

Mozart - Requiem D-moll, KV 626 (Karajan) [1986]

Written by bluesever

Friday, 27 March 2015 16:56 -

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1. I. INTROITUS Requiem 2. II. KYRIE III. SEQUENZ 3. No. 1 Dies Irae 4. No. 2 Tuba Mirum 5. No. 3 Rex Tremendae 6. No. 4 Recordare 7. No. 5 Confutatis 8. No. 6 Lacrimosa IV. OFFERTORIUM 9. No. 1 Domine Jesu 10. No. 2 Hostias 11. V. SANCTUS 12. VI. BENEDICTUS 13. VII. AGNUS DEI 14. VIII. COMMUNIO Lux Aeterna
Anna-Tomowa-Sintow - sopran Helga Müller Molinari - alt Vinson Cole - tenor Paata Burchuladze - bass Wiener Singerverein Wiener Philharmoniker Herbert Von Karajan – conductor

Whether one is an admirer or a critic of Herbert von Karajan, it is possible for most listeners to find this recording of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Requiem in D minor excessively drawn out, turgid, and unnecessarily heavy. Having previously recorded the Requiem in analog with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Karajan turned to the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra for this 1986 digital recording, and with the Wiener Singverein, delivered an interpretation that almost rivals performances of Verdi's Requiem for operatic flair, having so many drawn out passages that the music seems especially melodramatic. The quartet of singers -- soprano Anna Tomowa-Sintow, contralto Helga Müller Molinari, tenor Vinson Cole, and bass Paata Burchuladze -- is particularly theatrical in its delivery, as if their solos and quartets were borrowed directly from one of Mozart's operas. Undoubtedly, Karajan really wanted to make a big impression with this performance, for in addition to the scene-like presentation of the Tuba Mirum, Recordare, and Benedictus, the choruses are rather like severe choral commentary from opera seria, and the whole work has a Romantic sweep that seems uncalled for in a Classical sacred work. Because Karajan used the commonly heard Süßmayr completion, without any textual modifications from period scholarship, his exaggerated reading makes the flaws in the edition stand out, perhaps most egregiously in the Domine Jesu Christe, where the sentimentalized chorus is almost stifling, and in the Sanctus, which is bombastically hammered out. Deutsche Grammophon's sound is big and spacious, but this aural splendor tends to blur the counterpoint and makes the textures of the VPO inordinately muddy. ---Blair Sanderson, Rovi

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