



01/10-(5)

**G. Fr. Händel (1685-1759)**  
**Giulio Cesare HWV 17**  
Opera in Acts (Version 1724)

Soloists  
Orchestra of Patras  
(on period instruments)  
George Petrou, cond.

3 CDs at the price of 2

**Order No.: MDG 609 1604-2**

**UPC-Code:**



LC06768

### Operatic Universe

Although *Giulio Cesare* is Handel's most famous and most frequently performed opera, it has never really been recorded in its entirety. George Petrou: "It is a universe all of its own in which each musical number and every line of the recitatives is indispensable for the balance of the structure and the perfection of the proportions." All that we can add is that on this CD Petrou draws on outstanding voices, an enthusiastic orchestra, and a fascinating overall idea.

### Noble Entertainment

It took George Frideric Handel only a few months to compose an opera of great art based on the ancient subject of Caesar and Cleopatra, and the finished product celebrated its premiere at the Royal Academy of Music in King's Theatre, Haymarket, in London on 20 February 1724. The work was so popular that Handel again placed it on the performance program in 1725, 1730, and 1732. The work was perhaps especially appropriate as noble entertainment at the King's Theatre because the historical Caesar, who certainly had his flaws, was here portrayed as a model of princely virtues.

### Dramatic Interplay

In his *Julius Caesar* Handel has one highlight after another in store for opera fans. This opera offers a superb characterization of the principal dramatis personae and is distinguished by its enchanting mixture of drama and burlesque, of consummate art and deeply felt emotion, and of extravagance and simplicity. This poses an enormous challenge to the interpreters inasmuch as it requires them to range

over a broad stylistic and expressive spectrum. This applies especially to Cleopatra, the crowning figure of the work. She develops from an erotic seductress into a mature woman on the verge of despondency, with Caesar saving her from suicide at the last minute.

### Elite Corps

George Petrou has amazed the whole music world with his ensemble from Patras, Greece, especially since he has thus far dedicated himself to largely unknown Handel operas. Another plus is his outstanding arsenal of young Greek soloists. When he turns to *Julius Caesar* with this elite corps, the expectations are of course very high – and rightly so. „Something of a landmark has been achieved here“ (Fanfare)  
„Voici un coffret plus que recommandable de cette oeuvre rare au disque.“ (Classica-Répertoire)

### Georg Fr. Handel conducted by George Petrou

Oreste HWV A<sup>11</sup>  
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Arianna in Creta HWV 32  
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Tamerlano HWV 18  
(Version 1724)  
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