

MARC ANTONIO
e
CLEOPATRA

JOHANN ADOLF HASSE

ars lyrica
HOUSTON

JAMIE BARTON

AVA PINE

MATTHEW DIRST



MARC' ANTONIO

e

CLEOPATRA

1725

JOHANN ADOLF HASSE

(1699 - 1783)

WORLD PREMIERE COMPLETE RECORDING BY

ars lyrica
HOUSTON

DISC ONE – Total Time – 46:22

1. Sinfonia: *Spiritoso e staccato – Allegro* - 3:04
2. Sinfonia: *Spiritoso e staccato – Grazioso* - 2:27
3. Recitativo: *Da quel salsò elemento* - 2:32
4. Aria (Marc'Antonio): *Pur ch'io possa a te* - 6:11
5. Recit: *Signor, la tua sciogura* - 1:05
6. Aria (Cleopatra): *Morte col fiero aspetto* - 4:13
7. Recit: *Or che la mia fortuna* - 1:31
8. Aria (Marc'Antonio): *Fra le pompe peregrine* - 9:47
9. Recit: *Sì, nel rammento, o caro* - 1:38
10. Aria (Cleopatra): *Un sol tuo sospiro* - 6:04
11. Recit: *Così rapido fugge e vola il tempo* - 2:51
12. Duetto (Marc'Antonio & Cleopatra): *Attendi ad amarmi* - 4:57

DISC TWO – Total Time – 43:28

1. Recit: *Signor, la tua speranza* - 2:17
2. Aria (Cleopatra): *A Dio trano, impero a Dio* - 5:01
3. Recit: *Ah, toglia il ciel, mia cara* - 0:40
4. Aria (Marc'Antonio): *Come veder potrai* - 6:06
5. Recit: *Lascia, Antonio, deb lascia* - 1:31
6. Aria (Cleopatra): *Quel candido armellino* - 8:37
7. Recit: *L'eroico tuo coraggio* - 1:00
8. Aria (Marc'Antonio): *Là tra i mirti degl'Elisi* - 8:01
9. Recit: *Poiché la morte sola* - 4:02
10. Duetto (Marc'Antonio & Cleopatra): *Bella etade avventurosa* - 6:09

In 1721 a young German tenor by the name of Johann Adolf Hasse traveled to Italy to hone his craft and seek his fortune.

His work at the Hamburg Opera and at the Brunswick court assured entrée into Italian musical circles, and he quickly found opportunities in Rome, Venice, and Florence, much as the youthful Handel had done just a few years earlier. The Italians even honored him with the same nickname they had given Handel, “Il Sassone,” despite Hasse’s non-Saxon origins. Settling in Naples, Hasse studied composition first with Nicola Porpora, then Alessandro Scarlatti, the grey eminence of Italian opera and oratorio, and began to write seriously for the stage. By 1730 he produced at least seven operas, eight intermezzi, and three *serenate*, the most significant of which is *Marc’Antonio e Cleopatra*.

As a genre, the *serenata* (or “serenade”) falls somewhere between solo cantata and full-length *opera seria*, though the dimensions and scoring of such works varies considerably. Owing perhaps to the long tradition of lover’s serenades, the Baroque serenata typically sets a familiar love story and was often used as a kind of compositional gift for an important patron. Concert performance was the norm, though many likely incorporated at least some theatrical gestures; some even included painted backdrops and costumes. *Marc’Antonio e Cleopatra* was written for a Neapolitan banker, at whose palace the work was first performed in 1725 by two of the greatest singers of the age: castrato Carlo Broschi (aka Farinelli), who took the role of Cleopatra, and contralto Vittoria Tesi, who appeared as Antony. While this kind of cross-casting might seem eccentric to us, in the eighteenth century gender-bending reinforced the artificial nature of the theatrical depiction: naturalistic acting styles had not yet been invented, and the depiction of real-life situations was largely restricted to comic, not serious, forms of entertainment.



Johann Adolf Hasse
(1699-1783)

The libretto, by poet and impresario Francesco Ricciardi, begins with Antony’s fateful military loss to Octavian’s superior forces. Putting aside all dreams of empire, Antony declares that his love for Cleopatra is worth more than any kingdom. Cleopatra is likewise reluctant to pursue the conflict with Rome, and is ready to die if necessary to preserve her honor. Reminiscing about their courtship and affair only makes their predicament more poignant: Antony & Cleopatra’s love will not defeat Octavian, though it gives them both comfort and courage. Rather than submit to Rome, Cleopatra proposes suicide, and though Antony initially rejects the idea, he too embraces it in the end. Eschewing sadness, the serenata ends with a joyful celebration of a “beautiful, eventful age,” a time when love triumphed, even over death.

Hasse's score makes vivid the complex emotions of his title characters in eight arias, two duets, and some highly expressive recitative; the whole is introduced by a *Sinfonia* in two movements. Though the work is scored for just strings and continuo, this recording adds various woodwinds (oboes, recorders, flute, and bassoon), rendering even more colorful Hasse's imaginative and supple ideas.

Marc'Antonio e Cleopatra likely had several performances in Naples and elsewhere and was mentioned by German theorist Johann Joachim Quantz (in 1755) as one of Hasse's most successful works. It brought him considerable fame in Italy, where it led to a number of full-length operas for Naples and other Italian cities. The work likely resonated deeply with Neapolitans — who, like the famous lovers, faced the unpleasant prospect of domination by a foreign power. But unlike Antony and Cleopatra, who choose death over captivity, Naples had grown accustomed to Hapsburg rule: the final recitative incorporates an obligatory bow to Emperor Karl VI and his consort Elizabeth.

From 1730 onwards Hasse served as *Kapellmeister* to the Saxon court in Dresden and was widely admired for his superior understanding of the lyric style. His operas were among the first seen by the young Mozart, and though Gluck's reforms threatened to put an end to Italian *opera seria*, Hasse continued to produce such works in Vienna, Venice, and elsewhere until the early 1780s. He and his wife, the great soprano Faustina Bordoni, were perhaps the first "power couple" in operatic history.

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1. - 2. Sinfonia**3. Recitativo****MARC' ANTONIO**

Da quel salso elemento
 a cui d'un vasto impero
 volli cieco fidar l'alta fortuna,
 ecco, o bella regina,
 che, te seguendo, a te ritorno
 e parmi che nulla di funesto
 abbia la sorte mia, se posso ancora
 sedermi avvinto d'amoroso laccio
 a la mia bella Cleopatra in braccio.

CLEOPATRA

Qual dunque a me ritorni,
 mio sposo e re? Come nomarti deggio?
 Sei vincitore o di vittoria privo
 trionfante d'Ottavio o fuggitivo?

MARC' ANTONIO

Mei chiedi ancor,
 non sai che là d'Azio sul mare
 chi de l'orbe roman l'imperio agusto
 contender volle al Cesare regnante
 era di Cleopatra ancor l'amante?

CLEOPATRA

Dunque fuggesti?

1. - 2. Sinfonia**3. Recitative****MARK ANTONY**

From that briny element
 which I trust with the great fortune
 of a vast empire,
 here, o beautiful queen,
 whom I follow, I return;
 and for me there seems nothing dismal
 about my fate, so long as
 I can be wrapped in the loving snare
 of my beautiful Cleopatra's arms.

CLEOPATRA

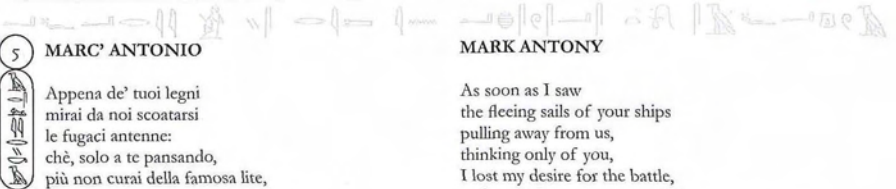
In what guise do you return,
 my husband and king? What shall I call you?
 Are you the victor or the vanquished,
 triumphant over Octavian or a fugitive?

MARK ANTONY

Must you keep asking?
 Don't you know that he, who on the sea near Actium,
 for control of the mighty Roman empire
 dared to challenge Caesars,
 was the lover of Cleopatra?

CLEOPATRA

So you fled?



MARC' ANTONIO

Appena de' tuoi legni
mirai da noi scoatarsi
le fugaci antenne:
chè, solo a te pansando,
più non curai della famosa lite,
da la battaglia io mi partii primiero
dell'onor dell'impero
posi in oblio le ambiziose idee
e al mio rival lasciando
libero il varco a la vittoria illustre
mostrai d'amor per segno
che Cleopatra val più assai d'un regno.

4. Aria

MARC' ANTONIO

Pur chi'io possa a te, ben mio,
palesar quel che desio,
più non curo dell'impero
e sol basta al mio pensiero
di regnar nel tuo bel cor.

Pur chi'io v'abbia solo il trono,
al superbo mio nemico
tutto il mondo e Roma io dono
e per te dell'odio antico
caro ben, mi scordo ancor.

5. Recitativo

CLEOPATRA

Signor, la tua sciagura grave m'è più
perchè a me stessa io deggio rimpoverar,
che fui nella naval tenzone

MARK ANTONY

As soon as I saw
the fleeing sails of your ships
pulling away from us,
thinking only of you,
I lost my desire for the battle,
and so I left as soon as possible;
and those ambitious ideas about honor and empire
I consigned to oblivion.
By leaving open for my rival
the path to a brilliant victory,
I showed proof of my love:
Cleopatra is worth much more than a kingdom.

4. Aria

MARK ANTONY

If only I could reveal, my beloved,
my desire for you,
then I'd no longer care for empire,
and it would be enough for me to know
that I reign in your beautiful heart.

If only I could have its throne,
then to my arrogant enemy
I'd give the whole world and Rome;
and that old enmity
for your sake, my love, I would forget.

5. Recitativo

CLEOPATRA

Sir, your misfortune moves me deeply,
and I must reproach myself,
for in this naval combat

delle perdite tue prima cagione;
ma di viltà non accusarmi e credi
che s'io schvai della battaglia il rischio
se 'l Cesar latino
affrontar non osai con pugna ardità,
la tema sol di schiavitù mi trasse
lungi dal dubbio evento,
chè di morte più acerbo mi sarebbe
se 'l nemico rival con fasto e orgoglio
trarmi potesse avvinta in Compidoglio.

6. Aria

CLEOPATRA

Morte col fiero aspetto
horror per me non ha,
s'io posso in libertà
morir sul trono mio,
dove regnai.

L'anima uscir dal petto
libera spera ognor,
sin dalle fasce ancor
sì nobile desio
meco portai.

7. Recitativo

MARC' ANTONIO

Or che la mia fortuna
con l'incostanza sua mi volge il crine
la passata grandezza, il fasto antico
e le cure amorose
sveglian in mente mia
memorie care sì, ma tormentose.
Ah, ti ricordi, o bella,

I was the main cause of your defeat.
But don't accuse me of cowardice
and think that I deserted you somehow:
if in opposing Caesar
I did not dare enter the fight,
it was only the fear of slavery that drew me
far away from that chancy conflict;
for it would be more bitter than death
to have our enemy, with pomp and pride,
drag me, vanquished, into the capitol.

6. Aria

CLEOPATRA

The fierce face of death
holds no horror for me
so long as I can, in freedom,
die on the throne
where I regned.

My soul hopes at all times
to escape free from my breast;
since I left the cradle,
I bore this noble desire
within me.

7. Recitativo

MARK ANTONY

Now that fate,
in its capriciousness, lets me look back,
the former greatness, pageantry,
and love's cares
awaken in my mind;
dear memories, yes, but tormenting ones.
Ah, do you remember, beautiful one,



su le cilici arene,
 quando di tua bellezza
 a me splendor facesti il primo raggio
 ch'io con umile omaggio
 vinto mi resi e ch'al tuo bel sembante
 prigioniero d'Amore
 più che al trono dell'Asia io diedi il core?

8. Aria

MARC' ANTONIO

Fra le pompe peregrine
 mi splendeva il serto al crine
 e col core pien d'amore
 mi dicea: «Bell'idol mio,
 sol desio languir per te.»

L'alto fasto e la grandezza
 l'alma mia non cura e sprezza,
 brama sol di far serene
 le tue luci a le mie pene
 con l'ardor della mia fè.

9. Recitativo

CLEOPATRA

Sì, mel rammento, o caro, e tu vedesti
 qual di pronuba idea dolce favella
 I nostri cori in equal fiamme accese.
 Frutto di nostri amori
 ci diede il ciel cortese,
 cui natura concesse
 di beltade e valor doti supreme,
 e dell'Asia e l'Egitto
 fur l'ornamento e la speranza insieme.
 Dell'oriente altero

the Sicilian sands
 when the first ray of your beauty
 shone upon me,
 and I, in humble tribute,
 yielded, a prisoner of Love,
 and gave my heart to your beautiful soul
 rather than to Asia's throne?

8. Aria

MARK ANTONY

Amidst the exotic pomp
 her crown shone on me,
 and with a heart full of love
 she said to me, "My beloved,
 I want only to pine for you."

For pageantry and grandeur
 my soul has nothing but disdain;
 it longs instead
 for my sorrow to lighten your eyes
 with the ardor of my faith.

9. Recitative

CLEOPATRA

Yes, I remember, my love;
 you saw how the sweet words of the marriage bed
 lit a fire in both our hearts.
 As fruit of our love,
 heaven kindly gave us a son
 to whom nature granted
 the supreme gifts of beauty and valor,
 and who, for Asia and Egypt
 represents both grace and hope simultaneously.
 From the haughty Orient

più regi umiliati al pie' traesti
e pur allor vedesti
ch'in si bel trono assisa
di Cleopatra altro il piacer non era
che vagheggiar il tuo real sembiante
e ch'in te riguardava,
più ch'Antonio signore, Antonio amante.

10. Aria

CLEOPATRA

Un sol tuo sospiro,
un guardo d'amore
con dolce martiro
giungeva al mio core
le piaghe a sanar.

D'eguale desio
quell'anima ardea
e allor ti dicea:
«Sì, caro ben mio, te sol voglio amar.»

11. Recitativo

MARC' ANTONIO

Così rapido fugge e vola il tempo
e delle trasandate alme dolcezze
altro a noi non avanza
ch'inutile memoria,
che penosa ne fa la rimembranza.

CLEOPATRA

Se di prospera sorte
gustammo un tempo il lusinghiero aspetto,
or che con mesto oggetto

you drew kings to be humbled at your feet;
and yet you saw that for Cleopatra,
seated on her beautiful throne,
there was no greater pleasure
than the delights of your royal countenance,
and that she saw in you
not Antony the ruler but Antony the lover.

10. Aria

CLEOPATRA

A lone sigh from you,
a loving glance
with sweet pain
came to my heart
to heal my wounds.

With that same desire
my soul burned
and said to you,
“Yes, my beloved, I want to love only you.”

11. Recitative

MARK ANTONY

Time flees and flies so quickly,
of our former sweet pleasures
nothing is left
but useless memory,
which is painful to recall.

CLEOPATRA

Just as we once looked forward
to fortunate times,
now that misfortune

comincian le sventure ad agitarsi
 convien ch'alma reale,
 sempre a se stessa eguale,
 degl'infortuni suoi preme l'orgoglio.
 Se libera sul soglio
 poss'io morir, non avrà colpa il fato
 che render possa il mio gran cor turbato.

MARC' ANTONIO

L'eroico tuo coraggio,
 mia vezzosa regina,
 l'Africa il vanta e a tuto il mondo è noto,
 ma se Ottavio mi vinse in naval pugna
 e fuggitivo io torno,
 non son oppresso già.
 Tanto mi resta di forze ancor ch'a lui
 sarà la sua vittoria un di funesta.

CLEOPATRA

E donde mai può si abbattuta e doma
 la fortuna d'Antonio trar di speme un conforto,
 che i lacerati allori
 faccia a lui rinverdire in su la chioma
 e'l riconduca vincitore in Roma?

MARC' ANTONIO

L'Africa e l'Asia non son vint'ancora,
 di poche infrante navi
 tiene Ottavio acquisto
 e posso ancor, s'ei baldanzoso aspira
 a seguir le mie tracce,
 d'Egitto in difesa
 più re vassalli e fare
 dubbia di nuovo a lui l'alta contesa.

troubles us with painful things,
 a royal soul must always
 stay true to itself,
 and remain proud despite tragedy.
 If in freedom on my throne
 I die, my fate will not bear the blame
 for troubling my generous heart.

MARK ANTONY

Your heroic courage,
 my charming queen,
 is vaunted in Africa and known the world over;
 but if Octavian has defeated me at sea
 and I return as a fugitive,
 I am not yet vanquished.
 So much of my strength remains
 that his victory will one day be fatal.

CLEOPATRA

And from where, though despondent and subdued,
 does Antony find the comfort of hope,
 that his faded laurel wreath
 might once again turn green
 and return him victorious to Rome?

MARK ANTONY

Africa and Asia are not yet lost;
 with only a few fragile ships,
 Octavian maintains these acquisitions,
 and if he is rash enough
 to follow my tracks,
 in defense of Egypt
 I can still call up enough royal vassals
 to shift this conflict's outcome.



12. Duetto

MARC' ANTONIO

Attendi ad amarmi,
vezzosa regina.

CLEOPATRA

Più fida in amarti
di me non si trova,
ma, o Dio, che ti giova
senz'armi l'amor?

MARC' ANTONIO

Che amor saprà darmi
vittoria e valor?

Un cor che non teme
non può dirsi vinto,
fortuna se 'l preme,
opprimer non sa.

CLEOPATRA

Ma questo è conforto
d'un cor disperato,
che contro del fato
non mostra viltà.

12. Duet

MARK ANTONY

Keep loving me,
charming queen.

CLEOPATRA

One more faithful to you
you'll never find,
but, oh God, what good to you
is love without weapons?

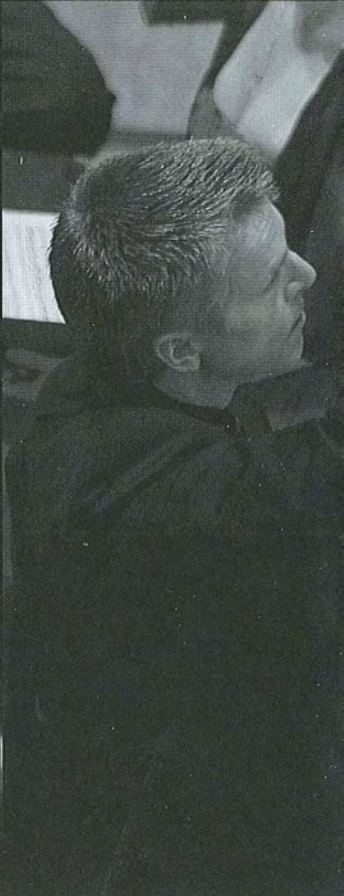
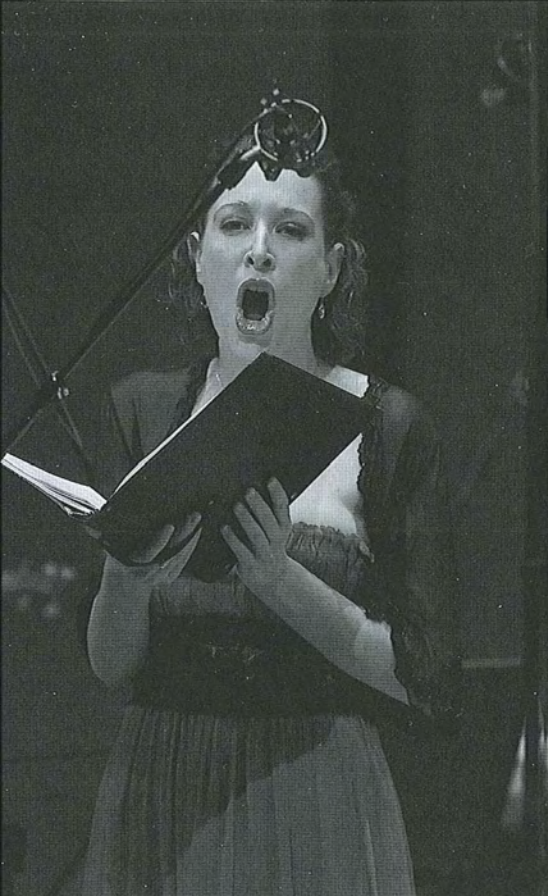
MARK ANTONY

Because love will give me
victory and courage?

A heart without fear
cannot be defeated,
despite fate's oppression
it refuses to yield.

CLEOPATRA

Oh, what comfort
for a desperate heart,
which facing ruin
shows no cowardice.





*I. Recitativo***CLEOPATRA**

Signor, la tua speranza
 è una speme fallace e lusinghiera,
 che il ver t'adombra e contro a' detti mici
 fa che ti cred'ancora
 infelice assai men di quel che sei.
 Quelli che a me tu senti
 principi a te vassalli,
 l'Asia intiera e le forze dell'Egitto
 vinte d'Aszio già fur nel sol conflitto;
 e a l'orgoglioso Cesare nemico
 altro di più non resta
 che a valicar poche onde
 per trionfar di nostra sorte
 e tutta vedersi a' piedi suoi
 di schiavitù de la catene avvinta
 l'Africa e l'Asia, umiliata e vinta.

MARC' ANTONIO

Dunque che far dobbiam, poichè è sì dura
 nostra ficra sventura,
 che ci si toglie ancora
 vive aure di speranza,
 quella che a tutti gli infelici avanza.

CLEOPATRA

Tu sai che il disperar d'ogni salute
 degl'infelici è l'unica speranza.
 Io dell'invida Parca

*I. Recitative***CLEOPATRA**

Sir, your hope
 is tempting but deceptive;
 it masks the truth, and contrary to my words,
 it makes you see yourself
 less fortunate than you really are.
 Those who you see
 as my princes and as your vassals,
 all of Asia and the forces of Egypt
 were defeated together at Actium;
 and proud, hostile Caesar
 needs only
 to overcome a few waves
 to triumph over us
 and to see at his feet,
 defeated by the chains of slavery,
 Africa and Asia, humbled and vanquished.

MARK ANTONY

Then what shall we do, since our fate
 is so cruel and hard
 that even the last glimmer of hope,
 which is all that remains for the ill-fated,
 is snuffed out.

CLEOPATRA

You know that to abandon thought of rescue
 is the only hope of the unfortunate.
 I neither tremble nor fear

l'orrido aspetto non pavento o temo
quando è rimedio a un infortunio estremo.

2. Aria

CLEOPATRA

«A Dio trono, impero a Dio.»
dirò allor con alma forte,
«io vi lascio e corro a morte
per morire in libertà.»

Ed a te dirò, ben mio:
«Se da me l'esempio apprendi,
a seguir chi t'ama attendi
con l'istessa maestà.»

3. Recitativo

MARC' ANTONIO

Ah, tolga il ciel, mia cara,
auguri sì funesti,
ancor non mi cred'io tanto infelice
che per toglierti a l'onta
d'esser schiava d'Ottavio
io sia costretto a darti
come in un estremo male
pegno estremo d'amor colpo mortale.

4. Aria

MARC' ANTONIO

Come veder potrei
quegl'occhi, o Dio, che sono

in the horrible face of envious Destiny,
if it relieves a more extreme misfortune.

2. Aria

CLEOPATRA

“Farewell, throne, farewell empire,”
I shall heartily say,
“I leave you and embrace death,
in order to die in freedom.”

And to you, my beloved, I will say,
“If you heed my example,
then follow she who loves you,
with the same dignity.”

3. Recitativo

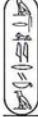
MARK ANTONY

May heaven carry away, my love,
such morbid predictions.
I am not so desperate
to save you from the shame
of being Octavian's slave
that I'd feel compelled to give you,
even in such dire circumstances,
a deathblow as a final pledge of love.

4. Aria

MARK ANTONY

How could I look on
as those eyes, oh God,



luce degl'occhi miei
pallidi a me girar!

Ah, ch'in pensarvi, o cara,
sento una pena amara,
che passa con ufuore
il core a lacerar.

5. Recitativo

CLEOPATRA

Lascia, Antonio, deh lascia
di sì teneri accenti il mesto sfogo.
Patimmo già quando dell'Asia il trono
illustrato splendea dalle nostre armi
e da' trionfi nostri;
tra le pompe e tra gl'ostri
di prospera fortuna
su l'ali del favore
le dolcezze gustai d'un dolce amore.
Or infelici siam, tutta già piove
sovra del nostro capo
di sdegnato destin l'ira crudele.
D'inutili querele vano è lo sfogo.
Altro a noi far non resta
che con anima forte
gir gloriosi ad affrontar la morte.

6. Aria

CLEOPATRA

Quel candido armellino
per non macchiar la spoglia

the light of my own eyes,
grow dim to me!

When I think of that, dearest,
I feel a bitter pain
that strikes with fury
and tears at my heart.

5. Recitative

CLEOPATRA

Stop, Antony, please stop
weeping over such tender things.
We have already seen the illustrious throne of Asia
resplendant with our weapons
and our triumphs;
amidst the pomp and majesty
of prosperous fortune,
on wings of favor
I enjoyed the sweetness of our tender love.
Now we face distress, with the cruel rage
of scornful destiny
raining down upon our heads.
Our laments are pointless.
Nothing remains for us
but to prepare with brave hearts
to face an honorable death.

6. Aria

CLEOPATRA

This snow-white ermine
avoids staining its coat

al rischio sta vicino,
nè de fuggir s'invoglia,
ma lieto al cacciatore
abbandonar si sa.

Pria ch'un superbo impero
macchi il mio regio onore,
di morte il volto fiero
non mi spaventerà.

7. *Recitativo*

MARC' ANTONIO

L'eroico tuo coraggio, bella regina,
ammiro io sì che tutto
sento nelle mie vene sento nelle mie vene
risvegliarsi l'ardire.
Se in vita io fui tuo compagno fedele,
voglio ch'ancora
a l'estremo tuo fato unito io mora.

8. *Aria*

MARC' ANTONIO

Là tra I mirti degl'Elisi
indivisi ancor vivremo
e colà discenderemo
senza macchia di viltà.

Tra le ombre dove giace
lieta pace e vera gioia
ci amerem poi senza noia
con ardore e fedeltà.

but doesn't flee from danger;
instead of flight
it offers itself up joyously
to the hunter.

Though an arrogant empire
tries to stain my royal honor,
the fierce face of death
will not frighten me.

7. *Recitative*

MARK ANTONY

Your heroic courage, beautiful queen,
I admire so much that
I feel resurgent in my veins
my own boldness.
If in life I was your faithful companion,
I want also at the end
to be united with you in death.

8. *Aria*

MARK ANTONY

Among the myrtles of Elysium,
we will live forever
and we will descend there
unstained by cowardice.

Amid the shadows, where
glad peace and true joy play,
we will never tire of loving each other
with passion and faithfulness.



9. Recitativo

CLEOPATRA

Poichè la morte sola
 può renderci onorati ed indivisi
 delle nostre sfortune ad onta ancora,
 caro mio ben, si mora;
 e l'orgoglioso vincitor latino,
 se avvien ch'in queste arene
 a trionfar di nostra sorte ci venga,
 mezzo il piacer di sua vittoria ottenga.

MARC' ANTONIO

Si, moriremo, o cara,
 ch'ai decreti del cielo
 mal qua giù si contrasta.
 Su le perdite mie voglio ch'innalzi
 Cesare un solo impero,
 e che restando al successor la chioma
 degl'allori di Roma
 stabile renda di tal scettri il pondo
 a la man che dovrà reggere il mondo.
 Quindi al volger degli anni
 sotto il cielo germano
 sorgerà nuovo sole
 che da la maure arene ai lidi eoi
 la terra illustrerà coi raggi suoi:
 questi fu Carlo il sovraumano, il grande,
 che con opre ammirande
 oscurerà quanti o la Grecia o Roma
 coi chiari inchiostri suoi
 sinora a noi vantò famosi eroi.

CLEOPATRA

9. Recitative

CLEOPATRA

Since only death
 can render us honorable and united,
 despite our misfortunes,
 my beloved, so we wish to die.
 And if the victorious Roman
 should come proudly onto these sands
 to triumph over our fate,
 his victory will be worth far less.

MARK ANTONY

Yes, we will die, my beloved,
 for the judgment of heaven
 cannot be opposed.
 After I'm gone I want Caesar to build
 a single, united empire,
 one where all those who succeed
 will with the steady weight of the scepter
 in his hand rule the world.
 Then, with the passing of the years,
 beneath the German sky,
 a new sun will rise,
 which from the Moorish sands to the Eastern shores
 will brighten the land with its rays:
 just as Charles, the superhuman, the great,
 who with his admirable works
 obscures those that Greece or Rome
 praised with their noble words
 until now as heroes.

Di sì fulgido sole
 sarà compagna una lucente stella,
 di cui più chiara e bella
 unqua non vide il sol cui l'Istro inaffia.
 Al balenar de' suoi bei raggi
 oscuro fia d'ogni altra beltade
 e il pregio e il vanto,
 tai che colui che in Manto
 trasse i natali e che d'eroi cantando
 tant'alto ascese in sul castalio monte
 da l'orrido Acheronte
 tornar dovrebbe a riveder le Muse.
 Così d'Elisabetta il nome illustre
 degna tromba sia data,
 onde ci possa volar per chiaro stile
 dal biondo Idaspe a la remota Tile.

10. Duetto

CLEOPATRA, MARC' ANTONIO

Bella etade avventurosa
 godi sì ch'andrai fastosa
 di tua gran felicità.

Perchè ignude d'ogni zelo
 scenderan per te dal cielo
 la giustizia e la pietà.

CLEOPATRA

The shining sun
 will be accompanied by a bright star,
 clearer and more beautiful than any
 ever seen in the lands watered by the Danube.
 The sparkle of its beautiful rays
 will obscure the honor and pride
 of all other great beauties
 so much so that he, who was born in Mantua
 and who, singing the praises of the heroes,
 ascended to Apollo's mountain
 from the dread Acheron¹,
 will need to seek out the Muses anew.
 Thus let Elizabeth's illustrious name
 be honored, so that
 it resounds with great clarity
 from the yellow Hydaspes² to remote Thule.³

10. Duet

CLEOPATRA, MARK ANTONY

Beautiful, eventful age,
 you delight in passing,
 proud of your good fortune.

Because you've been stripped of all cares,
 justice and mercy from heaven
 will descend upon you.

1 - "Acheron" = the River Styx, the entrance to Hades. Also used as a synonym for Hell by Vergil.

2 - "Hydaspes" = the Jhelum river in India

3 - "Remote Thule" = "Ultima Thule" was used at the time to refer to Iceland, although it can also refer to a poetic idea of an impossibly far place.

ars lyrica

MUSIC OF THE BAROQUE

Founded in 1998 by harpsichordist and conductor Matthew Dirst, **ARS LYRICA HOUSTON** has begun to make a name for itself in the international early music community. Its distinctive programming favors little-known dramatic and chamber works that merit revival, and its home series “sets the agenda for imaginative period-instrument programming in Houston,” according to the *Houston Chronicle*. Ars Lyrica’s numerous premières include the first American performance of Handel’s *Il Trionfo del Tempo e della Verità* and local premières of Jacopo Peri’s *Euridice*, John Blow’s *Venus and Adonis*, Handel’s *Flavio*, and Monteverdi’s *1610 Vespers*, among other works. These pioneering efforts have begun to attract international attention: *Gramophone* recently praised Ars Lyrica’s debut CD for its “exemplary skill and taste,” the ensemble’s musicians for their “impassioned performance” of never-before recorded works by Alessandro Scarlatti. More information on Ars Lyrica can be found at www.arslyricahouston.org.

MATTHEW DIRST

Artistic Director and conductor **MATTHEW DIRST** is the first American to win major international prizes in both organ and harpsichord, including first prize at the American Guild of Organists Young Artist Competition (1990) and second prize at the Warsaw International Harpsichord Competition (1993).

In addition to his work with Ars Lyrica, he also serves as Associate Professor of Music at the University of Houston and has authored numerous articles on Baroque performance practice and on Bach in particular. Noted for his stylish playing of both familiar and little-known repertory, his recent performances of Bach’s “Goldberg Variations” were praised as “an extremely taut and accurate traversal” (*The New York Sun*), “a technically dazzling, deeply moving performance” (*Houston Chronicle*), “of irresistible rhythmic impulse [and] dazzling virtuosity” (*Dallas Morning News*).

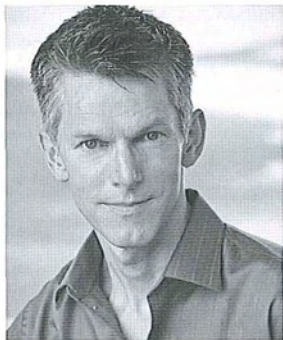


Photo by Darren Sabino



Photo by Karen Almond

AVA PINE

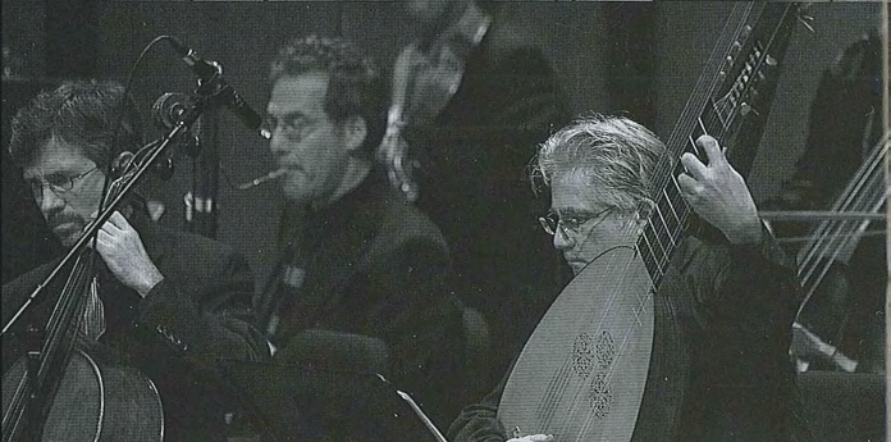
Soprano AVA PINE, admired by audiences and critics alike for her “sheer vocal beauty, ease and eloquence, and “rewarding musicianship,” excels in music ranging from Baroque to contemporary. In her debut with the Florentine Opera, she was praised as the production’s “vocal queen...who sang and acted Pamina with heartbreaking, honeyed sweetness.” She has sung numerous roles, including Melissa in Boston Baroque’s production of Handel’s *Amadigi di Gauila*, Josephine for Lyric Opera of Kansas City’s *HMS Pinafore*, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* with Opera Naples, and Adina in Fort Worth Opera’s production of *L’Elixir d’amore*. She is a frequent collaborator with early music ensembles, including *Arts Lyrica*, Concert Royal, the New York Baroque Dance Company, the Dallas Bach Society, the Orchestra of New Spain, and the Texas Camerata. She has also appeared as an oratorio soloist with the Dallas and Fort Worth Symphony Orchestras, the Orpheus Chamber Singers, and with the famed choir of men and boys at St Thomas Episcopal Church, New York.

JAMIE BARTON

Mezzo-soprano JAMIE BARTON, a winner of the 2007 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, has been described by *Opera News* as a “rising star” with a “sumptuous voice.” A 2009 graduate of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, she has already appeared with the Metropolitan Opera as the Second Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*, as Emilia in *Otello* with the Canadian Opera Company and as Marcellina in *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, among other roles. She has been heard in recital at the Kennedy Center, under the auspices of the Marilyn Horne Foundation, and at Carnegie Hall as part of their *Great Singers: Evenings of Song* series. Additional concert engagements have included Bernstein’s *Opening Prayer* and “Jeremiah” Symphony with the Colorado Symphony and a number of appearances with *Arts Lyrica*. Her oratorio credits include Brahms’ *Alto Rhapsody*, Durufle’s *Requiem*, Bach’s *Cantata 197*, Handel’s *Alexander’s Feast*, Honegger’s *King David*, Mozart’s *Requiem*, and the world premiere of Chris Theofanidis’s *The Refuge*.



Photo by Jonathan Timmes



ARS LYRICA HOUSTON (on period instruments)

Marc' Antonio Jamie Barton, *mezzo-soprano*
Cleopatra Ava Pine, *soprano*

Zachary Carrettin, Hae-a Lee, Maria Lin - *violin I*
Alan Austin, Kurt Johnson, Nadia Lesinska - *violin II*
James Dunham, Erika Lawson - *viola*
Barrett Sills - *cello*
Deborah Dunham - *violone*

Kathryn Montoya, Kathleen Staten - *oboe & recorder*
Kathleen Staten - *traverso*
Benjamin Kamins - *bassoon*
Richard Savino - *theorbo & guitar*
Matthew Dirst - *conductor & harpsichord*

Ars Lyrica Houston – Marc' Antonio e Cleopatra - Johann Adolf Hasse – DSL-92115

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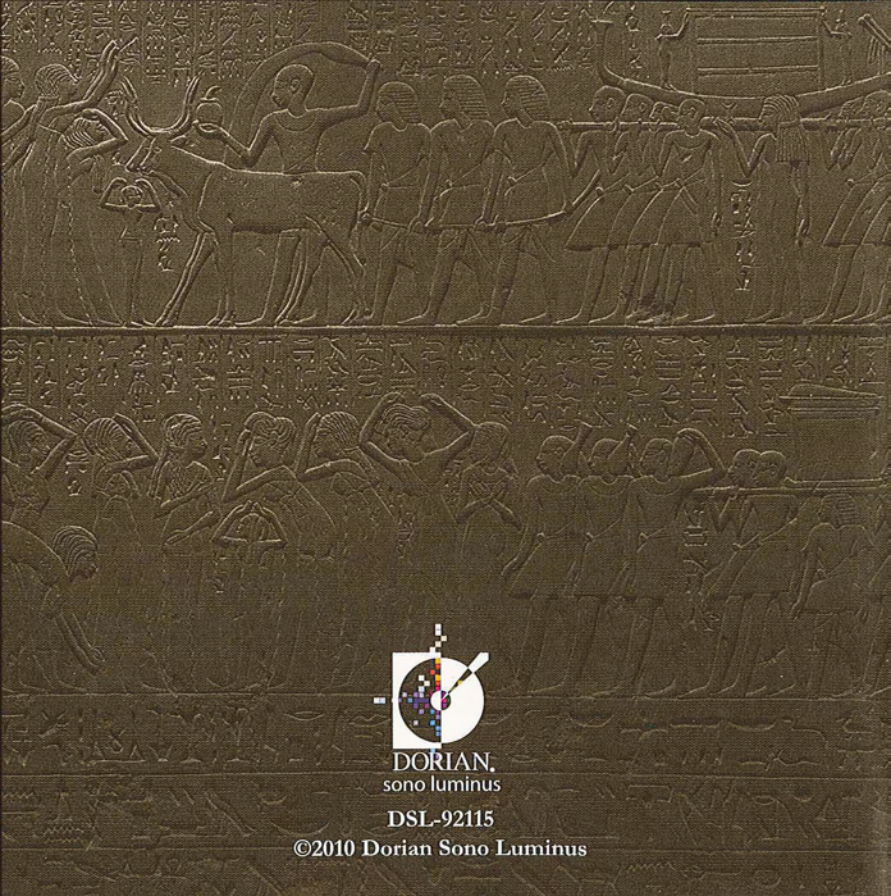
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MARC'ANTONIO
e
CLEOPATRA

1725
JOHANN ADOLF HASSE
(1699-1783)

WORLD PREMIERE
COMPLETE RECORDING
by

ars lyrica
HOUSTON

DISC ONE

- 1-2. Sinfonia: *Spiritoso e staccato – Allegro - Grazioso*
3. Recitativo: *Da quel salso elemento*
4. Aria (Marc'Antonio): *Pur ch'io possa a te*
5. Recit: *Signor, la tua sciagura*
6. Aria (Cleopatra): *Morte col fiero aspetto*
7. Recit: *Or che la mia fortuna*
8. Aria (Marc'Antonio): *Fra le pompe peregrine*
9. Recit: *Sì, mel rammento, o caro*
10. Aria (Cleopatra): *Un sol tuo sospiro*
11. Recit: *Così rapido fugge e vola il tempo*
12. Duetto (Marc'Antonio & Cleopatra): *Attendi ad amarmi*

DISC TWO

1. Recit: *Signor, la tua speranza*
2. Aria (Cleopatra): *A Dio trono, impero a Dio*
3. Recit: *Ab, tolga il ciel, mia cara*
4. Aria (Marc'Antonio): *Come veder potrei*
5. Recit: *Lascia, Antonio, deb lascia*
6. Aria (Cleopatra): *Quel candido armellino*
7. Recit: *L'eroico tuo coraggio*
8. Aria (Marc'Antonio): *Là tra i mirti degl'Elisi*
9. Recit: *Poichè la morte sola*
10. Duetto (Marc'Antonio & Cleopatra): *Bella etade avventurosa*



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