

Montgomery Philharmonic 2013 - 2014 Concert Season – A Confluence of Culture They Write Descriptive Music – October 27, 2013

Mendelssohn | Verdi | Beethoven

Overture, *Nabucco* (premiered 1842) – Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901)

Verdi wrote the opera *Nabucco* in 1841 based on the Italian libretto by Temistocle Solera. The libretto had been based on the biblical story about the plight of the Jewish people, who were exiled from their homeland by Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar.

It was a very difficult time for Verdi and his family; both of his children had just died in infancy and then his wife, Margherita, suddenly became ill and also passed away. Additionally, his second opera, *Un giorno di regno*, was not well-received and closed after only one performance. Verdi wanted to abandon his musical career and vowed never to compose again. Thankfully, Merelli, the Italian impresario and manager of La Scala Milan opera house, persuaded Verdi to take a look at the libretto. When Verdi told Merelli that he did not like it, Merelli convinced him to start composing. Interestingly, he threw the book on the table and it opened to a page with one special line: '*Va pensiero, sull' ali dorate!*' This famous chorus later became one of the most beloved choruses in all of opera and was sung at his funeral, which was attended by more than a quarter of a million mourners.. Verdi considered this opera the beginning of his artistic career.

The overture is a compilation of the various themes heard in the opera. It opens with a majestic introduction in A major played by the brass section, which then transitions with chromatic figures to a fast section with a new theme. It then moves abruptly into the *Va pensiero* theme, played by the clarinets and oboes an octave apart. The overture ends with the second theme again played by the full orchestra.

About Giuseppe Verdi –

Giuseppe Fortunino Francesco Verdi was an Italian Romantic composer known primarily for his operas. Verdi is considered, along with Richard Wagner, to be the most influential composer of operas of the nineteenth century. His Requiem is regarded as one of the masterpieces of oratorio. Verdi was also politically active and was a major figure in the reunification (*Risorgimento*) of Italy in the 1804s and 1850s.

- **Born:** October 10, 1813, in Le Roncole, Italy
- **Died:** January 27, 1901, in Milan, Italy
- **Compositions:** La traviata, Aida, Rigoletto, Nabucco, Il trovatore, Requiem
- **Children:** Virignia Maria Luiga Verdi, Icilio Romano Verdi
- **Spouse:** Giuseppina Strepponi (m. 1859 - 1897), Margherita Barezzi (m. 1836 - 1840)

Instrumentation – 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets in A, 2 bassoons, 2 horns , 2, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals , violins 1, violins 2, violas, celli, double basses

Artifact – Photos of [Verdi](#) and [Nabucco](#) scene



1. [Nabucco: Overture - Viva Verdi - Overtures & Preludes](#)

2. [Nabucco: Overture - Verdi: Nabucco](#)

3. [Nabucco: Overture - Verdi: Nabucco](#)

4. [Nabucco: Overture - Verdi: Nabucco](#)



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4. [Famous Overtures & Choruses](#)

5. [Verdi: Nabucco - Overture](#)

6. [Verdi: Nabucco](#)

7. [Verdi - Nabucco / Muti, Bruson, Dimitrova, Burchuladze, Becaria, Pierotti, La Scala](#)