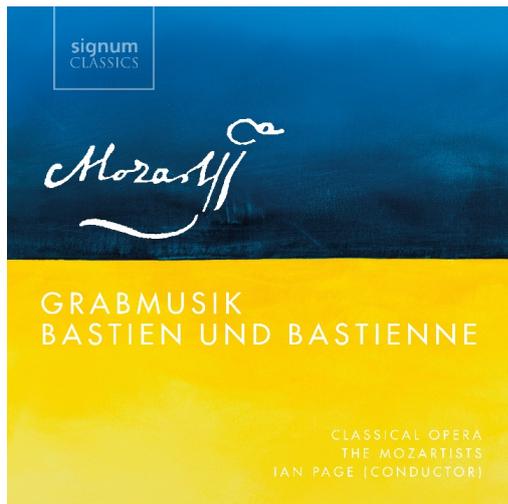


Ian Page and Classical Opera release the world première recording of Mozart's original 1768 version of *Bastien und Bastienne*



**Mozart: Grabmusik
Bastien und Bastienne**

Anna Lucia Richter (soprano)
Alessandro Fisher (tenor)
Jacques Imbrailo (baritone)
Darren Jeffery (bass-baritone)

Ian Page (conductor)
The Mozartists

Signum Classics SIGCD547

Classical Opera and Ian Page release the seventh recording in their acclaimed Complete Mozart Opera Cycle featuring the world première recording of Mozart's original 1768 version of *Bastien und Bastienne*, paired with the original version of the 1767 cantata *Grabmusik*. This recording brings together an outstanding cast comprising of Anna Lucia Richter (soprano), Alessandro Fisher (tenor), Jacques Imbrailo (baritone) and Darren Jeffery (bass-baritone) with the period-instrument orchestra of The Mozartists.

Ian Page – conductor, founder and Artistic Director – said: *“It was only when I started preparations for this recording that I realised how complex and convoluted the origins of Bastien und Bastienne were. Mozart’s autograph manuscript was missing for a great many years, but it was finally rediscovered in Krakow in the 1980s. As a result it has been possible to establish the provenance of this charming work and to recreate the text as Mozart himself set and performed it. We are coupling the piece with Grabmusik, one of the most astonishing and visceral of Mozart’s childhood compositions, and a particular favourite of mine.”*

Bastien und Bastienne is the only one of Mozart's operas to be conceived for a performance in a private house rather than a theatre. It was commissioned by the controversial German physician Franz Anton Mesmer in mid-1768, when Mozart was 12 years old, and set a 1764 libretto by F.W. Weiskern. This libretto was essentially a German adaptation of a French libretto which was itself an adaptation of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's 1752 intermezzo *Le devin du village*. When Mozart returned to Salzburg in 1769, a few months after the composition of *Bastien und Bastienne*, his friend Johannes Schachtner, who fancied himself as a librettist (he was subsequently to write the text for Mozart's *Zaide*), felt that Weiskern's text was too harsh and angular, and he set about the task of 'improving' it.

Because Mozart had already composed the music, Schachtner limited his changes in the sung text to sporadic words or phrases that have the exact same stresses and syllable-count, but he completely rewrote the spoken dialogue, rejecting Weiskern's prose in favour of a versified text which he hoped Mozart would set to recitative (Mozart did indeed set the first few recitatives before seemingly losing interest). When examining Mozart's autograph it is clear that the original text has been crossed out in a different pen wherever Schachtner made changes to the sung text. The Bärenreiter Urtext edition, however, was made before the rediscovery of the manuscript, and therefore follows (along with other editions) an inauthentic hybrid of Weiskern, Schachtner, dialogue and recitative. Ian Page's recording reinstates Weiskern's deliberately rustic and unrefined language, the first recording of the opera to do so.

The second work featured on the disc is Mozart's cantata *Grabmusik*, which is supposedly the result of a test set by the Prince of Salzburg. The Prince was sceptical that a child could write "such masterly compositions", so the ten-year-old Mozart was shut in a room for a week with manuscript paper and words of an oratorio. The anonymous text represents a dialogue between a tormented soul, who is lamenting Christ's death, and an angel. When the work was revived in the mid-1770s Mozart added a final recitative and chorus, but this recording again presents Mozart's original version, ending with the conciliatory duet between the Soul and the Angel. The work was conceived for performance in Holy Week, and its title can be translated as "Cantata on Christ's Grave" – literally 'grave music'.

As part of Ian Page's visionary MOZART 250 series, Classical Opera and The Mozartists will present the first modern performance of Mozart's original version of *Bastien und Bastienne* at Wigmore Hall, London on 18th September 2018.

www.classicalopera.co.uk

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Notes to editors

Classical Opera & The Mozartists – [full biography here](#)

Classical Opera, founded in 1997 under the direction of Ian Page, is one of the world's leading exponents of the works of Mozart and his contemporaries. It is renowned for its vibrant, fresh and stylish performances, for its ability to discover and nurture outstanding young artists, and for its imaginative and illuminating programming. Following the launch of Ian Page's ground-breaking MOZART 250 and a broadening of repertoire, incorporating symphonies and concertos, oratorios and concert arias as well as operas, the company launched The Mozartists in 2017 to reflect and facilitate this expanding strand of work on the concert platform.

Ian Page – [full biography here](#)

Ian Page is the founder, conductor and artistic director of Classical Opera and The Mozartists. With Classical Opera he has conducted most of Mozart's operas, including the world premières of the "original" version of *Mitridate*, *re di Ponto* and a new completion of *Zaide*, as well as the UK premières of Gluck's *La clemenza di Tito*, Telemann's *Orpheus* and Jommelli's *Il Vologeso*, and the first new staging for 250 years of Johann Christian Bach's *Adriano in Siria*. In 2009 he made his Royal Opera House début conducting Arne's *Artaxerxes* at the Linbury Studio Theatre.

Ian is deeply committed to nurturing and championing outstanding young singers and players – for several years he was a professor at the Royal College of Music, and he has given masterclasses for the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and The Royal Opera’s Jette Parker Young Artists Programme. He is also a passionate spokesman for classical music, opera and the arts, and has broadcast on BBC 4 and Sky Arts.

Track listings

Grabmusik, K. 42 / 35a (original 1767 version)

1. No. 1, Recitative: “Wo bin ich? bitterer Schmerz!” (Die Seele)
2. No. 2, Aria: “Felsen, spaltet euren Rachen” (Die Seele)
3. No. 3, Recitative: “Geliebte Seel’, was redest du?” (Der Engel)
4. No. 4, Aria: “Betracht dies Herz und frage mich” (Der Engel)
5. No. 5, Accompanied recitative: “O Himmel! was ein traurig Licht” (Die Seele)
6. No. 6, Duet: “Jesu, was hab’ ich getan?” (Der Engel, Die Seele)

Bastien und Bastienne, K. 50 (original 1768 version)

7. Intrada
SCENE ONE
8. No. 1, Aria: “Mein liebster Freund hat mich verlassen” (Bastienne)
9. Dialogue: “Du fliehst von mir, Bastien?” (Bastienne)
10. No. 2, Aria: “Ich geh jetzt auf die Weide” (Bastienne)
SCENE TWO
11. No. 3: Entrance of Colas
12. No. 4, Aria: “Befraget mich ein zartes Kind” (Colas)
13. Dialogue: “Guten Morgen, Herr Colas!” (Bastienne, Colas)
14. No. 5, Aria: “Wenn mein Bastien im Scherze” (Bastienne)
15. Dialogue: “O, die Edelfrau vom Schloß” (Colas)
16. No. 6, Aria: “Würd ich auch, wie manche Buhlerinnen” (Bastienne)
17. Dialogue: “Gib dich zufrieden!” (Colas, Bastienne)
18. No. 7, Duet: “Auf den Rat, den ich gegeben” (Colas, Bastienne)
SCENE THREE
19. Dialogue: “Dieses Liebhaberpaar ist wahrlich ein rechtes Wunderwerk” (Colas)
SCENE FOUR
20. No. 8, Aria: “Großen Dank dir abzustatten” (Bastien)
21. Dialogue: “Es freut mich, daß du endlich zu dir” (Colas, Bastien)
22. No. 9, Aria: “Geh! du sagst mir eine Fabel” (Bastien)