

## Francesco Cavalli - Heroines Of The Venetian Baroque (2015)

Written by bluesever  
Sunday, 24 July 2016 13:22 -

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CD1 Le nozze di Teti e di Peleo 1 Atto II, Scena 11: *Mira questi duo lumi* 05:44 2 Atto II, Scena 6: *Sinfonia di viole a 5* 01:40 3 Atto I, Scena 3: *Hor con pania e con esca* 01:26  
Gli amori di Apollo e di Dafne  
4 Atto I, Scena 8: *Volgli, deh volgi il piede* 07:57  
Didone  
5 Atto II, Scena 2: *Didone, ohimè, non mi riceve amante* 01:29 6 Atto II, Scena 2: *Re de' Getuli altero* 02:45  
La virtù dei strali d'Amore  
7 Atto I, Scena 3: *Occhi per pianger nati* 03:53  
Egisto  
8 Atto III, Scena 10: *Amanti, se credete* 01:31  
L'Ormino  
9 Atto I, Scena 3: *Aprite, aprite gl'occhi* 00:45  
La Doriclea  
10 Atto I, Scena 6: *Udite amanti* 00:54  
Giasone  
11 Atto I, Scena 15: *Dell'antro magico* 05:14 12 Atto II, Scena 1: *Lamento «Lassa, che far degg'io* 06:46  
Orimonte  
13 Atto III, Scena 12: *Caro Ernesto / Mia Cleanta (Instrumental version)* 01:42  
Oristeo  
14 Atto I, Scena 4: *Dimmi amor, che farò?* 03:32  
La Rosinda  
15 Atto I, Scena 7: *Non col ramo di Cuma* 02:26  
La Calisto  
16 Atto III, Scena 1: *Restino imbalsamate* 02:18 17 Atto III, Scena 1: *T'aspetto, e tu non vieni* 02:46  
L'Eritrea  
18 *Prólogo: Ne le grotte arimaspe* 02:24  
La Veremonda,  
19 Atto III, Scena 6: *Tardano molto? - Qui si fa il ballo de' tori* 02:27 20 Atto III, Scena 6: *Che rumori, che voci - Qui se replica il ballo de' tori* 02:50  
CD2 L'Orione  
1 *Prologo: Sinfonia a 3* 01:36

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Il Ciro

*2 Atto III, Scena ultima: Mia vita / Moi bene 01:51*

Xerse

*3 Atto II, Scena 18: Ed è pur vero, o core 01:45 4 Atto II, Scena 18: Luci mie che miraste 04:01*

Erismena

*5 Atto I, Scena 4: Speranze voi che siete 02:41 6 Atto I, Scena 5: O stelle, a che mi sforzate 01:43 7 Atto I, Scena 5: A me il veleno 00:52*

La Statira

*8 Atto II, Scena 9: Menfi, mi patria, regno 03:28*

Artemisia

*9 Atto II, Scena 6: Regina, udiste mai 03:48*

Hipermestra

*10 Atto III, Scena 14: Quest'è un gran caso al certo 03:04*

Elena

*11 Atto II, Scena 14: Amazone non son 02:52*

Xerse

*12 Atto II, Scena 1: Speranze, fermate 04:08*

Ercole amante

*13 Atto IV, Scena 7: Una stila di speme 01:57 14 Atto I, Scena 3: E vuol dunque Ciprigna 03:14 15 Atto I, Scena 3: Ma in amor ciò ch'altri fura 03:02*

Scipione africano

*16 Atto III, Scena 3: A tuo dispetto amor 01:41*

Mutio Scevola

*17 Atto I, Scena 7: Né fastosa allor che ride / Né dolente allor che freme 01:38*

Pompeo Magno

*18 Atto I, Scena 17: Come al mar corrono i fiumi 02:07*

Eliogabalo

*19 Atto III, Scena 2: Giuliano al tuo ferro 01:38 20 Atto III, Scena 15: Pur ti stringo, pur t'annodo 02:16*

Mariana Flores - soprano Anna Reinhold – mezzo-soprano Cappella Mediterranea Leonardo García Alarcón - conductor

The opening of Venices first opera house, the Teatro di San Cassiano, in 1637, was one of the major events in the history of opera. The protagonists of these new operas henceforth represented all the social categories making up this public and who, in fact, had to be able to find themselves onstage. The gods were no longer the only ones to lay down the law, challenged by the Vices and Virtues who preached in the Prologues. The new heroes are kings, emperors, dictators, courtesans, as well as nurses, valets, soldiers, philosopher, and, above all, lovers. Whoever they might be, we find them sympathetic or antipathetic; all are glorified, all are ridiculed. With his 27 existing operas, Francesco Cavalli gives us a fascinating version of this theatre of life. A single main thread runs through the excerpts drawn from each of them by Leonardo García Alarcón: the expression of human passions. They are all there, from

ingenuousness to ecstasy, joy to anger, passionate love (and its erotic, sensual expression) to despair. This fascinating programme represents a new contribution to the knowledge of Cavallis operas and allows for unveiling part of the mystery still surrounding his works. ---mdt.co.uk

Cavalli composed more than 30 operas for five different Venetian theatres, and most of the scores survive. Recordings of complete stage works are not exactly rare but constitute a drop in a very large ocean. Leonardo García Alarcón's double album 'Heroines of the Venetian Baroque' is a clever chronological narrative that draws diverse extracts (often very short) from 27 different operas dating between 1639 and 1667, most of them sung by Mariana Flores. Proci's impassioned 'Volgi, deh volgi il piede' from Gli amori di Apollo e Dafne has melodic leaps, moments of tormented dissonance and reiterated refrains that are reminiscent of Monteverdi's famous lament from Arianna (revived during the same 1640 Carnival season). Interspersed among doleful scenes are lowbrow comic complaints about Cupid from Egisto (1643), L'Ormindo (1644) and La Doriclea (1645). Flores's softer languid singing aptly conveys a nymph's erotic longing for the return of her lover Jupiter (La Calisto, 1651). Isifile's lament 'Lassa, che far degg'io?' in Giasone (1649) is sequenced next to a vividly dramatic account of her rival Medea's incantation scene – the latter sung ardently by mezzo-soprano Anna Reinhold.

The two singers join together in a few dissimilar scenes such as the flamenco-infused depiction of a Spanish battle in La Veremonda (1653). Flores's depiction of the enraged Juno in Ercole amante (Paris, 1662) is a potent tour de force, whereas the simile imagery of waves is realised beautifully in the gently rolling and overlapping string ritornellos that accompany Giulia's 'Come al mar corrono i fiumi' from Pompeo Magno (1666). The recital's multi-layered trajectory concludes with a quartet sung by two pairs of reunited lovers at the end of Eliogabalo (1667).

Christina Pluhar and L'Arpeggiata take their recital's title 'L'amore innamorato' from an early lost opera (1642). Up to 10 vivacious continuo pluckers generate lilting energy that transports listeners on an imaginative whistle-stop tour of Cavalli's operas. Hana Blažíková's nimble diminutions beguile in Harmony's prologue to L'Ormindo (addressed to the good citizens of La Serenissima), and her plaintive chromatic lines in 'Affliggetemi, guai dolenti' from Artemisia (1657) combine superb technique and harmonic intelligence. Calisto's enraptured 'Restino imbalsamate' (the only selection duplicated in both recitals) is charged with erotic languor by Nuria Rial, who elsewhere delivers gleeful humour in Nerillo's thinly disguised paean to the craziness of Venice (L'Ormindo) and evokes tragic despair in Cassandra's lament from La Didone (1641).

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Almost every number is credited transparently as having been 'arranged' by Pluhar, which probably tells the wary purist something about improvisational flights of fancy (Alarcón is not immune to some interventionist touching-up either). Not everyone will relish the fusion cuisine served up by Pluhar's realisations – 'Ninfa bella' from La Calisto turns into an instrumental jam session not far removed from the Latin-jazz-rock of the early 1970s band Santana – but the singing is frequently sensational and L'Arpeggiata's colourful playing conjures alluring fantasy. ---David Vickers, gramophone.co.uk

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