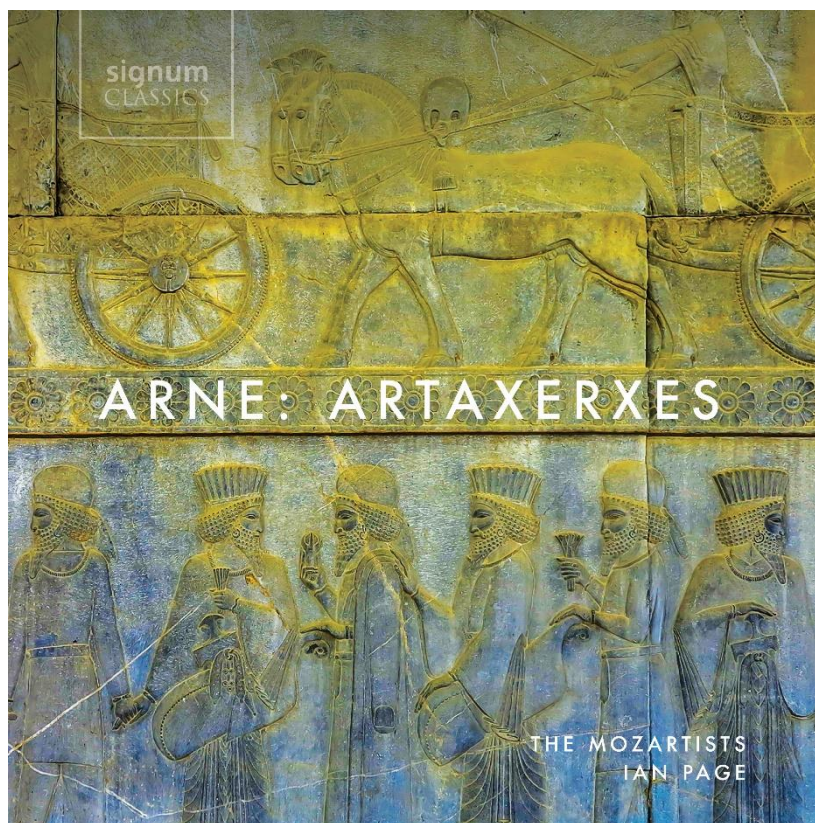


# THE MOZARTISTS

**Ian Page and The Mozartists rerelease Thomas Arne's restored opera *Artaxerxes***

**Signum Records to release reissue on 14 May 2021**



Arne: Artaxerxes by The Mozartists and Ian Page

*"The performance is thrilling, with exemplary singing and playing."*  
GRAMOPHONE MAGAZINE

Ian Page and The Mozartists are rereleasing their highly praised recording of Thomas Arne's *Artaxerxes* on Signum Records, available from 14 May 2021.

Following critically acclaimed performances at the Royal Opera House in 2009, Ian Page and The Mozartists recorded Thomas Arne's rarely-heard opera *Artaxerxes* in 2010. The opera was originally premiered at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden in 1762, and the young Mozart almost certainly heard at least one performance during his childhood visit to London in 1764-65. When Haydn came to London in the 1790s he reportedly said that he "had no idea we had such an opera in the English language". In November 2009, the Royal Opera House staged the opera's return to Covent Garden

after an absence of more than 150 years, mounting a fully-staged production created by director **Martin Duncan** for the Linbury Theatre.

Though the full libretto for *Artaxerxes* has survived through the centuries, the music for the recitatives and finale of *Artaxerxes* has been lost. This created an opportunity for Ian Page and composer **Duncan Druce** to create a new performing edition of *Artaxerxes* that completes the partially lost opera.

Following nine sold-out performances at the Royal Opera House, the Classical Opera Company (now The Mozartists) recorded the opera with 5 of the 6 original cast, including **Elizabeth Watts, Rebecca Bottone, Caitlin Hulcup, Christopher Ainslie, Andrew Staples** and **Daniel Norman**.

The plot of *Artaxerxes* is set in ancient Persia and shows the young prince Artaxerxes supporting his innocent friend Arbaces, who has been found guilty and condemned to death by the real murderer, his own father.

Ian Page said: *"I am delighted that this recording – the first complete opera set that we made – is now being re-released on Signum Classics. I have very fond memories of performing the work, both in the recording studio and in Martin Duncan's beautiful production for the Royal Opera, and the music has an irrepressible freshness and vivacity."*

#### **Reviews from the Royal Opera Production in 2009:**

*"All credit to the Classical Opera Company for resurrecting a work brimming with delightful music... Page proves an engaging advocate of the score with his briskly paced but sensitive direction."*  
The Evening Standard

*"Ian Page, who prepared this restoration for the Classical Opera Company and its excellent orchestra, makes capital of what were at the time new-fangled novelties."*  
The Independent

*"Mezzo Caitlin Hulcup is a winsome Arbaces, whose love song over sustained violas and plucked basses could stand up to the best of Mozart."*  
The Guardian

#### **Reviews from the original album release in 2010:**

*"The excellent cast includes rising stars Christopher Ainslie and Elizabeth Watts, and Ian Page's conducting is crisp and lively."*  
The Metro

*"Elizabeth Watts and Rebecca Bottone shine under Ian Page's crisp direction."*  
The Observer

*"Christopher Ainslie is outstanding in the title role."*  
The Sunday Times

[www.mozartists.com](http://www.mozartists.com)

-ENDS-

For more information please contact Rebecca Johns at Premier  
[Rebecca.johns@premiercomms.com](mailto:Rebecca.johns@premiercomms.com) | +44(0)7715 205 196

### Notes to Editor

THOMAS ARNE (1710-1778)

ARTAXERXES

Libretto translated by Arne from Pietro Metastasio's *Artaserse*

ARTAXERXES CHRISTOPHER AINSLIE countertenor

MANDANE ELIZABETH WATTS soprano

ARBACES CAITLIN HULCUP mezzo-soprano

ARTABANES ANDREW STAPLES tenor

SEMIRA REBECCA BOTTONE soprano

RIMENES DANIEL NORMAN tenor

THE MOZARTISTS

Leader: Matthew Truscott

Continuo: Mark Packwood/Steven Devine (harpsichord), Joseph Crouch (cello)

IAN PAGE conductor

Recitatives composed by Ian Page, finale by Duncan Druce

### Track listing

CD 1

ACT ONE

1 Overture (Poco più che andante – Larghetto – Gavotta)

2 Recitative: "Still silence reigns around" (Mandane, Arbaces)

3 No. 1, Duettino: "Fair Aurora, prithee stay" (Mandane, Arbaces)

4 Recitative: "Alas, thou know'st that for my love to thee" (Arbaces, Mandane)

5 No. 2, Air: "Adieu, thou lovely youth" (Mandane)

6 Recitative: "O cruel parting! How can I survive?" (Arbaces, Artabanes)

7 No. 3, Air: "Amid a thousand racking woes" (Arbaces)

8 Recitative: "Be firm, my heart" (Artabanes, Artaxerxes)

9 No. 4, Air: "Behold, on Lethe's dismal strand" (Artabanes)

10 Recitative: "Stay, Artaxerxes, stay" (Semira, Artaxerxes)

11 No. 5, Air: "Fair Semira, lovely maid" (Artaxerxes)

12 Recitative: "I fear some dread disaster" (Semira, Rimenes)

13 No. 6, Air: "When real joy we miss" (Rimenes)

14 Recitative: "Ye Gods, protectors of the Persian Empire" (Semira)

15 No. 7, Air: "How hard is the fate" (Semira)

- 16 Recitative: "Whither do I fly?" (Tutti)
- 17 No. 8, Air: "Thy father! Away, I renounce the soft claim" (Artabanes)
- 18 Recitative: "Ye cruel Gods, what crime have I committed" (Arbaces)
- 19 No. 9, Air: "Acquit thee of this foul offence" (Semira)
- 20 Recitative: "Appearance, I must own, is strong against me" (Arbaces, Artaxerxes, Rimenes, Mandane)
- 21 No. 10, Air: "O too lovely, too unkind" (Arbaces)
- 22 Accompanied recitative: "Dear and beloved shade" (Mandane)
- 23 No. 11, Air: "Fly, soft ideas, fly" (Mandane)

## ACT TWO

- 24 Recitative: "Guards, speed ye to the tower" (Artaxerxes, Artabanes)
- 25 No. 12, Air: "In infancy, our hopes and fears" (Artaxerxes)
- 26 Recitative: "So far my great resolve succeeds" (Artabanes, Arbaces)
- 27 No. 13, Air: "Disdainful you fly me" (Arbaces)
- 28 Recitative: "Why, my dear friend, so pensive" (Rimenes, Artabanes, Semira)
- 29 No. 14, Air: "To sigh and complain" (Rimenes)
- 30 Recitative: "How many links to dire misfortune's chain" (Semira, Mandane)
- 31 No. 15, Air: "If o'er the cruel tyrant love" (Mandane)

## CD 2

- 1 Recitative: "Which fatal evil shall I first oppose?" (Semira)
- 2 No. 16, Air: "If the river's swelling waves" (Semira)
- 3 Recitative: "Ye solid pillars of the Persian Empire" (Tutti)
- 4 No. 17, Air: "By that belov'd embrace" (Arbaces)
- 5 Recitative: "Ah me, at poor Arbaces' parting" (Mandane, Artabanes)
- 6 No. 18, Air: "Monster, away" (Mandane)
- 7 Recitative: "See, lov'd Semira" (Artaxerxes, Semira, Artabanes)
- 8 Accompanied recitative: "At last my soul has room" (Artabanes)
- 9 No. 19, Air: "Thou, like the glorious sun" (Artabanes)

## ACT THREE

- 10 No. 20, Air: "Why is death for ever late" (Arbaces)
- 11 Recitative: "Arbaces! Gracious Heav'n" (Artaxerxes, Arbaces)
- 12 No. 21, Air: "Water parted from the sea" (Arbaces)
- 13 Recitative: "That face, secure in conscious innocence" (Artaxerxes)
- 14 No. 22, Air: "Though oft a cloud with envious shade" (Artaxerxes)
- 14 No. 22, Air: "Though oft a cloud with envious shade" (Artaxerxes)

- 15 Recitative: "My son, Arbaces... where art thou retir'd?" (Artabanes, Rimenes)
- 16 No. 23, Air: "O let the danger of a son" (Rimenes)
- 17 Accompanied recitative: "Ye adverse Gods!" (Artabanes)
- 18 No. 24, Air: "O, much lov'd son, if death" (Artabanes)
- 19 Recitative: "Perhaps the King releas'd Arbaces" (Mandane, Semira)
- 20 No. 25, Air: "Let not rage, thy bosom firing" (Mandane)
- 21 Recitative: "What have I done? Alas, I vainly thought" (Semira)
- 22 No. 26, Air: "'Tis not true that in our grief" (Semira)
- 23 Recitative: "Nor here my searching eyes" (Arbaces, Mandane)
- 24 No. 27, Duetto: "For thee I live, my dearest" (Arbaces, Mandane)
- 25 Recitative: "To you, my people, much belov'd" (Artaxerxes, Artabanes, Semira, Mandane) 26 No. 28, Air: "The soldier, tir'd of war's alarms" (Mandane)
- 27 Recitative: "Behold, my King, Arbaces at thy feet" (Arbaces, Artaxerxes, Mandane, Artabanes)
- 28 No. 29, Finale: "Live to us, to Empire live" (Semira, Mandane, Arbaces, Artaxerxes, Artabanes)

### **The Mozartists – [full biography here](#)**

The Mozartists, under the dynamic leadership of conductor and artistic director Ian Page, are leading exponents of the music of Mozart and his contemporaries. Originally called Classical Opera, the company was founded in 1997, and has received widespread international acclaim for its stylish and virtuosic period-instrument orchestra, its imaginative and innovative programming, and its ability to nurture and develop world-class young artists.

### **Ian Page – [full biography here](#)**

Ian Page is the founder, conductor and artistic director of The Mozartists (formerly Classical Opera). With the company 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 Hasse's *Piramo e Tisbe*. In 2009 he made his Royal Opera House début conducting Arne's *Artaxerxes* at the Linbury Studio Theatre, and in 2019 he conducted Handel's *Ariodante* at the Drottningholm Palace Theatre, Sweden.

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, as well as making many radio appearances and writing articles for The Guardian, Gramophone, Opera Now and The Arts Desk.