

OPERAS FOR NOVEMBER 2024

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Stories of the Operas

WAR & PEACE

War and Peace (Op. 91) (Russian: Война и мир, *Voyna i mir*) is a 1946 230-minute opera in 13 scenes, plus an overture and an epigraph, by Sergei Prokofiev. Based on the 1869 novel War and Peace by Leo Tolstoy, its Russian libretto was prepared by the composer and Mira Mendelson. The first seven scenes are devoted to peace, the latter six, after the epigraph, to war.

Mendelson and Prokofiev's original scheme for the libretto of the opera envisaged 11 scenes, and Prokofiev began composing the music in the summer of 1941, spurred on by the German invasion of the Soviet Union which began on June 22, 1941. The description "lyric-dramatic scenes" in the libretto accurately suggests both a homage to Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin and an emphasis on individuals and their emotions rather than on the bigger picture of a country at war.

Plans were drawn up for a 1943 première at the Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow, to be directed by Sergei Eisenstein and conducted by Samuil Samosud. Nothing came of this project, although a private performance of eight scenes with piano accompaniment took place at the Moscow Actors' Centre on October 16, 1944, and a public concert performance of nine scenes, conducted by Samosud, was given in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory on June 7, 1945.

The first staged performance was of a newly extended seven-scene version of Part 1 (what is now Scene 2 having been added at Samosud's suggestion), together with Scene 8, the first scene of Part 2. This took place on June 12, 1946, at the Maly Theatre (before the Revolution the Mikhailovsky Theatre) in Leningrad, again conducted by Samosud. Part 2, also with an additional scene (Scene 10), was to be performed there in July 1947, but after the dress rehearsal no public performances were given, "for reasons beyond the control of the theatre and the composer".

Following the Zhdanov decree of February 1948, Prokofiev started work on a shortened single-evening version of the opera, at the same time making various revisions to his original scheme, although the thirteen-scene framework remained. This version was first performed on 26 May 1953, at the Teatro Comunale, Florence, conducted by Artur Rodziński, two months after the composer's death. Scenes 2 and 9 were, however, omitted. The Russian première of this version was given at the Maly Theatre, Leningrad, on April 1, 1955, conducted by Eduard Grikurov, in this case with the omission of Scenes 7 and 11. All thirteen scenes (but with cuts) were eventually first performed together on November 8, 1957, at the Stanislavski-Nemirovich-Danchenko Theatre in Moscow,

Roles

Countess Natalya (Natasha) Rostova	soprano	Yelena Prokina
Count Pyotr (Pierre) Bezukhov	tenor	Gregam Gregorian
Prince Andrei Bolkonsky	baritone	Alexandr Gergalov
Field-Marshal Prince Mikhail Kutuzov	bass	Nikolai Okhotnikov
Napoleon Bonaparte	baritone	Vassily Gerele
Count Ilya Rostov, Natasha's father	bass	Sergei Alexashkin
Countess Hélène Bezukhova, Pierre's wife	contralto	Olga Borodina
Prince Anatole Kuryagin her brother	tenor	Yuri Marusin
Marya Akhrossimova Moscovite lady	contralto	Irina Bogachova
Lieutenant Dolokhov Anatole's friend	baritone	Alexandr Morozov
The Kirov Chorus & Orchestra of St Petersburg Conductor Valery Gergiev		

Synopsis Part 1 (Peace)

The Overture precedes the action

Scene 1: After dark, in the garden of Count Rostov's country estate, May, 1806

Andrei, who is a guest there, is depressed by the loss of his wife. Natasha, who also cannot sleep, looks out of her window and tells Sonya how beautiful the garden looks in the moonlight, and Andrei recovers his spirits.

Scene 2: New Year's Eve, 1810

At a ball in St Petersburg attended by the Tsar, Pierre encourages Andrei, who is attracted to Natasha, to ask her to dance. Anatole, also attracted to her, asks Hélène to arrange an introduction.

Scene 3: Town house of Prince Nikolai, February 1812

Count Rostov and Natasha visit Prince Nikolai's home. He is the father of Andrei, to whom she is engaged. Andrei has been abroad for a year. Princess Marya indicates that her father will not see them, and Count Rostov departs. However, the Prince, dressed eccentrically and behaving boorishly, does appear, and Natasha realises that he does not approve of the marriage.

Scene 4: Pierre's Moscow house, May 1812

Hélène tells Natasha that Anatole is attracted to her, and, after some hesitation, Natasha hears his declaration of love and agrees to meet him.

Scene 5: Dolokhov's apartment, 12 June 1812

Dolokhov has made the arrangements for his friend Anatole's elopement with Natasha. The coach-driver Balaga, Dolokhov and Anatole drink to the escapade and to the latter's mistress Matriosha.

Scene 6: Later that night

Natasha discovers that Sonya has given away her secret to Madame Akhrossimova, with whom they are staying. Anatole and Dolokhov are sent away by Gavrila, and Akhrossimova reduces Natasha to tears. Pierre arrives, reveals that Anatole is married, and agrees to ask Andrei to forgive Natasha. He shyly admits that he himself would want to marry her if he were free. Natasha takes poison off-stage and rushes back on stage in great agitation to confess this fact to Sonya.

Scene 7: Later still

Hélène is entertaining Anatole, Metivier and an Abbé. Pierre, returning home, upbraids Anatole and demands that he leave Moscow immediately. He agrees, and Pierre is left alone to bemoan his own circumstances. Denisov arrives with the news that Napoleon and his army are crossing into Russia. War is inevitable.

Part 2 (War)

The Epigraph is usually performed here if it was not used at the start of Part 1.

Scene 8: Near Borodino, 25 August 1812

Amid preparations for the defence of Moscow, Andrei and Denisov discuss utilising partisans to make life difficult for Napoleon's army. Pierre, wanting to observe the scene, arrives, and he and Andrei embrace, perhaps for the last time. Field-Marshal Kutuzov offers Andrei a position on his staff, but Andrei prefers to go into battle with his own regiment. The battle starts.

Scene 9: Later that day

Napoleon ponders his position, first refusing to commit more men, then agreeing. An unexploded cannonball lands at his feet and he kicks it away.

Scene 10: Two days later

Kutuzov and his generals are holding a Council of War at Fili, near Smolensk. The army will be at risk if Moscow is to be defended to the last – but if the army retreats, Moscow will be at the mercy of the French. Kutuzov decides that only by retreating, and potentially sacrificing Moscow, will there be any hope of victory.

Scene 11: Moscow is burning

The city is on fire because its citizens try to avoid a surrender. Pierre is caught up among some Muscovites, including the veteran Platon Karataev, who are accused by the French of fire-raising. As the asylum and theatre burn, lunatics and actresses flee – but Napoleon has to admit that the courage of the people has frustrated his plans.

Scene 12: In a peasant's hut at Mitishchi

The wounded Prince Andrei, delirious, has been evacuated with the Rostovs from Moscow. Natasha, who had been unaware that he was among her fellow evacuees, visits him. She tries to apologise for her conduct, but he again declares his love for her, and they sing of their happiness as Natasha reassures him that he will live. He falls asleep, and his heartbeat (conveyed by an offstage chorus) stops for ever.

Scene 13: November, 1812

On the road to Smolensk, the retreating French are escorting a group of prisoners through a snow-storm. Karataev cannot keep up and is shot, but Pierre and the others are rescued by the partisans. Denisov tells Pierre that Andrei is dead but that Natasha is alive and well. Kutuzov and his men rejoice in their victory, and celebrate the indomitable will of the Russian people.

Julietta is an opera by Bohuslav Martinů, who also wrote the libretto, in French, based on the play *Juliette, ou La clé des songes* (Juliette, or The Key of Dreams) by the French author Georges Neveux. A libretto in Czech was later prepared for its premiere which took place at the Prague National Theatre on 16 March 1938. Juliette has become widely considered as Martinů's masterpiece.

Performance history

Martinů became aware of the play by Neveux in 1932, two years after its premiere at the Théâtre de l'Avenue in Paris (8th arrondissement) on 7 March 1930. It appears that Neveux had come to an agreement with Kurt Weill to base a musical comedy on his play, but on hearing some of Martinů's music, passed his favour to the Czech. The initial work on the opera was undertaken to French words, but a Czech version was set between May 1936 and January 1937.

By the time of its premiere Martinů had written eight operas in a variety of styles. The work received its first performance at Prague National Theatre on 16 March 1938 with Václav Talich conducting, a few months before Martinů made his last visit to his country of birth. From Paris he wrote to Talich expressing his deep thanks to the conductor for his "understanding" which "showed all who worked with you the right path". Neveux had also been present at the premiere, adjudging the setting better than his prose original.

Subsequently, the opera has only been intermittently performed at that house; new productions were mounted in 1963 and 1989, and an Opera North production was seen three times in 2000; in March 2016 a new production was premiered at the theatre.

The composer was present at the German premiere in Wiesbaden in January 1956. A production by the Bielefeld Opera in Germany conducted by Geoffrey Moull received eight performances in 1992. In France, a radio broadcast in 1962 was conducted by Charles Bruck, while the stage premiere was at the Grand Théâtre in Angers in 1970.

The UK premiere was given in April 1978 in London by the New Opera Company at the London Coliseum, conducted by Charles Mackerras in an English translation by Brian Large, with Joy Roberts and Stuart Kale in the principal roles, and it was revived by English National Opera in the following season. There was a production by the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 1987 conducted by Howard Williams, with the title role shared between Juliet Booth and Sarah Pring. Following a performance at the Edinburgh Festival by a visiting Slovak company in 1990, the next UK production was by Opera North in 1997, with Rebecca Caine and Paul Nilon. A production by Richard Jones in Paris in 2002 was revived by English National Opera in September/October 2012 to enthusiastic reviews overall.

Germany's Theater Bremen staged a new production opening on 29 March 2014 under the direction of John Fulljames. Andreas Homoki and Fabio Luisi mounted a new production at Opernhaus Zürich with Joseph Kaiser as Michel in 2015 and the Berlin Staatsoper premiered a new production on 28 May 2016 at its temporary Schiller Theater home, with Daniel Barenboim conducting, Claus Guth directing, Magdalena Kožená as Juliette and Rolando Villazón as Michel.

Martinů's setting of his libretto is primarily lyrical although there are no extended solo arias. The "extended diatonicism" of the composer's mature works features along with "motoric rhythms found in his Double Concerto of 1938, especially where the plot moves rapidly forward.

Jan Smaczny observes that the ability of the composer to characterize, honed as an observer of small-town life when a child living in the Polička clock tower offers a sequence of "sharply painted tableaux" with a "carnival of caricatures", both comic and poignant. For the singers, there is the factor that significant sections of the piece are dialogue rather than singing, although Martinů's experience in a variety of theatre works before this, his ninth

opera, allows him to weave the spoken words as an integral part of the impact of the opera, "distancing the audience from the often dreamlike quality of the musical fabric". A snatch of melody on an off-stage accordion, and a melodic fragment which symbolizes longing are introduced at key moments in the score. Smaczny comments that "suggestion is everything in this score, and Martinů is astonishingly successful at stimulating the imagination often with breathtaking economy".

The opera was one of the composer's favourite works, and he incorporated a few bars from it in his last symphony in 1953.

There are two principal roles: Juliette (soprano) and Michel (tenor). James Helmes Sutcliffe remarked in *Opera News* on "Martinů's beautiful score" and on his "lyrical, atmospheric music". Hindle and Godsil have published a psychoanalytical study of the opera and analysed the work in the context of Martinů's life.

The opera was revived at the Prague National Theatre on 16 March 2018, the 80th anniversary of its premiere. This was accompanied by a month-long exhibition to mark the occasion.

Roles

Julietta	soprano	Maria Tauberová
Michel	tenor	Ivo Židek
Small Arab	mezzo-soprano	Ivana Mixová
Old Arab	bass	Vladimir Jedenáctik
Woman selling birds and poultry	mezzo-soprano	Jaroslava Procházková
Woman selling fish	soprano	Ludmila Hanzalíková
The man with the helmet	baritone	Zdeněk Otava
Police officer	tenor	Antonín Zálesák
Three gentlemen	sopranos	Miloslava Fidlerová, Eva Zikmundová, Eva Hlobilová
Grandfather Youth	bass	Jaroslav Horáček
Grandfather	bass	Karel Kalaš
Grandmother	contralto	Mlada Čadikovičová
Fortune teller	contralto	Věra Soupíková
The seller of memories	bass-baritone	Jindřich Jindrák
The old sailor	bass	Jaroslav Veverka
The young sailor	tenor	Zdeněk Švehla
The old lady	mezzo-soprano	Štěpánka Jelínková
The forest guard	tenor	Antonín Zálesák
The messenger	soprano	Marcela Lemariová
The official	tenor	Antonín Votava
The beggar	bass-baritone	Karel Berman
The convict	bass	Dalibor Jedlička
The railway engineer	tenor	Jaroslav Stříška
The nightwatchman	bass	Bohumír Lalák

Chorus: Townspeople; a group of grey figures.

Chorus and Orchestra of the National Theatre Prague: Conductor Jaroslav Krombholc

Synopsis

Act 1: Michel, a traveling bookseller from Paris, finds himself in a seaside town in search of a girl whose voice has haunted him since first hearing it three years before. From the following scenes with various townspeople, it emerges that none of them can remember more than a few minutes, which is confirmed by a police officer. The policeman asks Michel what his oldest memory is – in fact, a toy duck. As he has such a good memory the townsfolk he is elected to be town captain, and the officer departs to prepare for his inauguration. As Michel (with just piano accompaniment) tells some townspeople of how he came to fall in love with the voice of the unknown girl, the voice of Juliette is heard and after her song she asks him to meet her later in the woods. The policeman returns as a postman with no recollection of his meeting with Michel.

Act 2: At a crossroads in the woods near a fountain, various people enter, all showing a lack of memory, including a fortune teller who forewarns Michel of something. When Juliette arrives she conjures a world of romantic fantasy and asks him to tell her of their (non-existent) past love. A peddler comes by selling wares in which Juliette sees her past with Michel. She runs into the woods and Michel fires a shot at which the townspeople rush in to arrest him. He diverts them by telling them stories and they forget their intention to execute him and wander away. Back in the town square Michel locates Juliette's house, but an old woman says that she lives alone. He hears Juliette's song again, but decides to embark on a ship and leave.

Act 3: At the Central Bureau of Dreams several dreamers (the messenger, the beggar, the convict, the railway engineer) come to ask for their fantasy dream. Michel is warned that if he returns to his dream and does not wake up, he will be imprisoned in the dream-world forever. Ready to leave his dream, he hears Juliette's voice calling him and despite the nightwatchman's warning declares that he will stay with her. The setting and townsfolk from the start of the opera returns, and Michel remains in the dream-world.

Un ballo in maschera (A Masked Ball) is an 1859 opera in three acts by Giuseppe Verdi. The text by Antonio Somma was based on Eugène Scribe's libretto for Daniel Auber's 1833 five act opera, *Gustave III, ou Le bal masqué*.

The plot concerns the assassination in 1792 of King Gustav III of Sweden who was killed as the result of a political conspiracy against him. He was shot while attending a masked ball and died of his wounds thirteen days later.

It was to take over two years between the time of the commission from Naples and planned for a production there and its premiere performance at the Teatro Apollo in Rome on 17 February 1859. In order to become the *Un ballo in maschera* which we know today, Verdi's opera (and his libretto) was forced to undergo a significant series of transformations and title changes. Based on the Scribe libretto and begun as *Gustavo III* set in Stockholm, it became *Una vendetta in domino* set in Stettin, and finally *Un ballo in maschera* set in Boston during the colonial era. These changes were caused by a combination of censorship regulations in both Naples and Rome, as well as by the political situation in France in January 1858. It became one of the most frustrating experiences of Verdi's career.

From the mid-20th century, it has become more common for the setting to revert to its original 18th-century Stockholm location. A re-creation of the original Gustavo III has been staged in Sweden.

Cast (Boston setting)

Riccardo	tenor	José Carreras
Amelia	soprano	Montserrat Caballé
Renato	baritone	Ingvar Wixell
Ulrica	mezzo-soprano	Patricia Payne
Oscar	soprano	Sona Ghazarian
Silvano	baritone	Jonathan Summers
Samuel	bass	Robert Lloyd
Tom	bass	Gwynne Howell
Un Giudice (Judge)	tenor	Robin Leggate

Chorus and Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

Conductor Sir Colin. Davis

Synopsis

Place: Stockholm, Sweden or Boston Massachusetts.

Time: March 1792 in Sweden or the end of the 17th century in Boston.

Act 1: Scene 1: A public audience at Riccardo's palace, attended by his supporters, but also by his enemies who hope for his downfall

Riccardo (Gustavo) reviews the list of guests who will attend an upcoming masked ball. He is elated to see the name of the woman he loves on the list – Amelia, the wife of his friend and advisor, Renato (Count Anckarström). (Aria: *La rivedrà nell'estasi* / "There I will be in ecstasy to see her again"). When Renato arrives, he tries to warn Riccardo about the growing conspiracy against him (aria: *Alla vita che t'arride* / "Your life, so full of joy and hope"), but Riccardo refuses to listen to his words.

Next, Riccardo is presented with a complaint against a fortune-teller named Ulrica (Madame Arvidson), accused of witchcraft. A magistrate calls for her banishment, but Oscar the page defends her (Aria: *Volta la terra* / "Turning her eyes from the earth"). Riccardo resolves to investigate for himself and tells the members of the court to disguise themselves and to meet him at Ulrica's lodging later that day.

Scene 2: At Ulrica's dwelling

Ulrica summons her magical powers: *Re dell'abisso, affrettati* / "King of the abyss, make haste". Disguised as a fisherman, Riccardo arrives before the others. He makes the fortune of a sailor named Silvano come true by spiriting a document of promotion into his pouch, convincing the crowd of the truth of Ulrica's powers. When he realizes that Amelia is coming to see Ulrica, he hides and watches. Alone with Ulrica, Amelia confesses that she is tormented by her love for Riccardo, and asks for a means to bring peace to her heart. Ulrica tells her to gather a certain herb with magical powers; Riccardo resolves to be there when she does so. Amelia leaves.

Now Riccardo presents himself again, along with all of the courtiers, and asks to have his fortune told. (Aria: *Di' tu se fedele* / "Tell me if the sea awaits me faithfully"). Ulrica reveals that he will be killed by the next man who shakes his hand. He laughingly dismisses her prophecy and offers his hand to the courtiers, who refuse to take it. Renato arrives and shakes

Riccardo's hand in greeting. Riccardo's true identity is now revealed and he is acclaimed by the people.

Act 2: On the outskirts of the town, at the gallows-place. Midnight

Amelia, conquering her fears, has come here alone to pick the herb of which Ulrica told her (Aria: *Ma dall'arido stelo divulsa* / "But when I have plucked the herb"). She is surprised by Riccardo, who has come to meet her, and the two finally declare their love for each other.

Unexpectedly, Renato arrives, and Amelia covers her face with her veil before he can recognize her. Renato explains to Riccardo that the conspirators are pursuing him, and his life is in danger. Riccardo leaves, making Renato promise to escort the veiled woman safely back to town, not asking her identity. When the conspirators arrive, they confront Renato; in the struggle, Amelia's veil drops. Renato assumes that Amelia and Riccardo have been involved in an adulterous love affair. He asks the two leaders of the conspiracy, Samuel and Tom, to meet him the next day.

Act 3: Scene 1: Renato's house

Renato has resolved to kill Amelia for the dishonour she has brought on him. She protests her innocence and begs to see her son one last time. (Aria: *Morrò, ma prima in grazia* / "I will die, but first, a kindness"). Renato relents, and declares that it is Riccardo, not Amelia, who deserves to die (Aria: *Eri tu che macchiavi quell'anima* / "You were the one who stained her soul").

Samuel (Count Ribbing) and Tom (Count Horn) arrive, and Renato asks to join their plot, pledging the life of his son as proof of his sincerity. They agree to draw lots to decide who will kill Riccardo. Amelia is forced to draw the winning name – Renato.

Oscar, the page, arrives with invitations to the masked ball; Samuel, Tom and Renato agree that this is where the assassination will take place.

Scene 2: The ball

Riccardo, torn between love and duty, has resolved to renounce his love for Amelia and send her and Renato back to England (Aria: *Ma se m'è forza perderti* / "But if I am forced to lose her").

At the ball, Renato tries to learn from Oscar what costume Riccardo is wearing. Oscar at first refuses to tell (Aria: *Saper vorreste* / "You want to know"), but he finally answers: a black cloak and a red ribbon. Riccardo manages to identify Amelia and tells her of the decision he has made. As they say goodbye, Renato stabs Riccardo. The wounded Riccardo discloses that though he loved Amelia, she never broke her marriage vows. He pardons all the conspirators, bidding farewell to his friends and his country as he dies.

Anna Bolena Donizetti

One of four Tudor opera by Donizetti, librettos based on historical figures from England were popular with Italian composers because they were less likely to arouse the wrath of the censors who were alive to any suggestions of sedition if set in Italy or in other European countries.

Roles

Anna Bolena (Anne Boleyn)	soprano	Beverley Sills,
Enrico VIII (Henry VIII)	bass	Paul Plishka,
Giovanna Seymour (Jane Seymour)	mezzo-soprano	Shirley Verrett,

Lord Rochefort (George Boleyn)	bass	Robert Lloyd,
Lord Percy (Henry Percy)	tenor	Stuart Burrows,
Smeton (Mark Smeaton)	contralto	Patricia Kern,
Hervey	tenor	Robert Tear,

John Alldis Choir; London Symphony Orchestra; Julius Rudel, conductor

Time: 1536 / Place: Windsor and London

Synopsis

Act 1

Scene One: Night. Windsor Castle, Queen's apartments

Courtiers comment that the queen's star is setting, because the king's fickle heart burns with another love.

Jane Seymour enters to attend a call by the Queen, Anna enters and notes that people seem sad. The queen admits being troubled to Jane. At the queen's request, her page Smeaton plays the harp and sings to cheer the people present. The queen asks him to stop. Unheard by anyone else, she says to herself that the ashes of her first love are still burning, and that she is now unhappy in her vain splendour. All leave, except Jane.

Henry VIII enters, he tells Jane that soon she will have no rival, that the altar has been prepared for her, that she will have husband, sceptre, and throne. Each leaves by a different door.

Scene Two: Day. Around Windsor Castle

Lord Rochefort, Anna's brother, is surprised to meet Lord Richard Percy, who has been called back to England from exile by Henry VIII. Percy asks if it is true that the Queen is unhappy and that the King has changed. Rochefort answers that love is never content.

Hunters enter. Percy is agitated at the prospect of possibly seeing Anna, who was his first love. Henry and Anna enter and express surprise at seeing Percy. Henry does not allow Percy to kiss his hand, but says that Anna has given him assurances of Percy's innocence but she still has feelings for Percy. Henry VIII tells Hervey, an officer of the king, to be the spy of every step and every word of Anna and Percy.

Scene Three: Windsor Castle, close to the Queen's apartments

Smeaton takes a locket from his breast containing Anna's portrait. He has stolen it and has come to return it. He hears a sound and hides behind a screen. Anna and Rochefort enter. Rochefort asks Anna to hear Percy. Then he leaves. Smeaton peeps out from behind the screen, but cannot escape. Percy enters. Percy says that he sees that Anna is unhappy. She tells him that the king now loathes her. Percy says that he still loves her. Anna tells him not to speak to her of love. Before leaving, Percy asks whether he can see Anna again. She says no. He draws his sword to stab himself, and Anna screams. In the mistaken belief that Percy is attacking Anna, Smeaton rushes out from behind the screen. Smeaton and Percy are about to fight. Anna faints, and Rochefort rushes in. Just then, Henry VIII enters and sees the unsheathed swords. Summoning attendants, he says that these persons have betrayed their king. Smeaton says that it is not true, and tears open his tunic to offer his breast to the king for slaying if he is lying. The locket with Anna's portrait falls at the king's feet. The king snatches it up. He orders that the offenders be dragged to dungeons. Anna says to herself that her fate is sealed.

Act 2: Scene One: London. Antechamber of the Queen's apartments

The guards note that even Jane Seymour has stayed away from Anna. Anna enters with a retinue of ladies, who tell her to place her trust in heaven. Hervey enters and says that the Council of Peers has summoned the ladies into its presence. The ladies leave with Hervey. Jane enters and says that Anna can avoid being put to death by admitting guilt. Anna says that she will not buy her life with infamy. She expresses the hope that her successor will wear a crown of thorns. Jane admits that she is to be the successor. Anna tells her to leave, but says that Henry VIII alone is the guilty one. Jane leaves, deeply upset.

Scene Two: An antechamber leading into the hall where the Council of Peers is meeting

Hervey tells courtiers that Anna is lost, because Smeaton has talked and has revealed a crime. Henry VIII enters. Hervey says that Smeaton has fallen into the trap. Henry VIII tells Hervey to continue to let Smeaton believe that he has saved Anna's life. Anna and Percy are brought in, separately. Henry VIII says that Anna has made love to the page Smeaton, and that there are witnesses. He says that both Anna and Percy will die. Percy says that it is written in heaven that he and Anna are married. They are led away by guards.

Jane enters. She says that she does not want to be the cause of Anna's death. Henry VIII says that she will not save Anna by leaving. Hervey enters and says that the Council has dissolved the royal marriage and has condemned Anna and her accomplices to death. Courtiers and Jane ask the king to be merciful. He tells them to leave.

Scene Three: The Tower of London

Percy and Rochefort are together in their cell. Hervey enters and says that the king has pardoned them. They ask about Anna. Hearing that she is to be executed, they choose to be executed also. They leave, surrounded by guards.

In Anna's cell, a chorus of ladies comment on her madness and grief. Anna enters, she imagines that it is her wedding day to the king. Then she imagines that she sees Percy, and she asks him to take her back to her childhood home (Donizetti used the theme from the English/American song Home Sweet Home as part of Anna's Mad Scene to underscore her longing). Percy, Rochefort and Smeaton are brought in. Smeaton throws himself at Anna's feet and says that he accused her in the belief that he was saving her life. In her delirium, Anna asks him why he is not playing his lute. The sound of cannon is heard. Anna comes to her senses. She is told that Jane and Henry VIII are being acclaimed by the populace on their wedding day. Anna says that she does not invoke vengeance on the wicked couple. She faints. Guards enter to lead the prisoners to the block. Smeaton, Percy and Rochefort say that one victim has already been sacrificed.