

## Emmanuel Chabrier □ – L'Etoile (1984/2006)

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1-1 Ouverture 1-2 Méfions - Nous 1-3 Ouf Ouf C'est Moi , Le Roi 1-4 Du Monde  
1-5 Que Diable 1-6 Nous Voyageons Incognito 1-7 Assistôt Que L'aurore 1-8 Ah La La  
Quel Voyage 1-9 Nous Voyagons Incognito 1-10 O Petit Étol 1-11 Ah Mon Dieu 1-12  
Il Faut Le Chatouiller 1-13 Mon Dieu ! Mais Au Fait , J'y Pense 1-14 Ce N'est Qu'une  
Histoire De Rir 1-15 Ciel ! Qu'ai Je Vous 1-16 Qui Êtes-Vous 1-17 Je Suis Lazuli 1-18  
Je Suis Furieux 1-19 Jeune Homme 1-20 Ce Fauteuil , Qui N'a L'air De Rien 1-21  
Arrêtez Arrêtez 1-22 Entr' Acte 1-23 Ah! Le Charmant Garçon 1-24 Oh! Mais Elles Sont  
Parties 1-25 Quand On Aime , Est - Il Utile 2-1 Et Puis S'il N'est Pas Content 2-2  
Quand On Veut Ranimer Sa Belle 2-3 C'est Parfait 2-4 Moi , Je N'ai Pas Une Âme Ingrate  
2-5 Maintenant Il Faut Partir Vite 2-6 Ah Ah Ah 2-7 Nous Allons Donc Voir 2-8 La  
Princesse 2-9 Un Coup De Feu 2-10 Tous Deux Assis Dans Le Bateau 2-11 Ma Foi ! Ca  
Nous Est Bien Égal 2-12 C'est Un Malheur 2-13 Entr' Acte 2-14 Une Heure 1-15 Enfin  
, Je Me Sens Mieux 2-16 Je Viens De Prendre Un Petit Verre 2-17 Je Me Sens , Hélas ,  
Tout Chose 2-18 Ah 2-19 Un Amoureux , Princesse 2-20 Vivant ! Il Est Vivant 2-21  
Ainsi Que La Rose Nouvelle 2-22 Assez De Musique 2-23 Voici Venir Monsieur Le Maire  
2-24 Princesse 2-25 Musique De Scène 2-26 Eh Bien 2-27 Nous Voici , Messieurs , À  
La Fin Baritone [Hérisson de Porc-Epic] – François Le Roux Baritone [Zalzal] – René  
Schirrer Bass [Sirocco] – Gabriel Bacquier Mezzo-soprano [Aloes] – Magali Damonte  
Soprano [Adza] – Andrée Didier Soprano [Asphodele] – Isabelle Manent Soprano [Koukouli] –  
Valérie Marestin Soprano [La Princesse Laoula] – Ghyslaine Raphanel Soprano [Lazuli] –  
Colette Alliot-Lugaz Soprano [Oasis] – Elizabeth Vidal Soprano [Youca] – Isabelle  
Eschenbrenner Soprano [Zinnia] – Brigitte Desnoues Tenor [Le Roi Ouf 1er] – Georges  
Gautierfrench Tenor [Patacha] – Michel Fockenoy Tenor [Tapioca] – Antoine David Voice  
Actor [La Chef de la Police], Directed By [Mise en scene] – Alain Maratrat Chorus – Chœurs  
De L'Opéra De Lyon Chorus Master – Henri Farge Orchestre De L'Opéra De Lyon John Eliot  
Gardiner - conductor

A zany, fantastical comedy – sometimes macabre, frequently absurd, but also touched by romance – Emmanuel Chabrier's L'Étoile is filled with delicious music. In this classic recording based on performances at the Opéra de Lyon, John Eliot Gardiner conducts a superb all-French

cast. ---warnerclassics.com

This is a welcome reissue of the 1984 Opéra de Lyon production—the superb and still available DVD presentation with the same forces (substituting Jules Bastin for Gabriel Bacquier) was made two years later (Image 9302). Either way, you can't lose, though if you prefer the CD format you're best advised to grab this now. "The music is so strongly defined, alert and lively," Poulenc noted, "that there is not a dull moment in the whole three acts, in spite of the mediocre text . . .", which is replaced here by a detailed cued synopsis. EMI does not even direct you for it to their Web site, though the libretto, with translation, was included with the LP issue. One may well enjoy its farcical zaniness, populated nonetheless—unique, until then, with Chabrier—not by the usual comique caricatures but by characters we come to know as well as those in Mozart's operas. Poulenc continues, "Quite apart from its intrinsic qualities, L'étoile is the source of subsequent French operetta, particularly that of Messager. For the first time, Chabrier introduced into opéra bouffe a careful attention to harmony and orchestration, which had previously been missing, except in Offenbach and Lecocq. I myself thought much about L'étoile while I was writing *Les mamelles de Tirésias* ." Can there be higher praise? The upshot is that the music, whether or not you attend closely to the plot, is tender, racy, scintillant, joyous, and self-commending. Perhaps this will prompt someone to reissue Erato's exemplary Dutoit go at *Le roi malgré lui* , nor would more Messager and Lecocq be amiss.

EMI's pasteboard box encloses the discs in paper sleeves and a booklet graced with production photos, the synopsis, and brief but informed notes by Roger Nichols. Sound captures stage depth, near or far, in crisp detail. Enthusiastically recommended. ---FANFARE: Adrian Corleonis, arkivmusic.com

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