

György Ligeti

Le Grand Macabre

Opera in four scenes / Opern in vier Bildern  
(1974–77)

Libretto by Michael Meschke and György Ligeti  
freely adapted from Michel de Ghelderode's play  
"La Balade du Grand Macabre"

Libretto von Michael Meschke und György Ligeti  
frei nach Michel de Ghelderodes Schauspiel  
„La Balade du Grand Macabre“

English translation by / Englische Übersetzung von  
Geoffrey Skelton

Revised Version 1996 / Revidierte Version 1996

Study Score / Studienpartitur  
ED 8522

**PREVIEW**  
Low Resolution

The revised version of *Le Grand Macabre* was commissioned by the Salzburger Festspiele

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**First Performance:**

28 July 1997 in Salzburg, Großes Festspielhaus  
Philharmonia Orchestra  
Konzertvereinigung Wiener Staatsopernchor  
Production: Peter Sellars  
Scenes: George Tsybin  
Costumes: Dunya Ramicova  
Conductor: Esa-Pekka Salonen

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### Silent parts

Detectives and hangmen of the Secret Police,  
Prince Go-Go's master of ceremonies (preferably a dwarf),  
Pages and servants of the Prince's court,  
Nekrotzar's infernal entourage at the entry into the Prince's court (including four musicians)

### Choruses

Mixed chorus off stage („Echo of Venus" (Women's chorus), „Chorus of spirits", „Whispering with"  
and the People of Breughelland I)

Mixed chorus in the auditorium (the people of Breughelland II)

Among them four soloists: high soprano, soprano, high tenor, tenor. They should be  
preferably be scattered among the audience (stalls as well as boxes), so that  
they are indistinguishable from the audience.

### Place and time of action

In the Principality of Breughelland, an imaginary country, in the year 1900.

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## Characters

Chief of the Secret Police (Gepopo)

Venus <sup>1</sup>

Amanda

Amando <sup>2</sup>

Prince Go-Go <sup>3</sup>

Mescalina

Piet the Pot

Nekrotzar

Astradamors

Ruffiack <sup>4</sup>

Schoblack <sup>4</sup>

Schabernack <sup>4</sup>

The White Minister <sup>5</sup>

The Black Minister <sup>5</sup>

Coloratura Soprano

High Soprano

Soprano

Mezzo-Soprano

Soprano

Dramatic Mezzo-Soprano

High Buffo-Tenor

Character Baritone

Bass

Baritone

Baritone

Baritone

Tenor

Baritone

<sup>1</sup> The roles of Venus and the Chief of the Secret Police (Gepopo) can be played by the same person. Venus, who appears naked, can be played by a strip-tease dancer. In either case, the character should not be seen by the audience.

<sup>2</sup> Breeches part.

<sup>3</sup> Prince Go-Go is a plump boy with a soprano voice. If a woman is used, possibly a soprano undertakes the role, the voice and appearance of the player should give the impression of a boy.

<sup>4</sup> Can be members of the chorus.

<sup>5</sup> The Ministers can be played by actors (mask half of the face) or by a clown (mask half of the face and forehead). Alternatively, they can be represented by giant puppets. In the latter case, the puppets should be in black. In this case the singers remain out of sight.

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