January 27, 2022 – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*

On this week’s Thursday Night Opera House we’ll hear Mozart’s magnificent retelling of the Don Juan legend, *Don Giovanni*. First performed in Prague on Oct. 29, 1787, it was set to a libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte. Perhaps Mozart’s masterpiece and one of the greatest of all music dramas, *Don Giovanni* has remained one of the most popular of all operas.

The action takes place in 17th-century Seville. The libertine Don Giovanni (bass Samuel Ramey), aided by his servant Leporello (bass Ferruccio Furlanetto), attempts to seduce Donna Anna (soprano Anna Tomowa-Sintow) but is disturbed by her father, the Commendatore (bass Paata Burcheladze), whom he kills in a duel. Anna and her fiancé Don Ottavio (tenor Gösta Winbergh) swear vengeance. Giovanni’s attempts to seduce the peasant girl Zerlina (soprano Kathleen Battle), engaged to Masetto (bass Alexander Malta), are foiled by Donna Elvira (mezzo-soprano Agnes Baltsa), whom Giovanni has seduced and abandoned. All turn against Giovanni at a party at his villa, but he escapes and finds himself in a churchyard, where the statue of the Commendatore speaks. Lightheartedly, Giovanni invites the statue to supper. The statuesque Commendatore arrives and drags the unrepentant Giovanni down to hell.

**Herbert von Karajan** conducts the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra and the Chorus of the German Opera Berlin in this 1986 Deutsche Grammophon recording.

From a 1990 Met Opera performance, here’s the scene in which the statue of the Commendatore (Kurt Moll) comes to dinner with Don Giovanni (Samuel Ramey), much to the horror of Leporello (Ferruccio Furlanetto): [https://youtu.be/EB_HjICSn5g](https://youtu.be/EB_HjICSn5g).