

**Anger and Extreme Frustration  
expressed in Opera**

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## **Anger and Extreme Frustration expressed in Opera, Introduction**

- **Anger is a feeling that every person can experience.**
- **The question is: at what time is the anger expression extreme and borders on a mental illness.**
- **Surprisingly the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, the DSM-IV, does not have a separate code for anger alone.**
- **When anger is uncontrolled, it can be associated with other symptoms for example in bipolar disease, where emotions are swinging in many directions, in oppositional – defiant disorder, which is seen in some adolescents, in sociopathic disorders to name a few.**

## **Anger and Extreme Frustration expressed in Opera, Introduction**

- **Anger and extreme frustration can be expressed by male and female characters and with any voice type in Opera, which is a dramatic form of art.**
- **In our presentation today, we will examine and listen to 11 operatic examples of this common emotional feeling.**

## **Anger against an Employer Le Nozze di Figaro**

Composer: W. A. Mozart Libretto: Lorenzo Da Ponte

- In Act 1 Figaro, the Count's valet, is engaged to Susanna, the maid of the Countess. He discovers that the Count is pursuing his bride. The Count in the spirit of the age of enlightenment had denounced and abolished his previous right to sleep with the bride the first night of the married couple.
- He is sorry about it now and pursues Susanna, bribing her with a promised endowment, if she gives in.
- Figaro is enraged. His anger is restraint since the count is his employer and he is dependent on him for his livelihood. The story is set in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and based on a play by Beaumarchais, which was written before the French Revolution (1789).

## **Anger against an Employer continued**

- The play was revolutionary at its time and represents the rising rebellion of the servant class against the often unjust treatment of their employers, which was one of the courses of the French Revolution.

*" Bravo, signor padrone"*

*" Se vuol ballare, Signor"*

**Figaro: Erwin Schrott**

**A daughter's grief for her murdered father and her anger  
against the murderer**

**Don Giovanni**

**Composer: W. A. Mozart Libretto: Lorenzo Da Ponte**

- **Donna Anna's father was murdered by Don Giovanni in a duel after the masked Don Giovanni tried to rape her.**
- **Donna Anna recognizes his voice when she and her fiance Don Ottavio come to his villa in an effort mistakingly to get his help.**
- **Donna Anna expresses rage of anger and frustration against the man who murdered her father and asks Don Ottavio to revenge her in her aria:**

**" Or sai chi l'onore"**

**Donna Anna: Rene Fleming**

**Anger of a mother against her daughter  
Die Zauberfloete (The Magic Flute)**

- **In act 2 after Tamino and Pamina have fallen in love, Tamino recognizes that Pamina's mother, the Queen of the night, is the dark influence, he seeks admission to the enlightened order, whose leader is the High Priest Sarastro.**
- **Sarastro rescued Pamina from her mother. The Queen of the night in her fury appears before her daughter. She is enraged that Pamina and Tamino have gone over to Sarastro's side.**
- **She sings of vengeance and betrayal, that Sarastro stole her power over the earth and puts a dagger into her daughter's hand, demanding that she should murder Sarastro. This is a high coloratura aria of a very angry woman.**

## Zauberfloete continued

- “ Der Hoelle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen”
- Queen of the Night: Diana Damrau

## Anger against a villain, plotting a murder Fidelio (Leonore)

Composer: Ludwig van Beethoven Libretto: Joseph von Sonnleithner  
revised by von Breuning and Treitschke

- In act 1 Leonore, who is searching for her husband Florestan, suspects he has been imprisoned by the evil Pizarro, an enemy of her husband.
- She disguises herself as the male assistant Fidelio to the prison warden Rocco. Fidelio (Leonore) overhears Pizarro trying to bribe Rocco to murder a prisoner and to dig his grave. Rocco refuses to murder and Pizarro throws him a purse with money to just dig his grave. Leonore is enraged and expresses her frustration and anger in her Recitative and Aria:
  - “Abscheulicher! Wo eilst du hin?”
- Fidelio (Leonore): Gundula Janowitz

## **Anger against the betrayal of a lover**

### **Norma**

**Composer: Vincenzo Bellini Libretto: Felice Romani**

- **Pollione, a Roman proconsul, has a secret relationship with the Druid priestess Norma, who bore him two children, who are hidden away in the forest.**
- **Pollione falls in love with another young Druid priestess Adalgisa, who is guilt ridden by breaking her vows.**
- **She confides in Norma, asking Norma to release her from her vows.**
- **Knowing what she has done, Norma agrees, but asks who Adalgisa's lover is.**
- **When she finds out that it is Pollione, she rages against Pollione who has betrayed her.**

## **Norma continued**

- **" Oh! Di qual sei tu vittima"**
- **Norma: Fiorenza Cedolin, Adalgisa: Sonia Ganassi  
Pollione: Vincenzo la Scola**

**Anger against the presumed betrayal of a lover, resulting in dishonoring a woman**

**La Traviata**

**Composer: Giuseppe Verdi Libretto: Francesco Maria Piave**

- **Violetta Valery (Traviata) and Alfredo are living happily in a lovely country home. Alfredo is a young passionate but inexperienced man. He does not realize that Traviata is using up all her wealth to support their love nest.**
- **Alfredo's father, a country gentleman, comes to Traviata and pleads with her, a courtesan, to leave his son, so that his innocent daughter honorably can marry her fiancée.**
- **Traviata in a heart breaking duet sacrifices her own love. She knows well that Alfredo is her last and only real love and that her life will come to an early end, since she is suffering from consumption.**

**Traviata continued**

- **Alfredo falls into an extreme rage and despair when his father tells him that Traviata has left him and went back to Paris.**
- **He follows her to a party at Traviata's friend Flora, where young men gamble. Alfredo gambles with Barone Douphol, Traviata's protector, and beats him at the card game.**
- **He takes the money, he won, and throws it at Traviata in his uncontrolled anger by this indicating she left for money and dishonoring her.**

**" Ogni suo aver tal femmina'**

**Alfredo: Rolando Villazon, Violetta Valery (Traviata): Rene Fleming.**

**Anger and curse of a father against the seducer of his daughter and the mocking courtiers of the duke**

**Rigoletto**

Composer: Giuseppe Verdi Libretto: Francesco Maria Piave

- The Duke of Mantua seduced the daughter of Count Monterone. The Count is arrested when he curses the Duke.
- The courtiers and the court jester Rigoletto mock him when Monterone goes to his death.
- Monterone solemnly curses Rigoletto for having ridiculed a father's grief.
- Rigoletto's mocking laughter dies on his lips and he reels, terrified, beneath the shock of the curse.

**" Ch'io gli parli"**

**Monterone: Ingvar Wixall**

**Anger of a father against the seducer of his daughter and grief, losing her and his granddaughter**

**Simon Boccanegra**

Composer: Giuseppe Verdi Libretto: Francesco Maria Piave and Arrigo Boito

- Simon Boccanegra, a pirate, and Maria Fiesco, Jacopo Fiesco's (a patrician's) daughter fell in love and she had an illegitimate daughter.
- The enraged Jacopo Fiesco secludes his daughter and keeps her captive in his palace.
- Maria's and Simon's daughter is brought up by an old woman, who dies and Simon finds that his daughter disappeared when he comes to visit.
- Maria Fiesco dies in captivity in her father's palace.
- Simon comes back and thinks, since he was nominated as Doge of Genoa, Maria's father would now accept him, only to find out that Maria died.



### **Simon Boccanegra continued**

- **Jacopo Fiesco in his grief, curses the seducer of his daughter and is enraged that Simon can not restore his granddaughter to him, who has disappeared.**

**Duetto: " Suono ogni labbro il mio"**

**Jacopo Fiesco: Robert Lloyd, Simon Boccanegra: Vladimir Chernov**

### **Anger against one's own fate and the world Otello**

**Composer: Giuseppe Verdi Libretto: Arrigo Boito**

- **Jago, Otello's ensign, is enraged that Otello advances Cassio's position in the army and not his.**
- **He intrigues against Otello, Cassio and Rodrigo and declares in his curse his anger at the world and his own fate.**
- **His actions lead to the death of Otello and Otello's wife Desdemona.**

**Jago's curse: " Vanne! Latua meta gia vedo... Credo in un Dio crudel".**

**Jago: Lado Ataneli**

**Anger, escalating in violence and murder  
Pagliacci**

Composer: Ruggiero Leoncavallo Libretto by the composer

- Canio/Pagliaccio, the circus clown, finds out that his wife Nedda has been unfaithful to him.
- The vengeful Tonio reveals to him that Nedda has an admirer. In his anger and jealousy Canio/Pagliaccio is unable to distinguish between fact and fiction and grows more and more frantic trying to force Nedda to reveal her admirer's name.
- When she refuses, he stabs her in his blind rage. Silvio, her lover, rushes to her aid and he stabs him too. The circus comedy is over.

"No! Pagliaccio non son!"

Canio/Pagliaccio: Placido Domingo, Colombina/Nedda: Teresa Stratas, Taddeo/Toneo: Juan Pons

Anger against the Gods who tricked him (the Nibelung Alberich) out of his gold and the tarnhelm, resulting in a fatal curse at the gods, destroying the world

Rheingold (first opera of the Ring cycle)

Composer and Libretto: Richard Wagner

- Alberich stole the Rhinegold from the Rhinemaidens and forged it into a ring, which had power to control the world.
- The Rhinemaidens cursed the gold until it would be returned to them.
- The giants seized the Goddess Freya when Wotan, the head God, couldn't pay for the building of Walhalla, the new home of the Gods.
- Wotan and the vilely half God Loge went down to the kingdom of the Nibelungs, deep in the mountain, where Alberich now resided and terrorized his fellow Nibelungs.
- Wotan and Loge tricked Alberich out of his gold and finally of the tarnhelm and the ring.
- Wotan loses all the gold, the tarnhelm and the ring to the Giants to free Freya.

## **Rheingold continued**

- **Alberich, enraged, about losing the ring and its power, puts a powerful curse on the ring and its owner. The curse in the last of the four Ring cycle operas Goetterdaemmerung eventually brings the world of the Gods down.**

**“Gezahlt hab ich, nun lasst mich ziehn”**

**Alberich: Ekkehard Wlaschiha**