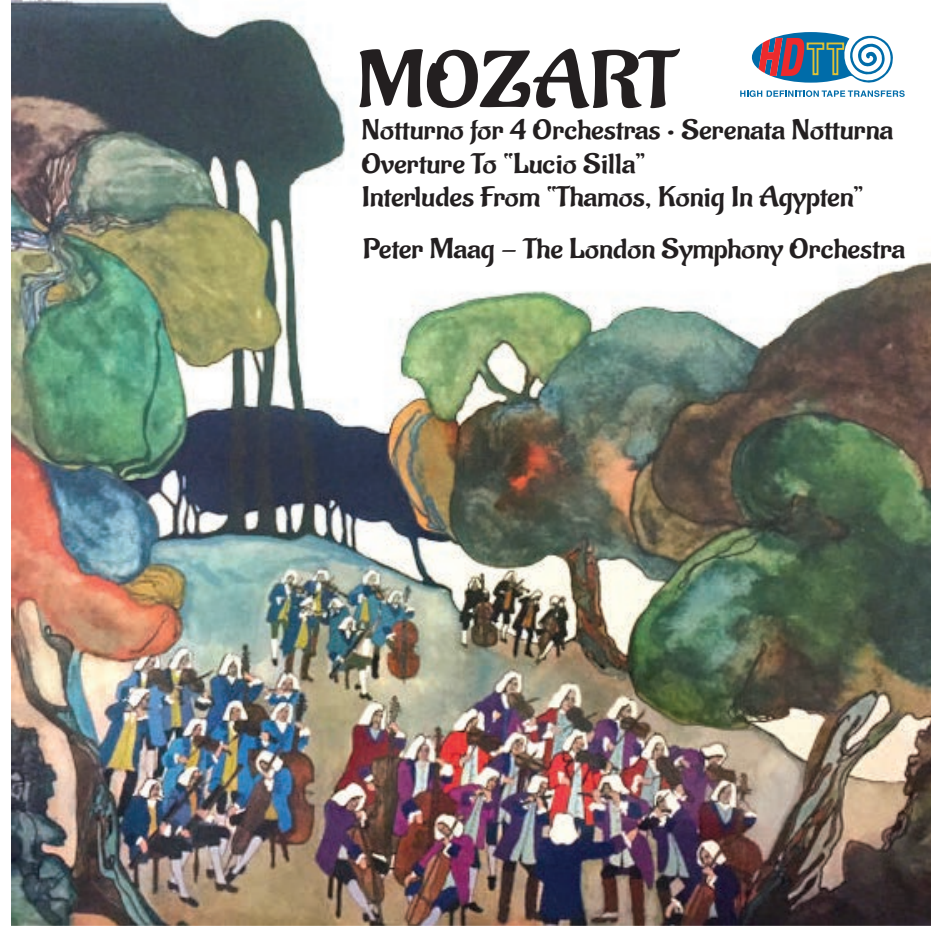


König in Ägypten) is a play by Tobias Philipp, baron von Gebler, for which, between 1773 and 1780, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart wrote incidental music, K. 345/336a, of an operatic character.

It is not known for certain whether the music that Mozart composed was performed with the play during his lifetime. The play's première took place at the Kärntnertheater in Vienna, probably on 4 April 1774, by which time two choruses had been written. Performances in Salzburg in 1776 and 1779–80 may have incorporated the orchestral interludes and the three choruses in their final form, respectively. The music was re-used in 1783 in a different play (set in India, not Egypt), *Lanassa*, by Karl Martin Plümicke.

The only named role in Mozart's music is Sethos, the high priest (baritone). There are parts for four other soloists (soprano, alto, tenor and bass) and for a chorus of priests and priestesses.

Thamos has succeeded his father, Ramesses, as king of Egypt, but Ramesses had usurped the throne from the rightful king, Menes, who is now disguised as the high priest, Sethos. Thamos loves Sais, a priestess, but she is really Menes' daughter Tharsis, for whom the high priestess Mirza is plotting marriage to Pheron, a treacherous general. When Menes reveals his true identity, Pheron is struck by lightning and Mirza kills herself. Menes cedes his crown to Thamos and Tharsis as all ends happily.



MOZART



Notturmo for 4 Orchestras · Serenata Notturna
Overture To "Lucio Silla"
Interludes From "Thamos, König In Ägypten"

Peter Maag – The London Symphony Orchestra

Although "notturmo" was a term applied to musical works performed in the late evening hours in the eighteenth century, Mozart used it in reference to his larger orchestral compositions. This one, often called *Serenata Notturmo* (or *Notturna*), is such an effort, though the size of the collective ensembles is not as massive as the headnote suggests: each orchestra consists of strings and two horns. The second, third, and fourth orchestras are placed at a distance from the first and serve merely to echo its sonorities.

Intended for performance at a Salzburg carnival, the work was left incomplete, though its three surviving movements are a substantial, if light work of about 15 minutes in length. The first movement is an elegant *Andante*, dominated by the strings, the horns relegated mostly to playing sustained chords. The main theme is stately and alternates with a perkier second theme. There is relatively little in this music that would bring to mind a carnival or other festive doings.

But there is much that is appropriate for celebration in the ensuing *Allegretto grazioso*. The music is playful and lively in this three-minute panel, and once again the horns serve a supporting role, lending occasional muscle to the harmonies in their sustained chords. The closing movement is a lively and graceful *Menuetto*, with the horns this time taking on a more active role. In the outer sections the music is chipper and jaunty, while the central Trio is

by contrast subdued in its elegance, delicate sonorities, and less lively pacing.

Serenata Notturna is scored for a very unusual ensemble: a solo quartet of two violins, violas, and string bass on one side, and a larger group of violins, violas, cellos, and timpani on the other. The use of the term "notturmo" in the title refers to a piece that was intended to be played at night rather than one that necessarily evokes nocturnal atmospheres.

The opening *maestoso* march makes much of the contrast between the opening fanfarish motif and the subsequent, more flowing singing lines. One intriguing section in the second half features timpani along with *pizzicato* strings, seemingly laughing at the fanfare's inherent grandiosity. A minuet follows where mock-bombast alternates with graceful elegance, and an exquisitely poised *allegretto rondeau* with a few surprises rounds things off.

Lucio Silla K. 135, is an Italian opera seria in three acts composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart at the age of 16. The libretto was written by Giovanni de Gamerra, revised by Pietro Metastasio. It was first performed on 26 December 1772 at the Teatro Regio Ducale in Milan and was regarded as "a moderate success".

Thamos, King of Egypt (or King Thamos; in German, Thamos,

MOZART

Notturmo for 4 Orchestras · Serenata Notturna Overture To "Lucio Silla" Interludes From "Thamos, Konig In Agypten"

Peter Maag – The London Symphony Orchestra
Double Bass – Stuart Knussen Viola – Simon Streatfeild
Violin – Hugh Maquire Sir Neville Marriner

1 Notturmo In D Major For Four Orchestras, K.286 15:40

2 Serenata Notturna In D Major K.239 12:54

3 Overture To Lucio Silla, K.135 9:05

4 Interludes From Thamos, Konig In Agypten, K.345 18:08

Recorded at Walthamstow Assembly Hall by Decca 9-11 Dec 1959

Producer: Erik Smith • Engineer: Kenneth Wilkinson



For more info e-mail us:
admin@highdeftapetransfers.com
or visit our website:
www.highdeftapetransfers.com