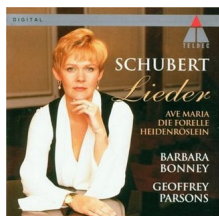


Barbara Bonney – Schubert Lieder (1995)

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 21 October 2009 13:10 - Last Updated Sunday, 18 August 2013 09:34

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01. *Ellens Gesang III D 839, Op. 52,6: 'Ave Maria, jungfrau mild'* 02. *Ganymed D 544, Op. 19,3: 'wie im morgenglanze'* 03. *Mignon-Lieder From Goethe's 'Wilhelm Meister': 'kennst du das land' D 321* 04. *Mignon-Lieder From Goethe's 'Wilhelm Meister': 'heiss mich nicht reden' D 877-2, Op. 62,2* 05. *Mignon-Lieder From Goethe's 'Wilhelm Meister': 'so lasst mich scheinen' D 877-3, Op. 62,3* 06. *Mignon-Lieder From Goethe's 'Wilhelm Meister': 'nur wer die sehnsucht kennt' D 877-4, Op. 63,4* 07. *Liebhaber In Allen Gestalten D 558: 'ich wolt, ich war ein fisch'* 08. *Heidenroslein D 257, Op. 3,3: 'sah ein knab ein roslein stehn'* 09. *nahe des geliebten D 162, Op. 5,2: 'ich denke dein'* 10. *Die Forelle D 550, Op. 32: 'in einem bachlein helle'* 11. *auf dem wasser zu singen D 774, Op. 72: 'mitten im schimmer der spiegelnden wellen'* 12. *im abendrot D 799: 'o wie schon ist deine welt'* 13. *standchen D 889: 'horch, horch die lorch im atherblau'* 14. *'du bist die ruh' D 776, Op. 59,3* 15. *gretchen am spinnrade D 118, Op. 2: 'meine ruh ist hin'* 16. *gretchens bitte D 564: 'ach neige, du schmerzensreiche'* 17. *der hirt auf dem fels D 965, Op. post. 129: 'wenn auf dem hochsten fels ich steh'* Barbara Bonney – soprano Geoffrey Parsons – piano Sharon Kam - clarinet

I don't think any review of mine will adequately describe how wonderful this CD is - you'll just have to believe me. Barbara's voice was made for lieder, and Schubert's are treated here with grace, sweetness, and immaculate artistry.

The selection of lieder for this disc is nice and broad, from the ubiquitous "Ellen's Gesang: Ave Maria" to the playful "Die Forelle" to the two dramatic songs set for Gretchen from Faust - "Gretchen am Spinnrade" and "Gretchen's Bitte". Every song is listenable and melodic (a characteristic feature of Schubert songs). The accompanist, Geoffrey Parsons, is also very good, with nice tempi and always supporting Barbara's vocal line, never overpowering it.

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Even though these songs are wonderful enough just to listen to, to get the full effect you must read the lyrics from the liner notes. Unless you happen to understand German, reading the words and the translations will only enhance your appreciation of these songs, which are really the musical settings of poems by German poets like Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Friedrich Rückert. You may realize that the high A she sings is the climax of "Gretchen am Spinnrade" (and believe me, it'll send shivers down your spine), but it becomes that much more dramatic when you know that the line is "An seinen küssen vergehen sollt!" - "And to perish in his kisses!"

Also, I've noticed that her voice breaks on the "O" in the line "O wärst du da!" ("Oh, that you were here!") in the song "Nähe des Geliebten". I'm pretty sure it was unintentional, but I find it very attractive, and I think it enhances the feeling of longing which the song describes. I think it must have been deliberately included, and I'm glad they did.

I think everyone will be able to take away something from this album. Parents out there with small children might even consider playing some of the softer songs like "Im Abendrot", "Du Bist die Ruh", or "Ave Maria" at bedtime to calm your children - they would make great lullabies! --- Christopher A. Lanter "music lover" (Mesa, AZ United States)

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