



International  
Presentations of  
Music & Dance

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

## Cesare Siepi

*Basso*

PHILIP HIGHFILL, *Pianist*

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, NOVEMBER 22, 1981, AT 4:00  
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

The Death Scene of Seneca, from

*L'Incoronazione di Poppea* . . . . . CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI  
(1567–1643)

Seneca, who is the Emperor Nero's chief counselor, tries to persuade the Empress Octavia that she should not publicly display her unhappiness over the affair of Nero and Poppea. The Empress becomes angry and throws him out. Poppea, who is aware that Seneca prefers Nero not to divorce Octavia, convinces Nero that Seneca has been treasonous. Alone, Seneca has a vision of the Goddess of Wisdom telling him that if he interferes with the Emperor's affair he will die. Nero, convinced by Poppea that Seneca should die, orders him to do so that very day.

Per pietà . . . . . ALESSANDRO STRADELLA  
(c. 1642–1682)

O, have pity, return now to me. My beloved, where art thou wending? Sharpest woe my soul is rending, live I cannot without thee.

“Sì, tra i ceppi” from *Berenice* . . . . . GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL  
(1685–1759)

Yes, even in chains and bonds my faith will shine, no, not even death itself will extinguish my flame.

Über Wildemann (Schulze) . . . . . FRANZ SCHUBERT  
(1797–1828)

The wind roars, streams are rushing, I press on, mile after mile. In the valley life is thrusting upward to the sun, but I prefer to gaze on winter. On green downs and sunny meadow-lands I should only continue seeing sorrow. One, only one, closes her heart. Shall I never again enjoy the springtime?

Der Wanderer (Schlegel) . . . . . SCHUBERT

The moon speaks to me: Wander on and fly from all worries and pains. So, even if I am alone, I meet the wonderful singing hopefully and happily.

Gruppe aus dem Tartarus (Schiller) . . . . . SCHUBERT

Hark—like the murmur of the swelling sea, as though its hollowed rocky basin weeps a brook, there sounds damp and deep a heavy, empty, tormented cry! Pain distorts their faces; despair sets their cursing jaws agape. Empty are their eyes, their glances peer fearfully toward the bridge of Cocytus, weeping they follow its doleful course. They ask each other anxiously and softly whether there is never an end? Eternity swings circles over them, breaks the scythe of Saturn in two.

“Que les songes heureux” from *Philémon et Baucis* . . . . . CHARLES GOUNOD  
(1818–1893)

Jupiter and Vulcan, posing as strangers, come to Phrygia in order to punish the town. An old couple, Philémon and Baucis, take them in and provide them with such hospitality that Jupiter decides that not only will the couple be spared, but he will also give them back their youth. In this aria, Jupiter is comforting the couple and calling forth the storm:

Listen now! Come storm and thunder, their offenses to chastise  
And all the world shall, awestruck, wonder  
You in peace may close your eyes  
Now be yours happy dreams, a heaven on earth restoring  
While sleep sent from the gods over your senses cast a spell  
Through the nighttime heed nor hear the voice of tempest roaring  
Sleep well.

Serenade, from *La Damnation de Faust* . . . . . HECTOR BERLIOZ  
(1803–1869)

Mephistopheles has taken Faust to the door of Marguerite’s house, and after Faust has gone in, Mephistopheles sings this mocking serenade.

Why, fair maid, will you loiter, when daylight is done,  
In the shade by the door of your lover?  
Though the darkness your blushes may cover,  
Have a care! Have a care and be gone!  
Heed this one thing, would you escape your undoing—  
Quench the thirst of his wooing,  
With a “First, if it please you, the ring.”

“Son lo spirito che nega” from *Mefistofele* . . . . . ARRIGO BOITO  
(1842–1918)

Mefistofele has wagered with Heaven that he can win the soul of Faust, and has burst upon the doctor in his study. This aria is his reply to Faust’s terrified questions regarding his identity.

“I am the spirit that denies ever, all things; the star, the flower. My smile, and the thought of me disturb the leisure of the Creator. I long for naught, and the ruin of all things created. My vital atmosphere is what men call sin. Death and Evil! I laugh and launch out this syllable: ‘No.’ I destroy, I tempt, I roar, I hiss. I am part of a cavern of the great all: Darkness. I am a son of Gloom, which Gloom shall reign anew. If now light usurps and clutches, rebellious, my sceptre, the dispute will shortly end. In the sun and on earth is Destruction! I laugh and launch forth this syllable: ‘No.’ I destroy, I tempt, I roar, I hiss.”

INTERMISSION

I due Tarli . . . . . RICCARDO ZANDONAI  
(1883–1944)

The bookworm in the old library called down to a worm in the cemetery: “He was great and wise, and they wept for him. What are you doing in his dark grave?” “I gnaw into his marvelous and silent brain and see the germs of his thoughts yet unborn. But what are you doing?” “I chew the great book full of his thoughts which he wrote while alive. Gnaw away, brother. We chew the matter and thoughts in silence and mystery. Before us the world will crumble.”

Levommi il mio pensier (Petrarca) . . . . . ILDEBRANDO PIZZETTI  
(1880–1968)

A sonnet written by the poet Petrarca after the death of Madonna Laura, in which he expresses his longing for her chaste beauty.

Notte (Negri) . . . . . OTTORINO RESPIGHI  
(1878–1936)

In a fantastic garden the quiet mantle of night rests upon the hidden miseries, the mute dreams, the flying joys—death itself.

Les Berceaux . . . . . GABRIEL FAURÉ  
(1845-1924)

Along the dock, the ships lie waiting, calm, rocked by the waves, unconscious of the cradles and crying mothers left behind. And yet, at their departure, they will feel an appeal from shore, an appeal from the white cradle's soul.

Chanson d'amour . . . . . FAURÉ

I love your eyes, I love your face, Oh, my rebellious savage.  
I love your eyes and your mouth where my kisses will be consumed.  
I love your voice and the strange grace of everything you say.  
Oh, my dear angel and my savage, you are my heaven and my hell!

Automne . . . . . FAURÉ

Autumn days of sad skies and pallid suns—of melancholy longing! My thoughts wander over the enchanted hills of my youth, and my eyes fill with tears in memory of departed days.

Alte Liebe (Candidus) . . . . . JOHANNES BRAHMS  
(1833-1897)

The dusky swallow flyeth towards her northern home, the songsters build and flutter beneath the leafy dome. The morn is warm and cloudy, the sky bedimmed with rains, my heart awakes from slumber to old forgotten pains. I feel a familiar hand resting upon my shoulder, I hear thy fluttering pinions, dove with the snow-white breast. Methinks I hear a knocking, but none stands at my door: I breathe the scent of jasmine, but I have no flower. A beloved voice is calling, an eye beckons near, an old sweet dream hath seized me, and bears my thoughts afar.

Sommerabend (Heine) . . . . . BRAHMS

The summer evening falls over the forest and the green meadow; the rays of the golden moon in the dark blue sky descend with a refreshing scent. The cricket chirps by the brook, there is movement in the water, and the wanderer hears its gurgling and breathes in the tranquility. The beautiful nymph bathes in the brook; her arms and neck, white and lovely, shimmer in the moonlight.

Traum durch die Dämmerung (Bierbaum) . . . . . RICHARD STRAUSS  
(1864-1949)

Through evening glow to the land of love, I walk not fast. I hasten not; I find my way by a velvety hue at twilight hour to the land of love in the azure blue of eve.

Heimliche Aufforderung (Mackay) . . . . . STRAUSS

Lift now the sparkling gold cup and drink, rejoice and be happy this festive day. Then, come to the sheltering arbor where I will tell you of my love for you.

"Madamina" from *Don Giovanni* . . . . . WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART  
(1756-1791)

Don Giovanni leaves his servant, Leporello, to explain to Donna Elvira why the Don deserted her even while eloping with her. Leporello gives her cynical comfort by telling her that she is only one of a long list of victims to the Don's gallantry. He unrolls a catalogue of them—a thousand or more of all countries, countesses, waiting maids, rustic beauties, marchionesses, young and handsome, old and plain, fair ones, dark ones, poor or wealthy. The music of this aria is a most perfect mingling of grace, sentiment, irony, and the comic.

## About the Artist

In December 1978 **Cesare Siepi** participated in the bicentennial celebrations of Milan's La Scala, for it was in that great opera house thirty years previously that he made his debut as a youngster in Verdi's *Nabucco*. Soon after that debut he was chosen by Arturo Toscanini to participate in the Boito celebrations at La Scala, and thus began Mr. Siepi's climb to international prominence. Since that time he has become a leading bass in the opera houses, concert halls, and festivals of Europe and America. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut as King Philip II in Verdi's *Don Carlo* on opening night in 1950, and his American concert debut later in the season, again under Toscanini, in the Verdi "Requiem" in Carnegie Hall. In more than twenty seasons at the Metropolitan Opera he sang seventeen roles, becoming noted particularly for his King Philip, Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Mephistopheles in *Faust*, Boris Godunov, and Don Giovanni. His last new role at the Met, and his first Wagnerian part, was Gurnemanz in *Parsifal*, which he added to his repertoire in a new production with the company in 1971.

Mr. Siepi made his Broadway debut in 1962 in *Bravo Giovanni*, and also sang in a new production of *South Pacific* in Las Vegas. In 1979 he starred again on Broadway in the Lerner and Loewe musical *Carmelina*. On television he has appeared in a production of *Don Giovanni* for the NBC Opera Theatre, and his recordings include virtually all of the great Italian bass roles as well as the Mozart ones, and such rarities as Rachmaninoff's *Miserly Knight* and the part of Archibaldo in Montemezzi's *L'Amore dei tre re*.

Last season Mr. Siepi appeared at London's Covent Garden in *Norma*, at the Hamburg State Opera in *Ernani*, at the San Francisco Opera in *Simon Boccanegra* and *Don Giovanni*, and in Vienna for a recital and a new concert production of *La Juive*. His rare recital appearances recently have evoked such praise as that from the Los Angeles Times . . . "an operatic basso with precious few peers . . . a singer of rare intelligence, uncompromising taste, and unique vocal endowments."

Mr. Siepi has previously sung in Ann Arbor in the May Festivals of 1953 and 1965. This afternoon marks his first recital here.

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## Coming Events

LUBLIN POLISH FOLK FESTIVAL . . . . .	Mon. Nov. 23
PAUL GAULIN MIME COMPANY . . . . .	Tues. Nov. 24
JAMES GALWAY, <i>Flutist</i> . . . . .	Mon. Nov. 30
PHILLIP MOLL, <i>Harpichordist</i> ; MORAY WELSH, <i>Cellist</i>	
Music of J. S. Bach, Handel, and Couperin.	
ROMANIAN FOLK FESTIVAL . . . . .	Wed. Dec. 2
HANDEL'S "MESSIAH" . . . . .	Fri.-Sun. Dec. 4-6
Choral Union and U-M Orchestra, DONALD BRYANT, <i>conductor</i> ;	
Soloists: SUSAN BELLING, MELANIE SONNENBERG, JOSEPH EVANS,	
MICHAEL BURT, and BEJUN MEHTA, <i>boy soprano</i> .	
VIENNA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA & PHILIPPE ENTREMONT . . . . .	Tues. Dec. 8
All-Mozart: Divertimento in D, K. 136; Piano Concerto No. 9, K. 271;	
Symphony No. 29, K. 201.	
CONCERTO SOLOISTS OF PHILADELPHIA . . . . .	Sat. Dec. 12
Haydn: Horn Concerti, Nos. 1 and 2, HERMANN BAUMANN, <i>French horn</i> ;	
K. P. E. Bach: Sinfonia No. 5; Respighi: Ancient Airs and Dances (Suite No. 3);	
Britten: Simply Symphony for Strings.	
PITTSBURGH BALLET, TCHAIKOVSKY'S "NUTCRACKER" . . . . .	Fri.-Sun. Dec. 18-20
ANDRÉ WATTS, <i>Pianist</i> , and CHARLES TREGER, <i>Violinist</i> . . . . .	Sun. Jan. 10
Sonatas of Beethoven, Prokofiev, Debussy, and Franck.	

**Watch for 1982 May Festival announcement in December;  
series orders accepted then.**

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