



Boris Papandopulo

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**Amfitrion, komična opera u tri čina (šest slika) (partitura)**  
**Amphitryon, Comic Opera in Three Acts (Six Tableaux) (score)**

1. svezak / Volume 1



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**Amfitrion,  
komična opera u tri čina (šest slika)**

**Amphitryon,  
Comic Opera in Three Acts (Six Tableaux)**

po istoimenoj Molierovoj komediji napisali  
written after the Moliere comedy of the same name by  
Mijo Štimac i/and Enrico Golisciani

Partitura / Score  
1. svezak / Volume 1

Koncertna dvorana Vatroslava Lisinskog, Muzički informativni centar  
Vatroslav Lisinski Concert Hall, Croatian Music Information Centre  
Zagreb, 2023





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**Boris Papandopulo** (Honnef am Rhein [since 1960 Bad Honnef], Germany, February 25, 1906 – Zagreb, October 16, 1991) is one of the most distinctive Croatian musicians of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. “Born, growing up and being brought up in a family that had always been tightly connected with music and the theatre”<sup>1</sup>, he devoted himself to music very early on. He first of all took private lessons in piano, and then studied composition at the Music Academy in Zagreb (where he attended the lectures of Dugan, Lhotka and Dobronić, and studied composition in and graduated from the class of Blagoje Bersa in 1929). In Vienna, at the New Vienna Conservatory, he studied conducting under Dirk Fock (1928-1930). During two periods (1928-1934 and 1938-1946) he was conductor of the Croatian Singing Association called Kolo, Zagreb, and from 1931 to 1934 had the posts of conductor of the Society Orchestra of the Croatian Music Institute and choirmaster of the Ivan Filipović Teachers’ Singing Association (which he himself founded in 1933). From 1935 to 1938 he worked as teacher at the State Music School in Split, and was conductor of the Zvonimir Music Association, as well as, from 1940 to 1945, of the Zagreb Opera (from 1943 to 1945 he was its director). At the same time he was conductor of the orchestra of Radio Zagreb (1942-1945). After World War II he was director of the Rijeka Opera (1946-1948 and 1953-1959), while from 1948 to 1953 he was opera conductor and teacher in Sarajevo. He took up his career in Zagreb again as conductor of the Zagreb Opera (1959-1968) and then the Split Opera (1968-1974). He was a regular guest-conductor of the *Komedija* Theatre in Zagreb, as well as of the Cairo Symphony Orchestra.



Papandopulo also worked as music writer, journalist, reviewer, pianist and piano accompanist; however, he achieved the peaks of his career in music as a composer. His composing oeuvre is imposing<sup>2</sup>: with great success he created instrumental (orchestral, concertante, chamber and solo), vocal and instrumental (for solo voice and choir), music-stage and film music. In all these kinds and genres he left a string of anthology-piece compositions of great artistic value.

Papandopulo’s youthful opuses were marked by features of the “national music style”, as it was called, that is, of patterns from folk music (either direct quotations or in the sense of the raw material and modal scale structures), while cosmopolitan influences are also appreciable: the application of composition technique elements of the neo-Classical style: polyphonic in structure, with Baroque energy and vital rhythmic movement, elementary touches of Impressionist and Expressionist musical idioms. Along with a treatment of the instruments that makes great demands on skill, technique and virtuosity, very visible are the optimism and serenity that permeate the music to the full. Connoisseurs of the composer’s oeuvre of the earlier (youthful) creative period pick out as the most successful works his *Laudamus (Slavoslovije)*, cantata for solo voices, mixed voice choir and orchestra; *Sinfonietta for String Orchestra* (published by Breitkopf und Härtel), *Zlato [Gold]*, a mime ballet with singing and orchestra; the brilliant, bravura *Concerto*

1 Boris Papandopulo, after Truda REICH: *Susreti sa suvremenim kompozitorima Jugoslavije [Encounters with the Contemporary Composers of Yugoslavia]*, Zagreb, 1972, p. 227. His grandmother Marija Terezija Ružička, married name Strozzi, was a celebrated actress and his mother, Maja Strozzi-Pečić, a well regarded opera singer of European rank, while his uncle, Tito Strozzi, was a notable intellectual, actor, writer, director and translator. His father was Konstantin Papandopulo, a Russian aristocrat who died young, after which event Maja returned from Germany with the little Boris back to Zagreb, who thus spent his childhood and youth in the city, where he was also educated.

2 According to the composer’s last hand-written list, kept by Zdenka Papandopulo, his last wife, as well as on the basis of recent research carried out by Croatian Music Information Centre (January, 2011) Papandopulo composed almost 490 opuses, including arrangements and instrumentations of other composer’s works. Musicologist Lovro Županović has claimed that Papandopulo, “after Zajc, but along with... Bruno Bjelinski, is without doubt the most fertile Croatian composer.” (Lovro ŽUPANOVIĆ: Introduction to: *Boris Papandopulo (1906-1991). Spomenica preminulim akademikima – vol. 70*, HAZU, 1994, p. 15.) Papandopulo’s oeuvre has still not been properly studied or evaluated, nor is there any major, comprehensive work devoted to him. The whereabouts of many of his works are not known, since the composer wrote them for and distributed them to the interpreters. A good number of them (about fifty) have been founded and collected in the last few years by the present writer. This has opened up the way and created the preconditions for an integral treatment, an overview and evaluation of the entire oeuvre.





## Synopsis of Amphitryon

Roles:

**Amphitryon**, Theban general (baritone)

**Sosia**, his orderly (tenor)

**Zeus** (baritone)

**Mercury** (tenor)

**Venus** (coloratura soprano)

**Alcmene**, Amphitryon's wife (soprano)

**Charis**, wife of Sosia (mezzo soprano)

**Bacchus** (bass)

**Kikinis**, Theban judge (bass)

Gods, demigods, goddesses and demigoddesses, Nocturnal Hours, soldiers, men and women of Thebes, Bacchante, satyrs, heavenly choir

Time of the action: mythic.<sup>36</sup>

### Act I

#### Tableau 1

Greek general Amphitryon and his orderly Sosia in a Hellenic military camp converse with soldiers. Amphitryon would like to motivate them to fight against the Persians in an imminent war. The soldiers, however, including Sosia, and ultimately Amphitryon himself, are not very keen and instead of going off to the heat of battle would rather go back home to their wives. After a tragic-comic scene in which an odd tear will shine in the eyes of these heroes, the soldiers all split up, and Amphitryon and Sosia sing a duet in which they conclude that they will run back home to their wives Alcmene and Charis, and "let the devil himself wage the war".

#### Tableau 2

From the heights of the "skyeey space wrapped in the dark of night", Night comes down by plane, and after her, the Nocturnal Hours and a group of gods and demigods. After her aria (*Call of Night*), Night orders the Hours to halt the course of time as long as possible for the king of the gods Zeus to be able to "have his fill of love's delight". Then comes the cheerful appearance of the Hours, gods and demigods who delightedly, with a lot of high spirits and jollity, prepare to go off to the Olympus Tavern, where they will continue the party.

#### Tableau 3

In the spacious Olympus Tavern the gods and goddesses chat pleasantly and play cards, and there are several demigods and Bacchus, while the waiters serve the gladdened guests. A drinking song is started ("Let's clink and merrily drink") and the atmosphere becomes relaxed and well nigh hedonistic, in which those present forget their problems ("All cares shatter like a glass on the floor"). At Bacchus' order, the Bacchantes start their libidinous dance in the rhythm of the foxtrot. Accompanied by two cupids, the

<sup>36</sup> The expression mythic time is taken from the libretto.



goddess of love Venus appears and tells all present that Zeus has gone off with Mercury to Thebes on one more amorous adventure, so, disguised as, or transformed into, the Greek general Amphitryon he should bed his lovely wife Alcmena. The gods wittily debate about the need for “settling the issue of Zeus’ eternal philandering” and Venus then sings her aria (*Venus’ Song*) in which in a humorous and quasi-philosophical tone she recalls that people have to make love when they are young for “love can never be got to stay when hairs begin to grey”, all to the rhythm of the tango. The fiesta continues and all are delighted and the Hours, the gods and demigods aver that in this good mood they “will be happy to hold up time”. Bacchus takes the reins of power in his hands and sings a drinking song in which he wittily celebrates love, women and of course wine. Bacchus then falls dead drunk under the table and in the midst of general license and joy the first act ends with an ecstatic bacchanal from the Bacchante and the satyrs.

## Act 2

### Tableau 4

Act 2 takes place in the garden of Amphitryon’s house in a suburb of Thebes in a pleasant autumn morning. In the garden are Zeus (as Amphitryon) with Alcmena and Mercury (as Sosia) with Sosia’s wife Charis. While they take breakfast, Zeus and Alcmena talk enthusiastically of the recently passed night of love that brought them joy and ecstasy. In the same amorous and sensuous mood are Mercury and Charis: neither of the women guess that the two men are not their husbands. In an attack of pettishness, somewhat unexpectedly, grotesquely almost, Zeus forbids Mercury to have “out-wellings of tenderness in the presence of his superiors”), while Mercury defends his behaviour with his marital weakness, for he has not seen the darling of his heart for more than a month. Zeus also orders Mercury to prepare a banquet in his house to celebrate their return from the war. In talk with Amphitryon, Alcmena observes he is acting strangely. Zeus, talking to himself, mentions and goes over the problems he has with his real wife, the goddess Hera, but she ascribes this to his “ardours on the journey that have incensed his nerves”, and sends him to the nuptial chamber to relax some more. Alcmena sings an aria about the amorous longing for her husband, celebrating his return and aggrandizing love as the highest life ideal of each wife and woman. Suddenly, a procession of Thebans poured into the garden, shouting Viva Amphitryon. Also come, with them, the real Amphitryon and Sosia. Amphitryon receives the applause of his countrymen with pride and sings of his martial exploits and glory. (“I’m known all around, famous general, Amphitryon. Always inclined to war. Boom. They call me the devil’s chum.”) After the Theban dance that the commons perform in his honour, Amphitryon thanks them for the magnificent welcome. Suddenly he recalls that in this bustle and shindig he has completely forgotten his beloved wife and sends Sosia to tell her he is waiting in the garden. Alcmena comes into the garden, Amphitryon joyfully running into her arms. Alcmena is taken aback, for she has just seen Amphitryon and sent him to their quarters to rest. She understands nothing, is confused at the behaviour of her husband and is amazed at his buffoonery and silly mood. In what is called a *Comic Duet* the comedy reaches its peak. Alcmena explains to Amphitryon that last night he came home and that from his lips “she had hot love imbibed”. She talks of their unforgettable breakfast with champagne, liqueur and chocolate, but Amphitryon is taken aback and realises that instead of him someone else ended up in bed with his wife. He is much offended and in an attack of rage insults Alcmena (“Quiet, wretched woman, vile and unashamed”), thinking that she deliberately deceived him and claiming that she has “insulted his honour as a man”. Alcmena, on the verge of tears, leaves the stage. Amphitryon is joined by Sosia, who expresses to his superior his confusion in his *Arietta*: his wife Charis has told him “events, entanglements like in a novel”, almost identical to Amphitryon’s, but now in his, Sosia’s house and bed, and wonders if he has gone mad. The two men understand they have been deceived and determine to find and crush the guilty parties who have horned them. In the finale of Act II (at the previous invitation of Zeus himself) in front of Amphitryon’s house the Theban commons come again to celebrate their famous general. Amphitryon accuses Sosia of having called them without his knowledge or approval, snarls at the guests and drives them from the house. A scuffle takes place, and the outraged people reckon that Amphitryon ought to be sent to a madhouse. Soon they all disappear through the garden door.

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## Act III

### Tableau 5

In the garden in front of Amphitryon's house, Alcmene is sitting on a bench and weeping. She is indignant and sorrowful, and once again says that her husband has "hopelessly lost his mind", blaming her for "making love with someone else". In her second *Aria* Alcmene sings of her love, figured in the archetypal rose that is withering for she cannot pick it ("When I may not pick you, you'll wither away"). At length Zeus appears again, still, of course, looking like Amphitryon. Alcmene reminds him that he was harsh on her and the pretty words he addressed her she calls pretence. She wants to have nothing more to do with him and says she will seek a divorce. In the *Duet of Alcmene and Zeus* two worlds clash: Zeus, still enchanted with Alcmene and still under the impression of that wonderful night gives her words full of admiration and love (aware that this moment of exaltation and love has perhaps gone forever and that he will have to return to his divine quotidian), while Alcmene, unjustly accused and insulted woman, sings of her husband's unintelligible behaviour, her disappointment and lack of belief in true love. Zeus tells Alcmene he was just joking "to put her faith to the test", at which she complains that he did not need to do it in that way. At the end of the scene, Alcmene nevertheless submits to Zeus' flattering words of love and once again ends in the arms of the god in her own marriage bed. Amphitryon comes on the stage through the garden door together with Sosia, determined to find the adversaries who have cuckolded them and punish them. Charis sees them, telling them in amazement she has seen them a little before in the house ("Where are you then, here or there, surely you're not the devil"). Amphitryon and Sosia suddenly realise the enemies are in the house; they are determined to enter it through the chimney, catch them in flagrante and smash them. Alcmene comes out in front of the house and Charis tells her that their husbands "are breaking into the house through the chimney to catch heaven knows whom". Alcmene thinks that there must be "some magic" at work, and she and Charis decide to go off to see the judge Kikinis "competent expounder of riddles" who lives outside Thebes, to decode for them the unusual behaviour of their men. The duet of Alcmene and Charis ("To the train! To the train!") musically figures hurrying to catch a train (imitating too the sound of a steam engine and the rumbling of the train). In the meantime Amphitryon comes out of the house, pulling Zeus by the ear; Sosia doing the same to Mercury. Zeus and Mercury keep up their grotesque joke and tell the two mortals that they are Amphitryon and Sosia, which arouses stupefaction and disbelief in the originals. All the absurdity of the identity thefts comes into the open, and the situation becomes more and more comical and weird. With his not very smart questions and his total lack of understanding, Sosia makes a major contribution to the general confusion, and Amphitryon is not a whit the smarter. The culmination of the comedy of errors of the opera is reached in the *Buffo Quartet* of Zeus, Mercury, Amphitryon and Sosia. The whole quartet is made up of absurd and confusing verses such as the initial words "We are as like each other as egg and egg. Who am I and who is he, the devil himself can see" and "If I am you and you are me, then tell me, who are we". With acceleration of rhythm and tempo of the action before the actual climax of the opera there is a scene in which Judge Kikinis (it seems that Alcmene and Charis have brought him to their house in the train) before the Theban people makes his "wise" interpretation of the situation. But at that moment in come the two Amphitryons and the two Sosias. Alcmene is distraught. Theatre of the absurd, fun, buffoonery continue with Kikinis's stupid questions first to Alcmene - does she have a single husband in two copies - and then to Zeus and Amphitryon asking them to tell him which is the original and which the copy. Alcmene falls on her knees and in despair asks almighty Zeus to come to her help and "tear the opaque veil of this mystery". The sound of subterranean thunder is heard, and the stage is left in total darkness. The terrified commons ask Zeus for mercy.

### Tableau 6

The stage lights up and in the background, in fantastic lighting, gleams lavishly decked and brilliant Olympus, on which all fix their gaze. The heavenly chorus celebrates Zeus - "Mighty Zeus - to thee be glory". Zeus and Mercury appear in their full celestial figures. Zeus in the finale, the apotheosis of the opera, first addressing Amphitryon, expounds and explains his action, claiming he wanted to "test Alcmene, her affection and her love". Amphitryon wonders why such a rare honour should have befallen him, and Zeus answers that it is thanks to his wife, for she values love highly. While Zeus blesses all those present (with Mercury drolly imitating his gestures), Sosia won't let himself be put down by the divine appearance and lucidly and completely correctly concludes like a man that his "boss is mightily touched, and duped to the top of his bent", and does not take his "malicious smile" from his lips.

Davor Merkaš

XXXI

## Izvođački sastav / Ensemble

Lica: / Roles:

Zeus (bariton) / Zeus (baritone)

Merkur (tenor) / Mercury (tenor)

Bakho (bas) / Bacchus (bass)

Venera (koloraturni sopran) / Venus (coloratura soprano)

Noć (mezzo-sopran) / Night (mezzo-soprano)

Amfitrion, tebanski vojskovođa (bariton) / Amphitryon, Theban general (baritone)

Alkmene, njegova žena (sopran) / Alcmene, Amphitryon's wife (soprano)

Sosias, ordonanc Amfitrionov (tenor) / Sosia, his orderly (tenor)

Charis, njegova žena (mezzo-sopran) / Charis, wife of Sosia (mezzo soprano)

Kikinis, tebanski sudac (bas) / Kikinis, Theban judge (bass).

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Bogovi i Polubogovi, Božice i Polubožice, Noćne Ure, vojnici, tebanski građani i građanke, Bahantkinje, satiri, nebeski zbor / Gods, demigods, goddesses and demigoddesses, Nocturnal Hours, soldiers, men and women of Thebes, Bacchantes, satyrs, heavenly choir

Vrijeme radnje: mitsko / Time of the action: mythic

Piccolo / Flauto 3

2 Flauti

2 Oboi

2 Clarinetti in Sib / in La

2 Fagotti

4 Corni in Fa

2 Trombe in Sib

3 Tromboni

Tuba

Timpani

Tamburo piccolo, Gran cassa, Tamburo basco, Piatti a 2,  
Piatto sospeso, Triangolo, Tam-tam, Castagnette

Campanelli

Xilofono

Arpa

Pianoforte

Violini I (14-16)

Violini II (12-14)

Viole (10-12)

Violoncelli (8)

Contrabassi (6-8)

# Amfitrion / Amphitryon

Boris Papandopulo

## Uvertira / Overture

Allegro giocoso (♩ = 138)

2 Trombe (in Sib) *1. sola*

Tamburo piccolo *sf*

Gran cassa *sf*

Ptto sosp. *sf*

Violoncelli *pizz.* *sf*

Contrabassi *pizz.* *sf*

13

2 Ob. *mf*

2 Cl. (in Sib) *sf*

2 Fg. *mf*

2 Tr. (in Sib) *mf* *(p)*

Tamb. picc. *mf*

Trgl. *mf*

Arpa *f*

Pf. *f*

1

Vn. I *p*

Vn. II *pizz.* *p* *non div.*

Vl. *sf*

Vc. *arco* *f*

Cb. *arco* *f*

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25 2

Picc. *mf*

2 Fl. *f*

2 Ob. *p*

2 Cl. (in Sib) *p*

2 Fg. *p*

1. *p*

2. *mf espress.*

3. *p*

4. *p*

4 Cor. (in Fa)

2 Tr. (in Sib)

3 Tbn.

Tba.

Timp.

Tamb. picc. *mf* *sf*

Trgl. *mf*

Arpa *non arpegg.*

Pf. *v*

Vn. I 2

Vn. II

Vl. *pizz.* *div.* *piu, f*

Vc. *pizz.*

Cb. *pizz., div.*

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54

Picc.

2 Fl.

2 Ob.

2 Cl. (in Sib)

2 Fg.

4 Cor. (in Fa)

2 Tr. (in Sib)

3 Tbn.

Tba

Timp.

Arpa

Pf.

Vn. I

Vn. II

Vi.

Vc.

Cb.

1. sola  
*piu marcato*

arco

arco

arco

1. *f*

8<sup>va</sup>

8<sup>va</sup>

*f*

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