Judge Dennis Davis and Professor David Peimer | Amadeus, Part 1

- [Moderator] I'm going to just say welcome back to everybody and just to say thank you very much to David and Dennis. We are looking forward to your presentation. Now, over to you. Thank you very, very much.

- [David] Thank you. Dennis, over to you to open up.

- Oh, you wanted me? All right. Thank you, David, for catching me offside, but that's fine. Well, firstly, thank you again to Wendy and Judi and always a pleasure to do these sessions with David. It's been an extraordinary, enriching experience for me. What we thought we would do was there a sort of series of dramatis personae, if you are going to analyse "Amadeus". And the reason for that is 'cause this is extraordinary form, which was done by Milos Forman based on the play by Peter Shaffer. And, of course, the two preeminent people within that play are, of course, Wolfgang "Amadeus" Mozart and Salieri.

So the way we thought we would do this is we would start by just looking a little bit at these dramatis personae, starting with Milos Forman and spending a little time on him and then on Peter Shaffer. And because we'll do a little bit , just a touch on Mozart and Salieri, who of course we'll be talking about much more during today's presentation and the presentation tomorrow. And we also hope that during these two presentations we intend to play quite a bit of music because the music is absolutely inextricably linked to the magnificence of the film and the play. So David, over to you, and talk about the director of the film, Milos Forman.

- Okay. Thank you very much. And as always, it's such an honour to work with you, Dennis. And thanks so much to Wendy and Judi for all, you know, the help with getting this together and to everybody for watching, especially in this incredibly tumultuous time. We're going to do the first look today and then present another talk tomorrow, early evening. So we have, we've split the "Amadeus" into two sections, looking at some of the themes and characters and ideas that Dennis has outlined for today and some of the others tomorrow. And even more in-depth the music tomorrow 'cause the music is so absolutely fundamental and is like a fourth character completely, if not the ultimate character of the play and the film and some ideas about the context, the times in Prague, the obviously metaphoric connections to today. But what we want to start with is looking at Forman and Shaffer.

And it's important to have a little bit of a knowledge of Milos Forman's life. Because all his films, in a sense, resonate very profoundly, I believe, with his life. And Peter Shaffer, in particular, with, you know, how the play, and coming from a very different English background to Forman's Czech-Jewish background, and how they work together to create this masterpiece. Forman is one of only four directors who have won two Oscars for directing, in the history of the Oscars. And if you think about it, this is a Jewish guy from the old Czechoslovakia in 1968, you know, gets out and gets to America without knowing the language, without knowing anything. Total immigrant or like classic immigrant of the kind that Judi and others have been speaking about,

you know, the waves of immigration, of Jews and Christians, anybody, you know, seeking refuge in America. I'm not going to talk about the obvious connections are to our own times, not only in the States, but in England, Brexit, anywhere.

So the extraordinary life that Forman has lived in order to create "Cuckoo's Nest", "One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest," "Amadeus", he did the film of "Hair", "Ragtime", "The People vs. Larry Flynt" and so on. Okay, so Forman, he grows up during the Nazi era. And his father was a member of the Czech resistance, and as he said, and his father died in Buchenwald, was arrested and taken to Buchenwald and murdered. His mother was arrested and taken to Auschwitz and murdered. Forman recalled the last time he saw his father, and he was seven. And Milos Forman is called out of class because his father was escorted in front of him by the Gestapo. His father gave him a letter and said, "Tell your mother I'll be back." But of course, his eyes said everything. And he's taken off by the Gestapo, in front of the seven year old. Then, a year later, he's in bed, sick with a kind of flu. Forman, the age of eight. And this is the old cliche, but the truth of the knock at the door. The Gestapo come in, Forman himself says, "My mother came and looked at me with terror in her eyes. I knew it was the Gestapo.

And then she was gone. The house was silent, I was alone." And I think that phrase, I was alone, the house was silent, the knock, the sense of the Kafkaesque authority can come at any moment, arrest you, take you, whatever, for just being born of a certain religion, nationality, creed, immigrant, anything. So any kind of, in this case, obviously, you know that his parents are members of the underground, of the resistance. So it's very evocative, in a way, Forman speaks about his own background. He grows up alone. He then discovers much later in life that his father was Jewish and living as an architect in Buenos Aires. And rediscovers, or discovers actually, a whole Jewish heritage, which he hadn't really been aware of as a young kid, but aware entirely of the whole Nazi era. So this is very important because he talks about "Cuckoo's Nest" as Nurse Ratched and he says, "Everything in 'Cuckoo's Nest', everything of Nurse Ratched, for me was the Communist Party telling me what I could and could not do."

And that is the despotic character of Nurse Ratched in Cuckoo's Nest. Now, the reason I'm mentioning this here is when we look at some of these characters and we look at the portrayal of Mozart compared to Salieri, the Emperor and so on. And the three stooges, as I like to call them on the side, you know, he plays with threes, three wise men, three stooges. It's all, he's all aware of it all the time, you know, of the Kapellmeister and, you know, the characters or the so-called experts together with Salieri, of music in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Okay. Then he does this film called "The Firemen's Ball", which, if anybody can watch it, is an extraordinary brilliant film of satire of any totalitarian state, where you do as you're told, question not, where you think as you're told, think not, and you behave and make decisions without being aware of how utterly corrupted you are by simply being acquiescent to the way that power tells you to think and behave. It's a fascinating, unaware corruption.

A belief in something that they're not corrupt, but the audience knows they are totally corrupt, and some of the characters. "The Firemen's Ball's" extraordinary satire about corruption in a

totalitarian state called communism, called Czechoslovakia of that era. Okay. He makes the film financed by Carlo Ponti of, as everybody knows, not only of Sophia Loren, but of fame in many ways. And Ponti refuses to finance the rest of it, calls it a disaster, terrible, horrific, et cetera. Forman gets to France. 1968, the Russian tanks arrived in Prague, and the Prague Spring, as everyone knows, is crushed by the Russians within hours, if not days, et cetera. The dreams, the idealism is over, literally in a day. Fast. And Forman chooses not to go back to Prague because he knows he has no future. His film is banned. "The Firemen's Ball" is banned. He was just a recently graduated student in '68 and there was his first film.

There's no future, there's no hope, on a personal level and on a career level. He makes a huge decision, like many others, courageous, to say goodbye, he leaves family, he leaves children, he leaves whatever there, to become an unknown and go to New York. Language, everything, all the difficulties, classic immigrant stuff. And then, Michael Douglas and Kirk Douglas, the connections, et cetera. I'm sure people know, and the films get made and so on. The first film was a flop and then "Cuckoo's Nest" and later "Amadeus". So that background, for me, because it's about conformity, it's about the individual voice, and the voice of power, the voice of conformity, of fashion, of what is right or what is possible or not. And for me, it's such a theme inside the theme of "Amadeus" as opposed to, and the obvious one, which you all know of mediocrity, jealousy, envy compared to what is genius and how it's portrayed through these characters.

So the reason I've gone into a bit of detail about Forman's life is because he himself acknowledges that all his work, and he is a remarkable director and writer, comes from that background. And I don't think one can ignore that kind of personal biography. In "Amadeus", he meets, he goes watches the play and he then starts to work, and Pete Shaffer, who comes from a very different English background. And as Dennis will talk about, the links with religion and God and so on. Anyway, they decide, okay, they will do a movie. And the most important idea to take out of it, is that Forman says to Shaffer, and they do this, they go off for six months in Connecticut and they literally work morning to night, and as Forman says, "I want to rewrite this completely for film because what he has created for theatre is one thing." And the theatrical wizardry, to use Forman's phrase, is brilliant, for Shaffer. In "Equus", "The Royal Hunt of The Sun", you know, all the remarkable players of Shaffer's and his ability with language, fantastic.

But you cannot have endless long soliloquies in a film, for example, that you can on stage. You cannot, on stage, use music while you're just trying to show visuals on stage. It doesn't work. But in film, you can have the remarkable ultimate character, the god character, really, who is really the music of Mozart, not just Mozart. For me, the ultimate god character is the music. You can do that, all the way through the movie. You can have the visual, closer to a kind of stylized naturalism. On stage, you have to have metaphor. You can't have such literal naturalism, nobody's going to buy it or believe it, or certainly not in our times, post a second World War. So, and you can play with stereotype in the way that the Emperor and the three stooges on the left, the kapellmeisters, you know, and then the incredibly, intricately crafted three-dimensional characters of Salieri and Mozart.

And the obvious meaning of calling him "Amadeus" is to humanise the character much more than I think in the regional play. And Salieri also, and we're going to show a bit of Paul Scofield in the national theatre production, very different, because it's theatre as opposed to F. Murray Abraham in film, you know, where the camera is close up, you can have a phrase, et cetera, et cetera. So the main point I want to get at is how Forman convinced Shaffer, against his will, to change everything for film. It's an entirely different medium and as opposed to theatre and the courage ultimately of both to trust each other and rewrite the thing entirely. And that's when film can absorb from theatre to make it work, in my personal belief. And I think that took the guts of Forman to do it. Okay, those were the main things. And then of course, shooting it in Prague is the last point, which we will talk about. 'Cause obviously Forman knows Prague inside out and gets the reluctant agreement of the Czech government of the time, because still obviously under Russian rule, to go and film it.

And how he works with old people that he knew, et cetera, et cetera. He's coming back as this sort of western hero because he's made it in the West as this great director. But he comes back and insists on filming it. A lot of it is filmed in the theatre, Tyl, T-Y-L, in Prague, which is where Mozart, over 200 years ago, directed the first production of Don Giovanni. And it has all huge resonant meaning for anybody who loves music, who loves art, who loves theatre, who loves the arts, that one of the great pieces of all time, you know, Don Giovanni, and you're filming in the place, you know, it's almost like doing Shakespeare, you know, in Anne Hathaway's house, I guess, for some people. Okay, that's enough of me. Over to you, Dennis.

- Okay. Thanks, David. And I want to sort of link to some extent the work of Shaffer to what you've just said because you can begin to understand, when I just take you through some of the key elements of Shaffer's work, how this dialogue between Shaffer and Forman ultimately came out in the production of the film. So Peter Shaffer dates on 1926 to 2016. He lived a very long time and he came from a Jewish family in Liverpool. I assume he must therefore supported David's football team, I suppose, but that doesn't make him a bad playwright at all. Interestingly enough, just for your interest, he had an identical brother called Anthony Shaffer, and some of you may recall that Anthony Shaffer wrote a play became a film called "Sleuth", which had Michael Caine and Laurence Olivier, and quite extraordinary performances by both of them in that play which was turned into a film.

Now, David's already mentioned, and it's important, I think, to emphasises this, that any output of plays, Shaffer's three great plays, with "The Royal Hunt of the Sun" from 1964, "Equus" from 1973 and "Amadeus" from 1979. And there's an overarching set of themes which prevail in each of these plays. And whilst it's not possible this evening given the time limits to interrogate all of them, let me just say a few words about the first. So "The Royal Hunt of the Sun" was really concentrated on the Spanish conquest of Peru and the play is really about the conqueror Pizzaro and his engagement with God. And the play concentrates to a large degree of Pizzaro's kind of existential conflict between his belief or non-belief in organised religion versus Inca rights. There's much of that which is contained in the play.

So the question of the authority of God versus the more spontaneous rights of the Incas become central to that play. When he wrote "Equus" in 1973, I mean one of the things that's interesting about that, was it came within a decade, less than a decade. Of course, the prevailing theories of R. D. Laing and David Cooper, with regard to questions of psychiatry, which of course is a stream that we could spend hours talking about, but I'm not going to do that. What I want to say about "Equus" was, again, very famous play, which I suspect many of you might have seen. And really what it entails is a journey into the mind of a 17-year-old boy called Alan Strang. And what really the play concentrates is the way Strang was brought up to have an awe and fear of God and how that awe and fear morph into an awe and fear of a hostile spirit called Equus. And the first part of the play is about that, and then the dilemma posed by this play, rarely centrally, is if Alan Strang, who is brought before the psychiatrist, who in the play, is Martin Dysart, and the question that Dysart has to grapple with is what happens to Strang if he is "cured"?

What happens to his passion? What happens to his authenticity? And what is the consequence of normality? Does he then die as an individual person? To what extent does the authority of religion in this particular case, or if you wish, the psychiatric dictates to make him normal, essentially crush the individual at the expense of adherence to authority? And whilst again, I'm hesitant to leave it there, I need to because we've got so much to deal with. So I'm more than happy to bite "Equus" at any time. But now we get to the question of "Amadeus", and of course what is fascinating about "Amadeus" is the way he acts. Shaffer takes the two characters and intertwines them into a theme, which as David has indicated, has a lot to do with authority and much to do with authority through the very prism which Shaffer was engaged in, both in "Royal Hunt" and in "Equus". So just briefly, Salieri whose dates are 1715 to 1825, he was 75-years-old when he died. The play version and the film version make out much older than that, only because of the fact that as I creep up towards that age, it doesn't seem to me that old, but that's perhaps my own problem, nothing to do with the chronology.

And he effectively was a very sophisticated pious man with fine musical credentials. In fact, many regarded him as a vitally important figure in the development of 18th century opera, particularly because he was the Austrian Imperial Kapellmeister from 1788 to 1824. But he was a person who essentially never strayed from the established social and musical mores of the court. In other words, he was somebody who adhered to the authority of the Emperor and to what the Emperor, and as David has called them, the three stooges as reflected in the film saw as the framework within which music must operate. Now, if you contrast that to Mozart, who is of course 1756 to 1791, what is significant for me is if you take the, absent yourself from the poetic licence of the playwright and film director, there was only six years difference between the two of them. Although when you read and listen to the thing, it seems that they were very much, Salieri is a much older man, and Mozart presented very much as the prodigal son.

What is incredible about Mozart in relation to the historical context in which this is located is that of the 626 compositions that Mozart actually composed throughout his life, only 70, only 70

were published during his lifetime. And for Shaffer, what he was grappling with was the genius of Mozart, which could not secure for himself a successful life or career whilst the far less talented Salieri was regarded as hugely successful during his lifetime. And what effectively the play then engages is the unjust design of the universal design of God, which is so unjust to the human condition. Salieri is Shaffer's Mozart in the play, which as David said was altered in the film version, was presented as a foul mouth and childishly irresponsible and impossibly arrogant person. Shaffer said that he based that on some of the letters of Mozart, although music colleges have contested whether that is truly an accurate picture of Mozart. And indeed in the film version, there's a softening of that character. When I saw the play together with Claudette in 1979, and we'll come to Scofield in the moment, Mozart was played very much as if he was a sort of musical version of John McEnroe. It was almost as if the actor had seen McEnroe at Wimbledon and kind of converted him into Mozart.

There is a more nuanced presentation when it comes to the film, but the essence of it was this, that this is bewildering relationship between the human being and God. Salieri hunts for a fair God, just like Pizzaro in "The Royal Hunt", just like Dysart grappling with the problems in "Equus". And the real fundamental point that comes out of the play, and I think of the film, is that without confidence in the ultimate order in subuniverse, the predictability of the universe, there can be no faith in human institutions. Salieri tries to find clear rules by which life is to be organised, and thus in effect, very much about the play and the film is Salieri challenging God, he argues that God really has a faulty divine set of presences. It's interesting, by the way, for those of you who are interested in the Parashah of the Shavua, how Moshe Rabbeinu Moses in this week's Parashah grapples with God as to whether he should be the leader, whether, in fact, God's plan is in fact the correct plan, giving rise to an interesting debate within the Jewish tradition about our ability to argue with the divine.

But back to the film and the play, you can see why Shaffer, whose concern was, as I've outlined it in the three plays, and Forman, given his background and what David has said about him, had come together. Because ultimately, this is about authority. It is about the authority which essentially defines how we need to perform and how we need to comport ourselves. And in each of the plays, Shaffer is dealing with somebody who's grappling against the oppression of normality, the oppression of authority, and the way in which authority crushes the individual spark. And, therefore, he raises in every one of these plays that particular problematic. In this particular play, the question of mediocrity versus talent, the way in which talent is crushed at the whim of authority, which dictates the distributional consequences of talent or the lack thereof, is fundamental to everything. And therefore, it's not surprising to me that given Milos Forman's background, as David has outlined it so eloquently, and what Shaffer was about, come together in this remarkable film. But I'll leave it there because I think we want to develop this further and I know you've got some comments on precisely those questions of authority, David. So over to you.

- Thanks Dennis, and thanks for putting it so beautifully, eloquently. Just to add in some comments about the film before we show you a few clips is I mentioned the three stooges and I

mentioned, because often the myth of the three wise men, the myth of three as, as the Holy Trinity in Christianity, et cetera. There's a kind of a mythological characteristic and what Shaffer and what Forman do here with the so-called the experts of the Austria-Hungarian Empire, which is one of the most powerful of the time, obviously empires in the world, one of the very few. And yet they are shown as such cardboard sycophants, idiots, sycophants, who will do anything of what the Emperor says or hints. Salieri knows that they're sycophantic, but he cannot divorce his own awareness of his mediocrity, let's call it averageness, in the face of the brilliance of what Mozart presents. So it does become, and because Salieri, and we see it, this is, and it is like a painting and Forman directs very much, Forman is very visually aware.

He's training at the Academy of Film in FAMU, in Prague. It's very visual, much more than a verbal kind of a training, which is Central European classic. So it's a lot of paintings, like this is a painting almost, which is the way he directs. And here we see the three, they represent absolute conformity. You know, we've been talking about the Marx Brothers, there's the three, the trio, again, it's resonant because they represent anarchy, but they're so individualised. You know, Chico, Harpo, Groucho, these three are not, these three are just echoes of cardboard cutouts of each other. Salieri is caught between the three and the Emperor and Mozart. He knows the brilliance of Mozart, the Diego Maradona, the Pele of music if you like, together with Beethoven, some others obviously, but he understands it. But he's pulled more towards the three because that's his limitations. And the envy and the jealousy ultimately eats at him.

And how many people do we know in authorities whose ultimate hubris is not necessarily only pride, but what does pride do? It can create, I think, and we go back to the ancient Greeks, it can create such jealousy and envy that the character cannot bear somebody else to be sitting in his or her seat. Obvious resonances to the events of the last week, but not only in America, globally. When mediocrity rules, the jealousy, the envy of somebody who is not possibly mediocre, Churchill's time, Churchill and Halifax and many of the others. The envy and the jealousy is so huge, I really believe they will do anything to crush ambition, crush innovation, crush individual spirit. And so the conflict between genius and averageness, between genius and mediocrity, we all know too well. We've worked for so many bosses, you know, of any kind, who are utterly mediocre, but heaven forbid, you know, we say a word or three, which is going to upset them and make them question our loyalty, not our innovative contribution.

And for an average person's life, in all of our lives, we know it only too well. And it may be staged on the great stage of musical history of Salieri and Mozart, et cetera. But it's, again, the role of authority, the role of power, and how power performs itself in relation to genius or innovative quality or brilliance. Under Hitler, for Einstein, just kill the guy because he is Jewish, so he gashes off. And the same for Freud and for so many of the others. You know, how do they tolerate the Hyde Park corners in social justice, in social situations of whatever religion, creed or nationality? Remembering also that Forman is making this film a while after the '60s. And coming from that background, that extraordinary background, why does he give Mozart the character he is, and this purple coat? I think he's playing an idea of the hippie. And for Forman, coming from, can we imagine from Eastern Europe, and he's thrown into world of the late '60s,

hippie America, anti-war Vietnam. We all know extraordinary tumult and convulsions happening in the states and globally, not only through the Vietnam war, but the post-war, the '60s boom, economically and child, et cetera.

And the dreams and the deferred dreams of the '60s. I think there's a hint of the free spirit of the hippie in Mozart, in Forman's imagination, you know, the way he's dressed, the excessive expression of infantilism, in the character. And yet this remarkable music coming out and what were so many of the '60s musicians from Dylan all the way through Leonard Cohen, many of them accused of an extended stay in infantile eras in their own lives, into their 20s, 30s, 40s. Pop music, the very name, pop, it's not taken, not meant to be taken seriously. So one can imagine Forman trying to imagine himself into this guy, you know, who comes to this, the centre of absolute European power. The Emperor, a cough, a yawn, can dictate. And we see this in the film in one of the great scenes. A yawn, as Salieri says, means you can run for a week. Two yawns, you're toast. You're not going to run for more than one or two performances. So a yawn, two yawns, the satire that Forman is saying, in the power of one person, one man, the Emperor. Yawn means everything irrelevant of brilliance, genius, creativity, innovation.

One yawn and your careers virtually toast, two, you're over. So the extreme authoritarianism that Forman suckly puts into the Emperor, although he is quite benign and a genial character, but the, he doesn't need to have more power because a yawn or two yawns mean every, it's so ridiculous and yet so true. And I believe it's whether it's a boss in a school, in a university, in a business, wherever we all know these figures, okay, we can yawn and stretch at the wrong time in a meeting. All of this happens. So the theme runs all the way through. And I believe that Forman is pushing Mozart into this ridiculous, childish character as a challenge to say, well, we don't know where the great idea will come from. We don't know where the Einstein idea, the Freud, the whoever, the brilliant ideas, the brilliant thoughts, the changes that can destroy or advance humanity and to put it with Shaffer, as Dennis is saying so beautifully, into the eyes of God. Can we imagine the jealousy of Salieri? Because this other young kid has something he doesn't have and he can't bear to be without it.

He can't bear to not be admired, like so many of our very mediocre leaders and creators and so good artists of today, cannot bear to not be admired, liked, wanted, needed. Who's the real infant in the clash between Mozart and Salieri? And I think Forman is pushing that question. The real infantilization rises with Salieri, not with a guy running around in a purple coat who has a ridiculous laugh. This childish, pathetic personality. The real infantilization lies with Salieri and the performance of power, through the others who appear the opposite to what they really are. Nothing is, but what it seems. Over to you, Dennis.

- All right, so just one point I had forgotten before I introduce the Saliere's march for Mozart. Shaffer, of course, wasn't the first person to peddle the idea that Salieri had murdered Mozart. Of course, it's very useful for him to do that because it kind of essentially is able to structure the entire play. 'Cause, of course, it's exactly where it starts, play's like, you know, the case of, who murdered Mozart but both Pushkin and Rimsky-Korsacov had peddled this idea that Salieri had

murdered Mozart. Naturally, that's where, Shaffer got it from. So we want to show you now a clip from the film and I need just to say a little bit about it because for me, it's utterly remarkable. David has spoken about this issue of mediocrity. And mediocrity, which is rewarded by rigid adherence to authority. Whereas real talent, talent which threatens the paradigm in order to explode that paradigm into another one, often is crushed by authority. Even though it's perfectly obvious with the benefit of hindsight of history that something is radically amiss. And what you're about to see is precisely that. This is a little clip from the film where, and it's also in the play, where Salieri composes a march when Mozart arrives at the court.

And of course, let's be clear about this, the film does take place in the last years of Mozart's life. He's not a youngster, well he's still about 30, but, I mean, essentially, he's already got a massive output behind him. So Salieri composes this march in honour of Mozart. And what we are going to see is the way Mozart versus that, in order to give us what ultimately becomes, and you're going to pardon my pronunciation because I'm not going to get this right, but it's non pui andrai from Figaro. Figaro, one of the, probably which was ultimately written in 1786, five years before Mozart's death. Certainly one of the top probably four operas performed in the world. Interesting enough, we'll come to it tomorrow when I talk about Don Giovanni similar, at the same liberetto when we get there. I'm not worried about so much. But think about this as you watch this clip, not going to hear a Salieri play the march himself, but you'll hear Mozart having to do it and then think about this clash between the mediocre and the prodigious talented and the way in which this to some extent clearly does disturb the authority, even of the Emperor. So let's just watch this clip.

Video clip plays

- Oh, this is yours.

- Keep it majesty if you want, it's already here in my head.

- [Emperor] What? On one hearing only?

- I think so sire. Yes.

- Show us.

- The rest is just the same, isn't it? That doesn't really work, does it? Did you try? Shouldn't it be a bit more? Or this. This, yes. Better? What do you think?

- I mean, it says everything. It says everything that David and I have said in one clip. I mean, and I think, I must say Murray Abraham does a brilliant job, just by his facial expressions. It's very great acting of just showing the intensity of both the embarrassment and the hatred for realising 'cause he knows this Salieri, he's a good enough musician to know this, that he's watching genius unfold before his eyes. And the fact that the piece of music, which is an utterly

pedestrian composition is transformed in an instant into something which is central to one of the great operas of the repertoire.

And the way in which you kind of watch the reaction of the authority figures who probably in some deep way know this, but they leave it like that. And then, of course, contrasting that to the actual figure of Mozart so effortly does this and then ends with this ridiculously childish laugh, which is just more than just a bit provocative. It's an absolutely spectacular reflection of precisely that clash that we've been talking about, being presented between mediocrity and genius, in front of the austere authority of Frank Joseph. I don't know if you want to add anything to that, David, before we move on to the next clip.

- Only thing I would add is how Forman, the filming as we saw, the camera is so precise when he goes to the three and it's always the three. And then there's Emperor, who's the benign Oedipal father figure, grandfather figure. And then there's Salieri. As Dennis is saying, the intensity of jealousy, which almost outranks Iago, but there's absolute awareness by Shaffer and Forman, of Iago, one of the great characters of Shakespeare. And what jealousy is doing to anybody in authority. And the king and the Emperor, knowing that he's playing with the jealousy of the little authority, of the authority of Salieri compared to this purple clad, delayed adolescent rebellion type of Mozart, who is a kid. And this or the Oedipal play is just spinning all the time. And the camera captures that. Over to you, Dennis.

- And so we want to now show you something that comes from the play, the initial play. It is different, but it's worth seeing. I, particularly, am keen on this because in 1979, when Claudette and I were studying at Cambridge, we went to the National Theatre to see what I thought were perhaps two of the most remarkable performances that I've ever seen in theatre. One was Warren Mitchell doing "Death of a Salesman", which Peter Hall later said was perhaps the greatest he'd ever seen. And the second was amazingly Paul Scofield as Salieri in "Amadeus". And just a word about Paul Scofield, 'cause he truly was a great actor. He was born in 1922, died in 2008. One of the great more than just this generation, those of you who know about him will probably might well have seen him. And if you haven't, well worth seeing the film for which he won an Oscar called "The Man for All Seasons" in which he played Thomas More.

It's a film that I'd like to show to law students because it basically shows a lot about the clash between justice and law and authority. But here is Scofield and we're going to show you the clip and then we are going to play a little bit of the music to which he's speaking about. And why this is so interesting is, it's again, the reflection Salieri who starts to listen to a piece of music, in this case the Serenade No. 10, which was composed around about 1781, 1782. And he describes just wonderfully through the words just how this piece of music is a share piece of genius. How it wrenches his soul because he knows that this adolescent character in him has been inserted, as David said, the divine, that is God. And God is playing a joke in him. He who had done everything according to authority. He who had basically behaved in terms of the norms of society. He had been very religious and very devout. All of that counts for nothing as he listens to music that he could only, he's good enough to know, but not good enough to compose. So

let's listen to the angst-ridden speech. Of course, Scofield, very great actor indeed.

- That night I heard Mozart's music for the first time, some serenade for wind instruments, only vaguely at first, too horrified to attend. But presently the sound insisted, a solemn, adagio in E flat. It started simply now, just a pulse in the lowest register, bassoon and basset horn, like a rusty squeeze box. It would've been comic except for the slowness, which gave it instead, a sort of serenity. And then suddenly, high above it, sounded a single note on an oboe. It hang there, unwavering, piercing me through 'til breath could hold it no longer. And the clarinet withdrew it out of me and softened it and sweetened it to a phrase of such delight, it had me trembling. The lights flickered in the room, my eyes clouded.

The squeeze box grown louder and over at the higher instruments, wailed and wobbled throwing lines of sound around me, long lines of pain around and through me, oh the pain, pain is, I had never known it. I called up to my sharp old God. "What is this? What?" But the squeeze box went on and on and the pain cut deeper into my shaking head and suddenly I was running downstairs through the side door out into the street, out into the dark night, gasping for life. "What, what is this in your way? What is this pain? What is the need in the sound forever unfulfillable and yet fulfilling him who hears it, utterly? Is it your need? Can it be yours?" Dimly, the music sounded from the salon above. Dimly, the stars shone on the empty street. I was suddenly frightened. It seemed to me that I had heard a voice of God and that it issued from a creature whose voice I had also heard. And it was the voice of an obscene child.

- It's an extraordinary passage.

- [David] Amazing.

- Can I now, just before I hand over to David, 'cause it's so, I always have to take a pause there. Just such an extraordinary piece of acting and the text is, the text summarises everything we're saying in so many different ways. But just listen, because I think it's important that we should listen to a little bit of the music of the Serenade. It's a scored for two oboes, two basset horns, two clarinets, four horns and a double bass. There's seven movements. We are going to hear just a little bit of the third movement, which is the one he was talking about. It really has the most extraordinary syncopated pulse, the way in which the beats change throughout the movement. And it conveys as Scofield, as Salieri and Scofield says, a kind of sensuality, a passion which is indescribably beautiful and so incredibly well described by Shaffer.

Just one point, which I thought was well worth mentioning is that Milos Forman, I think that the wonderful thing of getting the very, very fine conductor Neville Marriner and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields orchestra to do all the music. And I think it's still very possible to get the CD of the soundtrack of all of the music, which is just fabulous. But here, let's just hear the music in the light of Scofield's acting, 'cause I think it reinforces the point.

Serenade No. 10 plays.

Sorry it is a little long, but I hope you appreciated that because it's so much central to the production, to the film, to the play, and to making sense of what this Salieri character was saying. David, over to you for the final marks.

- Okay, thank you Dennis. Just to add a couple of things to the Scofield performance and this piece of music "Serenade for Winds" and how they work so brilliantly together, in that, for me, one of the most amazing pieces of writing for theatre is that speech that Scofield or Murray Abraham give linked to this piece of Mozart. He doesn't show, Scofield doesn't show jealousy on the obvious level of just envy. He shows the human pain inside the jealousy that the pain that he is only mediocre, he cannot beat something more, will not be. And when he goes out and he speaks to God and jumps up on the stage as we saw, the brilliance in acting and as actors will say, is to look for the duality of the pain inside the jealousy. And that is what is human and all too human in that performance of that speech of Salieri's and what humanises the character and that we can all identify with.

And when he played the music, and we just hear that, as he says, that oboe just comes seemingly from nowhere, just from up there. That is the moment of brilliance. That is the moment of enormous surreal leap, of the magnificence for me in the music, of pain inside the magnificent beauty of that moment of music. And it's almost for me, and I'm giving my entirely personal response here without trying to be too romantic about it, is that Mozart, in music, gets the beauty of nature and humanity in being alive, but the utter pain that goes with it. And he, all the time, is not just Mr. Goody Two Shoes like Salieri following a singular mono dimensional approach to life, which is to conform, fit in with whatever authority says. But Mozart is trying to, and in the act and Hulce is trying to get it, Forman's trying to get it, is just trying to show some of the fresh, the openness, if you like, the invisibility of the wind, the invisible air that is possible to breathe even in most oppressive times of conformity that he shows in the Viennese Court.

You know, that barren, it's a barren desert, even though it's cluttered with the colour of costume and the colour of the set design, it's cluttered, but it is so barren and empty, devoid of humanity. And in comes this purple coated kid with this ability to just find that oboe that lingering up there from nowhere. You know, and it doesn't matter if it comes from that, from a person who's short, tall, fat, thin, wears orange, yellow shoes or is overweight or too thin. Doesn't matter. If there's something to offer inside a human being, and I think that's ultimately what Forman and Shaffer are trying to say, let it out, give it a chance. But if power and authority are obsessed with mediocrity and loyalties and will be tied anyone who are not conformed to their sense of loyalty, and their mediocrity and mediocre driven authority will be tied, they will be crushed. They will be destroyed. And I think capturing in the music, that pain and that beauty of both, it's a never ending dialectic, if you like in life, I think, for all of us.

And I think Shaffer and Forman are trying to just suggest that. And it doesn't matter what period of life we live or which country or nationality, I think it's a challenge for everyone to at least, you know, in Leonard Cohen's craze, you know, there's a crack where the light gets in, you know, let

the crack happen for God's sake. And not only in this tumultuous times that we are living in, wherever in the world at the moment, not just America, anywhere, for God's sake, you know, let the light come in a little bit through the crack. Doesn't matter whether it's through the mouth of an arrogant little kid brat or whether it's through a great grandparent, whatever. And that's it for now.

- It's so true about every aspect of life, isn't it? The anti-science lobby that refuses to recognise the brilliant scientists, the appointment of mediocre judges rather than great lawyers. The fact that in organisations, mediocre people get appointed above those of real talent and individuality. And as you watch this, it seems to me that it talks to our human condition, our ability to actually be generous to human beings more talented than us. Our ability to actually know that conformity to some rigid form of authority is not where creativity nor development lie. It's a play and a film that seems to me to speak to our condition in all sorts of manner of ways, which will obviously speak up a little bit about tomorrow night. Thank you very much to everybody for listening. I hope you appreciated the music, which is the most important thing of all.

- Absolutely. Thank you very much to everybody and thank you Dennis and Judi and Wendy.

- [Judi] Dennis and David, do you have time to quickly look at any of questions online or is there time for that?

- Suddenly, I've lost them, Judi. I had them.

- Okay.

- I know there were quite a few, David. I think there was some about the confusion about which-

- Yeah.

- The life of Forman, the stepfather and the father.

- Yeah.

Q&A and Comments:

Q: Yeah, thank you to Myra. "Was Forman's father murdered in Buchenwald or was he an architect in Buenos Aires?"

A: It's a very good question. And the man he thought was his father and was told, was not. His biological father was the Jewish architect who fled to Buenos Aires. And he only discovered it quite a while after the war in the '60s, in the early '60s. And his, I suppose, his adopted father, although he didn't know he was adopted until later, was the one who was part of the Czech resistance and was murdered in Buchenwald. And his mother was part of the Czech resistance

and murdered in Auschwitz. Okay. I hope that answers for Glen.

Q: For Betty, "If you remain as an orphan at eight, how do you survive?"

A: Through family, extended family and so on, passed from person to person, really, but like Polanski, in a different way in Poland. Thank you.

Q: Jackie. "What's the connection between Kirk and Michael Douglas and Forman?" Great question.

A: Kirk Douglas and Michael Douglas had heard about this up and coming, very young film director from Prague who was a student and they'd heard about "The Firemen's Ball", the film I spoke about, which was initially lauded in Europe and they'd heard about it in New York and America before the Czechoslovakian government at the time banned it completely. And they'd heard that there was this really good, creative, innovative, interesting director. And when he got across to New York, he was living in the Chelsea Hotel, Forman, and this is in the late '60s, and they offered him to direct "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" and everybody, 'cause they had the rights to it, and everybody said Ken Kesey's novel, nobody could, it could never be made into a film, let alone a play, anything. And Forman said precisely for that reason, he took up the challenge. There's a great wonderful tradition of that generation of Prague-trained directors of adaptation, how to adapt the classics into the language of film. And that's how he met Kirk and Michael Douglas. Okay, then Spielberg, yeah, he won for "Schindler's List" and "Saving Private Ryan", as far as I know, Forman was one of four to win the Oscar twice. Then Denise. "The significance of three for Forman."

I think that the three is linked to the stress on, it goes back to Christianity, is the mythology of the trio. You know, whether it's of Christian mythology or whether it's, you know, the three wise men, you know, et cetera, et cetera. And you know, for me it's also, as my own personal interpretation, you know, Abraham, the son, the father, the three is such a powerful mythological number, for me, in human society. There's three pillars of democracy. You know, the judiciary, as Dennis is talking about, the executive and the administrative branch, you know, there are so many aspects of where there's threefold.

Q: "Would Forman learn the craft of directing in the Academy of Film in Prague?"

A: Which is an amazing academy which produced remarkable filmmakers, Milan Kundera, the great Czech novelist, was a lecturer there, and Vaclav Havel, they were all part of this. Havel didn't study there, he wasn't allowed to by the Russian Czech Communist authorities. But they congregated around film. And I think one of the reasons why Czech film is so amazing and Czech theatre is the emphasis on the visual. And we see it in in the form of "Amadeus" because obviously the language is very limited. It's only spoken by Czech, Slovaks and, you know, maybe Polish can understand it as well. But it's a Central European theme is where the visual is paramount to the verbal. In the English speaking world, it's often the verbal which takes

precedence and the literary aspect, and hence the influence of Shakespeare and many others. Whereas in central Europe, where the language is spoken by small countries, small populations rather, the emphasis has become or became more on the visual. And that's what they taught when Forman was studying. Film directors, theatre directors came out of that tradition.

"First scene looks like one of the paintings." Thanks, Sandy. Absolutely, I've spoken about that. Sorrel, thank you. You saw the marionette show of Don Giovanni, staged in Prague. Yeah, thanks for that. That's great because the great tradition of marionettes and puppetry in the Czech Republic and William Kentridge. You know, William is very influenced by Czech history and tradition of using puppets and marionettes. It's a fantastic Central European tradition of puppetry going back centuries and part of the Mozart rebellion against an authoritarian regime. Absolutely. And I believe it's Forman and, as Dennis was saying, Shaffer as a Jewish guy from Liverpool, you can imagine, you know, how these guys together feel about authority of different kinds. And we've often spoken about the insider and the outsider, you know, inside and outside in terms of authority. And if I may just add, I don't think it's by chance that the foreigner migrant character is so often the outsider who then becomes the brilliant creator or innovative genius, et cetera. And when one shuts the doors on the outsider who's literally coming from outside as a nomad migrating or is already nomadic inside the culture, those are the people of an authority and mediocrity need to first imprison or police.

- Well, it's not particularly surprising that two Jewish collaborators would actually think that way, given our own history. Yeah.

- [David] Yep. Dennis, for you, some of the other questions.

- I haven't, I can't see them David somehow,

- [David] Okay.

- But I did answer most of them. The one question that was put to me that I saw on the trap line, which I just, sorry, I can't name person who did it, but I'll just answer that before we leave, which is this question.

Q: “Is one attracted to this dilemma between authority as it were and talent because of one's South African background?"

A: Well, I do think that obviously living in an authoritarian country, as apartheid was, that is a particularly problematic scenario. So clearly, one would be particularly influenced by that. But I think, and we'll be talking about this next week in different contexts, I think that when I saw the play, certainly that would've been true in brushing up for it over the last couple of days. It struck me how much this is attracts. It's attractive to me because it poses so many of the dilemmas of the contemporary era of where we are now and of the way in which forms of authority seek to crush all range of talent of any particular kind. And so I don't think you only have to be South

African or come from a country similar to South Africa to just realise that this is a remarkable production, the film version and indeed the play precisely because it poses these dilemmas in so many ways. Now, of course, the issue about God is, I mean, Shaffer is particularly interested in this and Scofield makes that particularly clear, why would God have done this to us? Well, that itself is an interesting point of history, particularly when we start studying the Holocaust. It's a part of so much of Fackenheim and so much of the theological literature there. So there are a range of reasons why would we find this play, one that has traction today. But I can't anyway, I think that basically covers where I am.

- Great.

- [Judi] Thank you so much, Dennis and David, and we will see you for part two tomorrow evening.

- Yes, we will.

- [Judi] So thank you once again and thank you to everybody who listened in today and see you all tomorrow.

- Take care, everybody.

- [David] Take care. Thanks so much, everyone.