zudem war er hier als Colline (*La Bohème*), Hans Foltz (*Die Meistersinger*) und Castro (*La fanciulla del West*) zu hören. Zu seinen weiteren Rollen zählen Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*), Raleigh (*Gloriana*) sowie die Titelrolle in *Le nozze di Figaro* an der Opera North; Cadmus (*Semele*), die vier Schurken (*The Tales of Hoffmann*), Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Hunding (*The Valkyrie*) und Narbal (*The Trojans*) an der English National

Opera. Außerdem trat er auf dem Glyndebourne Festival und mit der Glyndebourne Touring Opera auf. Außerhalb Englands sang Clive Bayley an der Netherlands Opera, der Seattle Opera, in Lissabon, Luzern, Toulouse und München, und im Konzertsaal war er mit Les Arts Florissants unter William Christie zu hören.

Clive Bayley pflegt auch eine sehr rege Tätigkeit als Konzertsänger, darunter mit Highlights wie Leonard Bernsteins *Candide* mit dem London Symphony Orchestra, Waltons *The Bear* mit der Northern Sinfonia sowie Don Fernando in konzertanten Aufführungen von *Fidelio* mit dem City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra unter Walter Weller. Seine CD-Einspielungen in der Chandos-Serie "Opera in English" umfassen den Bonzen in *Madam Butterfly*, Ferrando in *Il trovatore*, den Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*, Pistol in *Falstaff* und Timur in *Turandot*.

Als Staatsoper für Nordengland ist die **Opera North** der Inszenierung von informativen, packenden, herausfordernden und unterhaltsamen Spitzenwerken verpflichtet. Über 24 Jahre hinweg hat sich die Opera North als eine der führenden

Kulturinstitutionen Englands und eines der phantasievollsten Opernensembles in Europa etabliert – eine dynamische Organisation, die das Verständnis der Oper als Kunstform in Frage stellt. Das Ensemble erweckt Klassiker zu neuem Leben, setzt sich aber auch für weniger bekannte Werke und für das Musiktheater ein. Der von der Kritik gerühmte Chor und das vielseitige Orchester treten auch selbständig auf und hinterfragen ständig ihren eigenen Ansatz zur Darbietung von Musik. Der Chandos-Katalog umfasst unter anderem Waltons *Troilus und Cressida* und, für die Serie "Opera in English", Auszüge aus Mussorgskis *Boris Godunov*.

David Parry hat bei Sergiu Celibidache studiert und seine berufliche Laufbahn als Assistent von Sir John Pritchard begonnen. Er hat am English Music Theatre debütiert und wurde dann Dirigent mit Festvertrag an den Städtischen Bühnen Dortmund und an der Opera North. Von 1983 bis 1987 war er Musikdirektor der Opera 80 und seit 1992 Gründungsmitglied und Direktor der Almeida Opera.

Er übt in Großbritannien und international eine weitgespannte Tätigkeit in den Bereichen Oper und Konzert aus, hat mehrere Produktionen der English National Opera und

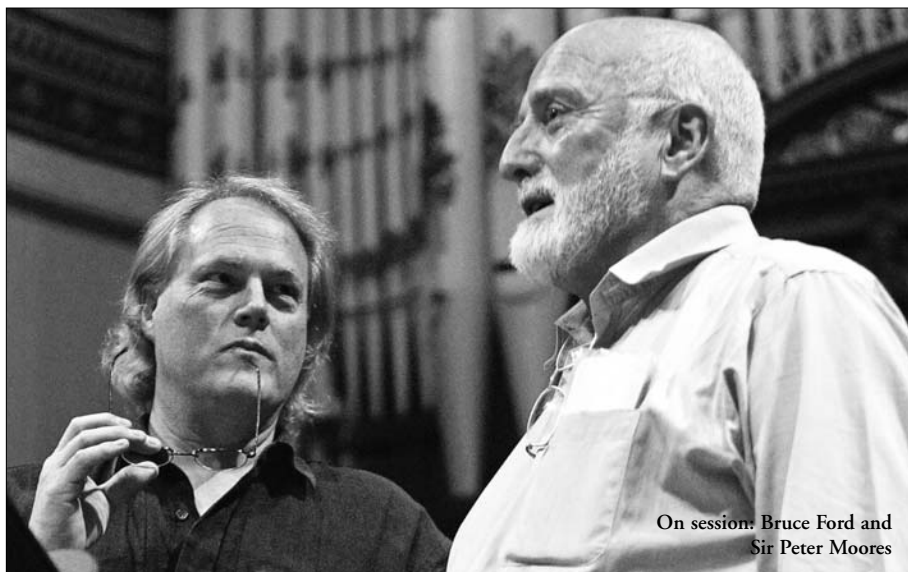
der Opera North dirigiert und tritt regelmäßig mit dem Philharmonia Orchestra und dem London Philharmonic Orchestra auf. 1996 gab er sein Debüt beim Glyndebourne Festival mit *Così fan tutte* und hat dort 1998 die Uraufführung von Jonathan Doves *Flight* geleitet.

Er ist häufig in Spanien zu Gast und hat mit den meisten bedeutenden spanischen Orchestern Konzerte gegeben. In Madrid hat er die spanische Uraufführung von *Peter Grimes* dirigiert, und 1996 die erste spanische Inszenierung von *The Rake's Progress*. Er ist in Deutschland, der Schweiz und den Niederlanden aufgetreten, bei den Festspielen in Pesaro, beim Hong Kong International Festival, in Japan anlässlich einer *Carmen*-Tournee und in Mexiko mit dem UNAM Symphony Orchestra. Zu den Neuproduktionen, die er in letzter Zeit dirigiert hat, zählen *Fidelio* beim New Zealand Festival, *Lucia di Lammermoor* an der New Israeli Opera und *Don Giovanni* an der Staatsoper Hannover.

Seine Tätigkeit im Aufnahmestudio umfaßt die Produktion von Marschners *Der Vampyr* fürs BBC-Fernsehen und achtundzwanzig vollständige Opernaufzeichnungen unter der Schirmherrschaft der Peter Moores Foundation. Darunter befinden sich zahlreiche Aufnahmen der Reihe Opera Rara, die

mehrere Preise gewonnen haben, beispielsweise den belgischen Prix Cecilia für Donizettis *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*. Für Chandos hat er die Aufzeichnung einer Serie von Programmen mit Opernarien geleitet (mit Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson, Della Jones, Alan Opie und Andrew Shore),

außerdem *The Thieving Magpie*, *Carmen*, *Don Giovanni*, *Don Pasquale*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Ernani*, *Il trovatore*, *Aida*, *Faust*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *La bohème*, *Turandot*, die preisgekrönte *Tosca* und Highlights aus dem *Rosenkavalier*, jeweils in Zusammenarbeit mit der Peter Moores Foundation.



On session: Bruce Ford and
Sir Peter Moores



On session: Diana Montague

Mozart: Idomeneo

Idoménée, dans la légende grecque, fils de Deucalion, petit-fils de Minos et de Pasiphaé, et roi de Crète. Il fit la cour à Hélène et prit part à la guerre de Troie. Dans l'*Odyssée*, Homère lui réserve un retour heureux avec tous ses compatriotes ayant survécu à la guerre. Dans une tradition post-homérique, ayant été surpris par une violente tempête, il jure de sacrifier à Poséidon le premier être vivant qu'il verra à son retour. Mais c'est son fils qui l'accueille et Idoménée est obligé de l'immoler; un fléau s'abat alors sur le pays et Idoménée est banni...

Voilà ce que m'apprend mon exemplaire vieux de trente-cinq ans de l'*Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Cette histoire fut à l'origine d'un opéra de Campra sur un livret d'Antoine Danchet, créé à l'Opéra de Paris en 1712. A la fin de l'*Idoménée* de Campra, Idoménée, rôle tenu par une basse, sombre dans la folie, tue son fils Idamante et seule l'intervention de sa suite l'empêche de se suicider. Récemment repris par le chef d'orchestre baroque William Christie, cet opéra s'avère être une magistrale tragédie lyrique à part entière, qui influença probablement Mozart.

L'œuvre de Campra fut certainement la source principale du livret pour l'opéra de Mozart qui fut créé à Munich le 29 janvier 1781. Le librettiste de Mozart, l'abbé salzbourgeois Giovanni Battista Varesco, simplifia l'intrigue de Danchet et opta pour une fin heureuse plutôt que tragique. Les cinq actes furent réduits à trois en conformité avec les opéras "réformés" de Gluck. L'influence de l'un de ces opéras, *Alceste*, est d'ailleurs manifeste dans les passages les plus ampoulés, les plus solennels d'*Idomeneo* alors que les arias doivent plus au lyrisme italien.

Mozart reçut la commande de cette œuvre de l'Intendant [ou directeur] de l'Opéra de Munich, le comte Seeau, durant l'été de 1780. Anton Raaff, le ténor sur le retour pour qui Mozart conçut le rôle-titre, aurait contribué à l'attribution de cette commande à Mozart. Ce dernier connaissait la plupart des chanteurs et des acteurs après les quatre mois et demi si heureux qu'il venait de passer au théâtre de la cour de Mannheim. Dans cette ville, capitale du Palatinat, les arts fleurissaient. Sous l'influence bienveillante de Carl Theodor, directeur de théâtre éclairé, la musique

dominait Mannheim. L'on déclara même à l'époque: "Il serait difficile de trouver un autre grand homme qui ait incorporé si intimement la musique à sa vie". A Mannheim, Mozart se lia d'amitié avec de nombreux musiciens qui participeraient à *Idomeneo*. Il s'attela à l'opéra avant de quitter Salzbourg le 5 novembre. La composition de cette partition est bien documentée dans les lettres qu'il écrivit à son père, ce dernier servant parfois d'intermédiaire entre le compositeur et le librettiste.

Dans ses lettres à sa famille, Mozart décrit les réactions des chanteurs – pour la plupart favorables – et l'approbation de l'électeur de Bavière qui avait entendu une partie de la musique en répétition. La première, à laquelle assista Leopold Mozart, fut bien accueillie. Les décors évocateurs étaient de Lorenzo Quaglio, alors au sommet de sa profession. A soixante-six ans, Raaff trouva sans doute cette musique difficile, en particulier à cause des nombreux passages colorature, et pourtant Mozart prit soin de ne pas le faire chanter trop haut trop souvent. Dorothea Wendling et sa belle-sœur Elisabeth, qui avaient toutes deux travaillé avec Mozart à Mannheim, se virent confier les deux rôles féminins: Dorothea était Ilia, Elisabeth Electre. Idamante fut écrit pour un castrat

(pour Vienne, Mozart réécrivit le rôle pour un ténor); le rôle fut confié à un chanteur assez peu expérimenté, Vincenzo dal Prato, que Mozart dut ménager. Le ténor Domenico de Panzacchi, qui chanta le rôle du confident Arbace, insista pour avoir deux arias. Aucune des deux n'est mémorable, et elles sont souvent omises, comme dans le cas présent. Pour une représentation privée à Vienne en 1786, Mozart fit plusieurs révisions appréciables, raccourcissant la partition.

En ce début de carrière – il avait alors vingt-cinq ans – Mozart faisait encore l'apprentissage de son art. Il tenait avant tout à ce que l'opéra soit une réussite sur le plan théâtral et donc, lorsqu'il en vint à préparer l'œuvre pour la scène, il fit plusieurs coupures. Ces dernières années, avec l'importance attribuée à l'authenticité, leur rétablissement a fait couler beaucoup d'encre et soulevé bien des controverses. Le plus étrange, c'est que Mozart conserva les arias d'Arbace et le ballet final à Munich mais rejeta l'aria finale d'Electre, un air d'une extraordinaire originalité dans lequel elle devient folle furieuse; heureusement pour nous, l'aria retrouve ici sa place.

Cet opéra, considéré aujourd'hui comme le premier véritable chef d'œuvre de Mozart pour la scène lyrique, fut délaissé pendant de

longues années. A l'époque, Mozart voulait bien sûr le monter dans différents théâtres, mais il dut attendre cinq ans après cette création pour voir son œuvre reprise à Vienne, et encore, pour une seule représentation en version de concert chantée par des amateurs au Palais Auersperg. Comme je l'ai déjà mentionné, le rôle d'Idamante fut confié à un ténor et cela entraîna quelques changements dans les ensembles. Idamante bénéficia aussi d'une nouvelle aria bien développée avec violon *obbligato* (absente, bien sûr, de la version que voici) ainsi qu'un duo plus court et différent sur le plan musical avec Ilia à l'Acte III.

Lorsque l'opéra fut repris au début du XXe siècle dans les pays de langue allemande, ce fut souvent dans des adaptations préjudiciables comme celles de Richard Strauss ou Bernard Paumgartner. Il fallut attendre Glyndebourne et sa célèbre mise en scène de 1951 pour que cet opéra trouve sa voie et triomphe, grâce en grande partie à l'inspiration du chef d'orchestre Fritz Busch et du metteur en scène Carl Ebert. Ils utilisèrent un ténor pour le rôle d'Idamante et amalgamèrent les différentes éditions. L'interprétation la plus récente (en 2003) est celle de Simon Rattle qui choisit de suivre au pied de la lettre la version

originale composée pour Munich, une décision contestable puisque l'œuvre sous cette forme dure presque aussi longtemps qu'un opéra de Wagner.

Cet opéra s'est attiré un respect croissant dans de nombreux théâtres lyriques même si aujourd'hui encore sa place au répertoire courant n'est pas entièrement garantie: c'est dans le cadre des festivals qu'il est le plus souvent monté. Ceci s'explique sans doute en partie par le côté statique de l'intrigue et par le fait que l'*opera seria* en tant que genre n'est pas toujours du goût du grand public. En un sens, il faudrait réserver cette œuvre aux grandes occasions, d'abord à cause de la noblesse avec laquelle elle présente des émotions intenses dans une musique d'une grande profondeur et d'une beauté extraordinaire, ensuite à cause de son orchestration si émouvante. Comme l'écrivit l'éminent spécialiste mozartien Daniel Heartz dans un essai remarquable sur cette œuvre pour *The Musical Times*: "Mozart ayant entrepris de recréer le drame à travers son art, il s'en suivit certaines des pages musicales les plus personnelles et les plus passionnées qu'il ait jamais composées."

L'aria centrale d'Ilia, "Se il padre perdei" ("My father was taken", CD1, page 18) à l'Acte II, long épanchement sensuel pour

soprano lyrique, est d'une beauté suprême sur le plan de la ligne vocale et de l'émotion, et les cordes soutiennent à merveille les solos des vents. On comprend aisément que Dorothea Wendling se soit déclarée "arcicontentissima" (archisatisfaite) de sa musique.

Quant à Electre, Elisabeth se prononça tout aussi ravie de sa musique, et elle aurait eu tort de ne pas l'être, puisque le compositeur lui offre tout un éventail d'humeurs pour illustrer ses émotions contradictoires. Les chanteurs principaux furent nettement plus problématiques. Comme nous l'avons vu, Raaff n'était plus très jeune et ses vues étaient très traditionnelles. Quant à Dal Prato (Idamante), Mozart le compara à un enfant de chœur, toujours enclin à se tromper sur le plan vocal ou théâtral.

Mozart ne se contenta pas de satisfaire aux plaisirs et aux caprices de sa première distribution. Sur tous les plans, l'écriture fait preuve d'ampleur et de nouveauté dans sa structure et ses effets, et elle explore des profondeurs psychologiques jamais atteintes dans la plupart des opéras précédents, à l'exception peut-être des chefs d'œuvre de Gluck et Monteverdi. Mozart trouve la musique qui convient aux émotions de chaque personnage au moment voulu dans son œuvre.

Electre, l'étrangère, est dépeinte comme telle, elle n'est jamais vraiment intégrée à la texture musicale ou dramatique. Ilia évolue tout au long de l'opéra, passant de la triste jeune fille qui languit d'amour à une femme de stature quasiment héroïque prête à se sacrifier pour son cher Idamante: le long épisode dans lequel on prépare le jeune homme pour le sacrifice et l'intervention opportune d'Ilia ne manquent jamais d'émouvoir le public dans toute représentation correcte. Parallèlement, mais dans une moindre mesure, Idamante passe de l'adolescent à l'homme adulte dans une série d'arias et de duos d'une grande franchise. Arbace, bien qu'il n'ait pas d'arias, ou peut-être justement parce qu'il n'a pas d'arias, est un conseiller compatissant pour le roi et Mozart lui confie au centre de l'œuvre un récitatif accompagné d'une profonde introspection.

Au cœur de l'histoire se situe le souverain du titre. Après le soulagement d'avoir échappé sain et sauf aux tempêtes et à Neptune, il sombre dans la tourmente lorsqu'il rencontre son fils sur le rivage. Pratiquement jusqu'au bout, il est incapable de décider s'il doit sacrifier son fils, comme il l'a promis dans un serment malavisé. Sa musique décrit très clairement le supplice qu'il vit. Un ténor tel

Bruce Ford, avec ses talents vocaux et son intelligence, réussit à créer un personnage à la fois profondément troublé et vulnérable mais aussi d'une grande noblesse.

Cette partition renferme d'autres trésors extraordinaires d'invention, contenus dans les ensembles. Jamais encore à l'opéra ces passages développés illustrant les sentiments variés des participants n'avaient été aussi longs et aussi sûrs dans leur expression. Je pense en particulier au trio "Pria di partir" ("If I must leave", CD2, page [4]) à l'Acte II et au quatuor d'une éloquence sans pareille "Andrò ramingo e sol" ("Alone the earth I wander", CD2, page [13]) à l'Acte III. Dans ces deux passages, chaque personnage suit une ligne vocale indépendante et pourtant l'ensemble reste parfaitement cohérent. Un avant-goût des merveilleux ensembles des opéras avec da Ponte.

Et bien sûr, n'oublions pas ces chœurs superbes, dans lesquels la foule déconcertée exprime ses émotions changeantes. Le plus original de ces chœurs se situe à la fin de l'Acte II: "Corriamo, corriamo" ("Disaster! Run faster to flee such a horror!", CD2, page [7]) lorsque la foule réagit avec désespoir à l'aveu d'Idoménée. Il ne s'achève pas par une vraie cadence, et le public demeure aussi inquiet que

la foule – un vrai coup de génie. Quant à l'intervention du Grand Prêtre et celle de Neptune, *deus ex machina* à l'Acte III, elles sont toutes deux saisissantes et originales, et Mozart fait intervenir pour la première fois les trombones lorsque Neptune paraît. Si bien que l'oreille est constamment stimulée par des idées et des sonorités nouvelles.

Sur le plan purement musical, l'invention instrumentale a toute la pertinence que l'on attend de Mozart. L'audace harmonique domine dans sa peinture de la désolation du drame, et les relations tonales semblent choisies pour s'adapter au développement de l'intrigue. Même la construction du récitatif est plus variée et plus remarquable que dans les exemples précédents d'opéra seria.

Une œuvre aussi complexe et pourtant aussi directe recèle constamment de nouveaux trésors pour l'auditeur attentif. J'ai une longue expérience de cet opéra et il n'a jamais manqué de me stimuler auditivement et de m'émouvoir, en particulier à l'Acte III où les sentiments atteignent un paroxysme insoutenable.

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L'argument

COMPACT DISC ONE

[1] Ouverture

Acte premier

[2] – [3] Ilia, fille de Priam, le roi de Troie vaincu, fait partie des prisonniers troyens en captivité en Crète. Elle est partagée entre sa haine de l'ennemi crétois et son amour naissant pour Idamante, le fils du roi de Crète alors absent, Idoménée. Mais elle craint qu'Idamante ne soit amoureux d'Electre, la fille d'Agamemnon, qui vit en exil en Crète. [4] – [7] Idamante libère Ilia et les prisonniers et avoue à Ilia qu'il l'aime, mais cette dernière lui cache les sentiments qu'elle lui porte. [8] Arbace vient annoncer qu'Idoménée a péri dans une tempête en mer. [9] Electre, qui espérait qu'Idoménée à son retour la choisirait comme épouse pour son fils, est désespérée, [10] – [11] surtout lorsqu'elle découvre qu'Idamante aime Ilia.

[12] – [13] Idoménée a survécu à la tempête en jurant à Neptune de lui sacrifier le premier être humain qu'il rencontrerait après avoir touché terre. [14] – [15] Idamante, qui cherche le corps de son père parmi les naufragés,

l'aperçoit, mais les deux hommes ne se reconnaissent pas. Idoménée sait seulement qu'en accordance avec son serment, cet homme doit être immolé en sacrifice. Finalement, ils se reconnaissent et Idoménée, désespéré, repousse son fils, un geste qui laisse Idamante perplexe et malheureux.

[16] Les Crétois célèbrent le retour heureux de la flotte.

Acte II

[17] Idoménée révèle à Arbace le serment qu'il a fait à Neptune. Arbace conseille au roi d'envoyer Idamante et Electre à Argos, la patrie de la jeune fille. Une fois Idamante éloigné, on trouvera peut-être un autre moyen d'apaiser la colère de Neptune.

[18] Ilia vient remercier Idoménée de lui avoir rendu sa liberté et lui demande de prendre la place de son père mort.

[19] – [20] Le roi se rend compte qu'Idamante et Ilia s'aiment. Il décide qu'Idamante est certainement responsable du courroux de Neptune car il aime Ilia et a libéré les prisonniers troyens.

[21] – [22] Electre est heureuse de quitter la Crète et elle espère qu'une fois éloigné d'Ilia, Idamante acceptera l'amour qu'elle lui porte.

COMPACT DISC TWO

[1] – [4] Alors que leur bateau s'apprête à partir, une violente tempête éclate. [5] Certains que Neptune continue de les punir, les Crétois exigent de savoir qui a bien pu le contrarier. [6] – [7] Idoménée avoue être coupable et lance un défi à Neptune, réclamant le droit d'être lui-même sa victime. Une créature monstrueuse émerge de la mer démontée.

Acte III

[8] – [10] Idamante a décidé que la seule façon de mettre fin aux ravages causés par le monstre est de détruire ce dernier. Craignant qu'Idamante ne meure à ce combat, Ilia lui avoue qu'elle l'aime. [11] Alors que les deux jeunes gens célèbrent leur amour, [12] – [13] Idoménée arrive avec Electre et ordonne à son fils de quitter la Crète sur-le-champ, mais sans lui révéler la raison de sa froideur apparente à son égard.

[14] Arbace se plaint que les dieux ont abandonné la Crète. [15] – [17] Le Grand Prêtre décrit les ravages sur l'île: les rues sont inondées de sang, jonchées de cadavres et de mourants. Idoménée finit par admettre que c'est son propre fils, Idamante, qui doit être sacrifié.

[18] Durant les préparatifs pour le sacrifice, des cris de joie retentissent. Idamante a triomphé du monstre. [19] Idoménée, conscient que cette victoire ne fera qu'accroître la fureur de Neptune, sait qu'il ne peut plus faire obstacle à la mort de son fils. [20] Idamante accepte son destin en accordance avec le serment de son père. Idoménée s'apprête à l'immoler lorsqu'Ilia vient s'offrir en victime à la place d'Idamante. [21] C'est alors que l'on entend la voix de Neptune qui déclare l'amour vainqueur: Idoménée doit renoncer à son trône en faveur d'Idamante qui aura Ilia à ses côtés. [22] – [23] Electre est furieuse de voir ses espoirs s'effondrer. [24] – [25] Idoménée confie Idamante et Ilia à son peuple.

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Traduction: Nicole Valencia

Le ténor américain **Bruce Ford** est sans conteste l'un des chanteurs les plus remarquables de notre temps. On ne tarit pas d'éloges sur la beauté et l'étendue de sa voix, la façon dont il vit un texte, sa maîtrise stylistique et sa virtuosité technique ainsi que ses talents d'acteur. Il est invité régulièrement à se produire dans les plus grands théâtres d'Amérique du Nord et d'Europe, où il se

spécialise dans les œuvres les plus difficiles de Mozart et du répertoire *bel canto*. Depuis plus de dix ans, Bruce Ford joue un rôle majeur dans la revalorisation de nombreux opéras *bel canto*, autant au disque qu'en concert. Bien des théâtres ont repris exprès pour lui des opéras jusque-là négligés à tort, entre autres The Royal Opera (l'*Otello* de Rossini) ainsi que les festivals de Glyndebourne (*Ermione*) et Pesaro (Zelmira et l'*Otello* de Rossini). Il a également chanté à La Scala, dans les théâtres lyriques de Naples, Florence et Bologne ainsi que dans le cadre du Mai Musical de Florence et du Festival de Salzbourg. C'est en tant qu'Almaviva dans le Barbier de Séville – le rôle qu'il a le plus souvent interprété dans sa carrière à ce jour – qu'il a fait ses débuts au Royal Opera, au Metropolitan Opera, au Los Angeles Opera ainsi qu'au Dallas Opera.

En concert, il s'est produit dans des lieux aussi prestigieux que La Scala, Carnegie Hall et le Concertgebouw d'Amsterdam ainsi que dans le cadre du Festival d'Edimbourg. Il est très demandé comme récitaliste. Il a travaillé avec de nombreux chefs d'orchestre dont Claudio Abbado, Riccardo Muti, Sir Charles Mackerras, Richard Bonyngne, Sir Roger Norrington, Sir Colin Davis et David Parry, pour n'en citer que quelques-uns.

Bruce Ford a confié une grande partie de son répertoire au disque. On notera entre autres la version originale de Lucia di Lammermoor sous Sir Charles Mackerras, trois récitals d'airs d'opéra en soliste ("Héros romantiques" et "Rossini sérieux" pour Opera Rara ainsi que "Grands Airs d'opéra" pour Chandos en association avec la fondation Peter Moores), et les enregistrements pour Opera Rara d'opéras rares de Mayr, Donizetti, Pacini et Rossini, enregistrements fort prisés par la critique. Ses interprétations superbes de héros mozartiens, Mitridate (The Royal Opera) et Oreste dans *Ermione* (à Glyndebourne) sont disponibles sur vidéo/DVD. Malgré ses quelque vingt ans de scène, son répertoire du ténor ne cesse de s'élargir et il vient d'ajouter à sa discographie le rôle-titre de *La Clémence de Titus* et celui d'*Idoménée* de Mozart.

Dans la collection Opera in English de Chandos il a enregistré deux disques de grands airs d'opéra et un disque d'airs d'opérettes.

Susan Patterson s'est imposée comme l'une des grandes sopranos lirico spinto grâce à ses interprétations triomphales avec l'English National Opera (*Rusalka* de Dvořák, Violetta, Marguerite et Hélène dans *Mefistofeles* de Boito), le Washington Opera (*Tosca*), le

Baltimore Opera (Mimi et *Aïda*), l'Opera Company of Philadelphia (Violetta, Donna Anna et les quatre héroïnes des *Contes d'Hoffmann*). Elle fit ses débuts au Metropolitan Opera en 1998 dans le rôle de la Chanteuse italienne dans *Capriccio* de Strauss.

La traviata est l'œuvre qui a dominé la carrière de Susan Patterson: elle l'a donnée avec de nombreuses companies dont le San Francisco Opera, le New York City Opera, le Lyric Opera of Chicago, le Palm Beach Opera, le Michigan Opera Theatre, le Baltimore Opera ainsi qu'à Vancouver et Montréal. Ce fut dans le rôle de Violetta qu'elle fit ses débuts européens avec le Welsh National Opera sous la baguette de Sir Charles Mackerras. Parmi ses autres rôles, notons *Manon Lescaut* (Spoleto Festival Opera USA); *Falstaff* (Atlanta Opera); *Ernani* (Reisopera aux Pays-Bas); Fiordiligi et Constanze, Donna Anna, Donna Elvira de Mozart, Anne Trulove; Marguerite (*Faust*) (San Francisco Opera); Rosalinde (*Die Fledermaus*), Musetta et Gilda. En Europe, elle a chanté à La Scala de Milan (*Lodoiska* de Cherubini sous la direction de Riccardo Muti); à l'Opéra Néerlandais (*Le Comte Ory* et *Mitridate*); à Aix-en-Provence (Constanze); à l'Opéra de Cologne et à l'Opéra-Comique de Paris (*L'occasione fa il ladro*). Elle a enregistré

notamment le rôle de Carolina (*Il matrimonio segreto*) et Elvira (*Ernani*) pour Chandos.

Susan Patterson chante également régulièrement en concert, son répertoire allant de Haendel, Beethoven et Mendelssohn à Rossini, Poulenc, Szymanowski et Mahler. Elle a aussi chanté le *Requiem* de Verdi avec le Washington Opera sous la baguette de Plácido Domingo pour le centenaire de la mort du compositeur.

Rebecca Evans naquit dans le sud du Pays de Galles et fit ses études à la Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Elle s'est déjà forgé une solide carrière à l'opéra en Amérique où elle a chanté Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) pour le Santa Fe Opera; Adèle (*Die Fledermaus*) pour le Chicago Lyric Opera; Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Anne Trulove (*The Rake's Progress*) et Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*) pour le San Francisco Opera; et elle a été Susanna et Zerlina au Metropolitan Opera à New York. En Europe, elle fut entre autres Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Zdenka (*Arabella*), Servilia (*La clemenza di Tito*), Ilia (*Idomeneo*) et, plus récemment, Nanetta (*Falstaff*) pour l'Opéra de Munich; Ilia pour l'Opéra de Lausanne; le rôle-titre de *La Petite Renarde rusée* pour Scottish Opera; Susanna, Ilia, Marcellina

(*Fidelio*), Norina (*Don Pasquale*) et Héro (*Béatrice et Bénédicte*) pour le Welsh National Opera; Romilda (*Xerxes*) pour l'English National Opera; et Zerlina et Nanetta pour le Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

En concert, elle s'est produite dans le cadre des Promenade Concerts de la BBC et au Festival international d'Edimbourg. Elle a chanté le *Magnificat* de Bach avec le San Francisco Symphony Orchestra sous la baguette de Michael Tilson Thomas, le *Requiem* de Brahms avec le Boston Symphony Orchestra dirigé par Jeffrey Tate, et *Faust Szenen* de Schumann ainsi que le *Requiem* de Brahms au Festival de Ravinia. Elle a également chanté en Australie dans le cadre du Festival international de Melbourne, donnant par ailleurs une tournée de concerts avec l'Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Elle a donné des récitals au Wigmore Hall à Londres ainsi que dans le cadre des Festivals de Barcelone, Ravinia, Buxton et Belfast. Elle a enregistré entre autres *Le nozze di Figaro* en anglais, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *HMS Pinafore* et *Trial by Jury*, tous sous la baguette de Sir Charles Mackerras; pour Chandos Nannetta (*Falstaff*), *Hugh The Drover*, un disque solo de chansons italiennes, le *Requiem* de Delius et *Dies natalis* de Finzi.

Diana Montague naquit à Winchester et fit ses études au Royal Northern College of Music. Depuis ses débuts dans le rôle de Zerlina avec le Glyndebourne Touring Opera, elle s'est produite dans des théâtres aussi prestigieux que le Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, le Metropolitan Opera à New York, le Théâtre de la Monnaie à Bruxelles, l'Opéra national de Paris-Bastille, le Teatro Colon à Buenos Aires ainsi que dans le cadre des Festivals de Bayreuth et Salzbourg.

Son répertoire comprend tous les grands rôles de mezzo-soprano des opéras de Mozart, Gluck, Strauss, Rossini, Bellini et Berlioz, et elle a chanté en concert sous Georg Solti, James Levine, Riccardo Muti, John Eliot Gardiner, Seiji Ozawa, Jeffrey Tate et Andrew Davis. Elle a chanté entre autres *Iphigénie en Tauride* à Buenos Aires, Madrid et avec le Welsh National Opera; *Le Comte Ory* à Lausanne, Rome et Glyndebourne; Andromaque dans *Ermione* de Rossini à Glyndebourne; Proserpine dans *Orfeo* de Monteverdi à Amsterdam; *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* à Amsterdam et Sydney; *Sesto* à Madrid; le Compositeur (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) pour Scottish Opera et à Lisbonne; Meg Page (*Falstaff*) pour la réouverture du Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Octavian

(*Der Rosenkavalier*) à Naples, Bilbao et au Teatro Real à Madrid; et Marguerite à Vienne.

Parmi les nombreux enregistrements de Diana Montague, notons entre autres *Orfeo* de Monteverdi, *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, *Norma*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*; pour Opera Rara, elle a enregistré *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*, *Zoraida di Granata* et *Il crociato in Egitto*, et dans la collection Opera in English chez Chandos, *Cavalleria rusticana*, Octavian dans *Der Rosenkavalier* (extraits), *Faust*, et deux disques de grands airs d'opéra (CHAN 3010 et 3093).

Nicolai Gedda est reconnu dans le monde entier comme l'un des plus grands artistes de notre temps, et il a été acclamé pour sa maîtrise d'un immense répertoire couvrant presque tous les styles et les périodes dans les domaines de l'opéra, de l'oratorio, du lied et du chant avec orchestre.

Né à Stockholm d'un père russe (chanteur basse) et d'une mère suédoise, Nicolai Gedda fit ses débuts professionnels à l'Opéra royal de Stockholm en 1952 dans *Le Postillon de Longjumeau*. Herbert von Karajan se trouvait dans la salle, et l'engagea immédiatement pour chanter dans son enregistrement de la Messe en si mineur de J.S. Bach. Ainsi, l'année 2002

a marqué cinquante ans d'enregistrement pour Nicolai Gedda. Il fit ses débuts à La Scala de Milan en 1953, à l'Opéra de Paris en 1954, et au Metropolitan Opera de New York (dans le rôle titre de *Faust* de Gounod) en 1957. Après ses débuts au Royal Opera de Covent Garden en 1965 (dans le rôle du Duc de Mantoue dans *Rigoletto* de Verdi), il revint y chanter Benvenuto Cellini, Alfredo, Gustavus III dans *Un ballo in maschera*, Nemorino et Lensky. Il créa des rôles importants dans *Vanessa* de Barber et dans *The Last Savage* de Menotti au Metropolitan Opera de New York.

Ses triomphes à l'opéra sont allés des œuvres de Haydn et de Mozart à celles de Stravinsky, Orff, Barber et Menotti. En récital, il est considéré comme un interprète exceptionnel de lieder. Il est également le ténor le plus enregistré au monde avec 200 disques à son actif. Parmi ceux-ci figurent des opéras complets tels que *Guillaume Tell*, *La Bohème*, *Faust*, *Werther*, *Manon*, *Così fan tutte* et *Benvenuto Cellini*.

Natif du sud du Pays de Galles, **Ryland Davies** fit ses études au Royal Manchester College of Music dont il devint membre honoraire en 1971. Il a tenu de nombreux rôles pour le Glyndebourne Festival Opera dont Belmonte (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Ferrando

(*Così fan tutte*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Lensky (*Eugène Onéguine*) et Flamand (*Capriccio*). Il fit ses débuts lyriques avec le Welsh National Opera en 1964 sous les traits du comte Almaviva (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*); c'est en 1969 qu'il fit ses débuts au Royal Opera House où il a été entre autres Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Ernesto (*Don Pasquale*), Fenton (*Falstaff*) et Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

Parmi ses autres rôles notons *Turandot* (Opéra de Genève); *La finta giardiniera* (Welsh National Opera); Arbace (*Idomeneo*) pour le Metropolitan Opera et à Garsington; le Duc (*Chérubin*) pour The Royal Opera et à Monte-Carlo; le Père confesseur (*Les Dialogues des Carmélites*) pour l'Opéra Néerlandais; Monostatos (*Die Zauberflöte*) à Santa Fe; Basilio (*Le nozze di Figaro*) pour l'Opéra de Nice, le New Israeli Opera, le Lyric Opera of Chicago, l'English National Opera et à Glyndebourne; Dr. Caius (*Falstaff*) en Israël; Horace Adams (*Peter Grimes*) à Florence, à l'English National Opera et au Festival Saito Kinen au Japon; Albazar (*Il Turco in Italia* en anglais), Gaudenzio dans *La Bohème* de Leoncavallo et Dr. Caius (*Falstaff*) ainsi que *Guerre et Paix* pour l'English National Opera.

Clive Bayley chante régulièrement avec les plus grandes compagnies lyriques dans un répertoire allant de Monteverdi à Verdi, Puccini, Berg, Britten et Birtwistle. Il fit ses débuts avec le Royal Opera, Covent Garden dans la création mondiale de *Gawain* de Harrison Birtwistle avant d'être Colline (*La Bohème*), Hans Foltz (*Die Meistersinger*) et Castro (*La fanciulla del West*). Parmi ses autres rôles, notons Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*), Raleigh (*Gloriana*) et le rôle-titre de *Le nozze di Figaro* pour Opera North; Cadmus (*Semele*), les quatre scélérats (*The Tales of Hoffmann*), Collatin (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Hunding (*The Valkyrie* en anglais) et Narbal (*The Trojans*) pour l'English National Opera. Il a également chanté avec le Glyndebourne Festival Opera et le Glyndebourne Touring Opera. En dehors du Royaume-Uni, Clive Bayley a chanté avec l'Opéra Néerlandais, le Seattle Opera, à Lisbonne, Lausanne, Toulouse, Munich et en concert avec Les Arts Florissants et William Christie.

Clive Bayley se produit également fréquemment en concert: parmi les moments forts de sa carrière, notons *Candide* de Leonard Bernstein avec le London Symphony Orchestra, *The Bear* de Walton avec le Northern Sinfonia, et Don Fernando dans une

version de concert de *Fidelio* avec le City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra sous la baguette de Walter Weller. Il a enregistré entre autres pour la série Opera in English les rôles du Bonze (*Madam Butterfly*), de Ferrando dans *Il Trovatore*, du Commandeur dans *Don Giovanni*, de Pistol dans *Falstaff* et de Timur dans *Turandot*.

Opera North est la compagnie lyrique nationale pour le Nord de l'Angleterre. Elle vise, à travers des mises en scène de grande qualité, à informer, passionner, provoquer et divertir. Durant les vingt-quatre ans de son existence, Opera North s'est imposée comme l'une des principales organisations artistiques d'Angleterre et l'une des compagnies lyriques les plus imaginatives d'Europe. C'est un ensemble plein de vie qui remet en question notre idée de l'opéra en tant qu'art. Insufflant une vie nouvelle aux grands classiques de l'opéra, la compagnie défend également avec ardeur les œuvres moins connues et le théâtre musical. Le Chœur, porté aux nues par les critiques, et l'Orchestre aux talents si variés se produisent aussi séparément, remettant sans cesse en question leur façon d'aborder la musique. Parmi les enregistrements réalisés pour Chandos, notons *Troilus and Cressida* de

Walton et, pour la série Opera in English, des extraits de *Boris Godunov* de Moussorgsky.

Après avoir étudié avec Sergiu Celibidache, **David Parry** commença sa carrière comme assistant de Sir John Pritchard. Il fit ses débuts avec l'English Music Theatre avant de devenir l'un des chefs d'orchestre au Städtische Bühnen à Dortmund et à Opera North. Directeur musical d'Opera 80 de 1983 à 1987, il est directeur musical d'Almeida Opera depuis sa fondation en 1992.

Sa carrière, nationale et internationale, est extrêmement remplie, aussi bien sur la scène lyrique qu'en concert. Il a dirigé plusieurs productions de l'English National Opera et de l'Opera North et collabore régulièrement avec le Philharmonia Orchestra et le London Philharmonic Orchestra. C'est avec *Così fan tutte* qu'il fit ses débuts au Festival de Glyndebourne en 1996, une scène qu'il retrouva en 1998 pour diriger la création mondiale de *Flight* de Jonathan Dove.

Il séjourne fréquemment en Espagne où il a dirigé en concert la plupart des grands orchestres espagnols. C'est lui qui dirigea la première espagnole de *Peter Grimes* à Madrid et en 1996 la première production espagnole

de *The Rake's Progress*. Il a dirigé en Allemagne, en Suisse, aux Pays-Bas, au Festival de Pesaro en Italie, au Festival international de Hong-Kong, au Japon pour une tournée de *Carmen* et au Mexique avec l'Orchestre symphonique d'UNAM. Il a récemment dirigé plusieurs nouvelles productions dont *Fidelio* au Festival de Nouvelle-Zélande, *Lucia di Lammermoor* avec le New Israeli Opera et *Don Giovanni* à l'Opéra d'état de Hannover.

En studio, il a participé entre autres à la production de la BBC Television de *Der Vampyr* de Marschner, dirigeant aussi vingt-huit intégrales d'opéras financées par la Peter Moores Foundation. Plusieurs de ces intégrales furent enregistrées pour Opera Rara

et primées, *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* de Donizetti recevant en Belgique le Prix Cecilia. Pour Chandos, David Parry a dirigé une série d'enregistrements d'airs d'opéra (avec Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson, Della Jones, Alan Opie et Andrew Shore) de même que *The Thieving Magpie*, *Carmen*, *Don Giovanni*, *Don Pasquale*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Ernani*, *Il trovatore*, *Aida*, *Faust*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *La bohème*, *Turandot*, l'enregistrement primé de *Tosca* et des extraits de *Der Rosenkavalier*, tous ces enregistrements étant réalisés en collaboration avec la Peter Moores Foundation.

Mozart: Idomeneo

Idomeneo, re di Creta, figlio di Deucalione e nipote di Minosse, figura tra i pretendenti d'Elena e partecipò alla guerra di Troia. Fra i "ritorni", secondo l'*Odissea*, il suo fu uno dei più felici. Ma una versione della sua leggenda narra che, durante il viaggio da Troia a Creta, la sua flotta fu assalita da una tempesta e Idomeneo fece voto di sacrificare a Poseidone il primo essere umano che avesse incontrato nel suo regno. Ora il primo essere umano che vide approdando fu suo figlio e Idomeneo lo sacrificò. Ben presto però scoppiò una pestilenza a Creta e Idomeneo fu bandito per placare gli dei....

Fin qui, il dizionario mitologico; la leggenda fu la base di un'opera di André Campra su libretto di Antoine Danchet, presentata per la prima volta all'Opéra di Parigi nel 1712. L'*Idoménée* di Campra si conclude con la follia di Idomeneo (basso) che, dopo aver ucciso il figlio Idamante, tenta il suicidio, ma viene fermato dalla sua scorta. William Christie, direttore di musica barocca, l'ha riproposta di recente, rivelando una *Tragédie lyrique* magistrale nel suo genere, che probabilmente influenzò Mozart.

L'opera fu sicuramente la fonte principale per il libretto della versione mozartiana, rappresentata per la prima volta a Monaco il 29 gennaio 1781. Il librettista di Mozart, Giovanni Battista Varesco, pastore di Salisburgo, semplificò la vicenda di Danchet e trasformò la tragedia in una storia a lieto fine. I cinque atti furono ridotti a tre, in ottemperanza alla riforma di Gluck, e infatti l'influenza dell'*Alceste* si nota nei passaggi più altisonanti, ieratici dell'*Idomeneo*, mentre le arie devono di più allo stile lirico italiano.

La commissione fu offerta a Mozart dal conte Seeau, sovrintendente dei teatri di corte di Monaco nell'estate del 1780 e si pensa che a questa iniziativa non fosse estraneo Anton Raaf, tenore ormai di una certa età, per il quale Mozart concepì la parte. Il compositore aveva già conosciuto la maggior parte dei cantanti e musicisti a Mannheim, dove aveva trascorso felicemente quattro mesi e mezzo al teatro di corte. Nella capitale palatina le arti fiorivano. Sotto la benevola influenza dell'illuminato direttore teatrale Carl Theodor la musica era al centro dell'attenzione a Mannheim. Si diceva ai tempi: "Sarebbe

difficile trovare un altro grande che più di lui abbia intessuto la musica nella propria vita." Qui Mozart fece amicizia con molti musicisti che avrebbero interpretato *Idomeneo*. Iniziò a lavorare all'opera prima di partire da Salisburgo il 5 novembre, come testimoniano le lettere indirizzate al padre, che talvolta fece da intermediario tra il compositore e il suo librettista.

Mozart riferiva le reazioni dei cantanti – prevalentemente favorevoli – e parlava dell'apprezzamento manifestato dall'Elettore locale nei confronti della musica eseguita alle prove. La prima, a cui fu presente Leopold Mozart, ebbe una buona accoglienza. Autore delle suggestive scenografie fu Lorenzo Quaglio, una figura di rilievo in questo campo all'epoca. Il sessantaseienne Raaff forse trovò piuttosto difficile la musica, che comportava parecchi esempi di coloritura, anche se Mozart si adoperò per evitare di inserire troppe note alte. I due ruoli femminili furono interpretati dalle cognate Wendling, che avevano lavorato con Mozart a Mannheim: Dorothea (Ilia) ed Elisabeth (Elettra). Il ruolo di Idamante fu destinato a un castrato (e in seguito riscritto dal compositore per tenore per Vienna) e fu interpretato da un cantante relativamente inesperto, Vincenzo dal Prato, che Mozart

dovette seguire da vicino. Domenico de Panzacchi, che interpretò la parte tenorile del confidente Arbace, insisté per avere due arie. Nessuna delle due è memorabile ed entrambe vengono spesso omesse, come in questa registrazione. Per una rappresentazione privata a Vienna nel 1786, Mozart apportò notevoli revisioni, abbreviando per lo più la partitura.

Il compositore aveva appena venticinque anni e, in questo stadio iniziale della sua carriera, stava ancora imparando. Desiderava soprattutto che l'opera risultasse valida dal punto di vista teatrale e per questo, durante la preparazione per le scene, fece una serie di tagli. Il loro ripristino, suggerito negli ultimi tempi da una maggiore preoccupazione per l'autenticità, è stato argomento di grandi discussioni e di qualche controversia. Stranamente, Mozart conservò le arie di Arbace e il balletto di conclusione a Monaco, ma escluse l'ultima e straordinaria aria della follia di Elettra, che è stata giustamente ripristinata in questa registrazione.

L'opera, oggi considerata il primo capolavoro teatrale di Mozart, rimase dimenticata per molti anni. All'epoca Mozart sperava che venisse eseguita ancora altrove, ma Vienna la richiese solo cinque anni dopo la prima, e anche allora si trattò di un'unica

esecuzione in concerto, affidata ad alcuni dilettanti a palazzo Auersperg. Come già menzionato, Idamante divenne un tenore e di conseguenza i concertati vennero modificati. Al personaggio venne inoltre assegnata una nuova, lunga aria con violino obbligato (che non è stata naturalmente inclusa qui) e un duetto più breve e musicalmente diverso con Ilia nell'Atto III.

All'inizio del Ventesimo secolo l'opera venne riproposta nei paesi di lingua tedesca, ma spesso in poveri adattamenti firmati da Richard Strauss e Bernard Paumgartner. Per il giusto riconoscimento e l'apprezzamento universale bisognava attendere il 1951 e il famoso allestimento di Glyndebourne, in gran parte grazie all'ispirazione del direttore d'orchestra Fritz Busch e del regista Carl Ebert, che affidarono il ruolo di Idamante a un tenore e riunirono le due edizioni. Più di recente (2003) l'opera è stata diretta nello stesso teatro da Simon Rattle, che ha incluso ogni battuta composta da Mozart per Monaco – decisione discutibile in quanto la durata risulta prolungata quasi a livelli wagneriani.

L'opera ha gradualmente guadagnato rispetto anche in molti altri teatri, sebbene ancora oggi il suo posto nel normale repertorio non sia interamente assicurato: viene più

spesso eseguita ai festival. Questo potrebbe essere in qualche modo legato alla natura statica della vicenda e allo scarso richiamo popolare di un'opera seria come questa. In un certo senso dovrebbe essere un brano per occasioni speciali per la sua grandezza dal punto di vista della proiezione di emozioni pure in una musica di profondità e incomparabile bellezza, anche per la sua ripercussione sull'orchestrazione. In un importante saggio pubblicato da *The Musical Times* l'eminente studioso mozartiano Daniel Heartz ha scritto: "Impegnandosi a ricreare il dramma attraverso la sua arte, Mozart compose la sua musica più personale e appassionata."

L'aria principale di Ilia, "Se il padre perdei" ("My father was taken", CD2, traccia ^[18]) nell'Atto II è un lungo, sensuale sfogo della massima bellezza per un soprano lirico, in cui gli archi supportano meravigliosi assoli dei legni. Per forza Dorothea Wendling si dichiarò "arcicontentissima".

Elisabeth fu altrettanto soddisfatta della musica composta per Elettra, ed è naturale, data la varietà di stati d'animo in cui manifesta i suoi sentimenti contraddittori. I cantanti principali diedero più da pensare. Come già accennato, l'età di Raaff fu un problema e il

tenore aveva un modo di pensare molto conservatore. Mozart paragonò Dal Prato (Idamante) a un giovane corista, sempre pronto a sbagliare dal punto vocale e drammatico.

Il concetto di Mozart va ben oltre i piaceri e le bizzarrie del suo primo cast. Da ogni punto di vista, la scrittura è nuovissima, con una struttura importante e di largo respiro ed esplora profondità psicologiche inaudite nella maggior parte dei suoi predecessori, fatta eccezione possibilmente per le cose migliori di Monteverdi e Gluck. Mozart trova la musica giusta per i sentimenti di ciascun personaggio nel momento giusto. L'emarginata Elettra viene descritta come tale, ma è del tutto integrata nella tessitura musicale o drammatica. Ilia si sviluppa nel corso dell'opera, trasformandosi da fanciulla abbandonata e infelice in una donna quasi eroica, disposta a sacrificare la propria vita per il suo innamorato Idamante: il prolungato episodio della preparazione del giovane al sacrificio e il tempestivo intervento di lei non manca mai di commuovere in un buon allestimento. Idamante si trasforma da ragazzo in uomo attraverso una serie di arie e duetti. Nonostante venga privato delle sue arie o forse proprio per questo Arbace è un consigliere

solidale e ha un riflessivo recitativo con accompagnamento in un momento centrale dell'opera.

Il protagonista della vicenda è il re da cui l'opera prende il titolo. Dopo il sollievo per essere scampato alla tempesta e a Nettuno, il suo spirito viene tormentato dall'incontro con il figlio sulla spiaggia. Quasi fino alla fine non riesce a decidersi a mantenere l'impegno di sacrificare il figlio per rispettare la sua avventata promessa. La sua musica illustra visivamente l'agonia interna dell'uomo. Un tenore intelligente come Bruce Ford riesce a creare una figura allo stesso tempo profondamente turbata e vulnerabile, ma anche nobile.

Ma c'è ancora dell'altro che si aggiunge alla straordinaria novità della partitura e si ritrova nei concertati. Mai prima d'allora nell'opera brani altrettanto vasti che illustrano i sentimenti vari dei partecipanti sono stati espressi così lungamente e infallibilmente. Intendo parlare in particolare del trio "Pria di partir" ("If I must leave", CD2, traccia ^[4]) dell'Atto II e dell'eloquente quartetto "Andrò ramingo e sol" ("Alone the earth I wander", CD2, traccia ^[13]) dell'Atto III. In ciascuno i personaggi percorrono la loro via in maniera indipendente, ma creano un'unità coerente e

preannunciano le meraviglie analoghe delle opere di da Ponte.

Poi ci sono i magnifici cori, in cui la popolazione confusa esprime le sue emozioni contrastanti. Il più originale è quello alla fine dell'Atto II "Corriamo, corriamo" ("Disaster! Run faster to flee such a horror", CD2, traccia [7]) con la disperata reazione alla confessione di Idomeneo. Non si arriva a una vera cadenza, lasciando il pubblico preoccupato quanto i partecipanti – un colpo da maestro. Poi l'intervento del Gran Sacerdote e di Nettuno, quest'ultimo in qualità di *deus ex machina* nell'Atto III, sono notevoli e originali e Mozart introduce i tromboni per la prima volta nel secondo. L'ascoltatore viene costantemente stimolato da suoni e idee nuovi.

In termini puramente musicali, l'invenzione strumentale è intelligente come ci si attende da Mozart. L'audacia armonica è indispensabile nel descrivere l'asprezza del dramma e i rapporti chiave sembrano organizzati per fare spazio allo sviluppo della storia. Persino la costruzione del recitativo è più varia e notevole dell'opera seria precedente.

Un'opera tanto complessa ma immediata ha sempre nuove cose da rivelare a un ascoltatore attento. In tutti i casi della mia lunga esperienza dell'opera non manca mai di

stimolare l'orecchio e commuovere, culminando nella grande tenerezza delle purissime emozioni dell'Atto III.

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La trama

COMPACT DISC ONE

[1] Ouverture

Atto I

[2] – [3] Ilia, figlia dello sconfitto re Priamo di Troia, è stata condotta con gli altri prigionieri a Creta. È combattuta tra l'odio per il nemico cretese e il suo amore nascente per Idamante, figlio dell'assente Idomeneo, ma teme che il giovane sia innamorato di Elettra, figlia di Agamennone, che vive a Creta in esilio.

[4] – [7] Idamante concede la libertà a Ilia e ai prigionieri e confessa il suo amore per lei, ma la donna gli tace i propri sentimenti. [8] Arriva Arbace con la notizia che Idomeneo è morto in una tempesta in mare. [9] Elettra, che aveva sperato che al suo ritorno il re avesse scelto lei come sposa per Idamante, è disperata, [10] – [11] specialmente vedendo l'amore di Idamante per Ilia.

[12] – [13] Idomeneo è scampato alla tempesta dopo aver giurato a Nettuno che sacrificherà il primo essere vivente che incontrerà all'approdo in patria. [14] – [15] Incontra Idamante, in cerca del corpo di suo padre tra i resti del naufragio, ma padre e figlio non si riconoscono. Idomeneo sa solo che, per rispettare la sua promessa, quest'uomo deve essere il promesso sacrificio. Quando alla fine entrambe le identità vengono rivelate Idomeneo, disperato, allontana da sé il figlio, lasciandolo sbigottito e infelice.

[16] I Cretesi festeggiano il ritorno della flotta.

Atto II

[17] Idomeneo rivela ad Arbace la sua promessa a Nettuno e Arbace gli consiglia di inviare Idamante ed Elettra nella patria di lei, Argo. Quando Idamante sarà lontano si potrà trovare un altro modo di placare l'ira di Nettuno.

[18] Ilia va a ringraziare Idomeneo per la riacquistata libertà e gli chiede di prendere il posto del proprio padre morto. [19] – [20] Il re si rende conto che Idamante e Ilia sono innamorati e pensa che la causa dell'ira di Nettuno sia Idamante perché ama Ilia e ha liberato i prigionieri troiani.

[21] – [22] Elettra è felice di lasciare Creta e spera che, una volta separato da Ilia, Idamante sarà più disposto ad accettare il suo amore.

COMPACT DISC TWO

[1] – [4] Prima che la nave possa salpare, si scatena una violenta tempesta. [5] Convinti che si tratti di un'altra punizione di Nettuno, i Cretesi chiedono di sapere chi ha suscitato la sua ira. [6] – [7] Idomeneo ammette che è lui il colpevole e sfida Nettuno, sostenendo che deve essere lui a morire. Dalla tempesta emerge una creatura mostruosa.

Atto III

[8] – [10] Idamante ha deciso che l'unico modo per fermare il mostro sia quello di affrontarlo e distruggerlo. Temendo per la sua vita, Ilia gli confessa il proprio amore [11] e i due si riuniscono in un duetto. [12] – [13] Arrivano Idomeneo ed Elettra e il re ordina al figlio di partire immediatamente da Creta, senza però rivelargli il motivo della sua apparente crudeltà.

[14] Arbace lamenta la sorte dell'isola: gli dei hanno abbandonato Creta. [15] – [17] Il sommo sacerdote descrive la distruzione: il sangue scorre nelle strade, piene di cadaveri e feriti. Alla fine Idomeneo ammette che è suo figlio Idamante che deve essere sacrificato.

[18] La preparazione del sacrificio è interrotta da alcune grida di gioia: Idamante ha sconfitto

il mostro. ^[19] Certo che questo inaspirerà ancora l'ira di Nettuno, Idomeneo sa di non poter più impedire la morte del figlio. ^[20] Idamante accetta di morire per mantenere la promessa del padre. Idomeneo sta per sacrificarlo quando Ilia chiede di essere uccisa al suo posto. ^[21] A questo punto si sente la voce di Nettuno: l'amore ha vinto, Idomeneo deve abdicare a favore del figlio Idamante e sposare Ilia. ^[22] – ^[23] Elettra impreca mentre le sue speranze svaniscono. ^[24] – ^[25] Idomeneo presenta Idamante e Ilia al popolo.

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Traduzione: Emanuela Guastella

Il tenore americano **Bruce Ford** è considerato uno dei più importanti cantanti di oggi ed è particolarmente apprezzato per la sua voce straordinaria, la sua vivacità, il suo stile sicuro e la sua perizia tecnica, oltre che per la sua recitazione espressiva. È regolarmente ospite dei più importanti teatri del Nordamerica e dell'Europa ed è specializzato nelle opere più difficili del repertorio mozartiano e del belcanto. Da oltre dieci anni svolge un ruolo significativo nella rivalutazione di molte opere del belcanto, attraverso registrazioni e rappresentazioni dal vivo. Molti teatri hanno

riproposto proprio per lui delle opere meno note, per esempio la Royal Opera (*Otello* di Rossini) e i festival di Glyndebourne (*Ermione* e *Pesaro* (*Zelmira*, *Otello* di Rossini)). È comparso alla Scala e nei teatri lirici di Napoli, Firenze e Bologna ed è intervenuto al Maggio Musicale Fiorentino e al festival di Salisburgo. Il suo esordio è legato al ruolo del conte di Almaviva nel *Barbiere di Siviglia* – quello da lui più spesso interpretato in seguito – alla Royal Opera, Metropolitan Opera e nei teatri lirici di Los Angeles e Dallas.

L'attività concertistica di Bruce Ford lo ha visto comparire alla Scala, al festival di Edimburgo, al Carnegie Hall e al Concertgebouw di Amsterdam, e i suoi recital sono molto richiesti. Ha lavorato, tra l'altro, con Claudio Abbado, Riccardo Muti, sir Charles Mackerras, Richard Bonyng, sir Roger Norrington, sir Colin Davis e David Parry.

Bruce Ford ha registrato gran parte del suo repertorio e la sua discografia include la versione originale della *Lucia di Lammermoor* diretta da sir Charles Mackerras, tre recital operistici da solista (Romantic Heroes e Serious Rossini per Opera Rara e Great Operatic Arias per Chandos/Peter Moores Foundation). Inoltre ha partecipato a diverse

registrazioni di opere dimenticate di Mayr, Donizetti, Pacini e Rossini per Opera rara, molto apprezzate dalla critica. Le splendide interpretazioni del *Mitridate* di Mozart (Royal Opera) e *Oreste* in *Ermione* (Glyndebourne) sono disponibili su video/DVD. Dopo quasi vent'anni di carriera teatrale, il suo repertorio continua ad ampliarsi; le ultime aggiunte sono i ruoli di protagonista di due opere mozartiane, *La clemenza di Tito* e *Idomeneo*.

Per la serie Opera in English di Chandos ha registrato due dischi di Grandi Arie Operistiche e un disco di Arie da Operetta.

Susan Patterson ha conquistato una grande reputazione come soprano lirico spinto con interpretazioni di grande successo con English National Opera (Rusalka di Dvořák, Violetta, Marguerite ed Elena nel *Mefistofele* di Boito), la Washington Opera (*Tosca*), l'Opera di Baltimora (Mimi e Aida), l'Opera Company di Philadelphia (Violetta, Donna Anna, e le quattro eroine dei *Contes d'Hoffmann*). Ha esordito alla Metropolitan Opera nel 1998, nel ruolo della cantante italiana in *Capriccio* di Strauss.

La traviata ha rivestito un ruolo particolarmente importante nella carriera di

Susan Patterson, che l'ha interpretata con numerose compagnie, tra cui San Francisco Opera, New York City Opera, Lyric Opera di Chicago, Palm Beach Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Opera di Baltimora, Vancouver e Montreal. Nel ruolo di Violetta ha esordito in Europa con la Welsh National Opera diretta da sir Charles Mackerras. Altri ruoli comprendono *Manon Lescaut* (Spoleto Festival Opera USA); *Falstaff* (Atlanta Opera); *Ernani* (Reisopera, Paesi Bassi); Fiordiligi e Constanze, Donna Anna, Donna Elvira (Mozart), Anne Trulove, Marguerite (*Faust*) (San Francisco Opera), Rosalinde (*Die Fledermaus*), Musetta e Gilda. In Europa, Susan Patterson è comparsa alla Scala (*Lodoïska* di Cherubini per la direzione di Riccardo Muti), all'Opera dei Paesi Bassi (*Le Comte Ory* e *Mitridate*), ad Aix-en-Provence (Constanze), all'Opera di Colonia e all'Opéra Comique (*L'occasione fa il ladro*). La discografia comprende Carolina (*Il matrimonio segreto*) e Elvira (*Ernani*) per Chandos.

Susan Patterson svolge regolari concerti, presentando un repertorio che comprende opere di Handel, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Rossini, Poulenc, Szymanowski e Mahler. Ha interpretato anche il *Requiem* di Verdi con l'Opera di Washington sotto la direzione di

Plácido Domingo in occasione del centenario della morte del compositore.

Rebecca Evans è nata in Galles e ha studiato presso la Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Ha già un'importante carriera lirica in America dove ha interpretato Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) per l'Opera di Santa Fe; Adele (*Die Fledermaus*) per la Lyric Opera di Chicago; Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Anne Trulove (*The Rake's Progress*) e Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*) per l'Opera di San Francisco; Susanna e Zerlina per la Metropolitan Opera di New York. In Europa i suoi ruoli comprendono Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Zdenka (*Arabella*), Servilia (*La clemenza di Tito*), Ilia (*Idomeneo*) e, di recente, Nanetta (*Falstaff*) per la Bayerische Staatsoper; Ilia per l'Opéra de Lausanne; il ruolo di protagonista ne *La volpe astuta* per la Scottish Opera; Susanna, Ilia, Marzelline (*Fidelio*), Norina (*Don Pasquale*) e Hero (*Beatrice and Benedict*) per la Welsh National Opera; Romilda (*Xerxes*) per la English National Opera; Zerlina e Nanetta alla Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

La sua attività concertistica l'ha vista intervenire ai Prom della BBC e al Festival Internazionale di Edimburgo. Ha interpretato il *Magnificat* di Bach con la San Francisco

Symphony Orchestra diretta da Michael Tilson Thomas, il *Requiem* di Brahms con la Boston Symphony Orchestra diretta da Jeffrey Tate, e *Faust Szenen* di Schumann e il *Requiem* di Brahms al festival di Ravinia. È intervenuta anche al Melbourne International Festival australiano e ha svolto una tournée di concerti con l'Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Rebecca Evans è stata protagonista di recital in sale come la Wigmore Hall di Londra e ha partecipato ai festival di Barcellona, Ravinia, Buxton e Belfast. La sua discografia include *Le nozze di Figaro*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *HMS Pinafore* e *Trial by Jury*, dirette da sir Charles Mackerras; per Chandos Nannetta (*Falstaff*), *Hugh the Drover*, una registrazione di brani solistici italiani, il *Requiem* di Delius, e *Dies natalis* di Finzi.

Diana Montague è nata a Winchester e ha studiato presso il Royal Northern College of Music. Dopo il suo esordio nel ruolo di Zerlina con la Glyndebourne Touring Opera si è esibita in teatri quali la Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, la Metropolitan Opera di New York, il Théâtre de la Monnaie di Bruxelles, l'Opéra National de Paris-Bastille, il Teatro Colón di Buenos Aires e ha partecipato ai festival di Bayreuth e Salisburgo.

Il suo repertorio include i principali ruoli per mezzosoprano composti da Mozart, Gluck, Strauss, Rossini, Bellini e Berlioz. Nel corso della sua ricca attività concertistica ha lavorato con Georg Solti, James Levine, Riccardo Muti, John Eliot Gardiner, Seiji Ozawa, Jeffrey Tate e Andrew Davis. I suoi impegni hanno compreso *Iphigénie en Tauride* a Buenos Aires, Madrid e con la Welsh National Opera; *Le Comte Ory* a Losanna, Roma e Glyndebourne; Andromaca nell'*Ermione* di Rossini a Glyndebourne; Proserpina nell'*Orfeo* di Monteverdi ad Amsterdam; *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* ad Amsterdam e Sydney; i ruoli di Sesto a Madrid; il Compositore (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) per Scottish Opera e a Lisbona; Meg Page (*Falstaff*) per la riapertura della Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Ottavio (*Der Rosenkavalier*) a Napoli, Bilbao e al Teatro Real di Madrid; Marguerite a Vienna.

La ricca discografia di Diana Montague comprende *Orfeo* di Monteverdi, *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, *Norma*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*; per Opera Rara *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*, *Zoraida di Granata* e *Il crociato in Egitto* e per la serie Opera in English di Chandos *Cavalleria rusticana*, Ottavio in *Der Rosenkavalier* (momenti

salienti), *Faust*, e due dischi di Great Operatic Arias (CHAN 3010 e 3093).

Nicolai Gedda è uno dei più grandi artisti del nostro tempo ed è apprezzato per la sua padronanza di un repertorio che abbraccia quasi tutti gli stili e le epoche nel campo dell'opera, dell'oratorio, dell'operetta, del *lied* e delle composizioni per orchestra.

Nato a Stoccolma da padre russo e madre svedese, ha esordito come professionista alla Royal Opera di Stoccolma nel 1952 con *Le Postillon de Longjumeau*. Tra il pubblico si trovava Herbert von Karajan, che lo ingaggiò immediatamente per la registrazione della Messa in si minore di Bach. Nel 1953 Nicolai Gedda esordiva alla Scala di Milano, nel 1954 all'Opéra di Parigi e nel 1957 con il Metropolitan (nel ruolo di protagonista del *Faust* di Gounod). Ha esordito con la Royal Opera nel 1965 (con il duca di Mantova nel *Rigoletto* di Verdi) e vi ha fatto ritorno per cantare Benvenuto Cellini, Alfredo, Gustavo III in *Un ballo in maschera*, Nemorino e Lenski. Ha creato ruoli di protagonista in *Vanessa* di Barber e *The Last Savage* di Menotti al Metropolitan.

I suoi trionfi operistici vanno dalle opere di Haydn e Mozart a Stravinskij, Orff, Barber e

Menotti, mentre in recital viene considerato uno straordinario interprete di *lieder*. Inoltre è uno dei tenori con la discografia più ricca del mondo. Il 2002 ha segnato il cinquantésimo anniversario della sua prima registrazione e oggi l'artista ha al suo attivo 200 titoli discografici, comprendenti versioni integrali delle opere *Guillaume Tell*, *La Bohème*, *Faust*, *Werther*, *Manon*, *Così fan tutte* e *Benvenuto Cellini*.

Il gallese **Ryland Davies** ha studiato presso il Royal Manchester College of Music di cui veniva nominato Fellow nel 1971. I suoi numerosi ruoli con la Glyndebourne Festival Opera comprendono Belmonte (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Lenski (*Eugenio Onieghin*) e Flamand (*Capriccio*). Ha esordito in teatro con la Welsh National Opera nel 1964 nel ruolo del conte Almaviva (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*). L'esordio al Covent Garden risale 1969 ed è stato seguito da numerosi ruoli tra cui Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Ernesto (*Don Pasquale*), Fenton (*Falstaff*) e Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

Altri impegni hanno compreso *Turandot* (Opera di Ginevra); *La finta giardiniera*

(Welsh National Opera); Arbace (*Idomeneo*) per la Metropolitan Opera e a Garsington; Le Duc (*Chérubin*) per la Royal Opera e a Monte Carlo; Aumonier (*Dialogues des Carmélites*) per l'Opera dei Paesi Bassi; Monostato (*Die Zauberflöte*) a Santa Fe; Basilio (*Le nozze di Figaro*) per l'Opera di Nizza, la New Israeli Opera, la Lyric Opera di Chicago, la English National Opera e Glyndebourne; Dr. Cajus (*Falstaff*) in Israele; Horace Adams (*Peter Grimes*) a Firenze, con English National Opera e al festival giapponese di Saito Kinen; Albazar (*Il turco in Italia*), Gaudenzio nella *Bohème* di Leoncavallo e Dr. Cajus (*Falstaff*) e *War and Peace* per English National Opera.

Clive Bayley canta regolarmente con le principali compagnie liriche in un repertorio che va da Monteverdi a Verdi, Puccini, Berg, Britten e Birtwistle. Ha esordito con la Royal Opera, Covent Garden, nella prima del *Gawain* di Harrison Birtwistle e in seguito ha vestito i panni di Colline (*La bohème*), Hans Foltz (*Die Meistersinger*) e Castro (*La fanciulla del West*). Altri ruoli comprendono Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*), Raleigh (*Gloriana*), e il protagonista ne *Le nozze di Figaro* per Opera North; Cadmus (*Semele*), le quattro

personificazioni del cattivo genio (*The Tales of Hoffmann*), Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Hunding (*The Valkyrie*), e Narbal (*The Trojans*) per English National Opera. È comparso inoltre con la Glyndebourne Festival Opera e Glyndebourne Touring Opera. All'estero Clive Bayley è comparso nei teatri lirici dei Paesi Bassi, Seattle, Lisbona, Losanna, Tolosa, Monaco e in concerto con Les Arts Florissants e William Christie.

Clive Bayley ha molti impegni concertistici i cui momenti salienti comprendono *Candide* di Leonard Bernstein con la London Symphony Orchestra, *The Bear* di Walton con la Northern Sinfonia, e Don Fernando in alcune rappresentazioni in concerto del *Fidelio* con la City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra diretta da Walter Weller. Le sue registrazioni nella serie Opera in English comprendono il bonzo in *Madam Butterfly*, Ferrando nel *Trovatore*, il Commendatore nel *Don Giovanni*, Pistola in *Falstaff* e Timur in *Turandot*.

Opera North è la compagnia operistica nazionale dell'Inghilterra del nord ed è impegnata a produrre lavori di alta qualità per informare, entusiasmare, stimolare e intrattenere. Nell'arco di oltre ventiquattro

anni, Opera North si è proposta tra le principali organizzazioni artistiche inglesi, dimostrandosi una delle più creative compagnie d'Europa. L'approfondimento dinamico del concetto di opera come forma d'arte ha visto la compagnia infondere nuova vita al repertorio più classico, ma senza dimenticare le opere meno note e il teatro musicale. L'apprezzato Coro e la versatile Orchestra si esibiscono anche in maniera indipendente, rinnovando costantemente il loro approccio nei confronti dell'esecuzione musicale. Le registrazioni per Chandos includono *Troilus and Cressida* di Walton e, per la serie Opera in English, momenti salienti del *Boris Godunov* di Musorgskij.

David Parry ha studiato con Sergiu Celibidache ed ha cominciato la sua carriera come assistente di Sir John Pritchard. Ha debuttato all'English Music Theatre, quindi è diventato direttore d'orchestra presso la Städtische Bühnen di Dortmund e la Opera North. È stato Direttore Musicale di Opera 80 dal 1983 al 1987 e dal 1992 è stato Direttore Musicale fondatore dell'Opera di Almeida.

Lavora copiosamente in opere e concerti, a livello nazionale ed internazionale. Ha diretto diverse produzioni presso la English National

Opera e la Opera North e appare regolarmente con la Philharmonia Orchestra e la London Philharmonic Orchestra. Nel 1996 ha debuttato con *Così fan tutte* al Glyndebourne Festival, dove nel 1998 ha diretto la prima mondiale di *Flight* di Jonathan Dove.

È un frequente visitatore della Spagna dove si è esibito in concerto con la maggior parte delle maggiori orchestre spagnole. Ha diretto la prima spagnola di *Peter Grimes* a Madrid e nel 1996 la prima produzione spagnola di *The Rake's Progress*. È apparso in Germania, Svizzera, Paesi Bassi, al Festival di Pesaro in Italia, al Festival Internazionale di Hong Kong, in Giappone con una tournée della *Carmen* e in Messico con la UNAM Symphony Orchestra. Recenti nuove produzioni da lui dirette comprendono il *Fidelio* al Festival della Nuova Zelanda, *Lucia di Lammermoor* alla New Israeli Opera e *Don Giovanni* alla Staatsoper di Hannover.

Il suo lavoro in studio di registrazione comprende la produzione della BBC di *Der Vampyr* di Marschner nonché ventotto registrazioni operistiche complete con il patrocinio della Peter Moores Foundation. Tra questi vi sono numerosi dischi per l'etichetta Opera Rara che hanno vinti parecchi premi, tra cui il belga Prix Cecilia per la *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* di Donizetti. Per Chandos ha diretto una serie di registrazioni di arie d'opera (con Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Dennis O'Neill, Alastair Miles, Yvonne Kenny, John Tomlinson, Della Jones, Alan Opie e Andrew Shore), nonché *The Thieving Magpie*, *Carmen*, *Don Giovanni*, *Don Pasquale*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Ernani*, *Il trovatore*, *Aida*, *Faust*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *La bohème*, *Turandot*, *Tosca* (vincitrice di un premio) e brani scelti da *Der Rosenkavalier*, tutte in collaborazione con la Peter Moores Foundation.

Clive Barda



On session: Rebecca Evans



On session: Ryland Davies

Clive Borda



On session: Clive Bayley with the brass section of the Orchestra of Opera North

COMPACT DISC ONE

1 Overture

Act One

Scene 1

Recitative

Ilia

- 2** When will the gods release me from my unending torment! I am so wretched! The mis'able survivor of a tempest, beloved father and brothers stolen from me, the poisonous blood of our enemies mixed with the blood of those noble victims... Yet the gods mean to taunt me with a fate even harsher? Did not those gods grant vengeance to Priam and to Troy for their shame and suff'ring? The enemy fleet has perished, and Idomeneo surely perished as well, deep in the ocean... But that means nothing, oh heav'n, if at the first sight of that bold Idamante, who saved me from the waves, hatred could vanish and my heart be enslaved before I realised that I must be a pris'ner. Raging within me a battle between two feelings that cannot be resolved, hatred and love... A debt of vengeance to him who gave me life and of thanks to the man who saved me from death... Oh Ilia! Oh Idamante! Oh father? What anguish! How can I go on living?

Grant me oblivion!
What am I saying...
Idamante love me?...
Ah no!
The wretch sighs and pants for Electra, and it is she, the piteous Electra, exiled from Argos, who fled here to escape the calamities that befell her brother Orestes, she who is my rival.
How many ruthless passions prey on me like butchers?...
Tear out my heart, then cruel vengeance, jealous fury, hatred, love too human...
Tear out my heart...
Tear out the heart from this tormented woman!

No. 1 Aria

- 3** Father, my brothers, forgive me!
I watched them, watched them destroy you. Never was war so cruel: to love him would be a crime. I know that I should hate him, know that it is my duty; but when I gaze upon him my hatred melts away.

Recitative

- 4** Ah! He is coming: Idamante is here! My heart is pounding and racing in its torment... Will my anguish not cease for one single moment?

Scene 2

Recitative

Idamante (*to his followers*)

Go, assemble the Trojans, quickly, and prepare the whole city to celebrate peace.
(*to Ilia*)

A ray of hope shines through the cloud of pain. Minerva, the protector of our nation, has snatched my beloved father from the tempest: his fleet has been sighted not far from the shore.

Ilia (*ironically*)

Never fear: Minerva gazes fondly down upon you, while we poor Trojans must suffer the fury of the gods.

Idamante

You shall grieve for the Trojans' fate no longer. Hear me, noble princess: their sufferings shall cease, for I grant them freedom; and from henceforth the only pris'ner here shall be a man whom your beauty has bound in chains of passion.

Ilia

What are you saying?

Idamante

The goddess Venus, not content with Agamemnon's fall, has seen fit to punish me through your beauty, through your deep haunting eyes... But you are angry and embarrassed by my love?...

Ilia

What you have told me would best have remained unsaid!

Be careful: think, Idamante, just think of your father and of mine, of all that happened.

No. 2

Aria

Idamante

- 5** I am guiltless and yet you blame me, my adored one, because I love you. For their sport the gods inflame me: Here in anguish and pain I suffer, I suffer for what I cannot control. Straightaway if you demand it, I would end a life so painful: I can see your eyes command it, but if once the words are uttered, I shall answer to their call.

Recitative

Ilia

- 6** Here are the few wretched Trojan victims who escaped death from your butchers...

Idamante

And I will set them free: they shall suffer no longer.

Scene 3

Idamante

Unloose the pris'ners' chains and let the world

rejoice on this day to see our two glorious peoples united and reconciled at last in the sacred bond of friendship.

No. 3 Chorus

Chorus of Trojans and Cretans

- [7] The war is over: may love and reason,
draw out hatred's poison and bring new joy.

Two Cretans

Praise to the warrior who ends the fighting
the world uniting in peace today.

Chorus

The war is over: may love and reason,
draw hatred's poison and bring new joy.

Two Trojans

Offer our princess honour and duty:
her radiant beauty has set us free.

Chorus

The war is over: may love and reason,
draw out hatred's poison and bring new joy.

Scene 4

Recitative

Electra

- [8] Prince, my lord, you insult the Greek nation by
protecting the enemy.

Idamante

It should satisfy us that we have won the battle.

You, princess, and the nation must prepare to
perform a worthier action: to show the enemy
mercy.
Here is Arbace...

Scene V

Idamante

He seems weighed down by sorrow.

Arbace

Noble Lord, the very worst has happened...

Idamante

So my father is dead?

Arbace

He is dead.

What Mars could never do the insatiable
Neptune has achieved: I have just learnt that the
greatest of heroes was lost in the tempest and is
known to have drowned.

Idamante

Ilia, here I stand, the most wretched of men.
And heav'n at last deigns to give you
satisfaction...

Fate is so cruel!... Come! To the shore! Alas!
Despair overwhelms me!

(He leaves.)

Ilia

The wrongs done to Troy still feed my
resentment... And yet this hero's death, his

struggle, his downfall, have filled me with pity:
I can only bemoan a fate so painful.

(She leaves.)

Scene 6

Electra

- [9] The King dies... and I am friendless!
It seems that heaven gloats to see me brought low.
Shall Idamante do just as he wishes with his
empire, with his heart, while I am left with
nothing to hope for?
Must I be forced to witness, must Greece,
covered in shame, be forced to witness the sight
of a vile Trojan slave become his bride and
consort?
The love I bear the prince has been wasted...
Shall I, the daughter of a king, to whom kings
pay homage, impotent stand aside and let him
betray me?... How shameful! Such anger...
Such pain... This will destroy me.

No. 4 Aria

Electra

- [10] I feel you writhe inside me,
creatures of hell's foul darkness,
locked in my bitter madness,
no love, no pity left.
She who would steal my lover,
he who rejects me blindly,
both of them shall discover
my rage, my cruel spite.

Scene 7

No. 5

Chorus

- [11] Relent!
Heaven, relent!
Look down on us, we beg you,
and help us to our rescue...
The storm's unending horror
fills every heart with terror...
Through fate's unseeing anger
we face a mortal danger...
Relent! Relent! Relent!

Scene 8

Pantomime

Recitative

Idmeneo

- [12] We have been saved at last.

Scene 9

Recitative

Idmeneo

My friends my faithful, brave companions in
suff'ring and in rejoicing, yes faithful both in
defeat and victory, I beg you all to leave me
alone here for a while, that for a moment the fair
skies of my birth may soothe my torment. The
sea is calm, gentle breezes caress me, soft and
calming, the sun's warming rays would soothe
my aching body, and all around me I seem to see
the world peaceful and happy.

Yet I, in my innermost being am almost sick
with fear and apprehension; I alone cannot find
the peace I prayed for in the realm of the sea-god.
My prayer was evil, demented! What I vowed
cold and cruel! Which of you gods prolongs my
base existence, which of you now will offer me
assistance?

No. 6 Aria

Idomeneo

- [13] The ghost of my victim,
sobbing, will haunt me
and seem to taunt me,
'but I am blameless...' his silent cry.
His bloodless body forever pleading,
will not release me:
a crime so bloody can never die.
Endless darkness, endless torment!
For the weakness of a moment
must I suffer living death?

Recitative

Idomeneo

Alas already! Here is the wretch whom I must
sacrifice to ruthless Neptune as an off'ring in
return for my own wretched life! Treachery!
I curse the gods, curse my own weakness!

Scene 10

Idamante

- [14] This lonely shore, these cliffs, bleak and
forbidding, shall bear witness to my sorrows;

I am free here to feel the ceaseless racing of my
tormented heart. How strange the horror of this
place mirrors my suffering spirit! There amid the
wreckage of the storm I can see someone who
has survived...

(approaching Idomeneo)

Welcome, friend or foe! You have nothing to
fear: you see before you a man who wishes, and
has the power, to give you aid.

Idomeneo (to Idamante)

I am in your debt for the rest of my life: what
paltry reward can I offer you?

Idamante

It is reward enough to know that I have saved
you from harm and helped you: my friend I have
suffered so much that I have learnt to pity and
understand the sufferings of others.

Idomeneo

Suffered so much? Pray tell me, your
misfortunes, are they really so great?

Idamante

Out there he lies, lifeless in those watery depths,
the man whom I loved more than any other, the
hero Idomeneo.

But you are sighing and weeping?... You knew
Idomeneo? He was a father...

Idomeneo

Oh Gods! Tell me, whose father was he?

Idamante

He was mine!

Idomeneo

(You implacable gods!)

Idamante

You weep like me for my father's cruel fate?

Idomeneo

My son!

Idamante

What? Father?... Oh Gods! Could I be
dreaming? Joy past believing!
Father, most beloved of fathers, let me touch
you... let me embrace you... Alas!
You seem to scorn me, turn away in disgust!
What is it? What is it?

Idomeneo

You must not follow: I forbid it.
It would have been far better if you had not seen
me here today. I warn you:
shun my presence!

(He leaves hurriedly)

Idamante

Horror's icy embrace engulfs me, numbs me.
For now one moment I see my father...
My expressions of love seem to drive him away...
What is it? What have I done?
How have I earned such a look of disdain, such
threatening words?

I shall follow him now, though he berates me,
though a still harsher destiny awaits me.

No. 7 Aria

Idamante

- [15] The father I love dearly,
to find him and to lose him!
His feelings are clearly
revulsion and scorn...
So happy one moment
that tears drown my laughter,
then heav'n brings me torment
too deep to be borne.

End of Act One

Intermezzo

- [16] **No. 8 March**

No. 9 Chorus

May Neptune be honoured,
his name respected
his fame be reflected,
the ocean's great lord,
in dancing and singing
the tale shall be told.
Waves soft and gentle,
sparkling in sunlight,
take on the mantle of Neptune's glory;
and in the twilight,
with their mute story;

happy and playful, the dolphins gambol:
their joys resemble our human joys.
We join in harmony with nature's company
to bid the mermaids, the ocean's handmaids,
echo our voices:
we would sing praises to gods so gracious
who deigned to save us from hells' dark ploys.
May Neptune be honoured,
his name respected
his fame be reflected,
the ocean's great lord,
in dancing and singing
the tale shall be told.
The trumpets are blaring,
the priests are preparing:
the god shall have blood.

Act II

Scene 1

Idomeneo

[17] We are alone; listen, Arbace, and what I tell you
keep secret. I know you have always been
a man both faithful and true.

Arbace

My prowess in battle destroyed the Trojan
empire. I know what happened.

Idomeneo

Swollen with vain glorious pride, I fell into the
trap that Neptune set for me...

Arbace

And, allied with the wind-god and with Jupiter
himself, he whipped his realm into frenzy...

Idomeneo

Yes, to extort the promise of a human sacrifice.

Arbace

Of whom?

Idomeneo

The first man I would encounter on shore when
I had landed.

Arbace

And tell me who that poor man was.

Idomeneo

I fear to tell you... My own son...

Arbace

Idamante!... I faint with horror...

Idomeneo

You advise me Arbace...
Save my beloved son, I beg you, save him!...

Arbace

Send him away from here to some far off
country. But the people must know nothing.
The sea-god shall be placated by other means,
another god shall help us treaty with him.

Idomeneo

You are right, he must leave. Ilia is coming, alas...
He shall go to Argos and escort Electra to her

native land... We must act quickly...

Find my son and princess Electra and tell them
to prepare to leave at once.

Keep the matter a secret: I am in your hands and
I shall trust you, my dear, my faithful Arbace, to
save his life and save my peace of mind.

(Exit Arbace, enter Ilia.)

Scene 2

Ilia

If once the great Apollo should appear in
splendour over Argos, it would be on this day,
your Highness, the day when your august
presence returns in living glory to your delighted
subjects and dries the tears that, believing you
dead, they wept so freely.

Idomeneo

Noble Princess, my thanks; and may the tears
which you also weep freely flow no longer, your
endless woes be over.

Ilia

Your kind and noble son set me free, and now
my heart is full of gratitude and devotion to
him, and to his father.

Idomeneo

I and all I own are at your disposal and my only
aim shall be to show what honourable friendship
I would give you.

Ilia

It would be ungracious of me not to believe you.

No. 11 Aria

Ilia

[18] My father was taken,
my loved ones, my homeland:
now you are my father
and on this fair island
I make my new home.
No more shall I tremble
in torment and suffering:
for joy and contentment have come as an offering
from heaven above.

Scene 3

Recitative

Idomeneo

[19] How should I interpret words so ambiguous and
disturbing? Why should Ilia, in her situation,
after so much suffering, appear to be so happy?...
No, these feelings which she displays so warmly
for my son, could they perhaps be...
alas!... an awakening of love, hope for the
future?...
Now I see it: their passion is mutual.
Truly, Idamante, you have been too eager to free
her from her chains... And with that crime you
roused the wrath of heaven... Yes, yes, three
victims, the son, the father and Ilia, will be
sacrificed upon the sea-god's altar:

all three must face destruction, one by the swift knife, the others by grief's slow action.

No. 12 Aria

Idomeneo

- [20] Saved from storms, the storm within me rages, fiercer and yet more painful. And proud Neptune, still so disdainful, claims his vengeance on my pride. Angry sea-god, tell me plainly: if my heart is so near to drowning in fear, why did you save me when in the tempest I almost died?

Scene 4

Recitative

Electra

- [21] What pleasure could be deeper than mine is? Freedom to return to my homeland with my beloved, my adored one, always at my side... Ah, so much joy fills my heart, I feel it bursting! Far away from my rival I shall be able to charm him and to entice him, so that he may forget the love that makes him spurn me, and the flame of his passion at last may burn me.

No. 13 Aria

Electra

- [22] Dearest creature, that I know you love another cannot hurt me, nor the coldness that you show me:

your reluctance inspires delight. I shall spend the hours beside you and erase your childish passion; I am certain to persuade you when you know my loving heart.

No. 14 Marcia

Electra

There in the distance sweet trumpets sound their music, calling me to the quayside, and I must hurry.

COMPACT DISC TWO

Scene 5

Recitative

Electra

- [1] You shores of Crete, where I have suffered deeply, where love has been rejected and scorned so cruelly, now that a happier fate takes me from you, I come to bless you and, full of parting's sweet contentment, at last to bid you farewell without resentment.

No. 15 Chorus

Chorus

- [2] Calmly the sea is calling, gently the waves are swelling. Our voyage will bring good fortune: come, come, we leave at once.

Electra

Be kind and delicate ever, you breezes; harsh winds and thunderstorms, soften your anger: for only gentleness shall serve to please us, and all the opulence of sweet romance.

Chorus

Calmly the sea is calling, gently the waves are swelling. Our voyage will bring good fortune: come, come we leave at once.

Scene 6

Recitative

Idomeneo

- [3] You must set sail, prince.

Idamante

Oh gods!

Idomeneo

Without delay. Leave us, and let us hear tales of countless heroic deeds precede your glorious return. If you wish to learn the art of ruling, you can begin now by offering your aid to all who suffer: be worthy of yourself and of your father.

No. 16 Trio

Idamante

- [4] If I must leave, I beg you, noblest of fathers, let me kiss your beloved hand.

Electra

Know that my heart is grateful and, knowing it, permit me to thank you, sovereign most kind.

Idomeneo (to Electra)

Princess, you shall be happy.

(to Idamante)

My son, you must go, you must make this journey. Respond to our prayers, oh heav'n!

Idamante and Electra

Respond to our prayers, oh heav'n!

Electra

Hope fills my heart with rapture!

Idamante

The hour comes! (And my heart is breaking.) Farewell!

Electra

Farewell!

Idomeneo

Farewell!

Idamante and Idomeneo

(O bitter fate!)

Idamante

(My Ilia!) Oh father! Can I bear it?

Idomeneo

(My dear son!)

Electra

Oh heavens! What will come?

Electra, Idamante and Idomeneo

No more hesitation!

For heav'n in its mercy
will shield us from harm.

No. 17 Chorus

Chorus

- [5] The storm winds are howling!
The sea waves are pounding!
The gods' seething anger
will spare us no longer
and sweeps us away!
What fury, what hatred!
The sea-god is hungry!
A crime was committed
to make him so angry:
the culprit shall die!

Recitative

Idomeneo

- [6] I am the one, merciless Neptune, the culprit!
I alone am guilty: I should be punished;
on my head alone vent your anger.
Let my death slake your thirst for blood.
But if for my transgression you claim another
victim, one who is guiltless, I cannot let you;
and if still you demand it...
that is not justice and you may not command it.

No. 18 Chorus

Chorus

- [7] Disaster! Run faster to flee such a horror!
Disaster! Run faster to perish in terror!
What fate could be harsher,
more wretched than that?

Act III

Scene 1

Recitative

Ilia

- [8] Here, alone but not lonely, sweet air surrounds me.
Here, amid nature's shimmering beauty, no
longer need I attempt to hide the heartache of
inconsolable passion. How much it costs, so near
to my lover, to be calm and pretend that I do
not suffer!

No. 19 Aria

Ilia

- [9] Heav'nly breezes, soft and gentle,
see, you fly to my adored one
with the message that I love him
now and ever, in joy and pain.
And earth's flowers, the fruits of nature
that my bitter tears have watered,
bear the secret that love so tender
in this life shall not come again.

Recitative

He is coming here... Oh heavens!... To speak or

be silent?... Remain... or leave... or stay
hidden?... Ah, I cannot decide in my confusion!

Scene 2

Recitative

Idamante

- [10] Noble princess, if I dare to seek you out again, it
is not to press my reckless love upon you, but to
beg for forgiveness, and then to die.

Ilia

To die? Why say that?

Idamante

A fearful monster is wreaking havoc all around
us. The time has come to confront the monster,
to try to overcome him, or let death put an end
to all my suffering.

Ilia

Prince, you must banish gloomy thoughts that
could destroy you: remember that you are the
only hope of a glorious empire.

Idamante

Ilia, without your love, without you at my side,
empire means nothing.

Ilia

What shall I say? You must preserve your life!

Idamante

I embrace the cruel destiny that awaits me...

Ilia

You shall live... Ilia implores you.

Idamante

Oh heavens! What do I hear? Most beloved of
women.

Ilia

I am so weak now that I cannot conceal the
turmoil deep within me: for love and fear rage as
one in my soul.

Idamante

Truly? Perhaps now I only hear what I long for...
Perhaps my mind so sick with love would
deceive me... Is this a false dream to soothe my
aching sorrows?...

Ilia

Ah, it would have been better to have died than
to have spoken! Bitter remorse and guilt
overwhelm me!
The sacred call of duty and honour and country,
the blood of my kinsmen barely cold yet.
There is so much that serves to reproach my
unruly passion! What can I do? Now that I see
you rush into mortal danger,
now I alone can stop you,
finally I have to tell you:
I love you, adore you;
and, if you mean to perish,
first I shall die of grief,
I whom you cherish.

No. 20a Duet

Idamante

[11] At the moment such words were uttered
I would die, if men could die of love,
if a heart could burst with joy,
I would die, I would die.

Ilia

No more grief, no lonely weeping:
I am yours, forever faithful;
you are my night and my day.

Idamante

You shall be...

Ilia

...what you command me...

Idamante

...be my wife...

Ilia

...my loving husband shall be you...
in grief and joy.

Idamante and Ilia

...in grief and joy.
One short hour of smiling rapture
wipes away the tears of sorrow:
passion rules this blessed day.
Passion conquers this blessed day.

Scene 3

Recitative

Idomeneo

[12] (What do I see here?)

Ilia (*to Idamante*)

They have found us together.

Idamante (*to Ilia*)

There is no need to fear them.

Electra

(Ungrateful wretch!)

Idomeneo

(So I had guessed the truth.
What could be harsher?)

Idamante

My lord – for I no longer dare call you father –
I beg of you to grant your most unhappy subject
this one favour.

Idomeneo

Ask it.

Idamante

Tell me what my offence is. Why do you shun
me?... Hate me, nay, abhor me? Am I perhaps
the cause of Neptune's anger? But then, what
have I done?

Idomeneo

Neptune might be placated if you were not here
at my side. Listen, you shall obey me.
You have been exiled: you are not welcome.

Ilia (*to Electra*)

Alas! I beg you, comfort me, noble princess.

Electra

I comfort you? Why should I?

Idamante

So you send me away? Oh father! Oh Ilia! Where
shall I go?

Ilia

I shall come: we will live or die together.

Idamante

Live here in peace. Farewell, beloved, forever.

No. 21 Quartet

Idamante

[13] Alone the earth I wander,
waiting for death to take me:
I shall rejoice to die.

Ilia

We shall not be torn asunder
I shall go with you and when you are dying,
I too will die.

Idamante

Ah no...

Idomeneo

The God would taunt me.
Kill me, I beg you, kill me!

Electra

(Vengeance shall be my cry!)

Ilia and Idamante (*to Idomeneo*)

Your cruelty will haunt me.

Idomeneo

My anger is bursting:

Ilia, Idamante and Idomeneo

My aching heart is bursting:
such grief is too severe.

Electra

Such grief is too severe.

Ilia, Electra, Idamante and Idomeneo

Pain worse than dying:
so great a sorrow,
such fear and horror,
laden with sighing,
no man can bear.

Idamante

Alone the earth I wander,
waiting for death to take me:
I shall rejoice to die.

Ilia

No, we shall never be torn asunder:
I shall go with you when you are dying,
I too will die.

Idamante

Ah no...

Idomeneo

The God would taunt me.

Scene 5

Recitative
Arbace

- [14] Most unfortunate land! At every corner a haunting vision of death, of senseless carnage! Ah, this cannot be my homeland, this gloomy realm of weeping, this cruel, this ugly kingdom of pain. Has the last shred of pity been banished from the heav'ns? Alas! But I must hope still: one of the gods will surely relent before such bloodshed; and surely that god will convince all the rest... Even their harshness will respect mercy's call...

But yet I see no god who will show us pity... All deaf to our pleading!

Ah, Crete unfolds before me, a ruined desert with no trace of its glory! Yes, a miserable end to its great story!

No. 23 Recitative

High Priest

- [15] Raise your eyes for a moment, your highness, and see what dreadful carnage the cruel monster wreaks upon your kingdom. I tell you, every street in the city has become a river of blood. At every step a cry of torment as one more soul breathes its pain-ridden last from a poisoned body. Thousands on thousands I have witnessed with my own eyes swallowed still alive by that swollen, that sordid belly. And though their blood may choke him, the greedy monster with each hour grows yet more greedy.

You alone hold the key to our salvation: alone, you have the power to snatch us from death's agony. Your people live in terror: they cry out for you to help them, and still you wait. To the temple, highness, to the temple! Who is it who must be sacrificed? You must render up the gods' chosen victim.

Idomeneo

No more! High priest of Neptune and my people, you shall hear me: the victim is Idamante... and may it please you, cruel gods, that you can see me, a father, kill the son he loves do deeply.

No. 24 Chorus

Chorus

- [16] Oh, oh vow past redemption!
Oh vision of damnation!
The realm of the dying
consumes every being in hell's dark abyss.

High Priest

Great heaven, show mercy!
Shall innocence perish?
The vow was improper!
Ah, spare such a father a son's final kiss.

Chorus

Oh, oh vow past redemption!
Oh vision of damnation!
The realm of the dying consumes every being in hell's dark abyss.

Scene 7

[17] **No. 25 March**

No. 26 Cavatina with Chorus

Idomeneo

- [18] Oh mighty ocean god, we beg you hear us: temper your righteous anger, your holy law.

Priest

Oh mighty ocean god, we beg you hear us: temper your righteous anger, your holy law.

Idomeneo

Send again the gentle breezes,
that they may cheer us;
bid the fury of the storm
rage here no more.
We are repentant and we implore you,
spare us your vengeance,
your godly favour at last restore.

Priests

Oh mighty ocean god, we beg you hear us: temper your righteous anger, your holy law.

Chorus

Our prince is victorious eternal
and glorious his fame shall endure!

Idomeneo

What is the meaning of those happy shouts of victory?

Scene 8

Arbace

- [19] Highness, our hero, the prince Idamante, seeking the death that despair made him long for, has found triumph instead. Enraged, he threw himself upon the monster, overcame it and killed it. We have been saved at last.

Idomeneo

Alas! Proud Neptune will rise again in fury to vent his wrath upon us... My dear Arbace, soon you will weep to see that Idamante has found what he sought, that death will triumph over him at the end.

Arbace

Oh heavens, I see him...

Scene 9

Recitative

Idamante

- [20] Father, my dearest father... how sweet that name is!... as your son I kneel before you; at this high moment when I am called to die, upon the hand which is destined to shed your very own blood as it flows through my veins, take the last kiss I offer. I understand now, that your heartless manner never was anger's voice, but love unspoken. Oh, doubly blessed, yes doubly, is the moment of dying, if the one who gave me life shall take it; and in taking it shall offer it to heaven; and if heav'n with a new life shall reward

him; and if his people live at last in peace and the blessings of heaven never cease.

Idomeneo

My son, my dearest son, forgive me!
I have not chosen to perform this cruel deed:
fate has ordained it... Blind, unyielding fare...
Ah no! I cannot raise the pitiless knife against
my blameless son... The strength is ebbing from
my tormented body
My eyes are clouded, eyes that are sore with
weeping. Oh son!...

Idamante

Oh father!... Do not let pity so futile stay your
hand; no longer be seduced by the weakness of
love. Come, strike the blow that frees us both
from our anguish! Death holds no terrors; I am
here, ready: your holy vow of sacrifice, redeem
it!...

Idomeneo

Oh, how your words seem to inspire me and
arm we with new strength. Now I am free to
act... Now for the last time I kiss you... and kill
you.

Idamante

Oh father!... Oh heaven!...

Idomeneo

Oh son!... Oh heaven!...

Idamante

(Oh Ilia... alas!...)

(*to Idomeneo*)

Live and be happy!

Idamante (*to Idomeneo*)

I love you.

Idomeneo (*to Idamante*)

I love you.

Scene 10

Ilia

Stop, sire! What are you doing?

Idomeneo

I offer up the victim that I promised to Neptune.

Idamante

Ilia be silent...

High Priest (*to Ilia*)

Do not disturb the holy sacrifice...

Ilia

No! I am Priam's daughter, I am your enemy.
Highness, turn the knife on me for I shall be the
victim. Strike, I command you!

(*The sound of thunder is heard.*)

No. 28d

Voice of Neptune

[21] Your love has triumphed: Idomeneo shall rule no
more. The king shall be Idamante and Ilia shall
be his consort. Neptune's pride has been

honoured; heav'n is content; the innocent are
rewarded.

No. 29 Recitative

Idomeneo

[22] The gods show mercy!

Idamante

Ilia...

Ilia

Idamante, the god's voice.

Arbace

What rapture... What joy...
Thank Heaven!

Electra

What fury! What madness!
Rage and despair consume me!...
How shall I bear, seeing him with my rival?
Ah no, I would rather follow Orestes' shadow to
hell's dark pit. Yes, I shall join you in your
abysmal dungeon to know eternal torment, tears
past redemption.

No. 29 Aria

Electra

[23] The woes of my brother invade and destroy me.
The hell fires shall gather that herald my death.
This heart is my off'ring: consume it, you vipers,
or my earthly suff'ring I end with a knife.

Final Scene

No. 30 Recitative

Idomeneo

[24] Cretans: this shall be the last decree Idomeneo
will pronounce as your king: peace shall reign
forever. My vow has been redeemed, the gods
placated. Now Neptune and all the powers in
Creation shall bless our land. One thing remains
undone: that I, Idomeneo, should obey their
command. How happy, merciful heaven, am I in
that obedience. I, the king, give you a king, my
self reincarnate. To my son Idamante, to my
most dear son, I cede the throne of Crete and at
the same time all my sov'reign rights. You shall
respect his commands and, unflinching, obey
them, as you always obeyed and respected mine,
for which I am grateful indeed: these words are
law now. Here is the royal consort. Behold: this
blessed earthly couple is a gift that heav'n
bestows upon you. Let all your fears be
vanquished! O happy, glorious people: I am the
happiest!

No. 31 Chorus

Chorus

[25] Bless their love, bless their devotion,
bless them, noble goddess of marriage!
May their union give strength and courage;
and may happiness be theirs.

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On session: David Parry and Nicolai Gedda

Clive Barda



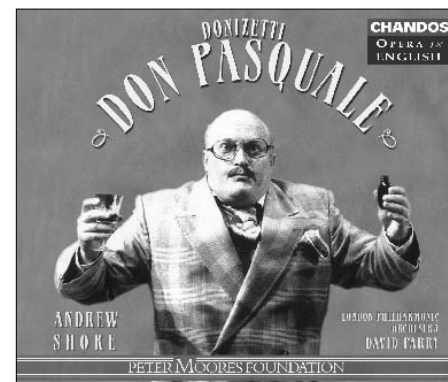
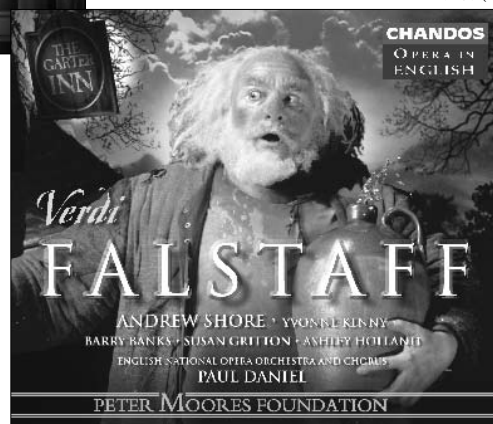
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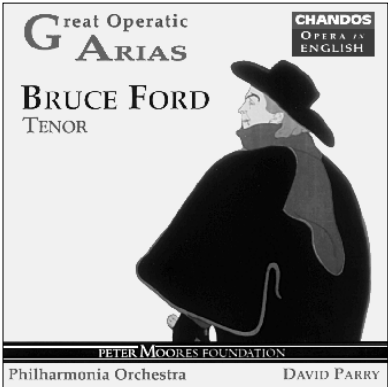


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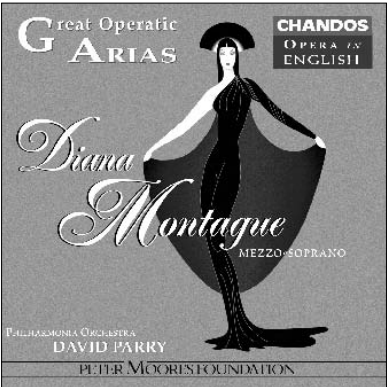


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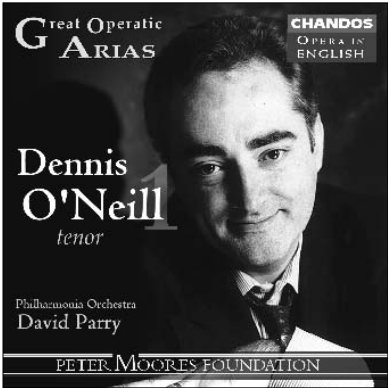
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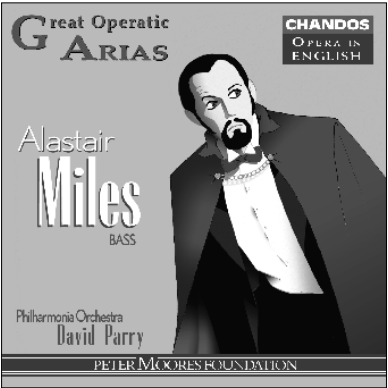
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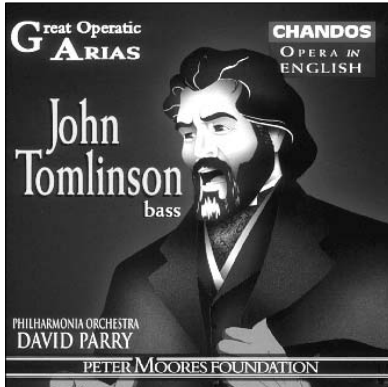


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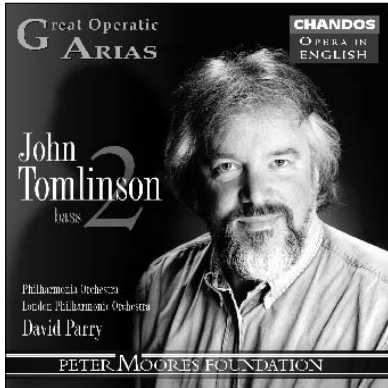
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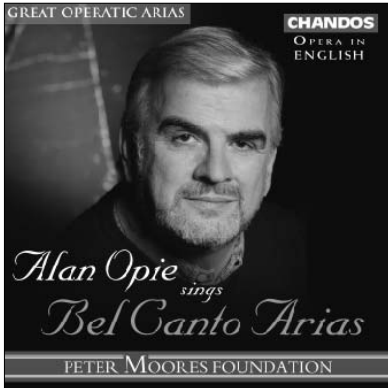
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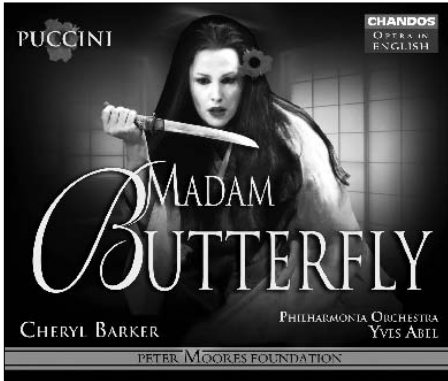


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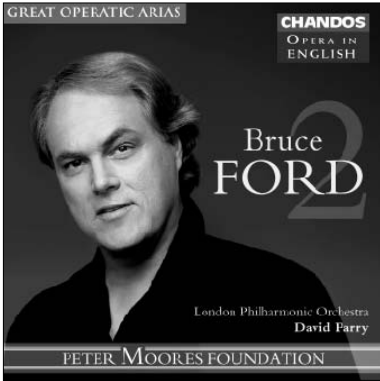
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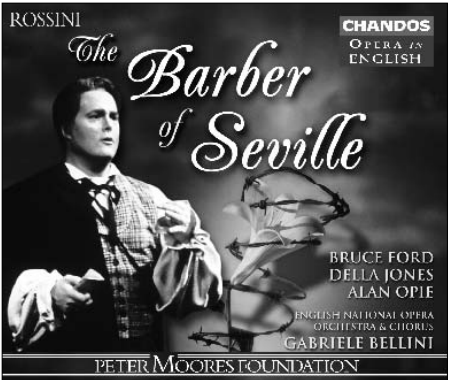


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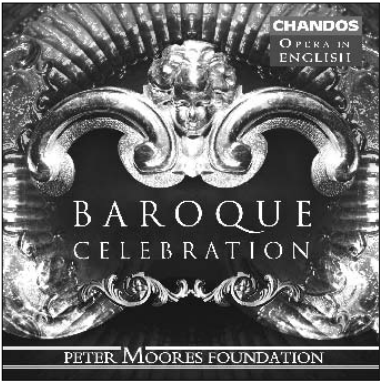
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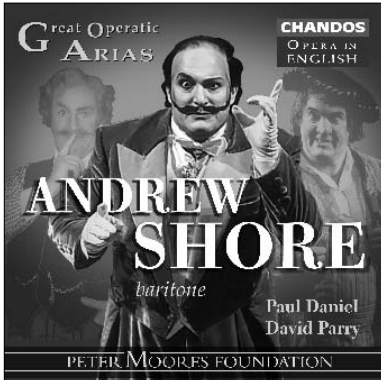
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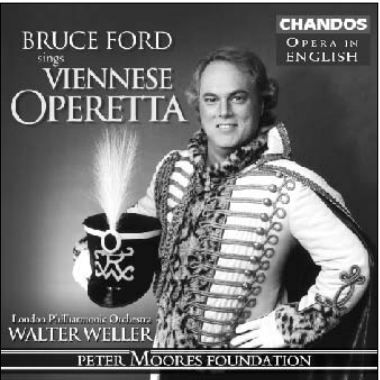
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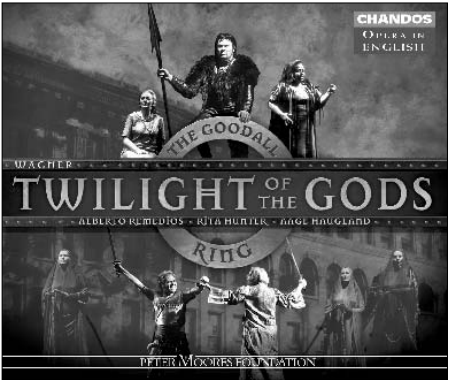
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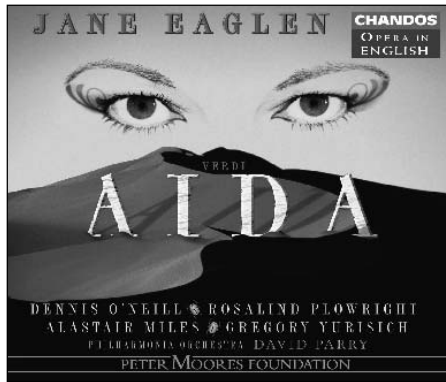
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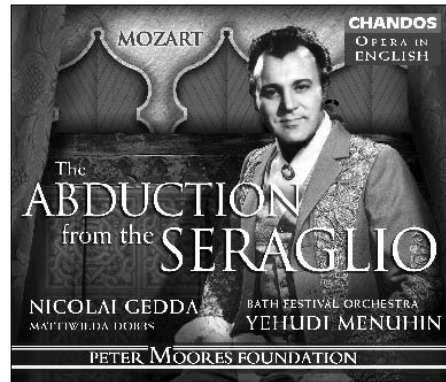
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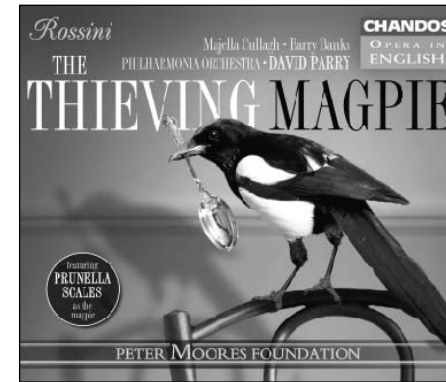
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MOZART: IDOMENEO

SOLOISTS/OPERA NORTH/PARRY

CHANDOS DIGITAL 2-disc set **CHAN 3103(2)**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Idomeneo, King of Crete

Dramma per musica in three acts

Libretto by Giovanni Battista Varesco after Antoine Danchet's *Idoménée*

English translation by David Parry

Idomeneo, King of Crete Bruce Ford *tenor*
Idamante, his son Diana Montague *mezzo-soprano*
Ilia, Trojan princess, daughter of King Priam Rebecca Evans *soprano*
Electra, princess, daughter of Agamemnon Susan Patterson *soprano*
Arbace, the King's confidant Ryland Davies *tenor*
High Priest of Neptune Nicolai Gedda *tenor*
Voice of Neptune Clive Bayley *bass*

Orchestra and Chorus of Opera North

Philip Sunderland assistant conductor/chorus master

David Parry

COMPACT DISC ONE

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