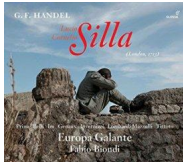


George Handel – Silla (2017)



1Silla, HWV 10: Overture03:42 2Silla, HWV 10: March01:22 3Silla, HWV 10, Act I: Silla, s'oggi risplende01:02 4Silla, HWV 10, Act I: Alza il volo la mia fama03:11 5Silla, HWV 10, Act I: S'eclissa la mia gioia!00:40 6Silla, HWV 10, Act I: Fuggon l'aure in me di vita04:34 7Silla, HWV 10, Act I: Cieli, numi! Che vidi?00:35 8Silla, HWV 10, Act I: Se ben tuona il ciel irato02:59 9Silla, HWV 10, Act I: Sin con lingua di foco00:21 10Silla, HWV 10, Act I: Un sol raggio di speranza05:15 11Silla, HWV 10, Act I: Sino su li occhi miei01:25 12Silla, HWV 10, Act I: Senti, bell'idol mio!04:53 13Silla, HWV 10, Act I: Sì, t'amo, oh caro00:17 14Silla, HWV 10, Act I: Se la speranza nudrisce il mio cor02:50 15Silla, HWV 10, Act I: Silla, dov'e la gloria01:24 16Silla, HWV 10, Act I: Con tromba guerriera04:56 17Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Flavia!00:59 18Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Qual scoglio in mezzo all'onde02:14 19Silla, HWV 10, Act II: T'arresta, altera! Ma pietoso Amore00:21 20Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Dolce nume de' mortali02:26 21Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Guerra, stragi e furor!01:48 22Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Guerra, stragi e furor!00:15 23Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Silla! Ove ti guida01:15 24Silla, HWV 10, Act II: È tempo, oh luci belle03:49 25Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Mio diletto, che pensi?00:57 26Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Sol per te, bell'idol mio06:12 27Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Bella, lascia i sospiri!01:08 28Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Mi brilla nel seno02:51 29Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Mio bel nume, t'arresta!00:40 30Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Hai due vaghe pupillette02:33 31Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Che miro, oh Dei? Qui Silla?01:14 32Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Tanto ardisci00:32 33Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Ti lascio, idolo mio01:27 34Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Anima mia!01:22 35Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Scabro! Lepido sia00:21 36Silla, HWV 10, Act II: La vendetta è un cibo al cor02:04 37Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Oh! Perfido consorte00:30 38Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Se'l mio mal da voi dipende01:50 39Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Sì, questi son trofei00:24 40Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Deh! Corri al tuo signore!00:21 41Silla, HWV 10, Act II: T'affretta, oh Scabro00:19 42Silla, HWV 10, Act II: Secondate, oh giusti dei02:10 43Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Quanto devo, oh Metella, al tuo cor generoso00:47 44Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Dunque partir deve00:48 45Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Io non ti chiedo più03:17 46Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Al tua fedeltade, o caro amino00:27 47Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Già respira in petto i core02:36 48Silla, HWV 10, Act III: L'imperio quanto e pio vasto e più pesante00:43 49Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Placasti, oh bella diva01:04 50Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Sei già morto, idolo mio03:51 51Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Rimembranze funeste01:32 52Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Luci belle02:44 53Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Stelle rubelle03:47 54Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Al fin, del mio rigore01:09 55Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Ma infelice sarie vivere00:59 56Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Spirto adorato, oh Dio!01:00 57Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Brano strumentale00:48 58Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Metella, oh Dio! Qual sento01:02 59Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Propizio arrida il cielo00:10 60Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Sinfonia - Assistete, soccorrete01:18 61Silla, HWV

10, Act III: Marche 101:15 62Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Pera la feritade!00:08 63Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Marche 1100:48 64Silla, HWV 10, Act III: De' miei falli pentito01:00 65Silla, HWV 10, Act III: Chi al trova tra procelle Sonia Prina - contralto (Silla) Martina Belli - mezzo-soprano (Claudio) Sunhae Im - soprano (Metella) Vivica Genaux - soprano (Lepido) Roberta Invernizzi - soprano (Flavia) Francesca Lombardi Mazzulli - soprano (Celia) Luca Tittoto - bass (Il Dio) Europa Galante (Ensemble) Fabio Biondi - violin & direction

No Handel opera is as enigmatic as Silla. His fourth London opera, it was composed in 1713 to a libretto by Giacomo Rossi, also the librettist of the composer's first great London triumph Rinaldo (1711). And that is just about the extent of any certainty on the subject. It might have been premiered in 1713 in London in a private concert at the Queen's Theatre, but even this remains unconfirmed. This is one of Handel's few historical operas, being concerned with Plutarch's account of the latter part of the life of Lucius Cornelius Sulla, who after taking Rome became a tyrannical despot who murders his opponents, before suddenly retiring to his country estate to enjoy his leisure. The libretto being somewhat weak, it leaves Silla an unlikely candidate to regain a place in the repertoire, but it definitely contains lots of thoroughly rewarding music. Handel itself utilized a significant part of it in his next opera, Amadigi di Gaula. Fabio Biondi and Europa Galante join an overwhelming vocal cast headed by a fantastic Sonia Prina in the title role, with Martina Belli, Sunhae Im, Vivica Genaux, Roberta Invernizzi, Francesca Lombardi Mazzulli, and Luca Tittoto also excelling in their respective parts. Biondi's ensemble perform with their trademark elegance and precision in a recording made in the Konzerthaus in Vienna over three days in January 2017. --- Editorial Reviews, amazon.com

Silla, the slightly-flawed and somewhat mysterious early London opera by Handel, receives a fine, if not overwhelming, performance here by Darlow and the London Handel Orchestra. This recording, taken from a live performance in 2000, remains (at this time) the only complete version in the catalog. The mystery is two- or even three-fold. First, a complete score was lost until recently located in a California library. Second, we have no record of a public performance in 1713, the opera's completion date, or even any mention in the London press of the time. Thirdly, (and this is also the major flaw), why would Handel choose to write a work about an unredeemed bloodthirsty Roman tyrant (the actual historical figure, Sulla) who was possibly a wee bit paranoid?

Silla, however, has one very noteworthy characteristic in the Handel opera canon: almost all the

music appears to have been (knock on wood!) originally composed for this work; no borrowing or self-filching. In fact, Handel immediately mined Silla for music in his next opera, Amadigi di Gaula. The workbook (score and stage direction) found in the Huntington library in California in 1969 not only allowed Darlow to reconstruct the show, it also contained a clue to the work's background. The workbook had a front-page dedication the the Duc d'Aumont, the recently-named French ambassador to England. This strongly suggests the reason for the lack of mention of Silla: instead of being a public for-profit venture, this was a privately contracted special occasion opera--either put on for the Duc or by the Duc for English bigwigs as a one-shot deal. For Handel, perhaps not a lot of money, but, depending on who was in the audience, maybe a lot of high-class PR. Anyway, we can only speculate--until some revealing London diary or daybook is unearthed.

Artistically, the final "mystery" is the most interesting: what was the relevance of the story of the bloodthirsty and greedy Lucius Cornelius Sulla (from Plutarch), the general who, in 82 B.C. defeated other Roman armies and occupied the city. Sulla, a consul who had been a brilliant general, assumed near dictatorial powers after the occupation of Rome, and proceeded to murder thousands of people who didn't fit into his plan for the city and empire (including around 1,000 of the nobility). This story makes for something of a protagonist-less opera. Giacomo Rossi, the Silla librettist, tweaks the tale with the usual love interests, but overall it's a dark story-arc. It has been suggested that the negative storyline was conjured up as a reference to the recent fall from favor of the Duke of Marlborough, the brilliant victor of the War of Spanish Succession who'd pushed his luck a bit too far with the Queen. I'm inclined to be dubious about this idea. --- Rollo Tomassi, amazon.com

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