Richard Strauss - Ariadne auf Naxos (Sinopoli) [2001]

CD1

1. Prologue - Orchestral Introduction Staatskapelle Dresden 2:19
2. Prologue - "Mein Herr Haushofmeister!" Albert Dohmen 5:55
3. Prologue - "Du allmächtiger Gott!" Anne Sofie von Otter 6:12
4. Prologue - Hast ein Stückerl Notenpapier? Jürgen Commichau 3:43
5. Prologue - Ist schon geschehn. Wir sind bereit Michael Howard 8:26
6. Prologue - Nein, Herr, so kommt es nicht Anne Sofie von Otter 5:17
7. Prologue - "Ein Augenblick ist wenig" Natalie Dessay 5:06
8. Prologue - "Sein wir wieder gut" - "Musik ist eine heilige Kunst" Anne Sofie von Otter 3:02
9. Opera - Overture Staatskapelle Dresden 3:43
10. Opera - "Schläft sie?" Christiane Hossfeld 3:53
11. Opera - Wo war ich? Tot? Deborah Voigt 3:15
12. Opera - Ein Schönes war: hiess Theseus - Ariadne Deborah Voigt 7:01
13. Opera - "Lieben, Hassen, Hoffen, Zagen" Stephan Genz 2:15
14. Opera - "Es gibt ein Reich" Deborah Voigt 6:02
15. Opera - "Die Dame gibt mit trüben Sinn" - "Wie sie sich schwingen" Christoph Genz 5:00

CD2

1. Opera - "Großmächtige Prinzessin" Natalie Dessay 11:10
2. Opera - "Hübsch gepredigt! Aber tauben Ohren!" - "Eine Stör- rische zu trösten" Stephan Genz 8:01
3. Opera - "Ein schönes Wunder!" Andris Liepa 3:40
4. Opera - "Circe, kannst du mich hören?" Ben Heppner 6:08
5. Opera - Theseus! Nein, nein! Deborah Voigt 10:35
6. Opera - Das waren Zauberworte! Deborah Voigt 3:14
7. Opera - "Gibt es kein Hinüber?" Deborah Voigt 7:51

Prima Donna (Ariadne) – Deborah Voigt
Compositor – Anne-Sophie Von Otter
Zerbinetta – Natalie Dessay
Tenor (Baco) – Bem Heppner
Professor de música – Albert Dohmen
Mordomo – Romuald Pekny
Oficial – Klaus Florian Vogt

Professor de dança – Michael Howard
Peruqueiro – Matthias Hennenberg
Lacaio – Jürgen Commichau
Arlequim – Stephan Genz
Scaramuccio – Ian Thmpson
Trufaldino – Sami Luttinen
Brighella – Christoph Genz
Naiade – Christiane Hossfeld
Driade – Angela Liebold
Eco – Eva Kirchner

Staatskapelle Dresden
Giuseppe Sinopoli – director

What a pity that this is Giuseppe Sinopoli's valedictory; it leaves us to imagine how glorious the rest of his Strauss opera readings may've been. Here, in the composer's most transparent, un-sentimental score, Sinopoli gets playing from the Dresden forces that makes everything Strauss and Hoffmansthal were driving at absolutely clear. The low strings at the start are deep and rich (bravo to the engineers, by the way--they deserve an award), the winds, which love to comment on the characters, are always audible and mostly witty, the stage-pit correspondence is never less than ideal, and the racket required of the limited number of instruments in the last part of the opera never has seemed more potent.

The opening dialogue between the music master and major domo is taken annoyingly slowly--how perfectly we get to dislike the pretentious major domo (in the snide person of Romuald Pekny)--immediately! The whole prologue is then of a piece: the running back and forth is vivid and the mounting anxiety of the composer, made absolutely real by Anne Sophie von Otter, never has been better; indeed her performance is one for the books. And then on to the opera: Deborah Voigt is absolutely lovely, singing with warmth and commitment, easily the equal of those stars of the so-called "Golden Age"; Natalie Dessay is in a class by herself, the voice bigger and richer than most Zerbinettas--but both her pyrotechnics and interpretation (what a fox!) are magnificent. And in Ben Heppner we at last find a tenor who can handle Strauss' almost impossible line: his voice rings out like a true hero, he's vocally secure enough to pay attention to the words, and he partners Voigt like Nureyev did Fonteyn. The Harlekin of Stephan Ganz is ideally perky, and the rest of the cast is top-notch, with the manic outcries of Naiad, Dryade, and Echo suitably melodramatic. This Ariadne goes to the top of the list--recommended to all lovers of Strauss and great singing, and, possibly, the performance that might convert non-Ariadne lovers to true fans. ---Robert Levine, ClassicsToday.com

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