

Leontyne Price - Leontyne Price Sings Richard Strauss (1974)

Written by bluesever

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Four Last Songs A1 *Frühling* 3:18 A2 *September* 4:15 A3 *Beim Schlafengehen* 4:38 A4
Im Abendrot 6:52 B1 *Die Frau Ohne Schatten – Act II: Empress' Awakening Scene* 14:11
B2 *Der Rosenkavalier – Act I: Marschallin's Monologue* 6:00 B3 *Guntram – Act II: Freihild's*
Aria 5:22 Leontyne Price - soprano New Philharmonia Orchestra Erich
Leinsdorf - conductor Men Of The Ambrosian Opera Chorus (B1) Patricia Clark - soprano (B1)

Generous, rich and full-hearted Strauss singing here from one of the great sopranos of our time, albeit not without some squally passages and others where contact with the conductor seems to be hit-and-miss. Nor was Leontyne Price content to record only the juicy 'hits'. True, Ariadne's "Es gibt ein Reich" is here and one of the Marschallin's reveries, also the Closing Scene from *Salome*, but not many sopranos between 1965 and 1973, when these extracts were made, were recording the Empress's awakening from *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and arias from *Guntram* and *Die aegyptische Helena*.

Price is at her most commanding as the Empress, in a long excerpt in which Leinsdorf's conducting of the New Philharmonia is distinctly impressive; and Helena's "Zweite Brautnacht!" is a superb display of sustained impassioned singing, with a soaring line that the composer would surely have loved. I liked her charm and elegance as the Marschallin, moving effortlessly into a more tragic mood at the end of the aria. The transfers to CD are successful and the disc incidentally provides a remarkable demonstration of how Strauss created a different sound-world for each of his operas.' ---gramophone.co.uk

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