Rachmaninov, Glinka – Songs (2006)

Sergey Vasil'yevich Rachmaninov (1873 - 1943) *1.The Night Is Mournful (Noch pechal'na), Op.26, No.12 3:06 2.Oh, Do Not Sing To Me (Ne poy, krasavitsa, pri mne) Op.4, No.4 5:19 3.Music (Muzika), Op.34, No.8 3:28 4.Spring Waters (Vesenniye vodi), Op.14, No.11 1:59 5.Vocalise, Op.34, No.14 7:42* Michail Iwanowitsch Glinka (1804 - 1857)
6.Somneniye (Doubt) 4:44 7.I remember the wonderful moment [Ya pommyu chudnoye mgnovene] (A. Pushkin)3:26 8.Kak sladko s toboju mne byt' (How sweet to be with you) 3:21 9."K nej" 1:30 10.First Occur "Only I avowed you" (1835) 1:47 11.Venetian Night (1832) 2:11
Cycle "Farewell" (1840)
12.No.10 The Lark 3:28 13.No.8 Barcarole 2:42
Galina Vishnevskaya – soprano Mstislav Rostropovich - piano

Don't start with the first track. You'll never make it through Night is mournful. And don't start with the second track, either. "Do not sing, my beauty" will kill you, kill you dead. Start with the fifth track. It's not that Vocalise is any less emotionally annihilating; it's that it at least has the virtue of not having words, so its meaning is less specific and more general. Or maybe that only makes it harder to take in the long run.

One thing is certain. Wherever you start it, this recital of songs by Rachmaninov and Glinka sung by soprano Galina Vishnevskaya accompanied by her husband Mstislav Rostropovich will prove to be one of the most profoundly moving vocal recordings you'll ever hear. Vishnevskaya was the epitome of the Russian soprano -- silken of technique, creamy of tone, and overwhelmingly passionate of interpretation -- and her choice of repertoire here is excellent. Glinka's songs were the first great Russian art songs and they're still deeply affecting in Vishnevskaya's fresh and natural performances. Rachmaninov's songs were among the last flowerings of the Russian art song and they're magnificently melancholy in Vishnevskaya's voluptuous and sensuous performances. Rostropovich, a great cellist, a decent conductor, and a capable pianist, supports his wife with affection and appreciation. This disc should be heard

by everyone who loves great singing. Deutsche Grammophon's late stereo sound is deep, warm, and just about real. --- James Leonard, Rovi

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