



ST JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE

Wednesday 4 June 2014, 7.30pm

The Mozartists

'Moto di gioia' - a programme of Mozart Concert Arias

"Un moto di gioia", K.579

"Va, dal furor portata", K.21

"O temerario Arbace... Per quel paterno amplesso", K.79

"Clarice cara mia sposa", K.256

"Basta vincesti... Ah, non lasciarmi, no", K.486a

"Alcandro, lo confesso... Non so d'onde vieni", K.512

"Misera, dove son!... Ah! Non son' io che parlo", K.369

Interval

"Vorrei spiegarvi, oh Dio!", K.418

"Così dunque tradisci... Aspri rimorsi atroci", K.432

"Misero! O sogno... Aura che intorno spira", K.431

"Bella mia fiamma... Resta, o cara", K.528

"Un bacio di mano", K.541

"Io ti lascio", K.621a

"Un moto di gioia", K.579

Louise Alder (soprano)

Eleanor Dennis (soprano)

Stuart Jackson (tenor)

David Shipley (bass)

The Mozartists (leader, **Matthew Truscott**)

Ian Page (conductor)

“Un moto di gioia”, K.579

Le nozze di Figaro, arguably the greatest opera ever written, was premièred at Vienna’s Burgtheater on 1 May 1786. It was actually received far better when it was presented in Prague later that year, and was not performed in Vienna at all in 1787 or 1788. When it was eventually revived there, in August 1789, the role of Susanna was sung by Adriana Gabrieli, who six months later was to create the role of Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*. In place of Susanna’s two original arias Mozart wrote Gabrieli two new ones: firstly the noble “Al desio, di chi t’adora” to replace “Deh vieni, non tardar” in the final act, and then this delightful little arietta in place of Susanna’s Act Two aria “Venite inginocchiatevi”. Like “Deh vieni”, it is scored for three wind solos and strings, and it possesses an ineffable charm and optimism which is quintessentially Mozartian.

SUSANNA:

Un moto di gioia
Mi sento nel petto,
Che annunzia diletto
In mezzo il timor!

Speriam che in contento
Finisca l’affanno,
Non sempre è tiranno
Il fato ed amor.

SUSANNA:

*An impulse of joy
I feel in my breast,
which announces delight
in the midst of fear.*

*Let’s hope that suffering
will end in happiness;
fate and love
are not always tyrannical.*

“Va, dal furor portata”, K.21

This is Mozart’s earliest surviving concert aria. It dates from 1765, when the composer was just nine years old, and was written in London, where Mozart and his family stayed between April 1764 and July 1765. During this formative time Wolfgang was exposed to a wide array of vocal music, by English, German and Italian composers, and he also met some of the leading opera singers of the day, including Giovanni Manzuoli, the celebrated castrato. Manzuoli sang at the King’s Theatre, Haymarket throughout the 1764-5 season, and reportedly gave the young Mozart singing lessons during this time. The text of “Va, dal furor portata” is taken from Metastasio’s *Ezio*, which Mozart had recently seen in London, but no record survives of the aria having been performed during Mozart’s lifetime. In addition to the London version, Metastasio’s libretto had already been set by numerous composers, including Handel and Gluck. It is set in the fifth century AD, shortly before the fall of the Roman Empire.

The Roman patrician Massimo has just made an unsuccessful attempt on the life of the emperor, Valentino III, but suspicion has fallen on Ezio, who is the beloved of Massimo’s daughter Fulvia. When Fulvia threatens to disclose her father’s crime, he defiantly questions whether she is capable of betraying her own father.

MASSIMO:

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

Scopri la frode ordita,
Ma pensa in quel momento,
Ch’io ti donai la vita,
Che tu la togli a me.

MASSIMO:

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

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

“O temerario Arbace... Per quel paterno amplesso”, K.79

This is the second of two concert arias written during the Mozarts' extended stay in The Hague on their return journey from London to Salzburg. They date from late 1765 or, more probably, early 1766, and the text of both arias is taken from *Artaserse*, an opera whose English setting by Thomas Arne would almost certainly have been heard by Mozart during his stay in London. Mozart, though, set Metastasio's original Italian.

Even at the age of nine Mozart was already astonishingly fluent and accomplished in setting words to music, and Dr Daines Barrington's fascinating report submitted to the Royal Society in London describes how the young Wolfgang had performed for him “an Extemporary opera to nonsense words... [with] an overture of three movements, recitative, Graziosa, Bravura and Pathetic Airs together with accompanied Recitatives, all full of good taste and imagination.”

“O temerario Arbace” begins with Mozart's first surviving accompanied recitative, a style of writing in which he was to become unsurpassed. It is sung by Arbaces, who has been wrongly imprisoned for the murder of Xerxes. This crime has actually been committed by his father, Artabanes, but Arbaces refuses to betray his own father and nobly accepts his fate. As was sometimes the case with arias written for concert performance, the singer assumes both roles in the scene so as to preserve dramatic continuity.

ARBACE:

Oh, temerario Arbace!

Dove trascorri? Ah, genitor, perdona:
Eccomi a' piedi tuoi; scusa i trasporti
D'un insano dolor. Tutto il mio sangue
Si versi pur, non me ne lagno; e invece
Di chiamarla tiranna,
Io bacio quella man che mi condanna.

ARTABANO:

Basta, sorgi; purtoppo
Hai ragion di lagnarti:
Ma sappi . . . (Oh Dio!) Prendi un abbraccio.

ARBACE:

Per quel paterno amplesso,
Per questo estremo addio,
Conservami te stesso,
Placami l'idol mio,
Difendimi il mio re.

ARBACE:

*Oh reckless Arbace,
where are you going?... Ah forgive me, father;
here I am at your feet. Excuse this outburst of
desperate grief – even if all my blood
is shed I will not complain; and instead
of calling it tyrannical,
I kiss the hand that condemns me.*

ARTABANO:

*Enough, rise! Unfortunately
you have plenty of reason to complain.
But know... (Oh God!)... Let me embrace you.*

ARBACE:

*With that paternal embrace,
with this final farewell,
take care of yourself for me,
console my beloved,
and defend for me my king.*

"Clarice cara mia sposa", K.256

During 1775 and 1776 Mozart wrote five arias and scenes related to performances given an Italian opera buffa troupe which was visiting Salzburg. Three of these were for tenor, the third of which was "Clarice cara mia sposa". In May 1775 Mozart had written "Con ossequio, con rispetto", K.210, for insertion into the Italian troupe's performance of Niccolò Piccinni's comic opera *L'Astratto* ("The Absent-Minded Man"), and when the same opera was brought back to Salzburg in September 1776 Mozart wrote "Clarice cara mia sposa" as an insertion aria for the tenor Antonio Palmini, who was playing the role of the galavanting military captain Faccenda.

Faccenda, disguised as a doctor but also assuming the roles of orator, scientist, mathematician, music tutor, lawyer and explorer, is boastfully appealing for the hand of Clarice, the daughter of the wealthy but bad-tempered landowner Don Timoteo. The comic patter of the text is typical of opera buffa, and Mozart's music is designed to support the wit and virtuosity of the language.

CAPITANO

Clarice cara
Mia sposa dev'essere
Per la magnetica
Virtù simpatica,
Voglio convincermi
Colla gramatica,
Colla retorica,
Logica e fisica,
La matematica
Non può fallar.

DON TIMOTEO:

Piano per carità...

CAPITANO:

Se in questa musica
Non siam unisoni
Tritoni e dissoni,
Vuo' fulminar.
Dell'arte medica
Con tutti i recipi,
Con mille cabale
Dell'aritmetica,
Degli avvocati
Con tutti gli et caetera,
Voi lo vedrete,
Voi lo sapete.
Saprò trionfar.

DON TIMOTEO:

Caro Signor Dottore, lasciate almen
Ch'anch'io Vi dica una ragion...

CAPTAIN:

*Dear Clarice
must be my bride,
attracting
by her magnetic qualities.
I will make sure of it.
With grammar,
with rhetoric,
logic, physics
and mathematics
one can't go wrong.*

DON TIMOTEO:

Gently, for pity's sake...

CAPTAIN:

*If in this music
there are no unisons,
tritones and dissonances,
then I will rage.
With all the prescriptions
of medical art,
with all of arithmetic's
thousand ruses,
with all the "etceteras" of
lawyers,
you will see,
you will learn,
I shall be able to triumph.*

DON TIMOTEO:

*Dear doctor, let me too at
least tell you a reason...*

CAPITANO:

Con carte e sarte
Con nautica bussola
D'un cor amabile
La cinosura
Certa e sicura
Saprò ritrovar.
Se mi diceste
Che cosa impossibile,
Quel vostro petto
Di tigre inflessibile
Con un fendente
Vorrei spalancar.

DON TIMOTEO:

Molto tenuto io sono
Alle finezze sue;
Ma cospettaccio!

CAPITANO:

Ma se poi facile
Siete e pieghevole,
Cento bucefali
Vuo' che s'attaccino,
E Salamanca,
Firenze e poi Tunisi,
Londra, Berlin, Roma,
Torino e Padova,
Amsterdam, Montpellier, Livorno
e Genova,
Vuo' testimoni
Dell'inclito merito
Della mia bella,
Dell'impareggiabile
Sposa adorabile
Del celeberrimo
Dottor giuridico,
Medico, fisico,
Che tutto il mondo
Vedrem stupefar.

CAPTAIN:

*With accurate maps
and a nautical compass
I shall be able to find
the sure and certain
guiding star
for a loving heart.
If you kindly tell me
that this is impossible
I will split open,
with a sabre cut,
your breast, which is
like that of an inflexible tiger.*

DON TIMOTEO:

*I am much obliged
for your favours
but, hang it all!*

CAPTAIN:

*But if you are
amenable and tractable,
I will harness
a hundred war-horses
and will call Salamanca,
Florence and then Tunis,
London, Berlin, Rome,
Turin and Padua,
Amsterdam, Montpellier,
Leghorn and Genoa
as witness
of the glorious merit
of my fair one,
of my incomparable,
adorable bride,
of the most celebrated
doctor of law,
medicine and physics,
whom we see
astonishing all the world.*

"Basta vincesti... Ah, non lasciarmi, no", K.486a

This aria was written in Mannheim in February 1778, and is the only concert aria which Mozart wrote for the German soprano Dorothea Wendling; two-and-a-half years later she was to create the role of Ilia in *Idomeneo*. She was the daughter of a horn-player and a lutenist, and had been a court singer at Mannheim and Munich since 1752. The poet and novelist Christoph Martin Wieland wrote in 1777: "Her manner of singing surpasses anything I have ever heard... This alone is true singing – the language of the soul and the heart."

The text of "Basta vincesti" is taken from Metastasio's *Didone abbandonata*. In spite of her troubled love affair with Aeneas, Dido has signed a document accepting the marriage proposal of Jarba, King of the Moors. The jealous Aeneas has demanded that she retract this acceptance, and as she succumbs to her true feelings and hands over the document to him, she begs him to remain faithful and not to abandon her. Her anguished anxiety and insecurity are beautifully captured by the plaintive yearning of the melodic line and the burnished orchestral texture of flutes and muted violins.

DIDONE:

Basta, Vincesti, eccoti il foglio.
Vedi quanto t'adoro ancora ingrato.
Con un tuo sguardo solo
Mi togli ogni difesa e mi disarmi;
Ed hai cor di tradirmi? E poi lasciarmi?

Ah non lasciarmi, no,
Bell'idol mio;
Di chi mi fiderò,
Se tu m'inganni?

Di vita mancherei
Nel dirti: addio,
Che viver non potrei
Fra tanti affanni!

DIDO:

*Enough! You have won. Here, take the letter.
See how much I still adore you, ingrate!
With a mere glance
you disarm me and leave me defenceless.
Yet you have not the heart to betray me? And you
can forsake me?*

*Ah no, do not leave me,
my dearest love;
whom can I trust
if you decieve me?*

*My life will end
if I must say farewell,
for I cannot live
in such anguish!*

"Alcandro, lo confesso... Non so d'onde vieni", K.512

On 24 February 1778, just three days before he finished "Basta vincesti", Mozart completed the first of the eight great concert arias which he wrote for his beloved Aloysia Weber, whose sister he married after Aloysia had rejected him. The aria in question, "Non sò d'onde viene", was a setting from Metastasio's *Olimpiade*, and Mozart had already become acquainted with J.C.Bach's celebrated setting of the same text while he was in London in 1764-5.

Nine years later Mozart returned once more to the same text to fulfil a request to write an aria for the bass Ludwig Fischer. The manuscript of this setting of the aria is dated 19 March 1787, and two days later Fischer performed the work in a concert at Vienna's Kärntnertor-Theater. Fischer had enjoyed great success in Vienna between 1780 and 1783, during which time he created the role of Osmin in Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* as well as performing in operas by Salieri and Gluck, but despite being considered "the finest bass in Germany" he left in 1783 after falling out with the director of the court theatres. Following his return to Vienna in 1787 he accepted a permanent position in Berlin, and as late as 1812, rather astonishingly for the man who created the role of Osmin, he appeared at the Haymarket Theatre in London as the Count in *Le nozze di Figaro*.

CLISTENE:

Alcandro, lo confesso,
Stupisco di me stesso. Il volto, il ciglio,
La voce di costui nel cor mi desta
Un palpito improvviso,
Che le risente in ogni fibra il sangue.
Fra tutti i miei pensieri
La cagion ne ricerco, e non la trovo.
Che sarà, giusti Dei, questo ch'io provo?

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

Nel seno destarmi
Sì fieri contrasti
Non parmi che basti
La sola pietà.

CLISTENE:

*Alcandro, I confess it,
I am surprised at myself. His face,
his expression, his voice awake
a sudden throbbing in my heart,
which my blood spreads through every fibre.
I seek the reason amid all my thoughts,
but cannot find it.
Just gods, what is this I feel?*

*I know not whence comes
this tender emotion,
this feeling that, all unknowing,
rises in my breast,
this chill that courses
through my veins.*

*For such fierce contradicitions
to awaken in my breast
mere pity does not seem
to me sufficient.*

"Misera, dove son!... Ah! Non son' io che parlo", K.369

Like Mozart's very first concert aria, this is a setting of a text from Metastasio's *Ezio*. It was written in Munich in March 1781, while Mozart was basking in the aftermath of the première of *Idomeneo*, and it was the last work he wrote before taking up permanent residence in Vienna. It was written for and dedicated to the Countess Josepha von Paumgarten, who was the mistress of the Palatine Elector Karl Theodor, but if Mozart thought that it might help to secure him a permanent position in Munich no such offer was forthcoming.

Fulvia is the daughter of the Roman patrician Massimo; her mother has been raped and murdered by the Emperor Valentino III, who now wishes to marry Fulvia. She, however, is in love with the general of the Roman army, Ezio, and he with her. To avenge his murdered wife, Massimo has attempted to assassinate Valentino, but the plot has failed and suspicion has fallen on the guiltless Ezio. Tormented by the conflict between her filial duty and her love for Ezio, and appalled at the prospect of having to marry the murderous Valentino, Fulvia becomes delirious and laments her horrific plight.

FULVIA:

Misera, dove son! L'aure del Tebro
Son queste ch'io respiro?
Per le strade m'aggrio
Di Tebe e d'Argo; o dalle greche sponde,
Di tragedie feconde,
Le domestiche Furie
Vennero a questi lidi,
Della prole di Cadmo e degli Atridi?
Là d'un monarca ingiusto
L'ingrata crudeltà m'empie d'orrore,
D'un padre traditore
Qua la colpa m'agghiaccia:
E lo sposo innocente ho sempre in faccia.
Oh immagini funeste!
Oh memorie! oh martiro!
Ed io parlo, infelice, ed io respiro?

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

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

FULVIA

*Alas, where am I? Is this
the air of the Tiber that I breathe?
Do I wander in the streets
of Thebes and Argos?
Or did the native furies,
the seed of Cadmus and of the Atrides, come
to these banks
from the tragedy-ridden shores of Greece?
There, the heartless cruelty
of an unjust monarch fills me with horror;
here, the crime
of a treacherous father chills me;
and my innocent husband haunts me forever.
Oh fearful thoughts!
Oh memories! Oh torture!
And I, wretched, still speak, still breathe?*

*Ah, it is not I who am speaking,
but the wretched grief
that breaks my heart
and makes me rave.*

*Tyrannical heaven does not heed
the torment that I suffer:
I ask for a thunderbolt,
but no thunderbolt falls.*

Interval

"Vorrei spiegarvi, oh Dio!", K.418

In June 1783 Aloysia Weber, whose sister Mozart had now married, made her Vienna opera debut in Pasquale Anfossi's *Il curioso indiscreto* ("The Indiscreet Snoop"), and Mozart wrote her two new arias to be inserted into the opera. This was a common practice at the time, and it was considered an impressive status-symbol for a singer to have such arias written for them, but it was still clearly a delicate issue. Regarding his insertion arias for *Il curioso indiscreto*, Mozart wrote to his father: "My friends were malicious enough to spread the report beforehand that 'Mozart wanted to improve on Anfossi's opera'. I heard of this and sent a message to Count Rosenberg that I would not hand over my arias unless the following statement was printed in the copies of the libretto, in both German and Italian – 'Notice: the two arias on p.36 and p.102 have been set to music by Signor Maestro Mozart to oblige Signora Lange [Aloysia's married name], those written by Signor Maestro Anfossi not being commensurate with her ability but meant for someone else. This must be noted, so that honour should be accorded where it is due, and this without prejudice to the reputation of the already well-known Neapolitan'."

In practice, of course, Mozart must surely have known that his music far surpassed that of Anfossi, and this announcement only served to highlight public interest in the two insertion arias. The first of these, "Vorrei spiegarvi, oh Dio!" is particularly impressive and memorable. It occurs towards the end of the opera's first act. Clorinda is engaged to the Marquis Calandrano, who has decided to test her fidelity by sending his friend the Count of Ripaverde to woo her. Clorinda, though, genuinely loves the Count – the Marquis was right not to trust her loyalty to him – and in the aria she bids an anguished farewell to the Count and nobly encourages him to find happiness with her rival Emilia. Mozart's ravishing music, in which a beguiling oboe solo interweaves with the vocal line above a bed of pizzicato strings, leaves us in doubt of Clorinda's feelings for the Count, and the pain it is costing her to obey her obligations of duty, and it brings the character a pathos, dignity and compassion which must have won Aloysia many new friends in Vienna.

CLORINDA:

Vorrei spiegarvi, oh Dio!
Qual è l'affanno mio;
Ma mi condanna il fato
A piangere e tacer.
Arder non pù il mio core
Per chi vorrebbe amore
E fa che cruda io sembri,
Un barbaro dover.

Ah conte, partite,
Correte, fuggite
Lontano da me;
La vostra diletta
Emilia v'aspetta,
Languir non la fate,
È degna d'amor.
Ah stelle spietate!
Nemiche mi siete.
(Mi perdo s'ei resta, oh Dio!)
Partite, correte,
D'amor non parlate,
È vostro il suo cor.

CLORINDA:

*Oh heaven! I would like to explain to you
the reason for my anguish,
but Fate condemns me
to weep in silence.
My heart cannot burn
for one who would love me,
and a bitter duty
makes me seem cruel.*

*Ah, go, Count,
leave me, fly
far from me.
Your beloved
Emilia awaits you,
do not cause her to pine;
she is worthy of your love.
Oh pitiless stars!
You are my enemies.
(I am lost if he remains, oh God!)
Go, run away;
do not speak of love;
her heart is yours.*

“Così dunque tradisci... Aspri rimorsi atroci”, K.432

Mozart had written concert or insertion arias for soprano or tenor since his childhood, but he did not start writing them for bass until 1783. The inspiration for this was the German bass Ludwig Fischer, who created the role of Osmin and for whom Mozart was to write his second setting of “Non so d’onde viene”. Fischer was eager to be recognised as a master of Italian opera, and in 1783 he asked Mozart to write a suitably impressive aria for him to insert into a forthcoming production of Andrea Bernasconi’s *Temistocle* – yet another eighteenth century setting of a Metastasio libretto.

The traitor Sebaste has himself been betrayed and exposed, and as he attempts to consider a possible escape route he is forced to confront his guilt and remorse. The music, though, is tormented rather than resolved, uneasy rather than accepting, and if the aria is reminiscent of the visceral sweep of *Idomeneo*, the preceding recitative might even be viewed as a precursor of the dark dramaticism of Verdi.

SEBASTE:

Così dunque tradisci,
Disleal principessa... Ah, folle! ed io
Son d’accursarla ardito!
Si lagna un traditor d’esser tradito!
Il meritai. Fuggì, Sebaste... Ah! dove
Fuggirò da me stesso? Ah! porto in seno
Il carnefice mio. Dovunque io vada,
Il terror, lo spavento
Seguiran la mia traccia;
La colpa mia mi starà sempre in faccia.

Aspri rimorsi atroci,
Figli del fallo mio,
Perché si tardi, oh Dio!
Mi lacerate il cor?

Perché, funeste voci
Ch’or mi sgridate appresso,
Perché v’ascolto adesso,
Né v’ascoltai fin or?

SEBASTE:

*So you have betrayed me,
faithless princess... Ah, fool,
that I venture to accuse her!
A traitor complains of being betrayed!
I deserved it. Flee Sebaste... But where can I
flee from myself? Ah, in my breast I carry my
own executioner. Wherever I go,
terror and fear
will follow in my tracks;
my guilt will always confront me.*

*Bitter, terrible remorse,
born of my misdeed,
why is my heart torn
so belatedly, o God?*

*Why, deadly voices
that now oppress me with reproaches, why
do I listen to you now
when I have not listened to you before?*

"Misero! O sogno... Aura che intorno spiri", K.431

This, the greatest of Mozart's concert arias for tenor, was written for Johann Valentin Adamberger, who sang it in concerts put on by the Vienna Tonkünstler-Societät in December 1783. Adamberger had recently created the role of Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, and in 1786 he was to play Herr Vogelsang ('Mr Birdsong') in the première of *Der Schauspieldirektor*. Little information survives about the provenance of the aria, and the author and source of the text are unknown, although it seems clear that it is an excerpt from a complete opera libretto. The protagonist is a prisoner, separated from his lover and bereft of hope, and several commentators have noted the parallel between this work and Florestan's dungeon scene in Beethoven's *Fidelio*.

Misero! O sogno,
O son desto? Chiuso è il varco all'uscita!
Io dunque, o stelle!
Solo in questo rinchiuso
Abitato dall'ombre!
Luogo tacito e mesto,
Ove non s'ode
Nell'orror della notte
Che de' notturni augelli
La lamentabil voce! I giorni miei
Dovrò qui terminar?
Aprite, indegne,
Questa porta infernale!
Spietate, aprite!
Alcun non m'ode! E solo,
Ne' cavi sassi ascoso,
Risponde a' mesti accenti
Eco pietoso
E dovrò qui morir?
Ah! negli estremi amari sospiri
Almen potessi, oh Dio!
Dar al caro mio ben l'ultimo addio!

Aura che intorno spiri,
Sull'ali a lei che adoro
Deh! porta i miei sospiri,
Dì che per essa moro,
Che più non mi vedrà!
Ho mille larve intorno
Di varie voci il suono;
Che orribile soggiorno!
Che nuova crudeltà!
Che barbara sorte!
Che stato dolente!
Mi lagno, sospiro,
Nessuno mi sente,
Nel grave periglio
Nessun non miro,
Non spero consiglio,
Non trovo pietà!

*Unhappy me! Am I dreaming or
awake? The way out is barred. Here
then, o stars,
alone in this enclosed,
silent, gloomy place
haunted by shadows,
where nothing is heard
in the horror of the night
save the mournful voices
of nocturnal birds,
must I end my days?
Open this infernal gate,
vile pitiless creatures,
open, open!
No one hears me, and,
hidden in these rocky caves,
only merciful echo
answers my cries.
Must I then die here?
Ah, if with my final bitter sighs
I could at least – oh God! –
bid my beloved a last farewell!*

*Breeze that blows around me,
go, on your wings carry my sighs to
her whom I adore;
say that for her I die;
that she will never see me more.
Around me are a thousand phantoms,
the sound of many voices.
What a dreadful abode!
What new cruelty!
What a barbarous fate!
What a pitiful state!
I lament, I sigh;
no one hears me.
In this dire peril
I see no one.
I have no hope of help;
I find no pity.*

"Bella mia fiamma... Resta, o cara", K.528

When Mozart came to Prague in 1787 to write *Don Giovanni*, he and his wife stayed at the Villa Betramka, the Dušeks' summer residence on the outskirts of Prague, and he reportedly put the finishing touches to the opera while seated in the garden of the villa. Following the opera's triumphant première on 29 October, the Mozarts remained in Prague for several weeks. Josefa Dušek, however, insisted that Wolfgang was not allowed to leave Betramka until he had composed a new aria for her, and she is said to have locked him in the pavilion in the villa's garden until he had completed the work. Mozart's son later recollected how his father "retorted that if she could not sing the song correctly and well at first sight he would not give it to her", and this story of Mozart's impish humour is given credence by a remarkably bold and harmonically complex passage in the aria which would have caused problems for even the most accomplished sight-reader. The manuscript of "Bella mia fiamma... Resta, o cara" is dated 3 November, but the speed with which it was composed belies the work's depth and mastery.

The text is taken from *Cerere placata* ('Ceres Appeased'), a 'festa teatrale' composed in 1772 by Niccolò Jommelli to words by Michele Sarcone. Titano is the mortal lover of the goddess Proserpina, whose mother Ceres has decreed that the pair must separate and that Titano must die. Titano here laments his fate and consoles his beloved Proserpina as he takes his final leave of her, but any sense of heroic fortitude is imbued with a profound sense of pain and anguish at his plight, a sense heightened by the pathos and chromatic intensity of Mozart's remarkable music.

TITANO:

Bella mia fiamma, addio; non piacque al cielo
Di renderci felici. Ecco reciso,
Prima d'esser compito,
Quel purissimo nodo,
Che strinsero fra lor gli animi nostri
Con il solo voler.
Vivi; cedi al destin, cedi al dovere.
Dalla giurata fede
La mia morte t'assolve;
A più degno consorte... oh pene! unita
Vivi più lieta e più felice vita.
Ricordati di me; ma non mai turbo
D'un infelice sposo
La rara rimembranza il tuo riposo.
Regina, io vado ad ubbidirti; ah tutto
Finisca il mio furor col morir mio.
Cerere, Alfeo, diletta sposa, addio!

[*a Proserpina*] Resta, oh cara; acerba morte
Mi separa, oh Dio! da te.
[*a Cerere*] Prendi cura di sua sorte,
Consolarla almen procura.
[*ad Alfeo*] Vado... ahi lasso! addio per sempre...
Quest'affanno, questo passo
È terribile per me.
Ah! Dov'è il tempio, dov'è l'ara?
[*a Cerere*] Vieni, affretta la vendetta!
Questa vita così amara
Più soffribile non è.
[*a Proserpina*] Oh cara, addio per sempre!

TITANO:

*My dearest love, farewell! It did not please heaven
to make us happy. Look, severed
before being completed
is that purest of knots,
which bound our souls together
in a single wish.
Live! Yield to fate, yield to duty.
My death will absolve you
from the loyalty you pledged;
with a more worthy husband – oh woe! –
live an easier and happier life.
Remember me, but never let
the occasional memory
of an unfortunate lover disturb your peace.
Queen, I go to obey you. Ah, may all
my fury end with my death.
Ceres, Alfeo, beloved bride – farewell!*

[*to Proserpina*] Stay, my darling; bitter death
separates me, o God, from you!
[*to Ceres*] Take care of her,
and try at least to console her.
[*to Alfeo*] I go... alas! Farewell for ever...
*This torment, this step
is terrible for me.
Ah! Where is the temple, where the altar?*
[*to Ceres*] Come, may revenge be swift!
*So bitter a life as this
I can no longer endure.*
[*to Proserpina*] My dearest, farewell for ever!

“Un bacio di mano”, K.541

This short bass aria dates from May 1788, and was written for Francesco Albertarelli, who earlier that month had sung the title role in the Vienna première of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. It was written for insertion into Anfossi's *Le gelosie fortunate*, which was produced in Vienna in June 1788, and the text is thought to be the work of Lorenzo da Ponte.

The aria is sung by a Frenchman, Monsieur Girò, who is offering amatory advice to his highly susceptible friend Pompeo, but the music is familiar for a different reason. Three months later, in the first movement of his final symphony, the 'Jupiter', Mozart made direct and extensive use of the theme from the aria where Girò is saying "You're a little naïve, my dear Pompeo – go and study the ways of the world". Was Mozart merely reusing some recent material to create a suitably 'buffo' contrast to the magisterial pomp and ceremony with which the symphony opens, or was the quotation perhaps a coded joke for one of his friends? We will probably never know.

M. GIRÒ:

Un bacio di mano
Vi fa maraviglia,
E poi bella figlia
Volete sposar.
Voi siete un po' tondo,
Mio caro Pompeo,
L'usanze del mondo
Andate a studiar.
Un uom, che si sposa
Che giovin vezzosa,
A certi capricci,
Dee pria rinunciar.
Dee libere voglie
Lasciar alla moglie,
Dee sempre le porte
Aperte lasciar,
Dee chiudere gli occhi,
Gli orecchi, la bocca,
Se il re degli sciocchi
Non vuole sembrar.

M. GIRÒ:

*A kiss of the hand
astonishes you,
and then you want
to marry a pretty girl?
You're a bit naïve,
my dear Pompeo;
go and study
the ways of the world. A
man who marries
a charming young girl
must first forgo
certain whims.
He must let his wife have
her way
and always leave
the doors unlocked.
He must close his eyes, his
ears, his mouth,
if he does not wish
to appear the king of fools.*

"Io ti lascio", K.621a

In 1799 Mozart's widow asserted that this, Mozart's last concert aria, was not her husband's work, but the result of a collaboration with their friend Gottfried von Jacquin, who, she claimed, wrote the vocal part as an adieu to Countess Hortense Hatzfeld, a well-known soprano and patron of the arts. But the musicologist Alfred Einstein, having examined the extant half of the manuscript score, felt little doubt that the work is pure and authentic Mozart; the attribution to Jacquin of a version in a different key with added wind parts, however, probably is correct. To further complicate matters, the scholar Alan Tyson has demonstrated that the surviving autograph fragment is of a type of paper that Mozart used primarily in 1788; but Mozart would certainly not be the first or last person to have jotted down his work on old paper, and on balance the most likely scenario seems to be that the aria was written just before Mozart left Prague after the premiere of *La clemenza di Tito* in September 1791.

Io ti lascio, oh cara, addio,
vivi più felice
e scordati di me.
Strappa pur dal tuo bel core
quell' affetto, quell' amore,
pensa che a te non lice
il ricordarsi di me.

*I leave you, my dear one; farewell.
Live more happily
and forget me.
Banish even from your beloved heart
that affection, that love,
and reflect that you are not permitted
to remember me.*

"Un moto di gioia", K.579

Please see page 2 for programme note.

Un moto di gioia
Mi sento nel petto,
Che annunzia diletto
In mezzo il timor!

Speriam che in contento
Finisca l'affanno
Non sempre è tiranno
Il fato ed amor.

*An impulse of joy
I feel in my breast,
which announces delight
in the midst of fear.*

*Let's hope that suffering
will end in happiness;
fate and love
are not always tyrannical.*

The Mozartists

Violin 1	Matthew Truscott (leader) Miki Takahashi Rebecca Livermore Julia Kuhn George Clifford Naomi Burrell	Flute	Katy Bircher Georgia Browne
Violin 2	Sophie Barber Liz MacCarthy Kristin Deekin Camilla Scarlett Davina Clarke	Oboe	Rachel Chaplin Leo Duarte
		Bassoon	Zoe Shevlin Inga Maria Klaucke
		Horn	Gavin Edwards Nick Benz
Viola	Alfonso Leal del Ojo Mark Braithwaite	Harpsichord	Steven Devine
		Keyboard technician	Malcolm Greenhalgh
Cello	Catherine Rimer Rebecca Truscott		
Double Bass	Timothy Amherst Jan Zahourek		

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