Maurice Andre - La Belle Epoque (1993)



1. Arban - Variations on 'Carnival of Venice,' for trumpet 2. Arban - Fantasie Brillante, for cornet & ensemble 3. Petit - Gouttes d'eau, for cornet 4. Verdi - Variations on Themes from Verdi's 'La Traviata, ' for cornet & orchestra 5. Petit - Fete militaire, for cornet & band 6. Petit - Myrto polka, for cornet & band 7. Petit - Madeleine, for cornet & band 8. Lehar - Das Land des Lächelns (The Land of Smiles) Air du Prince Sou-Chong 9. Delibes – Scène et légende de la fille du paria 10. Bizet - Les Pêcheurs de perles, Romance de Nadir Maurice Andre – trumpet, cornet Monte Carlo National Opera Orchestra Marc Soustrot – conductor

Maurice André has rightly earned the reputation of being one of the finest trumpet virtuosos from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. He has made numerous concert appearances and recordings and has inspired composers like Blacher, Jolivet, and Tomasi to write major works for his instrument.

André was born in the Cévennes district of southern France. Young Maurice began taking vocal instruction (solfeggio) at age ten, but two years later, influenced by his father -- a miner, but also an excellent amateur trumpeter -- began playing the cornet and eventually the trumpet. But he also followed his father's occupation, becoming a miner at age 14. It was not long until the elder André realized the depth of his son's talent and arranged lessons for him with local teacher Leon Barthélémy. Because his father's wages were meager, André could not consider study at the Paris Conservatory, but through Barthélémy's clever plan, he gained admittance, tuition-free, by first joining a military band. At the age of 18, André began studies at the conservatory under Raymond Sabarich. He quickly demonstrated his immense talents, winning first prizes there for both cornet and trumpet playing in his first two years. In 1953, he began playing professionally in two ensembles, the Lamoureux Concert Association Orchestra and the Radio France Philharmonic Orchestra. André captured first prize in trumpet at the 1955 Geneva International Competition. He left the two orchestral posts in 1960 and 1962, respectively, joining the orchestra of the Opéra Comique in the latter year. In 1963, André was asked to sit on the jury of the Munich International Competition, but entered as a candidate instead and

captured first prize, thus establishing himself at the age of 30 as one of the leading young trumpeters in the world. He immediately launched a solo career, which was eventually managed by his wife Liliane. He began making his first recordings around this time, most with the French label Erato. Many of his most important and popular later ones, however, were done for EMI. He has also recorded for Deutsche Grammophon, Philips, and smaller labels. Because the repertory for the trumpet was relatively small, he began transcribing -- or engaged others to transcribe -- works for oboe, violin, and other instruments. The Tartini Violin Concerto in D major was one such example, the transcription being done by Jean Thilde.

André also began commissioning works from some of the leading composers of the day. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, André maintained a heavy concert schedule, playing with many of the leading orchestras and conductors in Europe and the United States and making numerous recordings. In a 1978 interview, André estimated that he typically played a 180-concert schedule and had made over 220 recordings up to that time. By 2003, André had appeared on over 300 recordings, though he had significantly reduced his concert schedule. While he has recorded music from most periods, he has tended to focus on Baroque repertory, such as works by Bach, Telemann, Handel, Torelli, and Albinoni. On many of his concert tours, André's younger brother Raymond, also a trumpeter of some renown, has accompanied him. In 1979, the first Maurice André Trumpet Competition was held. Subsequent events in the series took place in 1988, 1997, and 2000. André usually serves as chairman of the jury. --- Robert Cummings, AMG

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