



Monday 20 May 2013, 7.30pm

The Mozartists

Tales from Ovid

Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf (1739–1799) Symphony in F major, 'The Rescue of Andromeda by Perseus'

Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714–1787) Scene from Act Three of *Orfeo ed Euridice*

Interval

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) Scene from *Philemon und Baucis*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) Part Three of *Apollo et Hyacinthus*

Anna Devin (soprano)

Christopher Ainslie (countertenor)

Benjamin Hulett (tenor)

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

Ian Page (conductor)

Dittersdorf

Symphony in F major, 'The Rescue of Andromeda by Perseus'

1. Adagio non molto 2. Presto 3. Larghetto 4. Vivace – Tempo di Minuetto

The Roman poet known as Ovid (his full name was Publius Ovidius Naso) was born in 43 BC, the year after the death of Julius Caesar, and he died in AD 17. Alongside his contemporaries Horace and Virgil he ranks among the greatest Latin poets, and his works include *Heroides*, *Amores*, *Ars Amatoria* and – most famous and influential of all – *Metamorphoses*. In AD 8 he was exiled to the shores of the Black Sea at the express command of the Emperor Augustus, perhaps because his *Ars Amatoria* advocated and celebrated adultery at a time when the Emperor was seeking to promote monogamous marriage. In exile he wrote *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

Metamorphoses is an immense, fifteen-book narrative poem which chronicles the history of the world from its creation right up until Ovid's own day. It incorporates some 250 stories from Classical Greek and Roman mythology, all of which culminate in some form of magical transformation, and is considered one of the most important works in Western literature. It inspired such authors as Chaucer, Shakespeare, Dante and Boccaccio, and many of the earliest operas were based on stories from it, despite the inherent difficulties in representing transformation scenes on stage. Each of the four works featured in this evening's concert evoke stories featured in *Metamorphoses*, and further tales and characters which were to form the basis of operas include Acis and Galatea, Ariadne, Daphne, Echo and Narcissus, Venus and Adonis, Semele and Medea.

In the 1780s the colourful and splendidly named Viennese composer Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf (he was actually ennobled by Empress Maria Theresia in 1773; before then he was plain Carl Ditters) wrote a series of twelve programmatic symphonies inspired by specific tales from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, of which six have survived. These include depictions of the Lycian Peasants being transformed into frogs and Actaeon into a stag, and the fourth of these symphonies is titled 'The Rescue of Andromeda by Perseus'.

Perseus was a Greek demi-god, the son of Zeus and Danaë, famed for having slain the Gorgon Medusa. Medusa, who is described as having a hideous female face with live venomous snakes instead of hair, turned all who looked at her to stone; but aided by gifts of winged sandals (with which to fly) from Hermes and a polished shield from Athena, Perseus cut her head off with his sword by viewing her reflection in his shield while she slept.

The ensuing story of Perseus' rescue of Andromeda comes from Book IV of *Metamorphoses*. Andromeda is the daughter of King Cepheus of Ethiopia, and her mother, Queen Cassiopeia, has provoked the anger of the gods by claiming herself to be more beautiful than the cherished sea-nymphs, the Nereids. The gods have responded by sending a terrifying sea-monster which can only be placated by the sacrifice of Andromeda. When Perseus flies past he sees Andromeda tied to a rock and vows to save her on condition that if he succeeds he can marry her. The King and Queen gladly consent, Perseus slays the monster, and he and Andromeda are joyfully united.

Although the reflective slow movement with which Dittersdorf's symphony begins has no prescribed narrative, it seems to portray Perseus flying high above the world, content in the satisfaction of his triumph over the Gorgon, as an ethereal oboe solo hovers serenely over gentle sonorities provided by muted strings and horns. The lively second movement is headed by a quotation from Ovid – "motis talaribus aera findit" ("he cuts a path through the air on his fluttering anklets"); as Perseus looks down and sees Andromeda, his excitement at her beauty is matched by his anxiety at the danger she is in. There follows a soulful larghetto in F minor, which again has no superscription but is redolent of Andromeda's grief and despair at her plight, while the finale is headed by another quotation from Ovid, "gaudent generumque salutant" ("they rejoice and welcome the son-in-law"). This begins in a vivacious D minor before rather surprisingly subsiding into a more introspective minuet, perhaps reflecting the privacy and intimacy of the wedding party after the clamour of public celebration following the slaying of the sea-monster.

Dittersdorf, whose father was a costumier in Vienna's imperial court and theatre, was a remarkably prolific composer, and enjoyed considerable success in his day. His compositions include some 120 symphonies, 40 solo concertos – including ones for flute, oboe, viola, cello and double bass – and numerous oratorios and operas. He was also an accomplished violinist, and at a house-concert in Vienna in 1784 he played in what can well claim to have been the most distinguished string quartet ever assembled – Haydn was the other violinist, Mozart played the viola and Vanhal the cello.

Gluck Scene from Act Three of Orfeo ed Euridice

Anna Devin (Euridice), Christopher Ainslie (Orfeo)

The story of Orpheus, and his descent into Hades to rescue his beloved Eurydice, has inspired composers throughout the history of opera, from Jacopo Peri (1600), Giuseppe Caccini (1602) and Claudio Monteverdi (1607) to Hans Werner Henze (1978), Harrison Birtwistle (1986) and Philip Glass (1993). Rameau and Debussy both worked extensively on Orpheus projects which they failed to complete, and the dozens of eighteenth century settings of the story included Haydn's final opera, *L'anima del filosofo*, written in London in 1791 but not performed until 1951.

Orfeo ed Euridice was the first of the three so-called 'reform' operas that Gluck wrote in collaboration with the poet Raniero Calzabigi, and it is generally considered to be one of the most important works in the history of opera. It was premièred at the Burgtheater in Vienna on 5 October 1762, and the following day the six-year-old Mozart arrived in the Austrian capital for the very first time. This coincidence seems curiously symbolic, and it was certainly bold of Gluck to choose for his new opera the subject of mythology's greatest musician, requiring him as it did to create music that could convincingly depict Paradise and placate the Furies.

The story of how Orpheus is allowed to rescue his beloved Eurydice from the underworld on condition that he does not look at her reaches its climax in the third act of Gluck's opera. Disorientated by her return towards the mortal world and bemused by Orpheus' failure to help or even make eye contact with her, Eurydice is in a state of such agitation that Orpheus briefly forgets the decree and turns to face his wife, thereby consigning her to a second death.

Gluck and Calzabigi's reforms were in fact not entirely new, and in many respects involved adopting existing French models rather than Italian ones. These included giving priority to the concept of the scene, rather than individual numbers, the rejection of the 'da capo' arias beloved by Italian 'opera seria', the use of the orchestra throughout (rather than having recitatives accompanied solely by the continuo section), and the rejection of empty virtuosity in the vocal writing. The one important Italian tradition which still won the day, however, was the need for a happy ending – in this version of the myth, Cupid is eventually victorious, and Orpheus and Eurydice are reunited for a second time.

RECITATIVO ACCOMPAGNATO

ORFEO: Vieni, segui i miei passi,
Unico, amato oggetto
Del fedele amor mio!

EURIDICE: Sei tu? M'inganno?
Sogno? Veglio? O delirio?

ORFEO: Amata sposa,
Orfeo son io, e vivo ancor!
Ti venni fin negli Elisi a ricercar.
Fra poco il nostro cielo,
Il nostro sole, il mondo
Di bel nuovo vedrai!

EURIDICE: Tu vivi? Io vivo?
Come? Ma con qual arte? Ma per qual via?

ORFEO: Saprai tutto da me.
Per ora non chieder più!
Meco t'affretta,
E il vano importuno timor dall'alma sgombra!
Ombra tu più non sei,
Io non son ombra.

ACCOMPANIED RECITATIVE

ORPHEUS: *Come, follow my steps,
sole, beloved object
of my faithful love.*

EURYDICE: *Is it you? Am I deceived?
Am I dreaming? Am I awake? Or am I raving?*

ORPHEUS: *Beloved wife,
I am Orpheus, and am still alive!
I have come even as far as Elysium to find you.
In a short while our own sky,
our sun and our world
you will see beautifully anew!*

EURYDICE: *Are you alive? Am I alive?
How come? Through what means? In what way?*

ORPHEUS: *You will learn all about it from me.
For the time being ask no more!
Hasten with me,
and banish the foolish, untimely fear in your soul!
You are no longer a phantom;
I am not a phantom.*

EURIDICE: Che ascolto? E sarà ver?
Pietosi Numi,
Qual contento è mai questo!
Io dunque in braccio all'idol mio
Fra' più soave lacci
D'Amore e d'Imeneo
Nuova vita vivrò!

ORFEO: Sì, mia speranza!
Ma tronchiam le dimore,
Ma seguiamo il cammin.
Tanto è crudele la fortuna con me,
Che appena io credo di possederti,
Appena so dar fede a me stesso.

EURIDICE: E un dolce sfogo del tenero amor mio
Nel primo istante che tu ritrovi me,
Ch'io ti riveggo,
T'annoia, Orfeo!

ORFEO: Ah, non è ver, ma...
Sappi... senti...
(Oh legge crudel!)
Bella Euridice,
Inoltra i passi tuoi!

EURIDICE: Che mai t'affanna
In sì lieto momento?

ORFEO: (Che dirò?
Lo preveddi!
Ecco il cimento!)

EURIDICE: Non m'abbracci? Non parli?
Guardami almen.
Dimmi, son bella ancora,
Qual era un dì?
Vedi, che forse è spento
Il roseo del mio volto?
Odi, che forse s'oscurò
Quel che amasti,
E soave chiamasti,
Splendor de' sguardi miei?

ORFEO: (Più che l'ascolto,
Meno resisto.
Orfeo, coraggio!)
Andiamo, mia diletta Euridice!
Or non è tempo
Di queste tenerezze,
Ogni dimora è fatale per noi.

*EURYDICE: What do I hear! And can it be true?
Merciful Heavens,
what happiness indeed is this!
Will I then in the arms of my beloved,
within the sweetest chains
of Love and Marriage,
live a new life?*

*ORPHEUS: Yes, my hope!
But let us stop delaying;
let us follow the path.
So cruel is Fortune to me
that I scarcely believe that I have you,
I scarcely know how to believe myself.*

*EURYDICE: And a sweet token of my tender love
at the first moment that you find me again,
and that I see you again,
annoys you, Orpheus?*

*ORPHEUS: Ah, it's not true!
But know... Listen...
(Oh, cruel decree!)
Beautiful Eurydice,
quicken your steps.*

*EURYDICE: Whatever can be troubling you
at such a happy moment?*

*ORPHEUS: (What can I say?
I foresaw it.
Here's the rub!)*

*EURYDICE: Will you not embrace me? Do you
not speak to me? Look at me, at least.
Tell me, am I beautiful still,
as I once used to be?
Do you see that the colour in my cheeks
has perhaps faded?
Do you sense that perhaps has been dimmed
that which you used to love
and called sweet –
the splendour of my eyes?*

*ORPHEUS: (The more that I hear,
the less I can resist.
Orpheus, have courage!)
Let's go, my darling Eurydice!
Now is not the time
for these endearments;
every delay is fatal for us.*

EURIDICE: Ma... un sguardo solo...

ORFEO: È sventura il mirarti.

EURIDICE: Ah, infido!
E queste son l'accoglienze tue!
Mi neghi un sguardo,
Quando dal caro amante
E dal tenero sposo
Aspettarmi io dovea
Gli amplessi e i baci!

ORFEO: (Che barbaro martir!)
Ma vieni e taci!

EURIDICE: Ch'io taccia! E questo ancora
Mi restava a soffrir?
Dunque hai perduto
La memoria, l'amore,
La costanza, la fede?
E a che svegliarmi dal mio dolce riposo,
Or ch'hai pur spente
Quelle a entrambi sì care d'Amore
E d'Imeneo pudiche faci!
Rispondi, traditor!

ORFEO: Ma vieni, e taci!

DUETTO

ORFEO: Vieni, appaga il tuo consorte!

EURIDICE: No, più cara è a me la morte,
Che di vivere con te!

ORFEO: Ah, crudel!

EURIDICE: Lasciami in pace!

ORFEO: No, mia vita, ombra seguace
Verrò sempre intorno a te!

EURIDICE: Ma perché sei sì tiranno?

ORFEO: Ben potrò morir d'affanno,
Ma giammai dirò perché!

EURIDICE, ORFEO:
Grande, o Numi, è il dono vostro!
Lo conosco e grata/grato io sono!
Ma il dolor che unite al dono
È insoffribile per me.

EURYDICE: But... one single look...

ORPHEUS: Looking at you would be disastrous.

*EURYDICE: Ah, faithless man!
And these are your reassurances?
You deny me a glance,
when from my dear lover
and tender husband
I might have expected
hugs and kisses?*

*ORPHEUS: (What excruciating torture!)
But come, and keep quiet.*

*EURYDICE: Keep quiet? And this too
I have to endure?
Have you then lost
memory, love,
constancy, faith?
And why do you waken me from my sweet repose,
now that you have indeed extinguished
those chaste torches so dear
to both Love and Marriage?
Answer, traitor!*

ORPHEUS: But come, and keep quiet.

DUET

ORPHEUS: Come, appease your husband!

*EURYDICE: No, more dear to me is death
than to live with you.*

ORPHEUS: Ah, cruel woman!

EURYDICE: Leave me in peace.

*ORPHEUS: No, my treasure, as a loyal phantom
I shall always hover around you.*

EURYDICE: But why are you being so cruel?

*ORPHEUS: I could well die of grief,
but never will I tell why.*

*EURYDICE, ORPHEUS:
Great is your gift, o Gods!
I know it and am grateful!
But the grief which is attached to the gift
is insufferable for me.*

RECITATIVO ACCOMPAGNATO

EURIDICE: Qual' vita è questa mai
che a vivere incomincio!
E qual funesto, terribile segreto
Orfeo m'asconde!
Perché piange, e s'affligge?
Ah, non ancora troppo avvezza
agli affanni, che soffrono i viventi;
a sì gran colpo manca la mia costanza;
agli occhi miei si smarrisce la luce,
oppresso in seno mi diventa
affannoso il respirar.
Tremo, vacillo e sento
fra l'angoscia e il terrore
da un palpito crudel vibrarmi il core.

ARIA

EURIDICE: Che fiero momento!
Che barbara sorte!
Passar dalla morte
a tanto dolor!
Avvezzo al contento
d'un placido oblio,
fra queste tempeste,
si perde il mio cor!
Vacillo, tremo...

RECITATIVO ACCOMPAGNATO

ORFEO: Ecco un nuovo tormento!

EURIDICE: Amato sposo,
m'abbandoni così?
Mi struggo in pianto;
non mi consoli?
Il duol m'opprime i sensi;
non mi soccorri?
Un'altra volta, oh stelle,
dunque morir degg'io
senza un amplesso tuo,
senza un addio?

ORFEO: Più frenarmi non posso,
a poco a poco la ragion m'abbandona,
oblio la legge, Euridice e me stesso! E...

EURIDICE: Orfeo, consorte!
Ah... mi sento... languir.

ORFEO: No, sposa! Ascolta! Se sapessi...
Ah che fo? Ma fino a quando
in questo orrido inferno dovrò penar?

ACCOMPANIED RECITATIVE

EURYDICE: *What life is this
that I am starting to live?
And what dreadful, terrible secret
is Orpheus hiding from me?
Why does he weep and look so troubled?
Ah, I am not yet reaccustomed
to the pangs which the living suffer;
at such a great blow my constancy fails me;
the light fades in front of my eyes,
and trapped in my breast
my breath becomes short.
I tremble, I sway, and I feel
my heart vibrating with bitter palpitations
of anguish and terror.*

ARIA

EURYDICE: *What cruel moment,
what wretched fate!
To pass from death
to such sorrow!
Accustomed to the contentment
of calm oblivion,
my heart is lost
among these storms.
I sway, I tremble...*

ACCOMPANIED RECITATIVE

ORPHEUS: *Here is a new torment!*

EURYDICE: *Beloved husband,
you abandon me like this?
I am consumed with grief,
and you do not console me?
Sorrow overwhelms my senses,
and you do not help me?
Must I then die
a second time, oh heavens,
without your embrace,
without a farewell?*

ORPHEUS: *I can't restrain myself any longer.
Little by little my reason leaves me;
I forget the decree, Eurydice, even myself! And...*

EURYDICE: *Orpheus, husband!
Ah... I feel myself... dying.*

ORPHEUS: *No, my wife! Listen! If you knew...
Ah, what am I doing? For how long
must I suffer in this dreadful hell?*

EURIDICE: Ben mio, ricordati... di... me!

ORFEO: Che affanno!
Oh, come mi si lacera il cor!
Più non resisto... Smanio...
fremo... deliro... Ah! Mio tesoro!

EURIDICE: Giusti Dei, che m'avvenne?
Io manco, io moro.

ORFEO: Ahimè! Dove trascorsi?
Ove mi spinse un delirio d'amor?
Sposa! Euridice! Consorte!
Ah più non vive, la chiamo invan!
Misero me! La perdo, e di nuovo e per sempre!
Oh legge! Oh morte! Oh ricordo crudel!
Non ho soccorso, non m'avanza consiglio!
Io veggo solo – ah, fiera vista! –
il luttuoso aspetto dell'orrido mio stato!
Saziati, sorte rea! Son disperato!

ARIA

ORFEO: Che farò senza Euridice?
Dove andrò senza il mio ben?
Euridice! Euridice!
Oh Dio! Rispondi!
Io son pure il tuo fedel.
Ah! Non m'avanza
più soccorso, più speranza,
né dal mondo, né dal ciel!

EURYDICE: My beloved, remember me!

*ORPHEUS: What torment!
Oh, how it tears my heart!
I can withstand it no longer. I rant...
I tremble... I am delirious... Ah, my treasure!*

*EURYDICE: Just Gods, what is happening to
me? I faint... I die.*

*ORPHEUS: Alas! What have I done?
To where has love's frenzy driven me?
Wife! Eurydice! My consort!
Ah, she no longer lives, I call her in vain.
Woe is me! I have lost her again, and for ever!
Oh cruel decree! Oh death! Oh bitter reminder!
There is no help, no advice for me.
I see only – oh cruel sight! –
the mournful aspect of my wretched state.
Be satisfied, ghastly fate! I am driven to despair.*

ARIA

*ORFEO: What shall I do without Eurydice?
Where shall I go without my beloved?
Eurydice! Eurydice!
Oh God! Answer!
I am still your faithful love.
Ah, there is left to me
no more help, no more hope,
either on earth or in heaven!*

Interval

Haydn Overture and Scene from *Philemon und Baucis*

Anna Devin (Baucis, Narcissa), Benjamin Hulett (Aret)

On 1 May 1761 the twenty-nine-year old Franz Joseph Haydn was appointed Vice-Kapellmeister to Prince Paul Anton Esterházy. Thus began one of the most important and productive master/servant relationships in the history of music, for although the Prince died within a year of Haydn's appointment, he was succeeded by his brother Nikolaus, who over the next twenty-eight years was to be an extraordinarily enlightened and inspirational benefactor for Haydn. The Esterházy's, whose main residence was their palace in Eisenstadt, a small town 26 miles south-east of Vienna, were the wealthiest and most influential family of the Hungarian nobility, and Prince Nikolaus had bold ambitions for the physical and artistic development of his court, quickly earning the sobriquet 'Nikolaus the Magnificent'.

The greatest of all his projects was the transformation of his modest hunting lodge in the reclaimed swampland east of Lake Neusiedl into the splendid new summer palace Esterháza. This was ready for occupation by 1766 – the same year that Haydn assumed the role of main Kapellmeister following the death of the elderly Gregor Werner – and Haydn and his musicians were to spend an increasing amount of their time there. In 1768 the new opera house at Esterháza opened with the première of Haydn's comic opera *Lo speziale*, and five years

later a new marionette theatre was completed. It was for this theatre that Haydn wrote *Philemon und Baucis*, which received its first performance on 2 September during a visit from the Empress Maria Theresia. The work, which is set in a small village in ancient Phrygia, is subtitled 'Jupiter's journey to the Earth', and as with Haydn's other marionette operas the text is in German. The score for this original setting was soon lost, but the work was adapted and revived as a singspiel (without puppets) in 1780, and a manuscript of the singspiel version has survived.

Jupiter and Mercury (both spoken roles) have come down to earth disguised as pilgrims, but are appalled that their requests for sustenance and lodging have been rejected by everyone they have approached. They finally arrive at the small hut of Philemon and Baucis, an elderly couple who are mourning the recent death of their only son, Aret, and his fiancée Narcissa. Despite their grief and their poverty they do all they can to help the visitors. Baucis prepares a hot bath and a modest meal, but laments the fact that she cannot do more for them. Left alone she bemoans her fate, and the failure of the other villagers to help, in an aria whose tender simplicity and unadorned sincerity reflects both her kind-heartedness and the modesty of her social status.

BAUCIS: Heut' fühl ich der Armut Schwere,
Dieser kleinen Hütte Leere,
Weil ich niemand helfen kann,
Ihr Erhöhten dieser Erden!
Ihr könnt Göttern ähnlich werden.
Nehmt euch nur des Niedern an!

*BAUCIS: Today I feel the hardship of poverty,
the emptiness of this tiny hut,
because I am unable to help anyone.
You exalted ones of this earth,
you can become like gods.
All you need to do is to look after the lowly.*

Moved by their generosity, Jupiter determines to reward Philemon and Baucis with a gift far more valuable to them than wealth, fame or status. He transforms the funeral urns of Aret and Narcissa into an arbour of roses, inside which the young couple sit and gradually return to life. The surviving manuscript score of the singspiel version of the opera includes a short orchestral interlude at this moment in the drama, although this music has been identified as not being by Haydn

but from a parody opera called *Alceste* by Carlo d'Ordonez (1734-1786), which was frequently performed at Esterháza.

Undoubtedly by Haydn, though, is Aret's ensuing aria, "Wenn am weiten Firmamente", in which he sings – amid a luscious texture of oboe solo, muted 2nd violin triplets and pizzicato 1st violins and bass – of his dawning realisation and wonder at the miracle that has just occurred.

ARET: Wenn am weiten Firmamente
nur die kleinste Sonne brennte,
blieb es doch ein Wunderbau.
Myriaden Sonnenglänzen
in des Äthers ewigen Grenzen
zur Bewundrung, nicht zur Schau.

*ARET: If from the furthest heavens
only the smallest ray of sun shone through,
it is still a miracle.
Myriad sun rays gleam
in the everlasting borders of the ether,
to wonder at, not to observe.*

As Aret and Narcissa are reunited, they pledge their devotion and undying love to one another in a charming and jubilant duet.

ARET: Entflohn ist nun der Schlummer,
Narcissa, der uns so reizend schien.
Ich seh es ohne Kummer:
Wo du bist, Narcissa,
da muß mein Glücke blühn.

NARCISSA: Mit lust erfülltem Herzen,
Aret, kehrt sich mein Blick nach dir.
Vor dir fliehn Gram und Schmerzen,
Aret, du bist mir die höchste wonne.

BEIDE: Es trenn' uns nie
des Schicksals mächtig Wort.

ARET: Ich wünsche nichts,
als dich beglückt zu wissen.

NARCISSA: Ich will kein Glück,
als nur mit dir genießen.

BEIDE: Und immer sind wir neidenswert,
nur dieser Wunsch sei uns gewährt.

*ARET: The slumber has now departed,
which seemed so delightful to us, Narcissa.
I behold it without grief:
where you are, Narcissa,
there must my joy blossom.*

*NARCISSA: With a heart filled with joy,
Aret, my gaze settles on you.
May grief and torments flee from you,
Aret, you are my greatest bliss.*

*BOTH: We shall never be separated
by Fate's mighty word.*

*ARET: I wish for nothing,
except to know that you are happy.*

*NARCISSA: I want no happiness,
unless I can share it with you.*

*BOTH: And we are always to be envied,
if this wish is granted to us.*

Mozart Part Three of *Apollo et Hyacinthus*

Anna Devin (Melia), Christopher Ainslie (Apollo), Benjamin Hulett (Oebalus)

Apollo et Hyacinthus was Mozart's first opera, written and first performed when the composer was just eleven years old. The grammar school attached to Salzburg's Benedictine University had had a tradition since 1617 of performing an annual Latin play, and in 1661 a theatre equipped with elaborate stage machinery had been erected adjacent to the university's Great Hall. In addition to the annual event in August, individual classes at the grammar school sometimes presented their own productions – indeed the five-year-old Mozart, though not attached to the school, had taken part in a Latin school play there in 1761 – and in May 1767 the third year students performed a five-act Latin tragedy, *Clementia Croesi* ('The Clemency of Croesus'). The three parts of *Apollo et Hyacinthus* were originally performed between the acts of this play.

In the original story of *Apollo and Hyacinth* as told by Ovid, Apollo is in love with Hyacinthus. While the two are playing discus together, Hyacinth is so impressed by the skill and strength of Apollo's first throw that he avidly runs to pick the discus up as it lands on the ground; the discus, however, ricochets off a rock as it lands and gives Hyacinth a mortal blow to the head. A grief-stricken Apollo refuses to let Hades claim the boy, and instead creates a flower, the hyacinth, from his spilled blood. Other accounts of the myth add the character of Zephyrus, Apollo's rival for the affections of Hyacinth. In this version, the jealous Zephyrus deliberately blows Apollo's discus off course and causes it to strike Hyacinth.

The libretto of the opera sought to make the story more palatable to eighteenth-century audiences by adding the characters of Melia and Oebalus. Melia becomes the object of Apollo's now heterosexual love, with Oebalus sharing her grief at Hyacinth's death, while Zephyrus provides the treachery and deceit which drives the drama forward. In this way the culmination of the opera becomes more about forgiveness and redemption, themes that were to dominate the great operatic masterpieces of Mozart's maturity.

The music of *Apollo et Hyacinthus* displays remarkable maturity, individuality and virtuosity, particularly in the third and final section of the work. Oebalus' aria is a wonderfully visceral evocation of the mourning father's anger and despair, with flashing violin scales and huge melodic leaps magnificently capturing the turbulent sea imagery, but the emotional climax of the score is surely the duet between Oebalus and Melia. Mozart's fledgling genius is already apparent in the beauty not only of the melody but also of the scoring: muted first violins, lapping violas and pizzicato second violins, cello and bass are gently supported by horns, creating an exquisite texture over which father and daughter lament their plight. Their despair is resolved with the return and forgiveness of Apollo, and the work ends with a delightfully effervescent and reconciliatory trio for the surviving protagonists.

RECITATIVE ACCOMPAGNATO

OEBALUS:

Hyacinthe! – Nate! – vixit – exanimis iacet! –
Apollo, dixit, innocens est, o Pater!
Crede mihi, non est; Zephyrus est auctor necis.
Sic ergo mecum Zephyre ter mendax! agis?
Sic Numen ipsum sceleris et tanti reum
Arguere, sic me fallere haud Regem times?
Cruente! faxim crimen hoc proprio luas
Cruore! – Mortem Filii an inultus feram?

ARIA

OEBALUS:

Ut navis in aequore luxuriante
Per montes, per valles undarum iactatur,
Et iamiam proxima nubibus stat,
Et iamiam proxima Tartaro nat:
Sic bilis a pectore bella minante
Per corpus, per venas, per membra grassatur.
Furore sublevor;
Dolore deprimor.
Ira, vindicta conglomerant se,
Atque quassare non desinunt me.

ACCOMPANIED RECITATIVE

OEBALUS:

*Hyacinthus! My son!.. His life is over. He lies dead!
"Apollo is innocent, father!", he said. "Believe me,
it was not he; Zephyrus is the author of my death."
Is this then how you treat me, ever lying Zephyrus?
Have you thus accused the god himself of so foul a
crime, and do you not fear to deceive me, the King?
Bloodthirsty one! I'll avenge this crime with your
own blood! Should I bear a son's death unavenged?*

ARIA

OEBALUS:

*Just as a ship on a violent sea is thrown
through the mountains and valleys of the waves,
one moment perching close to the clouds,
the next plunging close to Tartarus,
so the rage from a heart bent on vengeance
surges through my body, my veins and my limbs.
My fury buoys me up;
I sink under my grief;
rage and vengeful thoughts intertwine,
and will not let me rest.*

RECITATIVO

(Accedit Melia.)

MELIA:

Quocumque me converto, crudelis Dei,
Monumenta detestanda conspicio. Prius
Perire Zephyrum videram, et Fratrem modo
Video natare sanguine insontem suo.

OEBALUS:

Quid comite nullo Filia huc infers pedem?
An latro iamiam fugit?

MELIA:

Hunc iussi illico
Vitare nostra regna, nam caedem improbus
Nova gravare caede non timuit Deus.

OEBALUS:

Quid loquere? caedem Nata! quam narras
novam?

MELIA:

O Rex! amicum rapuit, et Zephyrum quidem,
Ventisque me vidente lacerandum dedit.

OEBALUS:

O iustus est Apollo, dum plectit scelus,
Quod imputavit perfidus et atrox Deo
Zephyrus! hic auctor, Filia! est factae necis.
Non est Apollo.
Zephyrus in Fratrem tuum
Discum agere non dubitavit.

MELIA:

Unde autem Pater!
Haec nosse poteris?

OEBALUS:

Natus haec retulit mihi,
Nam vivus est inventus a nobis. Meis
Extinctus est in manibus.

MELIA:

Heu me! quid? Pater!
Quid ergo regno exisse iussisti Deum?

OEBALUS:

Filia! dolore motus, et Zephyri dolis
Delusus, id iussisse me memini. Impium
Quis tale sibi timuisset a Zephyro scelus?

MELIA:

O Genitor! omnes perdit iamiam sumus!
Discessit, heu! discessit a nobis Deus!
O crede, non inultus id probrum feret.

RECITATIVE

(Melia enters.)

MELIA:

*Wherever I turn, I see hateful reminders of the
cruel god. Earlier I saw Zephyrus perish,
and now I see my innocent brother
swimming in his own blood.*

OEBALUS:

*Why are you coming here unattended, my
daughter? Has the scoundrel already fled?*

MELIA:

*I ordered him at once to leave our kingdom,
for the treacherous god has dared
to exacerbate his earlier killing with fresh slaughter.*

OEBALUS:

*What are you saying? What fresh slaughter do you
mean?*

MELIA:

*O King! He seized our friend Zephyrus, and before my
very eyes caused him to be torn to pieces by the winds.*

OEBALUS:

*Oh, Apollo is just, for he has punished the crime
which the treacherous and monstrous Zephyrus
imputed to the god! He was the author, my
daughter, of the murder that was committed. It
was not Apollo. Zephyrus did not hesitate
to launch the discus at your brother.*

MELIA:

*But father! How
could you know these things?*

OEBALUS:

*Your brother told me,
for he was alive when I found him.
He died in my arms.*

MELIA:

*What? Oh father, alas! Why then did you
order the god to be banished from our kingdom?*

OEBALUS:

*O daughter! Moved by grief and deluded by the
trickery of Zephyrus, I remember ordering that. Who
would have suspected Zephyrus of so heinous a crime?*

MELIA:

*O father! Now we are all lost! Alas, he's gone,
the god has left us! Believe me, he will not
bear such an insult unavenged.*

OEBALUS:
Quid? Nata! discessisse iam Numen putas?

MELIA:
Nil dubito; namque exire de regno tuo
Apollinem ipsa, linquere et nostros lares
Iussi. O ut hunc revocare nunc possem Deum!

OEBALUS:
Heu! fata quam sinistra nos hodie obruunt!

DUETTO

OEBALUS:
Natus cadit,
Atque Deus
Me nolente,
Nesciente
Laesus abit.
Regnum sine Numine
Iam non diu stabit:
Numen! quaeso, flectere,
Et ad nos revertere!

MELIA:
Frater cadit,
Atque meus
Te iubente
Me dolente
Sponsus abit.
Sponsa sine complice
Quaeso, quid amabit?
Noli sponsam plectere,
Numen! ah regredere!

RECITATIVO

(Accedit Apollo.)

APOLLO:
Rex! me redire cogit in Hyacinthum amor.
Ignosce, quod Numen ego tua regna audeam
Praesens beare! Disce, quid Numen queat!
Hyacinthe surge! funus et flore aemulo
Nomenque praeferente Defuncti tege.

*(Subsidens cum funere tellus hyacinthos
flores germinat.)*

OEBALUS:
Quid video? Surrexisse de Nato meo
Conspicio flores?

OEBALUS:
What, daughter? You think the god has gone already?

MELIA:
*I have no doubt, for I myself commanded Apollo
to leave our home and depart your kingdom.
Would that I could now recall the god!*

OEBALUS:
Alas! How hostile are the fates which today undo us!

DUET

OEBALUS:
*My son has perished,
and the god,
against my will
and without my knowledge,
has gone away insulted.
A kingdom without its god
will not survive for long.
O god, I beg you, change
your mind and come back to us!*

MELIA:
*My brother has perished,
and my betrothed,
at your command
and to my sorrow,
has gone away.
A bride without a husband,
whom, I ask, will she love?
Do not punish your bride,
O god! Ah, come back!*

RECITATIVE

(Apollo approaches.)

APOLLO:
*O King, love for Hyacinthus compels me to return!
Excuse me for venturing, as a god, to bless your
kingdom with my presence. Learn what a god can do!
Hyacinthus, arise! May his body be swathed in
flowers bearing his image, and marked with the dead
boy's name*.
(The dead body sinks into the earth, and
hyacinths bloom in its place.)*

OEBALUS:
*What am I seeing? Can I see flowers rising from
my son?*

* This refers to the marking on the hyacinth flower, which seemed to show the letters 'Ai' – an exclamation of grief in the ancient world.

MELIA:

Numen o nimium potens!
Pudore me suffusa profi teor ream.
Ad verba Zephyri, Patris ad iussa omnia
Quae me poenitet, feci.

OEBALUS:

Optime Parce Deus! Ignarus ego,
quis fuerit necis
Auctor patratae, pessimo Zephyro fidem
Habui, meumque credidi Natum tua
Periisse fraude. Zephyrus o quanta improbus
Induxit in regna mea, ni parcas, mala!

MELIA:

O Numen! haud fuisse contemptum putes;
Abire quod te iusserim, imprudens fui
Credulaque nimium, et ira mihi verba abstulit,
Quae de dolore Fratris occisi meant.

APOLLO:

Confide Rex! Apollo non fugiet tua
Regna. Manet, et manebit heic tecum, fide
Iam stare si promissa demonstres tua.

OEBALUS:

Intelligo. Ecce Nata! te sponsam Deus
Dignatur elegisse.

MELIA:

Num credam Deum
Amare posse Meliam?

APOLLO:

O crede! ipsemet
Jupiter amare saepe mortales solet;
Amare namque convenit tantum Diis,
Vobis amari.

MELIA:

Numen! en famulam, suo
Quae pro Parente pectus hoc offert tibi.

OEBALUS:

En! Si placere sponsa mortalis potest,
Apollo! nostra Filiam adductam manu
Accipe, meoque semper in regno mane.
Hyacinthus obiit: alter Hyacinthus mihi
Eris, manere Filia hac factus gener,
Regione si digneris in nostra.

MELIA:

*O all-powerful god!
Blushing with shame, I confess my guilt.
It was at the words of Zephyrus and the bidding
of my father that I did what now shames me.*

OEBALUS:

*Noble god, forgive me!
I was blind, and had faith in the monstrous
Zephyrus, who was the author of the murder that
was committed, and I believed my son to have perished
by your crime. O how much evil the wicked Zephyrus
has brought upon my kingdom, unless you spare us!*

MELIA:

*O divine Power, don't think that you have been scorned!
I ordered you to leave because I was foolish and too
trusting, and my anger wrung from me words which
were uttered out of grief for my murdered brother.*

APOLLO:

*Rest assured, O King! Apollo will not flee your kingdom.
He remains, and will continue to stay here with you, if
you now honour your vow to stand firm in your faith.*

OEBALUS:

*I understand. Behold, my daughter, how the god
has deigned to choose you as his bride.*

MELIA:

*Can I dare to believe that the god
is able to love Melia?*

APOLLO:

*Believe it! Jupiter himself
has more than once loved a mortal;
indeed it is entirely fitting for the gods to love
and to be loved by you.*

MELIA:

*Divine Power! Behold your servant, who offers
her heart to you in the name of her father.*

OEBALUS:

*Look! If any mortal bride can please you,
Apollo, receive my daughter from my hand,
and remain in my kingdom forever.
Hyacinthus is dead: you will be for me another
Hyacinthus, if you deign to remain in our land
as husband to my daughter.*

APOLLO:
Oebale!
Accipio laetus Meliae oblatae manum,
Rebusque semper placidus adsistam tuis.

MELIA:
Justitia sic tua Deus elucet magis.

OEBALUS:
Sic innocentem debita haud merces fugit.

APOLLO:
Sic saecla te futura clementem sonent.

TERZETTO

APOLLO:
Tandem post turbida
Fulmina, nubila,
Tonantis murmura,
Pax alma virescit
Et explicat se.

MELIA:
Post vincla doloris
Nos iungit amabile
Pignus amoris.
Post fata beata
Nos taeda coronat
Et erigat te.

OEBALUS:
Post bella furoris
Vos iungit amabile
Pignus amoris.
Post fata, optata
Vos taeda coronat
Et excitat me.

APOLLO:
Post monstra pavoris
Nos iungit amabile
Pignus amoris.
Post fata, sperata
Nos taeda coronat
Et erigat te.

APOLLO:
Oebalus!
*I joyfully accept your offer of Melia's hand, and
shall stand quietly at your side in all your endeavours.*

MELIA:
Thus your justice, O god, glows all the brighter.

OEBALUS:
Thus innocence will gain its just deserts.

APOLLO:
Thus future centuries will proclaim your clemency.

TRIO

APOLLO:
*At last, after violent
lightning bolts, storm clouds
and rumblings of thunder,
nourishing peace puts forth green buds
and blossoms.*

MELIA:
*After the bonds of sorrow,
the joyful pledge of love
unites us.
After these events decreed by fate,
the blessed marriage torch
will crown us and inspire you.*

OEBALUS:
*After furious battles,
the joyful pledge of love
unites you.
After these events decreed by fate,
the longed-for marriage torch
will crown you and gladden me.*

APOLLO:
*After fearful portents,
the joyful pledge of love
unites us.
After these events decreed by fate,
the hoped-for marriage torch
will crown us and inspire you.*

The Mozartists

Violin 1	Matthew Truscott (Leader) Catherine Martin Andrew Roberts Julia Kuhn	Oboe	James Eastaway Rachel Chaplin
Violin 2	Jill Samuel Camilla Scarlett Kristin Deeken	Bassoon	Zoe Shevlin
Viola	Simone Jandl Louise Hogan	Horn	Gavin Edwards Nick Benz
Cello	Aoife Nic Athlaoich Sally Woods	Harpsichord	Steven Devine
Bass	Timothy Amherst		

www.mozartists.com