

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Betulia liberata

L'Orfeo Barockorchester

Michi Gaigg

B E T U L I A

L I B E R A T A, 1805

DEL SIGNOR. ABATE

PIETRO METASTASIO.

POSTA IN MUSICA

Dal Signor

GIUSEPPE MILISWECEK.



I N P A D O V A. MDCCLXXI.



Nella Stamperia del Seminario.

Con Licenza de' Superiori.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

Betulia liberata, Azione sacra in due parti, **KV 118 (74c)** (1771)

Libretto: Pietro Metastasio (1698-1782)

CD 1

Parte prima (Part One)

[1]	Overtura	4:03
[2]	Recitativo: Popoli di Betulia (Ozia)	0:55
[3]	Aria #1: D'ogni colpa la colpa maggiore (Ozia)	6:29
[4]	Recitativo: E in che sperar? (Cabri, Amital)	1:50
[5]	Aria #2: Ma qual virtù non cede (Cabri)	3:03
[6]	Recitativo: Già le memorie antiche (Ozia, Cabri, Amital)	3:31
[7]	Aria #3: Non hai cor (Amital)	4:14
[8]	Recitativo: E qual pace sperate (Ozia, Amital, Coro)	2:45
[9]	Aria con il Coro #4: Pietà, se irato sei (Ozia, Coro)	3:39
[10]	Recitativo: Chi è costei che qual sorgente aurora (Cabri, Amital, Ozia, Giuditta)	3:14

[11]	Aria #5: Del pari infeconda (Giuditta)	4:54
[12]	Recitativo: Oh saggia, oh santa (Ozia, Cabri, Giuditta)	2:21
[13]	Aria con il Coro #6: Pietà, se irato sei (Ozia, Coro)	3:43
[14]	Recitativo: Signor, Carmi a te viene (Cabri, Amital, Carmi, Ozia, Achior)	3:16
[15]	Aria #7: Terribile d'aspetto (Achior)	3:49
[16]	Recitativo: Ti consola, Achior (Ozia, Cabri, Achior, Giuditta)	3:13
[17]	Aria #8: Parto inerme, e non pavento (Giuditta)	5:46
[18]	Coro #9: Oh prodigio! Oh stupor! (Coro)	2:14

total time 63:01

CD 2

Parte seconda (Part Two)

[1]	Recitativo: Troppo mal corrisponde (Achior, Ozia)	5:43
[2]	Aria #10: Se Dio veder tu vuoi (Ozia)	7:16
[3]	Recitativo: Confuso io son (Achior, Ozia, Amital)	1:28
[4]	Aria #11: Quel nocchier che in gran procella (Amital)	6:31
[5]	Recitativo: Lungamente non dura (Ozia, Amital, Coro, Cabri, Giuditta, Achior)	9:32
[6]	Aria #12: Prigionier che fa ritorno (Giuditta)	5:41
[7]	Recitativo: Giuditta, Ozia, popoli, amici (Achior)	1:13
[8]	Aria #13: Te solo adoro (Achior)	3:50
[9]	Recitativo: Di tua vittoria (Ozia, Amital)	0:50
[10]	Aria #14: Con troppa rea viltà (Amital)	5:59
[11]	Recitativo: Quanta cura hai di noi (Cabri, Carmi, Ozia, Amital)	2:51
[12]	Aria #15: Quei moti che senti (Carmi)	2:01
[13]	Recitativo: Seguansi, o Carmi (Ozia, Amital, Cabri, Achior, Giuditta)	0:56
[14]	Aria con il Coro #16: Lodi al gran Dio (Giuditta, Coro)	5:59

total time 59:51

SOLOISTS

Giuditta (alto):
Margot Oitzinger

Ozia (tenor):
Christian Zenker

Achior (baritone):
Markus Volpert

Amital (soprano):
Marelize Gerber

Cabri (soprano):
Ulrike Hofbauer

Carmi (soprano):
Barbara Kraus

ORCHESTRA

conductor
Michi Gaigg

violin
Julia Huber-Warzecha
(concert master)
Martin Jopp
Martin Kalista
Ilse Kepplinger
Sabine Reiter
Petra Samhaber
Simone Trefflinger
Elisabeth Wiesbauer

viola
Lucas Schurig-Breuß
Julia Fiegl
Daniela Henzinger

violoncello
Anja Enderle
Katie Stephens

double bass
Maria Vahervuo

flute
Katharina Kröpfl
Sandra Koppensteiner

oboe
Carin van Heerden
Philipp Wagner

bassoon
Nikolaus Broda
Makiko Kurabayashi

trumpet
Franz Landlinger
Martin Mühringer

horn
Péter Keserü
Michael Söllner
Thomas Fischer
Martin Eitzinger

harpsichord
Erich Traxler

A stroke of genius

Betulia liberata (The liberated Bethulia) seems to be the least known among Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's larger stage works, be it secular or sacred, composed during his youth. Written documentation on the subject is also scarce. Among these we find a letter by Leopold Mozart written to his wife in Salzburg during the first concert journey of Italy with his son:

Vicenza 14 March 1771

*In Padua we saw as much as can be seen in a day, for here too we were not left in peace, Wolfg. having to play in 2 different places. But he also got some work and has to write an oratorio for Padua which he can do as and when the opportunity arises.*¹

Taking into account the consequent turn of events the commissioned oratorio for Padua „when the opportunity arises“ was obviously expressed prematurely. The person involved might have thought nothing of it when

1. Eisen, Cliff et al. In Mozart's Words, Letter 239 <<http://letters.mozartways.com>>.

Version 1.0, published by HRI Online, 2011. ISBN 9780955787676.

addressing a young lad of fifteen. Leopold reveals the identity of this person and the seriousness with which the Mozart family dealt with this commissioned oratorio for Padua in another letter after their return to Salzburg. The letter is addressed to his friend, Count Giovanni Luca Pallavicini in Bologna:

Salzburg 19 July 1771

*Meanwhile my son is writing an oratorio by Metastasio for Padua that has been commissioned by Sgr Don Giuseppe Ximenes de Ppi d'Aragona. When I pass through Verona, I'll send this oratorio to Padua to be copied, and on our return from Milan we'll go to Padua to hear it rehearsed.*²

The plan apparently was to leave the finished score in Padua during the imminent second Italian journey where it was to be copied while the Mozarts continued their journey to Milano to deliver the commissioned *fiesta teatrale* Ascanio in Alba for the marriage celebrations of the Archbishop Ferdinand Karl of Austria with Maria Beatrice d'Este. On their return to Padua they

2. loc. cit.

hoped to attend the rehearsals for *Betulia liberata*. This is the last known report on the events. It is not known if the score ever arrived in Padua, let alone if it was handed to the Duke of Aragon. It is also not known if the Duke had changed his mind in the meantime and had consulted other composers on this matter. The latter seems apparent since the libretto was printed twice during 1771 in Padua. The composers in question were the Bohemian Josef Mysliveček (1737-1781), a highly successful composer of Italian operas and an acquaintance of the Mozarts since March 1770, and the local composer Giuseppe Calegari (†1808). The young Mozart admired Mysliveček and regarded him as a role model. Mysliveček had already composed the oratorio *Il Tobia* for Padua in 1769. In this case he nevertheless had to clear the stage for Calegari: the annals of the Accademia patavina contain a report of a performance of a work of his taking place.

The script is based on a sacred drama, an *azione sacra*, by the aged Habsburg court poet, Pietro Metastasio (1698-1782), first set to music by Georg Reutter the Younger (1708-1772) and performed during the Holy Week in 1734. Metastasio's *Betulia liberata* is based on the story told in the Old Testament book of Judith: the Assyrians, commanded by Holofernes, tried to besiege the city of Bethulia. For its readers this material no doubt evoked sinister memories of the siege of Vienna in 1683 (the final Ottoman threat to the Holy Roman Empire capital)

and also of a recent political crisis (the afflictions suffered by the Austrian army to animosities by Charles Emmanuel III of Sardinia-Piemont during the beginning of the War of the Polish Succession in Northern Italy). Even though the city of Bethulia was fictitious and the Assyrians were at the most Babylonians the story nevertheless deals, once again, with the people of Israel and their unwavering faith in God who alone can redeem them from a hostile invasion.

Achior, ruler of the Ammonites and ally to the Assyrians, dares to remind Oloferne (Holofernes) that the Bethulians were invincible as long as their faith was steadfast. This enrages Oloferne and he orders Achior to be tied to a tree near Bethulia. This is where he is found by Carmi, a Bethulian councillor, and taken hostage. In Bethulia, joined by Ozia, ruler of Bethulia and Amital, a noble lady, he witnesses Giuditta's (Judith's) courage and unwavering faith. Following a divine plan she ventures to the army camp of the enemy.

Dramatizing the unspectacular

Betulia liberata was set to music in Vienna alone at least eight times. One of its special features is Metastasio's strict compliance to the Aristotelean postulation regarding the unit of action, place and time.

(Metastasio was bestowed the honorary title of „il poeta filosofo“ during his day). All events occurring outside the city walls, and these include the actual decapitation of the Assyrian warlord, are thus related by Metastasio as narrative, in this case as recitative.

How then does a composer like Mozart approach this literary material in which the epic quality obtains priority to the dramatic events? How does a young boy recently turned fifteen convey the drama of something rather unspectacular? At this stage in his life Mozart had had a fair amount of experience composing Italian stage works. His musical language is headstrong, risky and refreshingly youthful. His rich knowledge of musical rhetorics enhances the vocal parts and mellows the sometimes tricky violin and wind parts.

Some highlights could serve as example: the Overtura, in Italian ternary form, darkly depicts the invaded city of Bethulia in the sinister key of d minor, with martial interjections thrown in by the horns. Both Ozia and Amital enjoy a certain social standing and this is symbolized with virtuoso writing: Ozia's concern about the timidity of his subjects is expressed in the aria „D'ogni colpa la colpa maggiore“ with extravagant coloraturas up to high B. Amital's aria in the beginning of the second act, „Quel nocchier che in gran porcella“, is equally virtuosic and metaphorically depicts a storm at sea and an

incurable disease to describe the sorry state of Bethulia. The figures in the violin parts strongly support the sorrow and pain.

The people of Bethulia, represented by their councils Cabri and Carmi, express their fear and desperation both individually and as a group (choir). The orchestra plays an active role in dialogue with the singers. Giuditta's appearance is quite low-key as she joins the anxious group. Her pastoral aria „Del pari infeconda“ is presented as parable. Only during her second aria it becomes clear that the first impression of a socially humble woman and the ascetic widow of Manasse doesn't ring true: she proves herself a formidable heroine as she departs from her fellow citizens. With a well-placed messa di voce (a dynamic rise and fall of the voice, a means of expression especially celebrated by the castrati of the time) on the opening „Parto“ her unwavering faith is expressed. The choir, representing the citizens of Bethulia, is astounded to witness such immense courage. Also the imprisoned Achior joins the choir after his apt description of Olofernes' brutality (in the characteristic „barbaric“ key of C major) in the aria „Terribile d'aspetto“. The beginning of the second part contains two expansive recitativos: Ozia beseeches Achior to convert to his one God. It is followed by an accompagnato in which Giuditta relates the terrible events leading to Olofernes' „righteous“ doom and her return to the city of Bethulia.

In comparable opera scenes we have one aspect here that distinguishes this scene from the rest: even though the subject matter is unbearably brutal the instrumental accompaniment consists of long-held chords. This is a technique rather associated with sacred music and conveys Giuditta's disconnection from reality, a state in limbo. (Silke Leopold)

Syncopations in the orchestral accompaniment of the following aria, „Prigionier che fa ritorno“, still express Giuditta's inner turmoil in the aftermath of her heroic deed although the text already describes the deluded Achior. This is followed by moving reactions of those present: Achior confesses his faith in one God („Te solo adoro“) and Amital, accompanied by beautiful simple figures in the violins, begs forgiveness for her initial doubt of this heroic deed.

After the enemy's defeat the citizens of Bethulia join Giuditta in the solemn choir „Lodi al gran Dio“, set as *tonus peregrinus* and based on Psalm 113 which describes the liberation of the chosen people of Israel from Egypt. This version of a four part cantus firmus, supported by the oboes, was used by Mozart later again for his Requiem and is a quote from his Salzburg colleague Johann Michael Haydn.

When Mozart wrote to his sister on July 21, 1784, requiring his father to send him the „old Oratorio betulia liberata“ for further use he probably considered

using the last choir with its flaring and belligerent fanfares again. Here they symbolize the dread of the erstwhile aggressor, now bereft of a leader, and the termination of the city's besiegement.

Christian Moritz-Bauer

Translated by Carin van Heerden

Margot Oitzinger

Margot Oitzinger (Giuditta) was born in Graz and studied singing at the University of Music and Performing Arts in her hometown. She also attended several masterclasses with Emma Kirkby and Peter Kooij. She was awarded prizes at the International Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Competition Leipzig 2008 and at the International Baroque-singing competition in Chimay (Belgium) 2006.

As a soloist she worked with ensembles such as Collegium Vocale Gent, Bach Collegium Japan, the Concerto Copenhagen, L'Orfeo Barockorchester, the Wiener Akademie, the Bach Consort, Le Concert Lorrain, the Dunedin Consort, sette voci and many more.

Her concert repertoire includes the alto roles in numerous Baroque oratorios, cantatas and operas but also contemporary music.

Her concert and opera engagements include appearances at international festivals such as the Festival Crete Senesi under Philippe Herreweghe, Bachfest Leipzig, Festival voor oude Muziek Utrecht, Musikfestival Bremen, Schützfest Dresden, Bachfest Salzburg, the Händel-Festspiele Halle, le festival de musique de la Chaise Dieu and the Styriarte. She has performed

in Austria, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, France and Bulgaria.

www.oitzinger.com

Christian Zenker

Tenor Christian Zenker (Ozia) was born in Ansbach and was a member of the famous Windsbach Boys' Choir. Even before he completed his vocal studies at the Munich Hochschule für Musik und Theater Brigitte Fassbaender took him on at the Tiroler Landestheater, where he was awarded a scholarship. In 2006 he changed to the Landestheater in Linz and since 2009 he is a full-time freelance singer.

He has made guest appearances in major opera houses and at many music festivals in Europe and farther afield such as the Opernfestspiele Schloss Rheinsberg, Seefestspiele Mörbisch, Händel-Festspiele Halle, Dresdner Musikfestspiele, Europäische Festwochen Passau, *donauFESTWOCHEN im strudengau*, Oper Bonn, Oper Graz, Theater an der Wien and Bartók-Festival in Szombathely (Hungary).

In addition to his stage work he is also in demand as lied interpreter and concert singer. He has worked with conductors such as Fabio Luisi, Dennis

Russell Davies, Michi Gaigg, Philippe Herreweghe, Christoph Hammer, Michael Schneider, Gothart Stier and Roderich Kreile. His repertoire includes Renaissance and Baroque music, lyrical roles by Mozart, Haydn and Rossini and contemporary music.

Christian Zenker was awarded a sponsorship by the Theaterfreunde des Tiroler Landestheaters.

www.christian-zenker.de

Markus Volpert

Bariton Markus Volpert (Achior) studied with Wolfgang Gamerith in Graz and completed his solo diploma cum laude with Kurt Widmer in Basel. Masterclasses with Sena Jurinac, Christa Ludwig, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Thomas Quasthoff, lessons with Horst Günter and as a member of the Zurich Opera studio added to his vocal expertise.

Markus Volpert has been awarded various prizes: the International Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Competition Leipzig, the Deutscher Musikwettbewerb Berlin, the Anneliese Rothenberger-Wettbewerb, the Grazer Schubert-Wettbewerb and the Francisco-Viñas-Wettbewerb

Barcelona. He has performed repeatedly at renowned festivals in Central Europe and he acquired a lot of concert experience in working with well-known conductors and ensembles with period instruments: Marcus Bosch, Michel Corboz, René Jacobs, James Judd, Sigiswald Kuijken, Rudolf Lutz, Hans-Christoph Rademann, Martin Turnovsky and Ralf Weikert, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Capriccio Basel, Concerto Köln, L'Orfeo Barockorchester, La Cetra and the Freiburger Barockorchester, as well as numerous European orchestras.

His activities are supplemented as lied interpreter and opera singer. His wide repertoire has been documented by numerous CD/DVD productions. He has lately appeared in the title role in productions of Telemann's operas *Orpheus* as well as *Miriways* conducted by Michi Gaigg with the L'Orfeo Barockorchester.

Marelize Gerber

The austrian coloratura soprano Marelize Gerber (Amital) was born in Cape Town, South Africa. She studied singing with Mimi Coertse and Ruthilde Boesch in Vienna and concluded her Musicology Studies with a Masters Degree in Music. Master courses in Early Music with Mieke van

der Sluis, Jesper Christensen (Schola Cantorum Basiliensis), Peter van Heyghen and Sigrid T’Hooft.

Within the framework of her extensive concert activity as a soloist, she traveled the USA, Europe, China, Syria, Turkey and Mexico. She performed at the Wiener Musikverein, Wiener Konzerthaus, Vienna Chamber Opera, Grafenegg Music Festival, trigonale - Festival for Early Music, the Festival Barocco di Viterbo, the Internationale Bachstage, BACH XXI GRAZ, St. Pölten Baroque Festival, *donauFESTWOCHEN im strudengau*, Festival Revueltas and Wiener Operettensommer.

Musical partners such as the L’Orfeo-, La Tempesta-, JJ Fux- and Karlsruher Baroque Orchestras, as well as the Clemencic Consort, Haydn Philharmonie, Capella Leopoldina, Academia Salieri, Musica Figuralis, In Flagranti, Prager Bachorchester, Ensemble Saitsiing & -Tientos, Capella Lutherana, Concertino Amarilli, Musiche Varie and Musica Aeterna set the tone of her various musical activities.

However, opera remains her main focus and includes roles from the Renaissance to the 21st century with specialization in early music. She sang the world stage première of Rameau’s *Zéphyre* as well as in

Agrippina & Clori, Tirsi e Fileno (Handel), *Dafne* (Caldara), *Apollon & Daphne* (Cavalli), *Nebucadnezar* (Keiser), *La Lotta D’Hercole con Acheloo* (Steffani) and *Fairy Queen* (Purcell). Marelize Gerber is continuously expanding her concert and oratorio repertoire to include a variety of works.

www.marelizegerber.com

Ulrike Hofbauer

Ulrike Hofbauer (Cabri) was born in Bavaria and studied singing and voice teaching at the Universities of Wurzburg and Salzburg, and at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis in Basle. The teachers who influenced her most profoundly were Sabine Schutz, Evelyn Tubb and Anthony Rooley. Ulrike Hofbauer now lives near Basle and has performed as a soloist with Singer Pur, Collegium Vocale Gent, L’Arpeggiata, La Chapelle Rhénane, L’Orfeo Barockorchester and Cantus Cölln amongst others and been directed by Andrew Parrott, Philippe Herreweghe, Christina Pluhar, Andrea Marcon, Gustav Leonhardt, Manfred Cordes, Hans-Christoph Rademann and Jörg-Andreas Bötticher.

Ulrike Hofbauer can also live out her love of acting on the opera stage and has performed at the theatres of Basle and Bern amongst others. Roles include Calisto in Cavallieri’s *Calisto*, Galathea in Handel’s *Acis*

and *Galathea*, Eurydice in Telemann's *Orpheus* and all the feminine roles in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*.

Currently she is devoting much of her energy to her own baroque ensemble savādi, with whom she won the Early Music Competition in York in 2003 and also the Van Wassenaer Concours in The Hague in 2004 (www.savadi.net). She directs larger-scale projects with her newly founded ensemble &cetera (www.ensemble-etcetera.com). Until recently she taught Baroque singing at the University Mozarteum Innsbruck.

She enjoys exploring new and unusual repertoires covering different epochs and styles, but she especially enjoys the early 17th century 'recitar cantando' style. Ulrike Hofbauer is particularly interested in heightening the emotional impact of the text and use with the use of gesture, musical rhetoric and ornamentation.

www.ulrikehofbauer.com

Barbara Kraus

Barbara Kraus (Carmi) comes from Bavaria and studied singing at the Salzburg Mozarteum with Marianne Schartner and Wolfgang Holzmair. She subsequently was trained by Hanna Ludwig. Barbara Kraus was awarded

the „Tassilo“- sponsorship of the Süddeutsche Zeitung. Since 2003 she has repeatedly performed in productions of the L'Orfeo Barockorchester, conducted by Michi Gaigg, at the *donauFESTWOCHEN im strudengau*: the title role in Mozart's *Zaide*, Julie in *Romeo und Julie* by Georg Anton Benda and Georg Friedrich Händel's *Almira*. She joined the ensemble of the Junge Kammeroper Köln during 2008 and 2009 and in 2009 sang the role of Silvia in Haydn's *Die wüste Insel* at the Theater an der Wien. Lied recitals and concerts in Austria, Germany and Switzerland complete her musical activities.

L'Orfeo Barockorchester

Since its foundation in 1996 at the Anton Bruckner Private University, Linz, the L'Orfeo Barockorchester has developed into one of the leading ensembles for historical performance practice today. The synthesis of standard repertoire and pioneering work is a trademark of L'Orfeo's concert programmes and CD's. In addition L'Orfeo has also proved itself an outstanding orchestra for stage works (CD releases: *Orpheus oder Die wunderbare Beständigkeit der Liebe* by Georg Philipp Telemann; Joseph Haydn's *Die wüste Insel*/The desert Island).

The orchestra leaves a mark time and again with its discography ranging from French Baroque suites through Sturm und Drang sinfonias to Classical and

Early Romantic repertoire. Among its many releases are several première recordings. Various prizes have been awarded e.g. by Diapason, Pizzicato ("Supersonic Award"), Le Monde de la Musique, Fono Forum, Radio Österreich 1 ("Pasticcio Prize"), as well as the coveted German music award ECHO Klassik.

A high artistic level, colourful playing and an immense sensitivity for sound are aspects confirmed by critics and audiences time and again. Team spirit and a close identification with founder and leader Michi Gaigg form the basis for its artistic success.

www.lorfeo.com

Michi Gaigg

The Austrian conductor and leader of the orchestra, Michi Gaigg, was deeply inspired as a student by the lectures given by Nikolaus Harnoncourt at the Salzburg Mozarteum. After completing her violin studies there she commenced learning to play the Baroque violin and studied with Ingrid Seifert and Sigiswald Kuijken.

Michi Gaigg accumulated valuable experience in internationally well-known ensembles such as London Baroque and with conductors such as Frans

Brüggen, Alan Curtis, Christopher Hogwood, René Jacobs, Ton Koopman and Hermann Max. Together with Carin van Heerden she founded the L'Orfeo Barockorchester in 1996.

Opera productions are becoming increasingly important in Michi Gaigg's work. Recently staged works are: Handel's first opera *Almira*, *Queen of Castille*, Georg Philipp Telemann's *Orpheus oder Die wunderbare Beständigkeit der Liebe*, *Orpheus und Eurydike* by Chr. W. Gluck, *Zaide* by W. A. Mozart, *Romeo und Julie* by Georg Anton Benda, Joseph Haydn's *Die wüste Insel* and a trilogy of early operas by Gioachino Rossini (*Il signor Bruschino*, *La scala di seta* und *La cambiale di matrimonio*).

Michi Gaigg has been teaching at the Institute for Early Music at the Anton Bruckner Private University in Linz since 1993. She is director of the Danube Festival in Strudengau and received two cultural awards by the province of Upper Austria.



Ein Geniestreich aus der Schublade

Unter den groß angelegten Vokalwerken aus Wolfgang Amadeus Mozarts Jugendjahren – ob sie nun der weltlichen oder der geistlichen Bühne zugehörig sind – handelt es sich bei *Betulia liberata* (Das befreite Bethulien) um das am wenigsten bekannte. Was wir an schriftlichen Dokumenten aus dem Briefwechsel der Familie Mozart besitzen, ist auch nicht gerade viel: Von der ersten und gleichzeitig erfolgreichsten mit dem Sohn unternommenen Italienreise, schreibt Leopold in einem auf „Vicenza den 14. Merz 1771“ datierten Brief an seine Frau in Salzburg:

Wir besahen in Padua was in einem tage zu sehen möglich war, da wir auch hier keine Ruhe hatten, und Wlfg. an 2 Orthen spielen muste. Er bekam aber auch eine Arbeit, indem er ein Oratorium nach Padua Componieren muß, und solches nach gelegenheit machen kann.

Angesichts dessen, was später damit geschehen sollte, war der Auftrag „nach gelegenheit“ ein Oratorium für Padua zu schreiben wohl doch ein wenig vorschnell ausgesprochen. Mit einem Komponisten von erst 15 Jahren kann man so etwas schon machen, wird sich derjenige, von dem er stammte, wohl gedacht haben. Um wen es sich dabei handelte und

wie ernst es den Mozarts nach ihrer Rückkehr nach Salzburg mit dem Oratorium für Padua geworden war, berichtet ein weiterer Brief Leopolds, den er am 19. Juli 1771 an den befreundeten Grafen Giovanni Luca Pallavicini in Bologna schrieb:

Fratanto sta componendo il mio figlio un Oratorio di Metastasio per Padua ordinato del Sgr: Don Giuseppe Ximenes de P[rinci]pi d'Aragona, quest' oratorio mandero, passando per Verona, à Padua per essere copiato, e ritornando da Milano anderemo à Padua per sentirne la Prova.

Anscheinend waren die Pläne bereits so weit gediehen, dass die mittlerweile vollendete Partitur auf der in Kürze beginnenden, zweiten Italienreise (mit den Mozarts von Verona kommend) zunächst in Padua zur Abschrift gelassen werden sollte. Nach Beendigung des folgenden Mailänder Aufenthalts (für den anlässlich der Hochzeit des Erzherzogs Ferdinand Karl von Österreich mit Maria Beatrice d'Este die Festa teatrale *Ascanio in Alba* bestellt worden war), gedachte man den Proben in Padua beizuwohnen.

Von nun an fehlt uns jeglicher Bericht über das Voranschreiten des Projektes *Betulia liberata*. So wissen wir weder, ob Wolfgang's Partitur jemals nach Padua, geschweige denn in die Hände des Fürsten von Aragona gelangte,

noch ob selbiger nicht längst mit weiteren Komponisten im Gespräch gewesen war. In Anbetracht zweier in Padua 1771 gedruckter Libretti erhärtet sich gar der Verdacht, dass mit dem Auftrag zur Vertonung der *Betulia liberata* offenbar wirklich noch andere bedacht worden waren: der mit den Mozarts seit ihrer ersten Begegnung im März des Vorjahres befreundete und im Bereich der italienischen Oper ungemein erfolgreiche Böhme Josef Mysliveček (1737-1781) sowie der ortsansässige Giuseppe Calegari (†1808). Obwohl Mysliveček, der als Komponist eine große Vorbildfunktion auf Mozart ausübte, bereits 1769 ein Oratorium für Padua, *Il Tobia*, verfasst hatte, scheint letztendlich der vergleichsweise unbekannte Calegari das Rennen um die Paduaner *Betulia liberata* gemacht zu haben, denn allein in seinem Fall berichten die Annalen der Accademia patavina von einer tatsächlich stattgefundenen Aufführung.

Bei dem Textbuch, welches der einer spanischen Familie entstammende, seit 1762 in Padua residierende Giuseppe Ximenes für seine (halböffentlich veranstalteten) Akademien erwählt hatte, handelte es sich um ein geistliches Drama, eine Aziona sacra des (mittlerweile hochbetagten) habsburgischen Hofdichters Pietro Metastasio (1698-1782). Erstmals von Georg Reutter dem Jüngeren (1708-1772) in Töne gesetzt, dürfte es seinerzeit, während der Karwoche 1734 nicht nur manch düstere Erinnerung an die Belagerung

Wiens im Jahre 1683 hervorgerufen, sondern auch an eine unmittelbar zurückliegende außenpolitische Krise erinnert haben. So wie einst die Osmanen die Hauptstadt des heiligen römischen Reiches bzw. Karl Emanuel III., König von Sardinien-Piemont, zu Beginn des polnischen Erbfolgekrieges das österreichische Heer im Norden Italiens in ärgste Bedrängnis gebracht hatten, waren es im alttestamentarischen Buch Judit die Assyrer unter ihrem Feldherrn Holofernes, die die Stadt Bethulia samt ihrer Bewohner in die Knie zu zwingen versuchten. Wenngleich es nie eine Stadt namens Bethulia gab und die Assyrer in Wirklichkeit bestenfalls Babylonier waren, geht es hier doch, wie so oft in der bewegten Geschichte des Volkes Israel um die Festigkeit ihres Glaubens an Gott, der allein sie vor der feindlichen Übernahme zu retten vermag.

Achior, ein Ammoniterfürst und Verbündeter der Assyrer, wagt gegenüber Oloferne (Holofernes) seiner Überzeugung Ausdruck zu verleihen, dass die Bethulier unbesiegbar wären, solange sie ihrem Gott vertrauten, wodurch jener außer sich gerät und Achior in die Hände der Israeliten spielt. Dort wird er zusammen mit Ozia, Fürst von Bethulien, Amital, einer Dame von ebenso edlem Blute und anderen hochgestellten Persönlichkeiten der Stadt Zeuge von dem Mut und unerschütterlichen Glauben Giudittas (Judiths), die einem göttlichen Plan folgend, sich in Richtung des feindlichen Heerlagers begibt.

Von der Dramatik des Undramatischen

Eine Besonderheit *der Betulia liberata* – von der einst allein in Wien acht verschiedene Vertonungen erklangen waren bzw. erklingen hätten sollen – stellt die konsequente Befolgung der aristotelischen Forderung nach Einheit von Zeit, Raum und Handlung dar. So lässt hier Metastasio, der für seine Dichtung mit dem Ehrentitel „Il poeta filosofo“ ausgezeichnet wurde, alle außerhalb der Stadtmauern stattfindenden Ereignisse nur in erzählter, d. h. rezitativer Form wiedergeben – so natürlich auch die Ermordung des assyrischen Kriegsherren.

Was macht nun ein Mozart aus jener literarischen Vorlage, die an den vermeintlich entscheidenden Momenten dem Epischen die Vorherrschaft über das Dramatische erteilt? Wie setzt der gerade einmal Fünfzehnjährige die Dramatik des Undramatischen in Töne?

Der an italienischer Theatermusik bereits mehrfach Erprobte spricht eine eigenwillige, im besten Sinne jugendliche Sprache, scheut kein Risiko, greift mit vollen Händen in die Schatztruhe musikalischer Rhetorik, mittels derer er nicht nur die Gesangspartien, sondern auch die spieltechnisch mitunter undankbar schwierigen Stimmen der Holzbläser und Violinen bereichert. Einige Höhepunkte im Detail: Im düsteren d-Moll und durch die martialischen Einwürfe der Hörner zusätzlich verdunkelt, malt der Komponist in der dreiteiligen, dem Schema der italienischen Opernsinfonie folgenden

Overtura den Belagerungszustand der Stadt Betulia.

Mittels einer sich in ausschweifenden Koloraturen bis zum h' empor schraubenden Arie („D'ogni colpa la colpa maggiore“) bemängelt Ozia die Furchtsamkeit seiner Untertanen. Zusammen mit Amitals „Quel nocchier che in gran porcella“ vom Beginn des zweiten Teils – die mittels Bildern von Seestürmen und unheilbarer Krankheit die Stadt für verloren erklärt, verleiht beider Gesang nicht zuletzt auch ihrer gesellschaftlich erhöhten Position mittels besonders virtuos gesetzter Koloraturen Ausdruck. Gleichwohl legen sich die Violinen mächtig ins Zeug um dem musikalischen Geschehen durch Leid und Schmerz symbolisierende Figuren zusätzliche Tiefe zu verleihen. Während die Bewohner Bethuliens vereint im Chor oder vertreten durch ihre Räte Cabri und Carmi den kollektiven Gefühlen von Angst und Verzweiflung individuellen Ausdruck verleihen und dabei variierende Unterstützung aus den Reihen des Orchesters erfahren, hält Giuditta auf geradezu unspektakuläre Weise mit einer pastoralen Gleichnisarie („Del pari infeconda“) Einzug in den Kreis der Kleinmütigen. Dass sie entgegen ihrer vergleichsweise schwachen gesellschaftlichen Position und ihrem beinahe asketischen Erscheinungsbild, die alles und alle überragende Heldin darstellt, wird spätestens in ihrer zweiten Arie offenbar, mittels der sie Abschied von den Ihrigen nimmt. Ein *messia di voce* (italienisch für „Stimme setzen“) auf „Parto“, in der Barockoper zumeist mit der Gesangkunst der Castrati

assoziiertes dynamisches Ausdrucksmittel, eröffnet den Gesang der unbeirrt auf Gott vertrauenden Frau.

Entsprechend groß ist auch die Verwunderung des Chores gegenüber der sich der öffentlichen Sorge annehmenden Witwe des Manasse, unter die sich auch die Stimme des Gefangenen Achior mischt, der kurz zuvor in „barbarischem“ C-Dur noch von der Grausamkeit des Oloferne berichtete („Terribile d’aspetto“).

Der Beginn des zweiten Teils wird von zwei ausladenden Rezitativen eingenommen: die Darstellung einer Unterredung mittels derer Ozia den Ammoniterfürsten für seinen monotheistischen Glauben zu gewinnen versucht, sowie ein Accompagnato, welches die Rückkehr und Erzählung der Giuditta von ihrer „gerechten“ Bluttat an Oloferne zum Inhalt hat:

Von den vergleichbaren Szenen in einer Oper unterscheidet sich dieses – der Ungeheuerlichkeit des Berichteten zum Trotz – durch eine [...] eher der geistlichen Sphäre zugeordneten Instrumentalbegleitung, die lang ausgehaltenen Streicherakkorde vollziehen nicht den Hergang nach, sondern geben Auskunft über Giudittas gleichsam entrückte Gestimmtheit.
(Silke Leopold)

Davon, dass das Geschehen im feindlichen Heereslager dem Seelenleben der jungen Heldin trotz allen Gottvertrauens äußerst zugesetzt hat, gibt die anschließende Arie („Prigionier che fa ritorno“) mittels innere Zerrissenheit anzeigender Synkopen in der Orchesterbegleitung zu erkennen – wenngleich sich deren Text vordergründig auf den in seinem Irrglauben gefangenen Achior bezieht. Die Reaktionen der Anwesenden sind jedenfalls bewegend: Während sich der Ammoniter zum Glauben an den einen Gott („Te solo adoro“) bekennt, bittet Amital zu wunderbar schlichten Adagio-Violinfiguren, wie sie nur ein Mozart hatte setzen können, um Vergebung der zuvor gehegten Zweifel an der großen Rettungstat.

Der Feind ist besiegt und die Bewohner der Stadt stimmen im Wechsel mit Giuditta im *tonus peregrinus*, der nach Psalm 113 die Befreiung des auserwählten Volkes Israel aus Ägypten behandelt, in den eindrucksvoll feierlichen Chor „Lodi al gran Dio“ ein. Die vierstimmige Bearbeitung jenes (hier von den Oboen verstärkten) Cantus firmus, den Mozart dereinst im Requiem wiederverwenden sollte, übernahm er übrigens aus einer Komposition seines Salzburger Kollegen Johann Michael Haydn.

Als Mozart am 21. Juli 1784 seine Schwester bat, der Vater möge ihm doch „das alte Oratorium betulia liberata“ schicken, weil er „für die hiesige [Wiener Tonkünstler-] Societät [...] doch Ja und da etwas davon Stückweise brauchen“ könnte, hatte er sicherlich auch an den Schlussgesang mit seinen nochmals

aufblitzenden, kriegerischen Fanfaren gedacht, die diesmal allerdings für die vor Schreck erstarrten, führerlos gewordenen Angreifer stehen und den Abbruch der Belagerung Bethuliens darstellen dürften.

Christian Moritz-Bauer

Margot Oitzinger

Margot Oitzinger (Giuditta) wurde in Graz geboren und studierte Sologesang an der Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Graz. Sie absolvierte Meisterkurse bei Emma Kirkby und Peter Kooij. Sie ist Preisträgerin des Internationalen Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Wettbewerbes Leipzig 2008 und des Internationalen Barockgesangswettbewerbs in Chimay (Belgien) 2006.

Ihr Repertoire reicht unter anderem von den Werken Bachs und Händels mit Schwerpunkt auf Oratorium über Mozart und Haydn bis zur Romantik und Moderne. Sie war bislang mit Orchestern und Ensembles wie Collegium Vocale Gent, Bach Collegium Japan, Cantus Cölln, Concerto Copenhagen, dem L'Orfeo Barockorchester, Sette voci, dem Dunedin Consort and Players oder Le Concert Lorrain zu hören.

Neben zahlreichen Chanson- und Liederabenden, Festival Crete Senesi unter Philippe Herreweghe (Brahms), war sie auch vor allem in Barockopernpartien in der Kammeroper Graz, Kammeroper Wien, bei den *donauFESTWOCHEN im strudengau* und der Styriarte zu sehen.

Margot Oitzinger tritt unter anderem bei Festivals wie den Händel-Festspielen in Halle, Bachfest Leipzig, Festival voor oude muziek in Utrecht,

Festival de Saintes, Knechtsteden, Innsbrucker Festwochen der Alten Musik, le festival de musique de La Chaise Dieu oder dem Bachfest Salzburg auf. Ihre Konzert-, Liederabend- und Opernauftritte fanden bis dato in ganz Österreich statt, sowie auch in Italien, Deutschland, Niederlande, Belgien, Schweiz, England und Frankreich.

www.oitzinger.com

Christian Zenker

Der Tenor Christian Zenker (Ozia) wurde in Ansbach geboren. Erste musikalische Erfahrungen sammelte er als Mitglied des renommierten Windsbacher Knabenchores. Das Studium an der Hochschule für Musik und Theater München schloss er mit Auszeichnung ab.

Noch vor Beendigung seines Studiums engagierte ihn Brigitte Fassbaender an das Tiroler Landestheater, dessen Ensemble er von 2002-2006 angehörte. 2006 wechselte er an das Landestheater Linz, das er 2009 verließ, um sich seiner freiberuflichen Tätigkeit widmen zu können.

Christian Zenker gastierte u. a. bei den Opernfestspielen Schloss Rheinsberg, den Seefestspielen Mörbisch, den Händel-Festspielen in Halle, den Dresdner Musikfestspielen, den Europäischen Festwochen Passau, den

donauFESTWOCHEN im strudengau, an der Oper Bonn, der Oper Graz, dem Theater an der Wien und dem Bartok-Festival in Szombathely (Ungarn).

Sein Repertoire reicht von der Musik der Renaissance und des Barock über die großen lyrischen Partien von Mozart, Haydn und Rossini (die historisch fundierte Aufführungspraxis ist ihm hierbei ein besonderes Anliegen) bis hin zu Uraufführungen zeitgenössischer Kompositionen.

Neben seiner Tätigkeit als Opernsänger ist Christian Zenker auch ein international gefragter Konzert- und Liedsänger. Er arbeitete mit DirigentInnen wie Fabio Luisi, Dennis Russell Davies, Michi Gaigg, Philippe Herreweghe, Christoph Hammer, Michael Schneider, Gothart Stier, Roderich Kreile (Dresdner Kreuzchor) und mit Orchestern wie den Münchner Philharmonikern, der Dresdner Philharmonie, den Dresdner Kapellsolisten der Sächsischen Staatskapelle Dresden, der Staatskapelle Halle, dem Beethoven-Orchester Bonn, dem Bruckner Orchester Linz und namhaften Originalklang-Ensembles.

Christian Zenker ist Preisträger des Förderpreises der Theaterfreunde des Tiroler Landestheaters.

www.christian-zenker.de

Markus Volpert

Markus Volpert (Achior) studierte in Graz bei Wolfgang Gamerith, sein Solistendiplom mit Auszeichnung erwarb der Bariton bei Kurt Widmer in Basel. Als Mitglied des Zürcher Opernstudios und in Meisterkursen bei Sena Jurinac, Christa Ludwig, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf und Thomas Quasthoff sowie im Unterricht bei Horst Günter rundete er seine stimmliche Ausbildung ab.

Markus Volpert ist Preisträger und Gewinner verschiedener Wettbewerbe – darunter der Internationale Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Wettbewerb Leipzig, der Deutsche Musikwettbewerb in Berlin, der Anneliese Rothenberger-Wettbewerb, der Grazer Schubert-Wettbewerb und der Francisco-Viñas-Wettbewerb in Barcelona – und hat wiederholt bei wichtigen Festivals in ganz Mitteleuropa gesungen.

Seine Erfahrung als Konzertsänger erwarb sich der Bariton in der Zusammenarbeit mit namhaften Dirigenten, beispielsweise Marcus Bosch, Michel Corboz, René Jacobs, James Judd, Sigiswald Kuijken, Rudolf Lutz, Hans-Christoph Rademann, Martin Turnovsky und Ralf Weikert, renommierten Originalklang-Ensembles wie der Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Capriccio Basel, Concerto Köln, dem L'Orfeo Barockorchester, La Cetra und dem Freiburger Barockorchester, sowie zahlreichen europäischen Orchestern.

Die kammermusikalische Betätigung als Liedsänger und Auftritte auf der Opernbühne runden die künstlerische Arbeit des Baritons ab. Das breit gefächerte Repertoire von Markus Volpert wird durch eine Vielzahl von Radiomitschnitten und CD/DVD-Produktionen dokumentiert. Zuletzt hat er unter der Leitung von Michi Gaigg mit dem L'Orfeo Barockorchester die Titelpartien der Telemann-Opern *Orpheus* und *Miriways* aufgenommen.

Marelize Gerber

Die österreichische Koloratursopranistin Marelize Gerber (Amital) wurde in Kapstadt, Südafrika, geboren. Gesangsstudium bei Mimi Coertse und Ruthilde Boesch. Sie schloss ihr musikwissenschaftliches Studium mit einem Master ab. Meisterkurse für Alte Musik bei Mieke van der Sluis, Jesper Christensen (Schola Cantorum Basiliensis), Peter van Heyghen und Sigrid T'Hooft.

Konzertreisen in die USA, Europa, China, Mexiko, Türkei und Syrien. Auftritte im Wiener Musikverein, Wiener Konzerthaus, Wiener Kammeroper, Grafenegg Musik Festival, trigonale – Festival der Alten Musik, Festival Barocco di Viterbo, Internationale Bachtage, BACH XXI GRAZ, Barockfestival St. Pölten, *donauFESTWOCHEN im strudengau*, Festival Revueltas und Wiener Operettensommer.

Musikalische Klangkörper wie das L'Orfeo-, La Tempesta-, J. J. Fux- und Karlsruher Barockorchester, sowie das Clemencic Consort, Haydn Philharmonie, Capella Leopoldina, Academia Salieri, Musica Figuralis, Prager Bachorchester, Ensemble Saitsiing und -Tientos, Capella Lutherana, Concertino Amarilli, Musiche Varie und Musica Aeterna prägen ihre vielseitigen Aktivitäten.

Ihr Repertoire umfasst Werke von der Renaissance bis zum 21. Jahrhundert mit Schwerpunkt Alte Musik. Sie sang u. a. die Bühnenpremiere von Rameaus *Zéphyre* sowie in *Agrippina und Clori*, *Tirsi e Fileno* (Händel), *Dafne* (Caldara), *Apollon & Daphne* (Cavalli), *Nebucadnezar* (Keiser), *La Lotta D'Hercole con Acheloo* (Steffani), *Orpheus* (Telemann) und *The Fairy Queen* (Purcell). Neben ihrer Tätigkeit im Opernbereich widmet sich Marelize Gerber dem Aufbau eines anspruchsvollen und vielseitigen Konzert- und Oratorienrepertoires.

www.marelizegerber.com

Ulrike Hofbauer

Ulrike Hofbauer (Cabri) studierte Gesang und Gesangspädagogik an den Hochschulen Würzburg und Salzburg und an der Schola Cantorum Basiliensis.

Zu ihren maßgeblichen Lehrern zählen Sabine Schütz, Evelyn Tubb und Anthony Rooley.

Die in Oberbayern geborene Sängerin ist heute in der Nähe von Basel ansässig und musizierte als Solistin unter anderem mit Singer Pur, dem Collegium Vocale Gent, L'Arpeggiata, La Chapelle Rhénane, L'Orfeo Barockorchester und Cantus Cölln und arbeitete mit Andrew Parrott, Philippe Herreweghe, Christina Pluhar, Andrea Marcon, Gustav Leonhardt, Manfred Cordes, Hans-Christoph Rademann und Jörg-Andreas Bötticher zusammen.

Neben Radiomitschnitten und live-Hörfunkauftritten dokumentieren CD- und Film-Produktionen die Vielseitigkeit der Sängerin. Ihr schauspielerisches Interesse kann Ulrike Hofbauer auch auf der Opernbühne unter Beweis stellen. Sie sang unter anderem am Theater Basel und am Theater Bern und war als Calisto in Cavallieris gleichnamiger Oper, als Galathea in Händels *Acis and Galathea*, als Eurydice in Telemanns *Orpheus* und in sämtlichen Frauenrollen in Purcells *Dido and Aeneas* zu hören.

Mit ihrem eigenen Ensemble savādi hat sie 2003 den York Early Music International Young Artists Competition und 2004 den Van Wassenauer Concours in Den Haag gewonnen. (www.savadi.net). Größer besetzte

Projekte verwirklicht sie mit ihrem neu gegründeten Ensemble &cetera (www.ensemble-etcetera.com).

Bis vor Kurzem unterrichtete sie Barockgesang an der Universität Mozarteum Innsbruck.

Ihr Repertoire umfasst alle Epochen und Stilrichtungen. Die intensive Beschäftigung mit musikalischer Rhetorik, Ornamentik und dem „recitar cantando“ Stil bildet einen Schwerpunkt ihrer künstlerischen Arbeit.

www.ulrikehofbauer.com

Barbara Kraus

Barbara Kraus (Carmi) wurde in Bayern geboren, studierte Gesang an der Universität Mozarteum Salzburg bei Marianne Schartner und Wolfgang Holzmair bis zu ihrem Abschluss im Juni 2006, anschließend intensives Rollenstudium bei Hanna Ludwig. Barbara Kraus ist Trägerin des „Tassilo“-Kulturförderpreises der Süddeutschen Zeitung. Seit 2003 ist sie wiederholt in Produktionen des L'Orfeo Barockorchesters unter der Leitung von Michi Gaigg zu hören, so z. B. bei den *donauFESTWOCHEN im strudengau* in der Titelrolle der Oper *Zaide* (Mozart), als Julie in *Romeo und Julie* von Georg Anton Benda oder als Almira in der gleichnamigen Oper von Georg Friedrich

Händel. In der Spielzeit 2008/2009 war sie Mitglied im Ensemble der Jungen Kammeroper Köln. 2009 gab Barbara Kraus ihr Rollendebüt als Silvia in Joseph Haydns *Die wüste Insel* (Theater an der Wien). Liederabende und Konzerte führen sie regelmäßig nach Österreich, Deutschland und in die Schweiz.

L'Orfeo Barockorchester

Seit seiner Gründung an der Anton Bruckner Privatuniversität Linz im Jahr 1996 hat sich das international besetzte L'Orfeo Barockorchester einen Platz unter den führenden Ensembles der historisch informierten Aufführungspraxis erspielt. Die Synthese aus Repertoire und Pionierarbeit ist ein Markenzeichen seiner Konzertprogramme und CD-Einspielungen. L'Orfeo begeistert auch als Opernorchester, wie zuletzt mit Glucks *Orpheus und Eurydike*, Georg Philipp Telemanns *Miriways* (erste szenische Produktion seit mehr als 280 Jahren) sowie den CD-Veröffentlichungen von *Orpheus oder Die wunderbare Beständigkeit der Liebe* (Telemann) und *Die wüste Insel* (Haydn).

Mit seiner Diskographie, die von der Suite des französischen Barock über die Sinfonia des musikalischen Sturm und Drang bis zur Literatur der Klassik und frühen Romantik reicht, setzt das Ensemble regelmäßig Akzente.

Darunter einige Ersteinspielungen, ausgezeichnet u. a. von Diapason, Pizzicato („Supersonic Award“), Le Monde de la Musique, Fono Forum, Radio Österreich 1 („Pasticcio-Preis“), sowie dem ECHO-Klassik – Deutscher Musikpreis.

Hohes interpretatorisches Niveau, Farbenreichtum und Klangsensibilität werden dem L’Orfeo Barockorchester von Publikum und Presse immer wieder bestätigt. Ensemblegeist und die enge Bindung an seine Gründerin und Leiterin Michi Gaigg sind die Basis einer erfolgreichen künstlerischen Arbeit.

www.lorfeo.com

Michi Gaigg

Entscheidende Impulse für ihren musikalischen Werdegang erhielt die österreichische Dirigentin und Orchesterleiterin Michi Gaigg während ihres Studiums am Salzburger Mozarteum in den Vorlesungen von Nikolaus Harnoncourt um sich anschließend bei Ingrid Seifert und Sigiswald Kuijken der Barockvioline zuzuwenden. Michi Gaigg sammelte wertvolle Erfahrungen in international renommierten Ensembles wie London Baroque sowie unter Frans Brüggen, Alan Curtis, Christopher Hogwood, René Jacobs, Ton Koopman und Hermann Max bevor sie 1996 zusammen mit Carin van Heerden das L’Orfeo Barockorchester gründete.

Einen Schwerpunkt ihrer künstlerischen Arbeit bildet die Oper des 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhunderts. Unter anderem gelangten bisher unter ihrer Leitung zur Aufführung: Händels Opernerstling *Almira, Königin von Castilien*, Telemanns *Orpheus* und *Miriways*, Glucks *Orpheus und Eurydike*, *Zaide* und *Betulia liberata* von W. A. Mozart, *Romeo und Julie* von Georg Anton Benda, Joseph Haydns *Die wüste Insel*, sowie eine Trilogie früher Operneinakter von Gioachino Rossini (*Il signor Bruschino*, *La scala di seta* und *La cambiale di matrimonio*).

Seit 1994 unterrichtet sie am Institut für Alte Musik und Historische Aufführungspraxis an der Anton Bruckner Privatuniversität in Linz. Michi Gaigg ist Intendantin der *donauFESTWOCHEN im strudengau* und wurde durch das Land Oberösterreich mit dem Großen Bühnenkunstpreis und der Kulturmedaille ausgezeichnet.

Overture

Parte Prima

Recitativo.

Ozia. Popoli di Betulia, ah qual v'ingombra
vergognosa viltà! Pallidi, afflitti,
Tutti mi siete intorno! È ver, ne stringe
d'assedio pertinace il campo assiro:
ma non siam vinti ancor. Dunque sì presto
cedete alle sventure? Io, più di loro,
temo il vostro timor. De' nostri mali
questo, questo è il peggior: questo ci rende
inabili a' ripari. Ogni tempesta
al nocchier che dispera
è tempesta fatal, benché leggiera.

[No. 1] Aria. *Ozia*

D'ogni colpa la colpa maggiore
è l'eccesso d'un empio timore,
oltraggioso all'eterna pietà.

Overture

Part one

Recitative.

Ozia. People of Bethulia, ah what shameful
faint-heartedness constrains you!
Pale and sorrowful around me are you all! 'Tis true,
the Assyrian host lays stubborn siege to us;
but we are not yet beaten. Do you then
so quickly yield to misfortune? I fear your dread
more than I fear them. Of our ills,
this is the worst: it makes us
incapable of defence. Every storm,
however slight, is a fatal tempest
to a pilot who despairs.

[No. 1] Aria. *Ozia*

Of all faults the worst
is an excess of godless fear,
offensive to the Eternal One's compassion.

Chi dispera non ama, non crede:
ché la fede, l'amore, la speme
son tre faci che splendono insieme,
né una ha luce se l'altra non l'ha.

Recitativo.

Cabri. E in che sperar?

Amital. Nella difesa forse

di nostre schiere indebolite e sceme
dall'assidua fatica? estenuate
dallo scarso alimento? intimorite
dal pianto universal? Fidar possiamo
ne' vicini già vinti?
negli amici impotenti? in Dio sdegnato?

Cabri. Scorri per ogni lato

la misera città; non troverai
che oggetti di terror. Gli ordini usati
son negletti o confusi. Altri s'adira
contro il Ciel, contro te; piangendo accusa
altri le proprie colpe antiche e nuove;
chi corre, e non sa dove;

He who despairs does not love, does not believe,
for faith, love and hope
are three torches that shine together,
and one sheds no light without the other.

Recitativo.

Cabri. And on what can we pin hope?

Amital. Perhaps on the protection
of our troops, weakened and reduced
by constant exhaustion, enfeebled
by lack of food, demoralised
by the universal lamentation? Can we
put our trust in already vanquished neighbours,
in impotent friends, in an offended God?

Cabri. Scour the wretched city on every side;
you will find nothing but objects
of terror. Normal order is neglected
or confused. Some become angry
with Heaven, or with you; others,
weeping, declare their own sins, old and new;
some run without knowing whither,

chi geme, e non favella; e lo spavento,
come in arida selva appresa fiamma,
si comunica, e cresce. Ognun si crede
presso a morir. Già ne' congedi estremi
si abbracciano a vicenda
i congiunti, gli amici; ed è deriso
chi ostenta ancor qualche fermezza in viso.

[No. 2] *Aria. Cabri*

Ma qual virtù non cede
fra tanti oggetti e tanti
ad avvilar bastanti
il più feroce cor?
Se non volendo ancora
si piange agli altrui pianti,
se impallidir talora
ci fa l'altrui pallor?

Recitativo.

Ozia. Già le memorie antiche

some groan without speaking; and fear,
like a flame in an arid forest,
spreads and grows. Everyone thinks himself
close to death. Already relations
and friends are embracing,
taking last farewells
of each other; and anyone who still
shows some firmness of face is derided.

[No. 2] *Aria. Cabri*

But amid so many, many sights
what strength does not weaken
enough to discourage
the fiercest heart,
if all unwillingly
it weeps at others' tears,
if others pallor at times
makes it turn pale?

Recitativo.

Ozia. Then have ancient memories already faded

dunque andaro in oblio? Che ingrata è questa
dimenticanza, o figli! Ah ci sovvenga
chi siam, qual Dio n'assiste, e quanti, e quali
prodigi oprò per noi. Chi a' passi nostri
divise l'Eritreo, chi l'onde amare
ne raddolci, negli aridi macigni
chi di limpidi umori
ampie vene ci aperse, e chi per tante
ignote solitudini infeconde
ci guidò, ci nutrì, potremo adesso
temer che ne abbandoni? Ah no. Minaccia
il superbo Oloferne
già da lunga stagion Betulia; e pure
non ardisce assalirla. Eccovi un segno
del celeste favor.
Cabri. Sì; ma frattanto
più crudelmente il condottier feroce
ne distrugge sedendo. I fonti, ond'ebbe
la città, già felice, acque opportune,
il tiranno occupò. L'onda che resta,
a misura fra noi

into oblivion? How ungrateful is this forgetfulness,
my children! Let us bear in mind
who we are, that God assists, and how many
and what marvels He wrought for us. Can we fear
that He who parted the Red Sea for our passage,
who sweetened the bitter waters,
who opened abundant springs
of limpid water in the arid boulders,
and who guided and fed us through so many
unknown, barren wildernesses,
will now abandon us? Ah no!
Proud Holofernes
has for long been threatening
Betulia, yet he dares not attack it.
Here is a sign to you of Heaven's favour.
Cabri. Yes, but meantime the savage general
lays siege to us more cruelly.
The tyrant took possession
of the fountains whence
the once happy city had plentiful water.
The water that remains

scarsamente si parte; onde la sete
irrita e non appaga,
nutrisce e non estingue.
Amital. A tal nemico,
che per le nostre vene
si pasce, si diffonde, ah con qual'armi
resisterem? Guardaci in volto; osserva
a qual segno siam giunti. Alle querele
abili ormai non sono i petti stanchi
dal frequente anelar, le scabre lingue,
le fauci inaridite. Umor al pianto
manca su gli occhi nostri, e cresce sempre
di pianger la cagion. Né il mal più grande
per me, che madre sono,
è la propria miseria; i figli, i figli
vedermi, oh Dio! miseramente intorno
languir così, né dal mortale ardore
poterli ristorar; questa è la pena,
che paragon non ha, che non s'intende
da chi madre non è. Sentimi, Ozia:
tu sei, tu che ne reggi,

is frugally divided between us by ration,
so that it provokes thirst, not slakes it,
increases and not quenches it.
Amital. Ah, with what arms
can we resist such a foe,
who feeds and flourishes on our springs?
Look at our faces: observe
to what a state we have come.
Our breasts, fatigued by constant gasping.
our swollen tongues, our parched throats
by now are incapable even of lamenting. Our eyes
lack moisture for tears, yet there
is increasing reason to weep. My own misery
is not the greatest tribulation for me, who am a mother:
to see my children - o Heaven! - wretchedly
declining around me, without being able
to restore their zest for life - this is the distress
beyond compare that is not understood
by those who are not mothers.
Listen to me, Ozia: you who rule us,
are the prime cause of our misery.

delle miserie nostre
la primiera cagione. Iddio ne sia
fra noi giudice e te. Parlar di pace
con l'Assiro non vuoi; perir ci vedi
fra cento affanni e cento;
e dormi? e siedi irresoluto e lento?

[No. 3] *Aria. Amital*

Non hai cor, se in mezzo a questi
miserabili lamenti
non ti scuoti, non ti desti,
non ti senti intenerir.
Quanto, oh Dio, siamo infelici
se sapessero i nemici,
anche a lor di pianto il ciglio
si vedrebbe inumidir.

Recitativo.

Ozïa. E qual pace sperate
da gente senza legge, e senza fede,
nemica al nostro Dio?

God be the judge
between us and you:
you will not speak of peace with the Assyrian;
you see us perish amid
untold anguish; and you sleep,
and sit irresolute and inactive?

[No. 3] *Aria. Amital*

You have no heart, if amid
these laments of misery
you do not stir, You do not wake,
you do not feel compassion.
If the enemy knew how wretched -
o Heaven! - we were,
even their eyes would be seen
to fill with tears.

Recitativo.

Ozïa. And what peace could you hope for
from that lawless and faithless people,
hostile to our God?

Amital. Sempre fia meglio
benedirlo viventi,
che in obbrobrio alle genti
morir, vedendo ed i consorti e i figli
spirar su gli occhi nostri.

Ozia. E se né pure
questa misera vita a voi lasciasse
la perfidia nemica?

Amital. Il ferro almeno
sollecito ne uccida, e non la sete
con sì lungo morir. Deh Ozia, per quanto
han di sacro e di grande e terra e cielo,
per lui, ch'or ne punisce,
gran Dio de' padri nostri, all'armi assire
rendasi la città.

Ozia. Figli, che dite!

Amital. Sì, sì, Betulia intera
parla per bocca mia. S'apran le porte,
alla forza si ceda: uniti insieme
volontari corriamo
al campo d'Oloferne. Unico scampo

Amital. It still might be better
to live and bless them
than die in dishonour before men,
seeing our husbands and children
perish before our eyes.

Ozia. And suppose
the treacherous enemy were not
to spare your wretched life?

Amital. At least let the sword kill us swiftly,
and not thirst, with so protracted a death.
Ah Ozia, by all that is sacred and noble
on earth and in heaven,
by Him who now is punishing us,
the great God of our fathers,
surrender the city to the Assyrian army.

Ozia. My children, what are you saying!

Amital. Yes, yes, the whole of Betulia
speaks through my lips, Let the gates be opened
and yield to force: let us all together
freely hasten to Holofernes' camp.
This is the only solution;

è questo; ognun lo chiede.

Coro. Al campo, al campo.

Ozia. Fermatevi, sentite. (Eterno Dio, assistenza, consiglio!) Io non m'oppongo, figli, al vostro pensier: chiedo che solo differirlo vi piaccia, e più non chiedo che cinque dì. Prendete ardir. Frattanto forse Dio placherassi, e del suo nome la gloria sosterrà. Se giunge poi senza speme per noi la quinta aurora, s'apra allor la città, rendasi allora.

Amital. A questa legge attenderemo.

Ozia. Or voi co' vostri accompagnate questi che al Ciel fervidi prieghi invio, nunzi fedeli in fra' mortali, e Dio.

[No. 4] **Coro.**

Ozia. Pietà, se irato sei, pietà, Signor, di noi: abbian castigo i rei,

everyone demands it.

Chorus. To the camp, to the camp!

Ozia. Stop! Listen! (Eternal God, help me, advise me!) My children, I will not oppose your intention: I ask only that you agree to defer it, and I ask no more than five days. Be of good courage. Meantime perhaps God may relent, and will uphold the glory of His name, If the fifth dawn rises without hope for us, let the city then be opened and surrendered. *Amital.* We will wait for this ordinance.

Ozia. Now you and yours join in these fervent prayers I address to Heaven, faithful messengers between mortals and God.

[No. 4] **Chorus.**

Ozia. Have mercy, Lord, on us, mercy if Thou art angry: let the guilty be punished,

ma l'abbiano da te.

Coro. Abbian castigo i rei,

ma l'abbiano da te.

Ozia. Se oppresso chi t'adora

soffri da chi t'ignora,

gli empî diranno poi:

questo lor Dio dov'è?

Coro. Gli empî diranno poi:

questo lor Dio dov'è?

Recitativo.

Cabri. Chi è costei, che qual sorgente aurora

s'appressa a noi; terribile all'aspetto

qual falange ordinata; e a paragone

della luna, del Sol bella ed eletta?

Amital. Alla chioma negletta,

al rozzo manto, alle dimesse ciglia,

di Merari è la figlia.

Ozia. Giuditta!

Cabri. Sì, la fida

vedova di Manasse.

but punished by Thee.

Chorus. Let the guilty be punished,

but punished by Thee.

Ozia. If Thou sufferest those who adore Thee

to be oppressed by those who know Thee not,

the heathen will then say:

“Where is this God of theirs?”

Chorus. The heathen will then say:

“Where is this God of theirs?”

Recitativo.

Cabri. Who is this who approaches us

like the rising dawn, terrible to the sight

as an ordered cohort, and of a beauty

and distinction comparable to the moon and sun?

Amital. From her neglected tresses,

coarse mantle and modest eyes

it is Merari's daughter.

Ozia. Giuditta!

Cabri. Yes, the faithful

widow of Manasses.

Ozia. Qual mai cagion la trasse
dal segreto soggiorno in cui s'asconde,
volge il quart'anno ormai?

Amital. So ch'ivi orando
passa desta le notti,
digiuna i dì: so che donolle il Cielo
e ricchezza e beltà; ma che disprezza
la beltà, la ricchezza; e tal divenne,
che ritrovar non spera
in lei macchia l'invidia o finta o vera.
Ma non saprei ...

Giuditta. Che ascolto, Ozia!
Betulia, aimè, che ascolto! All'armi assire
dunque aprirem le porte, ove non giunga
soccorso in cinque dì! Miseri! E questa
è la via d'impetrarlo? Ah Tutti siete
colpevoli egualmente. Ad un estremo
il popolo trascorse: e chi lo regge
nell'altro ruinò. Quello dispera
della pietà divina: ardisce questo
limitarle i confini. Il primo è vile,

Ozia. Whatever reason has drawn her forth
from the secret abode in which, for nearly
four years now, she has been hiding?

Amital. I know that she spends
the nights awake and praying,
and the days fasting: I know
that Heaven gave her both riches and beauty,
but that she disdains both;
and that she has become such that envy,
assumed or real, can find no blemish in her.
But I would not know ...

Giuditta. What do I hear, Ozia?
Alas, Betulia, what do I hear?
Shall we then open the gates to the Assyrian army
if help does not arrive in five days? Wretches!
Is this the way to seek it? Ah, you are all
equally guilty. The people have gone
to one extreme, and their ruler
has fallen into the other.
One despairs of divine mercy, the other
dares to limit its extent The first is base,

temerario il secondo. A chi la speme,
a chi manca il timor: né in questo o in quella
misura si serbò. Vizio ed eccesso
non è diverso. Alla virtù prescritti
sono i certi confini; e cade ognuno,
che per qualunque via da lor si scosta,
in colpa egual, benché talvolta opposta.

[No. 5] *Aria. Giuditta*

Del pari infeconda
d'un fiume è la sponda
se torbido eccede,
se manca d'umor.
Si acquista baldanza
per troppa speranza,
si perde la fede
per troppo timor.

Recitativo.

Ozia. Oh saggia, oh santa, oh eccelsa donna! Iddio
anima i labbri tuoi.

the second reckless. One lacks hope,
the other awe: neither one nor other
has retained moderation. Depravity and excess are
no different. To power certain limits are laid down;
and everyone who deviates from them in whatever
way, even though those ways be opposite,
falls into equal error.

[No. 5] *Aria. Giuditta*

Equally barren
is the bank of the river
whether it rises in turbulence
or lacks for moisture.
Presumption comes
from too much hope,
faith is lost
through too much fear.

Recitativo.

Ozia. O wise, o godly, o noble woman!
God prompts your words.

Cabri, Da tali accuse
 chi si può discolpar?
Ozia. Deh tu, che sei
 cara al Signor, per noi perdono implora;
 ne guida, ne consiglia.
Giuditta. In Dio sperate
 soffrendo i vostri mali. Egli in tal guisa
 corregge, e non opprime; ei de' più cari
 così prova la fede: e Abramo e Isacco,
 e Giacobbe e Mosè dilette a lui
 divennero così. Ma quei che osaro
 oltraggiar mormorando
 la sua giustizia, o delle serpi il morso
 o il fuoco estermirò. Se in giusta lance
 pesiamo i falli nostri, assai di loro
 è minore il castigo: onde dobbiamo
 grazie a Dio, non querele. Ei ne consoli
 secondo il voler suo. Gran prove io spero
 della pietà di lui. Voi che diceste
 che muove i labbri miei, credete ancora
 ch'ei desti i miei pensieri. Un gran disegno

Cabri. Who can escape
 such censure?
Ozia. O you who are dear to the Lord,
 implore pardon for us:
 guide and counsel us.
Giuditta. Trust in God,
 suffering your ills.
 In such a way does He admonish, not oppress, us;
 thus He tests the faith
 of those most dear to Him;
 thus Abraham and Isaac, Jacob and Moses,
 became His delight. But those who dared
 insult His justice by murmuring He destroyed
 either by the serpent's bite or by fire.
 If we weigh our defects in a true balance,
 the punishment for them is very slight;
 wherefore we owe thanks to God, not complaints.
 Let Him console us according to His will.
 I hope for great proofs of His mercy.
 You who say He prompts my words,
 continue to believe that He guides my thoughts.

mi bolle in mente, e mi trasporta. Amici,
non curate saperlo. Al sol cadente
della città m'attendi,
Ozia, presso alle porte. Alla grand'opra
a prepararmi io vado. Or, fin ch'io torni,
voi con prieghi sinceri
secondate divoti i miei pensieri.

[No. 6] Coro.

Ozia. Pietà, se irato sei,
pietà, Signor, di noi:
abbian castigo i rei,
ma l'abbiano da te.

Coro. Abbian castigo i rei,
ma l'abbiano da te.

Ozia. Se oppresso chi t'adora
soffri da chi t'ignora,
gli empî diranno poi:
questo lor Dio dov'è?

Coro. Gli empî diranno poi:
questo lor Dio dov'è?

A great plan is boiling up in my mind,
and excites me. Friends, do not seek to know it.
At sunset, Ozia, wait for me
by the city gate. I go to prepare myself
for the great work. Until I return,
second my devout thoughts
with your heartfelt prayers.

[No. 6] Chorus.

Ozia. Have mercy, Lord, on us,
mercy if Thou art angry:
let the guilty be punished,
but punished by Thee.

Chorus. Let the guilty be punished,
but punished by Thee.

Ozia. If Thou sufferest those who adore Thee
to be oppressed by those who know Thee not,
the heathen will then say:

“Where is this God of theirs?”

Chorus. The heathen will then say:
“Where is this God of theirs?”

Recitativo.

Cabri. Signor, Carmi a te viene.

Amital. E la commessa

custodia delle mura

abbandonò?

Ozia. Carmi, che chiedi?

Carmi. Io vengo

un prigioniero a presentarti. Avvinto

ad un tronco il lasciaro

vicino alla città le schiere ostili:

Achiorre è il suo nome;

degli Ammoniti è il prence.

Ozia. E così tratta

Oloferne gli amici?

Achior. È de' superbi

questo l'usato stil. Per loro è offesa

il ver che non lusinga.

Ozia. I sensi tuoi

spiega più chiari.

Achior. Ubbidirò. Sdegnando

Recitative.

Cabri. My lord, Carmi is come to see you.

Amital. And has he abandoned

the custody of the walls

entrusted to him?

Ozia. What would you, Carmi?

Carmi. I have come

to bring you a prisoner.

The enemy forces left him

bound to a tree near the city,

Achior is his name: he is

the prince of the Ammonites.

Ozia. Is this how Holofernes

treats his friends?

Achior. This is the customary style

of the arrogant. To them

an unflattering truth is an affront.

Ozia. Explain your meaning

more clearly.

Achior. I will obey. The Assyrian general,

l'assiro condottier che a lui pretendia
di resister Betulia, a me richiese
di voi notizia. Io, le memorie antiche
richiamando al pensier, tutte gli esposi
del popol d'Israele
le origini, i progressi; il culto avito
de' numerosi dèi, che per un solo
cambiare i padri vostri; i lor passaggi
dalle caldee contrade
in Carra, indi in Egitto; i duri imperi
di quel barbaro re. Dissi la vostra
prodigiosa fuga, i lunghi errori,
le scorte portentose, i cibi, l'acque,
le battaglie, i trionfi; e gli mostrai
che, quando al vostro Dio foste fedeli,
sempre pugnò per voi. Conclusi al fine
i miei detti così: «Cerchiam, se questi
al lor Dio sono infidi; e se lo sono,
la vittoria è per noi. Ma se non hanno
delitto innanzi a lui, no, non la spero,
movendo anche a lor danno il mondo intero.»

angry that Betulia dared to resist him,
from me sought knowledge of you.
Recalling to mind ancient memories,
I made known to him all the origins
and progress of the children of Israel -
the ancestral cult of numerous gods,
which your fathers changed to one alone;
their passage from Chaldea into Canaan
thence into Egypt; the harsh rule of that cruel king.
I told him of your marvellous flight,
the long wanderings, the miraculous supplies,
the food and water, the battles and victories;
and I demonstrated to him that,
when you were faithful to your God,
He always fought for you. Finally
I ended with these words: "Let us find
whether they are unfaithful to their God,
and if they are, victory is ours.
But if they have not sinned before Him,
no, do not hope for it, or you will become
a reproach before all the world."

Ozia. Oh eterna verità, come trionfi
anche in bocca a' nemici!
Achior. Arse Oloferne
di rabbia a' detti miei. Da sé mi scaccia,
in Betulia m'invia;
e qui l'empio minaccia
oggi alla strage vostra unir la mia.
Ozia. Costui dunque si fida
tanto del suo poter?
Amital. Dunque ha costui
sì poca umanità?
Achior. Non vede il sole
anima più superba,
più fiero cor. Son tali
i moti, i detti sui,
che trema il più costante in faccia a lui.

[No. 7] **Aria. *Achior.***
Terribile d'aspetto,
barbaro di costumi,
o conta sé fra' numi

Ozia. O eternal truth, how you triumph
even in the mouths of enemies!
Achior. Holofernes blazed with anger at my words.
He drove me from him
and sent me into Betulia;
and here the pitiless man threatened
to slaughter me along with you today.
Ozia. Is he then
so confident of his power?
Amital. Then has he
so little humanity?
Achior. The sun does not see
a more haughty soul,
a more savage heart.
Such are his words and deeds
that the most steadfast trembles before him.

[No. 7] **Aria. *Achior***
Terrible of aspect,
barbarous of manner,
either he counts himself among the gods

o nume alcun non ha.
Fasto, furor, dispetto
sempre dagli occhi spira;
e quanto è pronto all'ira,
è tardo alla pietà.

Recitativo.

Ozia. Ti consola, Achior. Quel Dio, di cui
predicasti il poter, l'empie minacce
torcerà su l'autor. Né a caso il Cielo
ti conduce fra noi. Tu de' nemici
potrai svelar ...

Cabri. Torna Giuditta.

Ozia. Ognuno
s'allontani da me. Convieni, o prence,
differir le richieste. Al mio soggiorno
conducetelo, o servi: anch'io fra poco
a te verrò. Vanne, Achiorre, e credi
che in me, lungi da' tuoi,
l'amico, il padre, il difensore avrai.

Achior. Ospite sì pietoso io non sperai.

or he has no god at all.
Pride, fury, scorn
always flash from his eyes;
and he is as quick to wrath
as he is slow to mercy.

Recitative.

Ozia. Be consoled, Achior. That God
whose power you foretold will turn back
his impious threats upon their author.
It was not by chance that Heaven led you
among us. You can reveal the enemy's ...

Cabri. Giuditta is returning.

Ozia. All leave me now.

Prince, I must defer my questions.
Servants, conduct him to my house:
I will come to you there soon.

Go, Achior, and believe that,
far from your people, in me
you shall find friend, father and defender.

Achior. I did not expect so compassionate a host.

Ozia. Sei pur Giuditta, o la dubbiosa luce
mi confonde gli oggetti?

Giuditta. Io sono.

Ozia. E come
in sì gioconde spoglie
le funeste cambiasti? Il bisso e l'oro,
l'ostro, le gemme a che riprendi, e gli altri
fregi di tua bellezza abbandonati?

Di balsami odorati
stilli il composto crin! Chi le tue gote
tanto avviva e colora? I moti tuoi
chi adorna oltre il costume
di grazia e maestà? Chi questo accende
insolito splendor nelle tue ciglia,
che a rispetto costringe e a meraviglia?

Giuditta. Ozia, tramonta il sole;
fa che s'apran le porte: uscir degg'io.

Ozia. Uscir!

Giuditta. Sì.

Ozia. Ma fra l'ombre, inerme e sola
così ...

Ozia. Are you Judith, or does the uncertain light
confuse what I see?

Giuditta. I am she.

Ozia. But why have you
changed your mourning
for such glad attire? Why have you again
put on fine linen and gold, purple, gems and
the other abandoned adornments of your beauty?

Your braided hair
exudes scented balsams!
Who has so revived the colour of your cheeks?
Who has decked your movements beyond
the usage of grace and grandeur? Who has lit
the unwanted splendour in your eyes,
which compels respect and admiration?

Giuditta. Ozia, the sun is setting;
command the gates to be opened: I must go out.

Ozia. Go out!

Giuditta. Yes.

Ozia. But in the darkness, unarmed
and alone like this ...

Giuditta. Non più. Fuor che la mia seguace,
altri meco non voglio.

Ozia. (Hanno i suoi detti
un non so che di risoluto e grande,
che m'occupa, m'opprime.) Almen ... Vorrei ...
Figlia ... (chi'l crederia! né pur ardisco
chiederle dove corra, in che si fidi.)
Figlia ... va: Dio t'inspira; egli ti guidi.

[No. 8] Aria. *Giuditta*

Parto inerme, e non pavento;
sola parto, e son sicura;
vo per l'ombre, e error non ho.
Chi m'accese al gran cimento
m'accompagna e m'assicura:
l'ho nell'alma, ed io lo sento
replicar che vincerò.

[No. 9] Coro.

Coro. Oh prodigio! Oh stupor! Privata assume
delle pubbliche cure

Giuditta. No more. Other than my serving-maid
I want no one with me.

Ozia. (Her words hold something, I know not what,
of resolution and grandeur which fills and
oppresses me.) At least ... I wish ... My daughter ...
(Who would believe it! I dare not even
ask her where she is going or what she relies on.)
Go ... my daughter: may God inspire and guide you.

[No. 8] Aria. *Giuditta*

I go forth unarmed and unafraid;
I go alone but secure;
I go through the darkness but have no fear.
He who fired me to this great trial
accompanies and protects me:
I have Him in my spirit, and hear Him reply
that I shall be victorious.

[No. 9] Chorus.

Chorus. O marvel! O amazement!
That an unwarlike woman on her own

donna imbellè il pensier! Con chi governa
non divide i consigli! A' rischi esposta
imprudente non sembra! Orna con tanto
studio se stessa; e non risveglia un solo
dubbio di sua virtù! Nulla promette,
e fa tutto sperar! Qual fra' viventi
può l'Autore ignorar di tai portenti?

Parte Seconda

Recitativo.

Achior. Troppo mal corrisponde (Ozia, perdona)

a' tuoi dolci costumi

tal disprezzo ostentar de' nostri numi.

Io così, tu lo sai,

del tuo Dio non parlai.

Ozia. Principe, è zelo

quel che chiami rozzezza. In te conobbi

chiari semi del vero; e m'affatico

a farli germogliar.

Achior. Ma non ti basta

should take on the responsibility of public cares
without sharing her counsel with the governor,
should be exposed to risks without seeming
imprudent! She adorns herself with such care,
yet arouses not a single doubt of her virtue!
She promises nothing yet gives us all hope!
Could the Author of such wonders disregard such a being?

Part two

Rezitativ.

Achior. To show such contempt for our gods

ill accords (forgive me, Ozia)

with your gentle manners.

As you know, I did not speak

like this of your God.

Ozia. Prince, what you call uncouthness

is zeal. In you I perceived

clear grains of the truth; and I am

struggling to make them germinate.

Achior. Is it not enough for you

ch'io veneri il tuo Dio?

Ozia. No: confessarlo

unico per essenza

debbe ciascuno, ed adorarlo solo.

Achior. Ma chi solo l'afferma?

Ozia. Il venerato

consenso d'ogni età; degli avi nostri

la fida autorità; l'istesso Dio

di cui tu predicasti

i prodigi, il poter; che di sua bocca

lo palesò; che, quando

se medesmo descrisse,

disse: «Io son quel che sono»; e tutto disse.

Achior. L'autorità de' tuoi produci in vano

con me nemico.

Ozia. E ben, con te nemico

l'autorità non vaglia. Uom però sei;

la ragion ti convinca. A me rispondi

con animo tranquillo. Il ver si cerchi,

non la vittoria.

Achior. Io già t'ascolto.

that I respect your God?

Ozia. No: everyone must

acknowledge Him one alone in substance

and worship Him alone.

Achior. But who asserts that He is one?

Ozia. The revered accord

of every generation;

the reliable authority of our ancestors;

that same God whose wonders and power

you foretold, which He revealed

in His own voice:

for when He described Himself

He said: "I am that I am," and said everything.

Achior. In vain you quote the authority of your people

against me, your antagonist.

Ozia. Well, my authority does not prevail

with you, my adversary. But you are a man:

reason will convince you. Answer me

with a tranquil mind: seek the truth,

not victory.

Achior. I am listening.

Ozia. Or dimmi:
credi, Achior, che possa
cosa alcuna prodursi
senza la sua cagion?

Achior. No.

Ozia. D'una in altra
passando col pensier, non ti riduci
qualche cagione a confessar, da cui
tutte dipendan l'altre?

Achior. E ciò dimostra
che v'è Dio, non che è solo. Esser non ponno
queste prime cagioni i nostri dèi?

Ozia. Quali dèi, caro Prence? I tronchi, i marmi
sculti da voi?

Achior. Ma se que' marmi a' saggi
fosser simboli sol delle immortali
essenze creatrici, ancor diresti
che i miei dèi non son dèi?

Ozia. Sì, perché molti.

Achior. Io ripugnanza alcuna
nel numero non veggo.

Ozia. Then tell me,
do you believe,
Achior, that anything can be done
without its reason?

Achior. No.

Ozia. Passing in thought
from one thing to another,
do you not come to acknowledge
some cause on which all else depends?

Achior. That shows that there is a God,
not that He is one.

Can our gods not be prime causes?

Ozia. What gods, dear prince? Tree-trunks
and marble that you have carved?

Achior. But if those stones were to the wise
merely symbols of the immortal creative beings,
would you still say
that my gods are not gods?

Ozia. Yes, because they are many.

Achior. I see no obstacle
in numbers,

Ozia. Eccola. Un Dio

concepir non poss'io,

se perfetto non è.

Achior. Giusto è il concetto.

Ozia. Quando dissi perfetto,

dissi infinito ancor.

Achior. L'un l'altro include:

non si dà chi l'ignori.

Ozia. Ma l'essenze che adori,

se son più, son distinte; e, se distinte,

han confini fra lor. Dir dunque déi

che ha confin l'infinito, o non son dèi.

Achior. Da questi lacci, in cui

m'implica il tuo parlar, cedasi al vero,

disciogliermi non so: ma non per questo

persuaso son io. D'arte ti cedo,

non di ragione. E abbandonar non voglio

gli dèi che adoro e vedo,

per un dio che non posso

né pure immaginar.

Ozia. S'egli capisse

Ozia. Here is one.

I cannot imagine a God

who is not perfect.

Achior. The idea is a just one.

Ozia. When I said perfect

I also meant infinite.

Achior. One includes the other:

of that there can be no question.

Ozia. But the beings you worship, if they are several,

are distinct; and if distinct, there are boundaries

between them. You then must say either

that the infinite has boundaries or that they are not gods.

Achior. I must admit, I cannot free myself

from these traps in which your words

have caught me; but I am not convinced

by this. I yield to your art,

not to your reason. And I do not wish

to desert the gods

I worship and can see

for a God whom I cannot even imagine.

Ozia. If we could imagine Him,

nel nostro immaginar, Dio non sarebbe.
Chi potrà figurarlo? Egli di parti,
come il corpo, non consta; egli in affetti,
come l'anime nostre,
non è distinto; ei non soggiace a forma,
come tutto il creato; e se gli assegni
parti, affetti, figura, il circoscrivi,
perfezion gli toglì.

Achior. E quando il chiami
tu stesso e buono e grande,
no'l circoscrivi allor?

Ozia. No; buono il credo,
ma senza qualità; grande, ma senza
quantità, né misura; ognor presente,
senza sito o confine; e, se in tal guisa
qual sia non spiego, almen di lui non formo
un'idea che l'oltraggi.

Achior. È dunque vano
lo sperar di vederlo.

Ozia. Un dì potresti
meglio fissarti in lui: ma puoi frattanto

He would not be God.
Who can envisage Him? He does not consist
of parts, like the body; He is not distinct
in concept, like our souls;
He is not subject to form, like all creation;
and if you assign parts, concepts, form to Him,
you circumscribe Him,
you mar His perfection.

Achior. And when you yourself call Him
both good and great,
do you not then circumscribe Him?

Ozia. No; I think Him good,
but without quality; great,
but without quantity, infinite; omnipresent,
without place or confine; and if in this way
I cannot explain what He is, at least I do not
form an idea of Him that offends Him.

Achior. So it is useless
to hope to see Him.

Ozia. One day you will be able
better to decide about Him;

vederlo ovunque vuoi.

Achior. Vederlo! E come,

se immaginar no'l so?

Ozia. Come nel sole

a fissar le pupille in vano aspiri,

e pur sempre e per tutto il sol rimiri.

[No. 10] Aria. Ozia

Se Dio veder tu vuoi,

guardalo in ogni oggetto;

cercalo nel tuo petto,

lo troverai con te.

E se dov'ei dimora

non intendesti ancor,

confondimi, se puoi;

dimmi, dov'ei non è.

Recitativo.

Achior. Confuso io son; sento sedurmi, e pure

ritorno a dubitar.

Ozia. Quando il costume

but meantime you can see Him wherever you wish.

Achior. See Him! But how,

if I cannot imagine Him?

Ozia. As you vainly seek

to fix your eyes on the sun, and yet

the sun always shines, and on everything.

[No. 10] Aria. Ozia

If you wish to see God,

look at Him in everything;

if you seek Him in your heart,

you will find Him with you.

And if you cannot conceive

where He dwells,

confound me if you can:

tell me where He does not dwell.

Recitativo.

Achior. I am confused; I feel tempted,

and yet my doubts return.

Ozia. When habit

alla ragion contrasta,
avvien così. Tal di negletta cetra
musica man le abbandonate corde
stenta a temprar, perché vibrare appena
si rallentan di nuovo.

Amital. Ah dimmi, Ozia,
che si fa, che si pensa? Io non intendo
che voglia dir questo silenzio estremo
a cui passò Betulia
dall'estremo tumulto. Il nostro stato
punto non migliorò. Crescono i mali,
e sceman le querele. Ognun chiedea
ieri aita e pietà; stupido ognuno
oggi passa, e non parla. Ah parmi questo
un presagio per noi troppo funesto!

[No. 11] Aria. *Amital*

Quel nocchier che in gran procella
non s'affanna e non favella,
è vicino a naufragar.
È vicino all'ore estreme

conflicts with reason,
it happens so. It is like struggling to tune
the neglected strings of a discarded lyre,
that scarcely vibrate
if further slackened.

Amital. Ah tell me, Ozia, what is happening,
what are your intentions? I do not understand
the meaning of this extreme silence
that has overtaken Betulia
after its extreme uproar. Our state
has not improved a jot. Our ills increase,
but complaints decline. Yesterday everyone
was begging for help and mercy; today
everyone walks around dully, without speaking.
Ah, this seems too gloomy an omen for us!

[No. 11] Aria. *Amital*

That pilot who in a great storm
is not anxious and does not speak
is close to shipwreck.
That sick man who does not groan

quell'infermo che non geme
e ha cagion di sospirar.

Recitativo.

Ozia. Lungamente non dura
eccessivo dolor. Ciascuno a' mali
o cede o s'accostuma. Il nostro stato
non è però senza speranza.

Amital. Intendo:

tu in Giuditta confidi. Ah questa parmi
troppo folle lusinga.

Coro (in lontano). All'armi, all'armi!

Ozia. Quai grida!

Cabri. Accorri, Ozia. Senti il tumulto
che fra' nostri guerrieri
là si destò presso alle porte?

Ozia. E quale
n'è la cagion?

Cabri. Chi sa?

Amital. Miseri noi!
Saran giunti i nemici.

but has reason to sigh
is near his last hour.

Recitative.

Ozia. Excessive grief
does not last long.
Everyone either yields to ills
or gets used to them, And yet
our state is not without hope.

Amital. I understand:

you rely on Judith.

Ah, I think that too wild an expectation.

Chorus. To arms, to arms!

Ozia. What are those shouts?

Cabri. Hurry, Ozia. Do you hear
the noise raised by our warriors
by the gates!

Ozia. And what is the reason for it?

Cabri. Who knows?

Amital. Mercy on us!
The enemy is here.

Ozia. Corrasì ad osservar.

Giuditta. Fermate, amici.

Ozia. Giuditta!

Amital. Eterno Dio!

Giuditta. Lodiam, compagni,

lodiamo il Signor nostro. Ecco adempite

le sue promesse: ei per mia man trionfa;

la nostra fede egli premiò.

Ozia. Ma questo improvviso tumulto ...

Giuditta. Io lo destai;

non vi turbi. A momenti

ne udirete gli effetti.

Ozia. E se frattanto

Oloferne ...

Giuditta. Oloferne

già svenato morì.

Amital. Che dici mai!

Achior. Chi ha svenato Oloferne?

Giuditta. Io lo svenai.

Ozia. Tu stessa!

Achior. E quando?

Ozia. Let us run and see.

Giuditta. Stop, friends.

Ozia. Giuditta!

Amital. Eternal God!

Giuditta. Praise, my friends, Praise our Lord'

Behold, His promises are fulfilled:

He triumphs by my hand:

He has rewarded our faith.

Ozia. But this sudden tumult ...

Giuditta. It was my doing:

do not be disturbed.

In a few moments you will hear the effects.

Ozia. But meanwhile

if Holofernes ...

Giuditta. Holofernes

has been slain.

Amital. What are you saying?

Achior. Who slew Holofernes??

Giuditta. I slew him.

Ozia. You!

Achior. But when?

Amital. E come?

Giuditta. Udite. Appena
da Betulia partii, che m'arrestaro
le guardie ostili. Ad Oloferne innanzi
son guidata da loro. Egli mi chiede
a che vengo e chi son. Parte io gli scopro,
taccio parte del vero. Ei non intende,
e approva i detti miei. Pietoso, umano
(ma straniera in quel volto
mi parve la pietà) m'ode, m'accoglie,
m'applaude, mi consola. A lieta cena
seco mi vuol. Già su le mense elette
fumano i vasi d'or; già vuota il folle
fra' cibi ad or ad or tazze frequenti
di licor generoso; e a poco a poco
comincia a vacillar. Molti ministri
eran d'intorno a noi; ma ad uno ad uno
Tutti si dileguar. L'ultimo d'essi
rimaneva, e il peggior. L'uscio costui
chiuse partendo, e mi lasciò con lui.

Amital. Fiero cimento!

Amital. And how?

Giuditta. Listen. Hardly had I left Betulia
than the enemy watch arrested me.
I was brought by them before Holofernes:
he asked me why I had come and who I was.
I disclosed part of the truth to him
but concealed part- He did not understand
but was pleased with what I said. He heard me
and received me kindly and benevolently (though
kindness seemed to me a stranger to that face),
he applauded and comforted me. He invited me
to a joyful banquet with him. On the special tables
the golden vessels were already smoking; already
the madman was every moment, between dishes,
emptying frequent cups of strong wine;
and little by little he was beginning to sway.
Many servitors were around us; but one by one
all disappeared. The last of these to remain,
and the worst, closed the door as he departed
and left me with him.

Amital. Fearful danger!

Giuditta. Ogni cimento è lieve
ad ispirato cor. Scorsa gran parte
era ormai della notte. Il campo intorno
nel sonno universal taceva oppresso.
Vinto Oloferne istesso
dal vino, in cui s'immerse oltre il costume,
steso dormia su le funeste piume.
Sorgo; e tacita allor colà m'appresso,
dove prono ei giacea. Rivolta al Cielo
più col cuor, che col labbro: «Ecco l'istante»,
dissi, «oh Dio d'Israel, che un colpo solo
liberi il popol tuo. Tu'l promettesti;
in te fidata io l'intrapresi; e spero
assistenza da te.» Sciolgo, ciò detto,
da' sostegni del letto
l'appeso acciar; lo snudo; il crin gli stringo
con la sinistra man; l'altra sollevo
quanto il braccio si stende; i voti a Dio
rinnovo in sì gran passo,
e su l'empia cervice il colpo abbasso.
Ozia. Oh coraggio!

Giuditta. Every danger is slight to the inspired heart.
By now a great part of the night had elapsed.
The camp all around was silent, wrapped
in universal sleep. Holofernes himself,
overcome by the wine, in which he had indulged
beyond his custom, was asleep, stretched out
on the fatal bed. I rose,
and silently then drew near to where he lay,
face down. Addressing myself to heaven,
I said, more with my heart than my lips,
“This is the moment, o God of Israel,
when a single stroke may liberate Thy people.
Thou didst make this promise; trusting in Thee,
I undertook the task; and I look to Thee for aid.”
Having said this, I untied the falchion hung
on the pillars of his bed, bared it, held his hair
with my left hand, raised the other
to the full length of my arm,
renewed my vows to God at so great a moment,
and smote the blow upon his wicked neck.
Ozia. What courage!

Amital. Oh periglio!

Giuditta. Apre il barbaro il ciglio; e, incerto ancora
fra'l sonno e fra la morte, il ferro immerso
sentesi nella gola. Alle difese
sollevarsi procura; e gliel contende
l'imprigionato crin. Ricorre a' gridi;
ma interrotte la voce
trova le vie del labbro, e si disperde.
Replico il colpo: ecco l'orribil capo
dagli omeri diviso.
Guizza il tronco reciso
sul sanguigno terren: balzar mi sento
il teschio semivivo
sotto la man che il sostenea. Quel volto
a un tratto scolorir; mute parole
quel labbro articular; quegli occhi intorno
cercar del sole i rai,
morire, e minacciar vidi, e tremai.

Amital. Tremo in udirlo anch'io.

Giuditta. Respiro al fine; e del trionfo illustre
rendo grazie all'Autor. Svelta dal letto

Amital. What danger!

Giuditta. The barbarian opened his eyes and, still uncertain
between sleep and death, felt the sword plunged
into his throat. He attempted
to rise and defend himself,
but his fettered hair prevented him. He resorted
to cries, but his voice
found the way to his lips barred,
and was lost. I repeated the blow, and lo,
the fearful head
was cleft from his shoulders.
The severed trunk quivered on the blood-stained
ground: I felt the half-dead skull
start beneath the hand that held it.
I saw that face suddenly lose colour,
those lips frame mute words, those eyes seeking
all round the light of the sun; I saw him die,
threatening, and I trembled.

Amital. I too trembled to hear it.

Giuditta. At last I breathed again, and gave thanks to the
Creator for this signal triumph.

la superba cortina, il capo esangue
sollecita ne involgo; alla mia fida
ancella lo consegno,
che non lungi attendea; del duce estinto
m'involo al padiglione; passo fra' suoi
non vista, o rispettata, e torno a voi.

Ozia. Oh prodigio!

Cabri. Oh portentoso!

Achior. Inerme e sola

tanto pensar, tanto eseguir potesti!

E crederti degg'io?

Giuditta. Credilo a questo,

ch'io scopro agli occhi tuoi, teschio reciso.

Achior. Oh spavento! È Oloferne: io lo ravviso.

Ozia. Sostenetelo, o servi: il cor gli agghiaccia
l'improvviso terror.

Amital. Fugge quell'alma
per non cedere al ver.

Giuditta. Meglio di lui
giudichiamo, Amital. Forse quel velo
che gli oscurò la mente

Pulling down from the bed the splendid canopy,
I quickly wrapped in it the lifeless head; I gave it
to my faithful maid, who had been waiting nearby;
I stole away from the dead general to the pavilion,
passed unseen and unchallenged through the camp,
and returned to you.

Ozia. Oh marvellous!

Cabri. Oh wondrous!

Achior. Unarmed and alone,

you could plan and perform this!

Am I to believe you?

Giuditta. Believe this that I disclose

to your eyes, the severed head.

Achior. How fearful! It is Holofernes: I recognise him.

Ozia. Support him, servants: sudden terror
has turned his heart to ice.

Amital. His spirit flees
so as not to yield to the sight.

Giuditta. Let us think better of him, Amital.
Perhaps that veil which obscured his mind
now is torn away all at once.

a un tratto or si squarciò. Non fugge il vero,
ma gli manca il costume
l'impeto a sostener di tanto lume.

[No. 12] **Aria. Giuditta**

Prigionier, che fa ritorno
dagli orrori al dì sereno,
chiude i lumi a' rai del giorno,
e pur tanto il sospirò.
Ma così fra poco arriva
a soffrir la chiara luce:
ché l'avviva e lo conduce
lo splendor che l'abbagliò.

Recitativo.

Achior. Giuditta, Ozia, popoli, amici: io cedo,
vinto son io. Prende un novello aspetto
ogni cosa per me. Da quel che fui
non so chi mi trasforma: in me l'antico
Achior più non trovo. Altri pensieri,
sento altre voglie in me. Tutto son pieno,

It does not flee from the truth,
but he is unaccustomed
to sustain the rush of so much light.

[No. 12] **Aria. Giuditta**

The prisoner who returns
from horrid night to peaceful day
closes his eyes to the sunlight
for which he yearned so much.
But soon he is able
to bear the radiant light,
because the splendour which dazzled him
animates and guides him.

Recitativo.

Achior. Giuditta, Ozia, people, friends: I yield,
I am vanquished. Everything takes on
a new aspect for me. I know not who
has transformed me from what I was:
I no longer find the old Achior in me.
I am filled, entirely filled, with your God.

tutto del vostro Dio. Grande, infinito,
unico lo confesso. I falsi numi
odio, detesto, e i vergognosi incensi,
che lor credulo offersi. Altri non amo,
non conosco altro Dio che il Dio d'Abramo.

[No. 13] *Aria. Achior*

Te solo adoro,
mente infinita,
fonte di vita,
di verità;
in cui si muove,
da cui dipende
quanto comprende
l'eternità.

Recitativo.

Ozia. Di tua vittoria un glorioso effetto
vedi, o Giuditta.

Amital. E non il solo. Anch'io
peccai; mi pento. Il mio timore offese

I acknowledge Him great, infinite, one,
I hate and abhor the false gods
and the shameful adulation that I
credulously offered them. I love no other,
I recognise no other god than the God of Abraham.

[No. 13] *Aria. Achior*

Thee alone I adore,
infinite Mind.
Source of life
and of truth.
in which moves,
on which depends,
everything that
eternity comprehends.

Recitativo.

Ozia. You see a glorious result
from your victory, o Giuditta.

Amital. And not the only one. I too have sinned;
I repent. My fear was an affront

la divina pietà. Fra' mali miei,
mio Dio, non rammentai che puoi, chi sei.

[No. 14] *Aria. Amital*

Con troppa rea viltà
quest'alma ti oltraggiò,
allor che disperò
del tuo soccorso.
Pietà, Signor, pietà;
giacché il pentito cor
misura il proprio error
col suo rimorso.

Recitativo.

Cabri. Quanta cura hai di noi, Bontà Divina!

Carmi. Furo, o santa Eroina,
veri i presagi tuoi: gli Assiri oppresse
eccidio universal.

Ozla. Forse è lusinga
del tuo desio.

Carmi. No, del felice evento

to divine mercy. In my tribulations, o God,
I forgot what thou canst, what thou art.

[No. 14] *Aria. Amital*

With too culpable baseness
my soul insulted Thee
when it despaired
of Thy succour.
Have mercy, Lord, mercy,
since my penitent heart
matches its own error
with its remorse.

Recitativo.

Cabri. What care Thou hast of us, o divine goodness!

Carmi. Your forecasts, saintly heroine,
were true: universal slaughter
has overwhelmed the Assyrians.

Ozla. This is perhaps
the flattery of your wishes.

Carmi. No; I saw part of the happy event;

parte vid'io; da' trattenuti il resto
fuggitivi raccolti. In su le mura,
come impose Giuditta al suo ritorno,
destai di grida e d'armi
strepitoso tumulto.
Amital. E qui s'intese.
Carmi. Temon le guardie ostili
d'un assalto notturno, ed Oloferne
corrono ad avvertirne. Il tronco informe
trovan colà nel proprio sangue involto:
tornan gridando indietro. Il caso atroce
spargesi fra le schiere, intimorite
già da' nostri tumulti; ecco ciascuno
precipita alla fuga, e nella fuga
l'un l'altro urta, impedisce. Inciampa e cade
sopra il caduto il fuggitivo: immerge
stolido in sen l'involontario acciaro
al compagno il compagno; opprime oppresso,
nel sollevare l'amico, il fido amico.
Orribilmente il campo
tutto rimbomba intorno. Escon dal chiuso

the rest I gathered from the fleeing survivors.
From above the walls
I raised a joyful noise
of shouts and arms, such as Judith
evoked on her return.
Amital. It was heard here.
Carmi. The enemy guards
feared a nocturnal attack,
and ran to warn Holofernes. There they found
the shapeless trunk lying in its own blood,
and turned back, crying aloud. The dreadful deed
was noised through the troops, already intimidated
by our shouts: behold, all rush to flee,
and in their flight collide and obstruct each other.
The fugitives stumble and fall over the fallen;
companions in their confusion involuntarily plunge
their swords in each other's breast;
overwhelmed, a faithful friend,
lifting his friend, in turn overwhelms him.
The camp all around
resounds with dreadful noise.

spaventati i destrieri, e vanno anch'essi
calpestando per l'ombre
gli estinti, i semivivi. A' lor nitriti
miste degli empi e le bestemmie e i voti
dissipa il vento. Apre alla morte il caso
cento insolite vie. Del pari ognuno
teme, fugge, perisce; e ognun del pari
ignora in quell'orrore
di che teme, ove fugge, e perché muore.
Ozia. Oh Dio! Sogno o son desto?
Carmi. Odi, o Signor, quel mormorio funesto?

[No. 15] Aria. *Carmi*

Quei moti che senti
per l'orrida notte,
son queruli accenti,
son grida interrotte
che desta lontano
l'insano terror.
Per vincere, a noi
non restan nemici;

From the enclosure the terrified steeds break out,
and in the darkness they too
trample on the dead and dying. The wind
disperses their neighing, mixed with the curses
and the vows of the heathens. The event opens up
a hundred unusual ways to death. Everyone alike
fears, flees, perishes; and everyone alike
in that horror knows not what he fears,
whither he flees, or why he perishes.
Ozia. O heaven! Am I dreaming or awake?
Carmi. Dost Thou hear, o Lord, that mournful murmur?

[No. 15] Aria. *Carmi*

Those sounds you hear
in the darkness of the night
are plaintive accents,
broken cries
that insane terror
arouses afar.
There remain no enemies
for us to conquer;

del ferro gli uffici
compisce il timor.

Recitativo.

Ozia. Seguansi, o Carmi, i fuggitivi; e sia
il più di nostre prede
premio a Giuditta.

Amital. O generosa donna,
te sopra ogni altra Iddio
favorì, benedisse.

Cabri. In ogni etade
del tuo valor si parlerà.

Achior. Tu sei
la gioia d'Israele,
l'onor del popol tuo ...

Giuditta. Basta. Dovute
non son tai lodi a me. Dio fu la mente
che il gran colpo guidò; la mano io fui:
i cantici festivi offransi a lui.

fear completes
the work of the sword.

Recitative.

Ozia. Have the fugitives pursued, o Carmi;
and let most of our spoils
be Giuditta's reward.

Amital. O generous woman,
may God favour and bless you
above all other women.

Cabri. Your valour will be spoken of
in every age.

Achior. You are
the exultation of Israel,
the glory of your people ...

Giuditta. Enough. Such praises are not due to me.
God was the spirit who guided the great blow;
I was His hand;
let the festive hymns be offered to Him.

[No. 16] Coro

Coro. Lodi al gran Dio che oppresse
gli empîi nemici suoi,
che combatté per noi,
che trionfò così.

Giuditta. Venne l'Assiro, e intorno
con le falangi Perse
le valli ricoperse,
i fiumi inaridì.

Parve oscurato il giorno;
parve con quel crudele
al timido Israele
giunto l'estremo dì.

Coro. Lodi al gran Dio che oppresse
gli empî nemici suoi,
che combatté per noi,
che trionfò così.

Giuditta. Fiamme, catene e morte
ne minacciò feroce:
alla terribil voce
Betulia impallidì.

[No. 16] Chorus.

Chorus. Praises to great God
who crushed His heathen enemies,
who fought for us
and who so triumphed.

Giuditta. The Assyrian came,
and with the Persian cohorts
covered the valley all around
and damned up the rivers.

The daylight seemed obscured;
it seemed to nervous Israel
that its last day had come
with that cruel man.

Chorus. Praises to great God
who crushed His heathen enemies,
who fought for us
and who so triumphed.

Giuditta. Flames, chains and death
he fiercely threatened:
at his terrible voice
Betulia turned pale.

Ma inaspettata sorte
l'estinse in un momento,
e come nebbia al vento
tanto furor sparì.
Coro. Lodi al gran Dio che oppresse
gli empî nemici suoi,
che combatté per noi,
che trionfò così.
Giuditta. Dispersi, abbandonati
i barbari fuggiro:
si spaventò l'Assiro,
il Medo inorridì.
Né fur giganti usati
ad assalir le stelle:
fu donna sola e imbelle
quella che gli atterrì.
Coro. Lodi al gran Dio che oppresse
gli empî nemici suoi,
che combatté per noi,
che trionfò così.
Tutti. Solo di tante squadre

But unexpected fortune
extinguished him in a trice,
and all that fury vanished
like mist in the wind.
Chorus. Praises to great God
who crushed His heathen enemies,
who fought for us
and who so triumphed.
Giuditta. Scattered and deserted,
the barbarians fled:
the Assyrians quaked,
the Medes were daunted.
Nor were giants employed
to assail the stars:
it was a lone, unwarlike woman
who filled them with terror.
Chorus. Praises to great God
who crushed His heathen enemies,
who fought for us
and who so triumphed.
All. Let the dead leader alone

veggasi il duce estinto,
sciolta è Betulia, ogni nemico è vinto.
Alma, i nemici rei
che t'insidian la luce
i vizi son: ma la superbia è il duce.
Spegnila; e spento in lei
tutto il seguace stuolo,
mieterai mille palme a un colpo solo.

of so many squadrons be seen;
Betulia is freed, every enemy is conquered.
O soul, the wicked enemies
that ensnare your light
are the vices; but chief of these is pride.
Quell it, and with it all its band
of followers will be quelled, and you will
gather a thousand palms at a single blow.



THE L'ORFEO BAROCKORCHESTER EXPRESSES
ITS GRATITUDE TO ITS SPONSORS AND PARTNERS:

bm:uk Bundesministerium für
Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur

donau**FESTWOCHEN**
bm strudengau


KULTUR


Linz
Kultur


Linz
verändert



Executive producers: Anne de Jong & Marcel van den Broek

Recorded at: Stiftskirche Waldhausen (Upper Austria)

Recording dates: 6-9 August 2012

Recording producer, engineer: Dietmar Wolf, Hans-Jochen Brauns, Irmgard Bauer (editing)

A&R Challenge Records International: Wolfgang Reihing

Liner notes: Christian Moritz-Bauer

Translation: Carin van Heerden

Booklet editing: Marike Hasler

Cover photo: wildundleise.de

Photo orchestra: Reinhard Winkler

Art direction: Marcel van den Broek, newartsint.com

www.challengerecords.com / www.lorfeo.com