

La Clemenza di Tito

W.A.Mozart

Opera in two acts. Sung in English.

The Crescent Theatre

2nd, 3rd, 5th & 6th Nov.

2004 7.30pm

Mozart's sublime
Roman masterpiece of
manipulation, murder
& magical melody

*"Music worthy of its master;
with his andantes he
particularly pleases,
and his melodies are so
beautiful as to entice
the angels down
to earth."*

Midland Music Makers
Opera

www.midlandmusicmakers.org



2004 PRODUCTION TEAM

Musical Director *Phil Ypres-Smith*

Producer and Director *Amanda Laidler*

Assistant Director *Andrew Holtom*

Production Manager *Barry Matthews*

Stage Manager *Kevin McGrath*

Set Design *Amanda Laidler*

Lighting *Nic Walsh*

Costume Co-ordinator *Pam Davies*

Costume Consultant *Pat Robinson*

Props *Susan Cash*

Stage Crew *Rob Taylor, Paul Taylor,
Terry Deering & Edward Alford*

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Ticket Managers *Norma & David Johnson*

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La Clemenza di Tito

Music by W.A.Mozart

Original Libretto by Metastasio. English translation by Amanda Holden

Reduced orchestration by Tony Burke. Copyright Welsh National Opera

CHARACTERS

Titus	<i>Emperor of Rome</i>	<i>Matthew Hale</i>
Vitellia	<i>Daughter of the deposed Emperor</i>	<i>Kym Sheargold</i>
Sextus	<i>Vitellia's admirer, brother of Servilia</i>	<i>Claire Stoneman</i>
Servilia	<i>Sister of Sextus, betrothed to Annius</i>	<i>Lorraine Payne</i>
Annus	<i>Friend of Sextus, betrothed to Servilia</i>	
	<i>Tuesday & Friday</i>	<i>Valerie Matthews</i>
	<i>Wednesday & Saturday</i>	<i>Pat Bullock</i>
Publius	<i>Loyal Guard to Titus</i>	
	<i>Tuesday & Friday</i>	<i>David Mellor</i>
	<i>Wednesday & Saturday</i>	<i>Charles Ainslie</i>

CHORUS LADIES:

Sally Allsop, Patricia Bullock, Susan Cash, Pam Davies, Sheila Giles, Josephine Holway, Norma Johnson, Valerie Matthews, Patricia Nixon, Helen Rourke, Juliet Sharpe, Janet Stanley, Dee White, Angela Willis, Marrian Yates.

CHORUS GENTLEMEN:

Charles Ainslie, Graham Brookman, Barry Matthews, Willem Meijs, David Mellor, Tim Morris, Malcolm Oakes, David Sandells, Patrick Sharpe.

ORCHESTRA:

*1st Violin - Ed Hargrave. 2nd Violin - Suzanne Elliott. Viola - Sally Greenwell.
Cello - Emily Fry. Flute - Alex Bullock. Oboe - Lesley Knowles.
Clarinet - Becky Milward. Bassoon - Dot Brodie. Horn - Pete Clarke.*



Synopsis

Act One

Rome, A.D. 79.

Vitellia, daughter of the deposed Emperor Vitellio, wants the current ruler, Titus (Titus Flavius Savinus Vespasianus), assassinated because he does not return her love and has chosen as consort Berenice, daughter of the King of Judea. Vitellia tries to overcome the scruples of her admirer, Sextus, about committing murder for her sake. Sextus' friend Annius comes to fetch him for an audience with the emperor, revealing that Berenice will not be consort after all. Vitellia's ambitions for the throne revive, and she asks Sextus to delay his plan. Annius reminds Sextus of his own desire to marry Sextus' sister, Servilia, and urges him to ask Titus for permission. The two men reaffirm their friendship.

Before the Capitol, the populace hails Titus, who declares he will help the survivors of the recent eruption of Vesuvius at Pompeii. Annius and Sextus learn that the emperor wishes to marry Servilia. Diplomatically, Annius assures Titus that he welcomes the union. The emperor says the chief joy of power lies in the opportunity to help others. Annius reluctantly tells Servilia the emperor wishes to marry her, but she reaffirms her love for Annius, and he admits he returns it.

In the imperial palace, Publius, a guard, shows Titus a list of those who have spoken disloyally. Titus is inclined to forgive them. The discussion is interrupted by Servilia, who confesses her prior commitment to Annius. Titus generously relinquishes all claim to her and leaves. Vitellia scorns Servilia in her jealousy and, angry again, tells Sextus now is the time to strike. He declares that her wish is his command. When Vitellia learns Titus is looking for her, she calls after Sextus to stop him, but it is too late.

In front of the Capitol, Sextus, who has set fire to the building and struck out at the Emperor, trembles with remorse. Annius, Servilia, Publius and Vitellia appear, voicing anxiety and confusion. Believing he has succeeded in killing the emperor, Sextus starts to confess but is silenced by Vitellia. The act ends with a poignant mourning for the 'dead' Titus.

20 minute INTERVAL

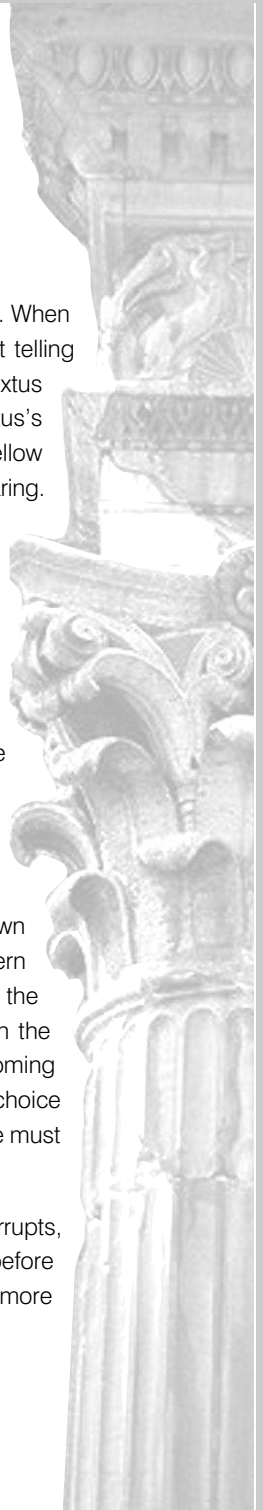
Act Two

In the palace, Annius tells Sextus the emperor has escaped harm. When Sextus confesses his assassination attempt, Annius advises that telling Titus the truth will earn forgiveness. Vitellia rushes in, imploring Sextus to flee for both their sakes. Publius enters and demands Sextus's sword; the man Sextus struck in the flaming Capitol was actually fellow conspirator, Lentulus, who survived. Sextus is taken to a senate hearing.

In a public hall, the people are thankful to their gods to find Titus safe. When the emperor doubts his friend Sextus's disloyalty, Publius cautions against being too innocent in the face of betrayal. Sextus has confessed and been sentenced, along with other conspirators, to be thrown to the lions. Annius agrees Sextus must be punished but asks Titus to consider the case compassionately. The emperor hesitates to sign the death decree until he has questioned Sextus, who is brought in. Alone with Titus, Sextus says he did not want the throne for himself, but he hesitates to implicate Vitellia. Titus, not satisfied with Sextus's explanation, orders him to execution. Alone, Titus agonizes over his decision, then tells Publius that Sextus's fate will be made known at the arena. Addressing the gods, Titus says that if they want a stern ruler, they ought to take away his human heart. He leaves, and the distraught Vitellia enters, convinced Sextus has implicated her in the conspiracy. Servilia and Annius beg her to save Sextus by becoming Titus's empress. Vitellia takes Titus's announcement of her as his choice as proof that Sextus did not betray her secret, and she realises she must die rather than accept the throne at the price of Sextus's life.

At the arena, Titus faces Sextus for the last time when Vitellia interrupts, declaring her guilt. The betrayed ruler almost hardens his heart before deciding to pardon the conspirators, valuing their repentance more than their fidelity.

CURTAIN



biographies

CHARLES AINSLIE (Publius, Wed & Sat)

Charles has studied singing with teachers in Cape Town, Johannesburg, New York and currently in London. He began his professional singing career as bass soloist with the early music ensemble Mass Appeal touring the major cities in South Africa. Other South African engagements consisted mainly of oratorio work, including Bach's St John's Passion performed in Durban and Pretoria. In the United Kingdom, he made his opera debut as *Escamillo* in Opera Mint's production of 'Carmen' performed in Wales. Charles is also a qualified Chartered Accountant and plays the 'cello as a member of the Birmingham Sinfonia.

PAT BULLOCK (Annius, Wed & Sat)

Pat Bullock has been involved with music for many years. As a child she played piano and sang, and played violin in Staffordshire County Youth Orchestra. After a first career in clinical chemistry, during which time she trained in ballet & tap dancing, she returned to singing around ten years ago. Pat has had wide experience in choral singing, including solo work. She joined MMM four years ago and has sung concert solos for them. This is Pat's second principal rôle for MMM, after her *Mrs Nolan* in last year's 'The Medium'. She is currently a primary teacher, and has just successfully completed a Diploma of Higher Education in music at Birmingham University.

MATTHEW HALE (Titus)

Matthew has trained at the Italia Conti Academy of Theatre Arts, The London College of Music and has a 1st Class Honours degree in Music and Business from University College Northampton. He is currently studying Tenor Voice at Birmingham Conservatoire. Recent Conservatoire roles include: *Linfa* in 'La Calisto', the lead role of *Franklin Shepard* in 'Merrily We Roll Along' and *Sailor* in 'Dido and Aeneas', also Chorus in 'Semele' (Handel) and 'The Cunning Little Vixen' (Janacek) with British Youth Opera at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, and Hungarian opera 'Hunyadi Laszlo' with Dorset Opera at the Bloomsbury Theatre, London. Recent concert performances include 'Nelson Mass', 'Messiah' and 'Mass in G minor' (Vaughan Williams). He is a founder member of the vocal ensemble, 'The Arianna Consort', who were special guests at the International Charpentier Convention in April 2004, and in July 2004 toured Germany to critical acclaim.

AMANDA LAIDLER (Producer and Director)

Amanda Laidler has directed the Sibford Millennium Pageant, 'Oliver!' for SOS, 'I'elisir d'amore', Menotti's, 'The Medium' and 'Trial by Jury' for Midland Music Makers and 'Shakespeare on Love' for Rogues and Vagabonds, and has written and directed pantomimes including 'Cinderella', 'Aladdin', 'Dick Whittington' and 'Babes in the Wood'. Future engagements include 'Les Misérables' School Edition for Rogues and Vagabonds, and 'Arms and the Man' for Second Thoughts. As stage/company manager work includes Company Manager/Assistant to the Artistic Director at Wexford Festival Opera and Opera Ireland. Specialising in musical theatre she has worked on many musicals and operas in Yorkshire and Warwickshire. She teaches drama and musical theatre at the Hadland School.

VALERIE MATTHEWS (Annius, Tue & Fri)

Valerie studied at the Royal College of Music, London and joined Midland Music Makers after moving to Birmingham. She has taken many lead rôles including *Maliela* in 'Jewels of the Madonna' and *Alison* in 'The Wandering Scholar'. She is one of the founder members of the CBSO Chorus and sang the soprano solo in their Brahms 'Requiem' and a minor solo in Szymanowski's 'King Roger'. Valerie was a participant in a Masterclass given by Robert Tear. She sang soprano solo in St Chad's Cathedral for 'Messiah' in aid of BBC's 'Round the World Messiah'. Valerie played the part of *Giannetta* in MMM's 2001 production of 'l'elisir d'amore'.

DAVID MELLOR (Publius, Tue & Fri)

David's operatic career started when he joined Royal Sutton Opera in 1981. He has sung in every MMM production since 1985. Solo roles include *Betto* in 'Gianni Schicchi', *Micha* and *Krusina* in 'The Bartered Bride', *Balthazar* in 'Amahl', *Zuane* in 'La Gioconda', *Jobard* in 'Aunt Caroline's Will' and *Mr. Gobineau* in last year's production of 'The Medium'. Rôles for RSO include *Zuniga* in 'Carmen', the *High Priest of Baal* in 'Nabucco', *Simone* in 'Gianni Schicchi', *Monterone* in 'Rigoletto', the *Marquis of Calatrava* in 'The Force of Destiny', *Zaretsky* in 'Eugene Onegin' the *Mandarin* in 'Turandot' and the *Imperial Commissioner* in 'Madam Butterfly'. He also sang in three productions of 'La Traviata' in eighteen months; as *Dr. Grenvil* for English Touring Opera Summer School and MMM, and as the *Marquis D'Obigny* for RSO.

LORRAINE PAYNE (Servilia)

Lorraine began vocal training in 1991, being introduced to Opera in 1992. Since then she has appeared for Midland Music Makers as *Marguerite* in 'Faust', *Nedda* in 'I Pagliacci', *Marenka* in 'The Bartered Bride', *Adina* in 'l'elisir d'amore' and *Monica* in last year's 'The Medium'. For Consensus Opera Lorraine was a cheeky *Cherubino* in 'The Marriage of Figaro'. She is also a regular concert and oratorio soloist. Since 1999 Lorraine has been privately coached by Birmingham Conservatoire tutor and international singer, Margaret Field.

KYM SHEARGOLD (Vitellia)

Kym Sheargold was born in Birmingham and studied at Birmingham Conservatoire, gaining a Masters Degree in Music Performance. She has appeared in many operas as a professional and semi-professional singer, including 'Don Giovanni', 'Macbeth', 'Tales of Hoffman' and 'Carmen'. Kym is also a recital singer, specialising in twentieth-century music, and has premiered a number of contemporary works. She has sung on radio and TV. Last year's rôles of *The Plaintiff* in 'Trial by Jury' and *Mrs Gobineau* in 'The Medium' were her first operatic appearances with Midland Music Makers. Kym currently studies with international performer Nicholas Clapton.

CLAIRE STONEMAN (Sextus)

Claire Stoneman was born in Birmingham and read English at the University of Leeds, studying music and singing privately. She made her operatic debut at 18 as the *Third Lady* in Mozart's 'The Magic Flute'. Claire has since gone on to perform *The Sorceress* in 'Dido and Aeneas', *Cherubino* in 'The Marriage of Figaro', *Mrs Grose* in 'The Turn of the Screw', *The Sandman* in 'Hansel and Gretel' and she made her London debut as *Hansel* in 'Hansel and Gretel' at the Purcell Room in 2001. Sextus is her first operatic role with Midland Music Makers. Claire performs regularly in various concerts, recitals and festivals around the country, singing both opera and oratorio. She has performed in many different venues and has appeared as a soloist three times at Symphony Hall, Birmingham. Claire teaches in Birmingham, and studies singing with tenor, Anthony Roden.

PHIL YPRES-SMITH (Musical Director)

Phil Ypres-Smith began his musical career studying organ and singing at Birmingham School of Music, where he worked closely with the vocal department as an accompanist. He was also a student at the Opera School and, in following years, was invited to return as a visiting lecturer, coach, répétiteur and Musical Director. His Musical Direction for the Opera School has included 'Don Giovanni', 'Alcina', 'Albert Herring' and many Workshop productions. Phil is an active singer with a fine Counter Tenor voice. He is also a singing teacher and vocal coach and an active composer, having a number of first performances planned over the next few months. Phil has sung and accompanied for radio and - over the years - has led many musical and choral groups. As well as MD for MMM, he is currently Director of Music at St. George's church, Edgbaston.

La Clemenza di Tito.

Political and vocal acrobatics.

This, the last opera Mozart completed was also the last masterpiece of the great opera seria tradition. It was commissioned to celebrate the coronation of Emperor Leopold II as King of Bohemia in 1791, and first performed in Prague that September, three weeks before the premiere of 'The Magic Flute' and just three months before Mozart's death.

The work is set in 79 A.D. Immediately after the eruption of Vesuvius at Pompeii, in the same year that the Colosseum was completed. In simple terms, *Vitellia* - daughter of the deposed emperor - schemes to have the current ruler *Titus* murdered because her love for him is unrequited, and her right to the throne ignored. Titus discovers the plot, ultimately pardons his enemies, and is praised for his forgiveness and generosity.

Although the action in Mozart's final opera 'La Clemenza di Tito' is set in 79 A.D. the story remains, in some ways, relevant to modern times. The ousting of political leaders, plotting and scheming, conducting senate hearings, marrying in the right circles, granting forgiveness for political effect... It was written, effectively, as a piece of spin to promote the virtues of monarchical rule. And, just as the main characters in the opera will plot and connive to raise themselves in the pecking order, so the opera itself was written to glorify and impress Bohemia's new ruler (Leopold II) by comparing him to the great Roman leader.

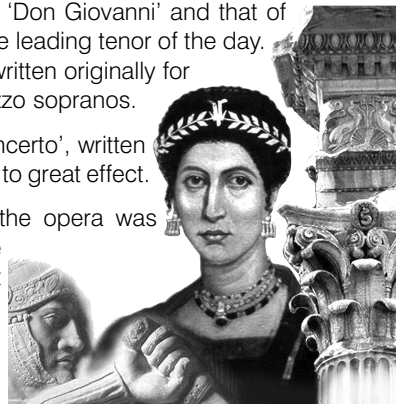
You might see, in both the setting and the context, reflections of contemporary society and the use of 'Spin' by our own leaders.

The incredible vocal range shown in the part of Vitellia can be attributed to the fact that the opera was written at such short notice, and before Mozart knew who his Soprano was going to be. He hurriedly wrote the part for a soprano with a rich lower register using themes from the lower parts of his concert arias. When finally he received his lead, her voice had a magnificent top range, so he immediately began adding high vocal lines to show off that as well. Consequently, the vocal acrobatics required to perform the entire rôle are quite considerable.

Any similarities between the rôle of *Don Ottavio* in 'Don Giovanni' and that of *Titus* are because both parts were written for the same leading tenor of the day. *Sextus* and *Annius*, as travesti roles, were of course written originally for male Castrati singers, though now performed by mezzo sopranos.

Musical themes from Mozart's famous 'Clarinet Concerto', written around the same time, are celebrated within the score to great effect.

Legends about the opera include the story that the opera was written in eighteen days, that Salieri turned down the commission no less than five times, and that the text had been set forty times before Mozart even saw it!



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**Thank you for supporting
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It's so nice to be back at the Crescent again. After our lovely Spring and Summer concerts this year, we spent a sunny September weekend at Birmingham's fantastic 'Artsfest'. Our soloists performed at St. Martin's in the Bull Ring and The Patrick Centre (Hippodrome) and were a great success. Many members of the society bravely manned our stall in Centenary Square, meeting hundreds of interesting people - some of whom we have already welcomed on board, and you may see on stage tonight! We also have more interested singers for next year's Opera, so we look to the future with great excitement.

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Forthcoming events

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by JACQUES OFFENBACH

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THE CRESCENT THEATRE Licensee and Manager Ian Craddock