

Double premiere: First recording and first performance of Franz Liszt's reconstructed *Sardanapalo*

"Sardanapalo is absolutely fascinating... An eminent discovery. What a pity Liszt didn't continue along this path." (Die Welt)

"a brilliant musical achievement"
(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung)

"There were audible gasps heard within the auditorium as the work ended with a very visceral bang... a thrilling piece of music, alive, vibrant, and new – and only 170 years old."
(Opera Canada)

FRANZ LISZT SARDANAPALO MAZEPPA

Joyce El-Khoury soprano
Airam Hernández tenor
Oleksandr Pushniak bass-baritone

Opera Chorus Nationaltheater Weimar
Staatskapelle Weimar
Kirill Karabits



Double premiere – first recording and first performance: Franz Liszt never finished his mature opera *Sardanapalo*. Now 170 years old, the first act refracts the world of mid 19th-century opera through the prism of Liszt's unmistakable voice. Kirill Karabits directs Liszt's orchestra in Weimar where the music was composed, in a programme of burning, Byronic romanticism.

Contrary heroes: *Mazeppa* and *Sardanapalo* performed by Karabits and the Weimar Staatskapelle

Sardanapalo, who prefers wine and concubines to politics and warfare, and *Mazeppa*, who dies with glory, having endured pain and humiliation: dramatic literary models, impressively set to music by Franz Liszt. Written at the same time, these works represent Liszt's ideas striving to unite literature and music, on the one hand modernising Italian opera and on the other advancing towards the symphonic poem in his orchestral writing.

The *Sardanapalo* manuscript comprises the first act. For 170 years the material lay dormant in the Goethe and Schiller archive in Weimar: it was only in 2017 that David Trippett deciphered, edited and orchestrated the manuscript at the University of Cambridge.

Kirill Karabits conducts the Weimar Staatskapelle: Liszt's orchestra in the city in which he composed the opera. audite continues its series of the great Weimar *Kapellmeister*-composers.

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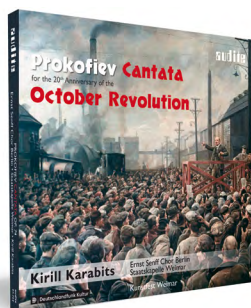
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Sardanapalo

- First performance / premiere recording
- Rarity
- Complete libretto in Italian, English & German (*audite.de*)
- Cambridge University video documentary on research and reconstruction (*audite.de*)
- Article by David Trippett providing scholarly background and in-depth analysis (*audite.de*)
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