

CD REVIEW 38

MOJCA ERDMANN

MAINLY MOZART

Mojca Erdmann (soprano), Le Cetra
Barockorchester Basel, Andrea Marcon

DGG 477 8979 (71 minutes)

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| MOZART | Tiger! Wetze nur die Klauen
(Zaide) |
| SALIERI | Par les larmes dont votre fille
(Les Danaïdes) |
| MOZART | Quando avran fine onai... Padre,
germani. addio (Idomeno)
Ruhe sanft, mein holdes, Leben
(Zaide)
Ma se colpa..Batti, batti, o bel
Masetto (Don Giovanni) |
| PAISELLO | Il mio ben quando verra (Nina) |
| MOZART | Giunse alfin il momento... Deh vieni, non tardar (Le Nozze di Figaro) |
| HOLZBAUER | Es ist geschrieben... Ihr Rosenstunden (Gunther von Schwarzburg) |
| MOZART | Vedrai, carino, se sei buone (Don Giovanni) |
| BACH J C | A qui pourrai-je avoir recours? (Amadia de Gaule) |
| MOZART | Ach, ich fühl's, es ist verschwunden (Die Zuberflote) |
| SALIERI | Pere barbara, arrache-moi la vie (Les Danaïdes) |
| MOZART | Se il padre pedrei (idomeno) |
| HOLZBAUER | Die Klufte suasen (Gunther von Schwarzburg) |



This young German soprano has a voice unaffected by affectation. She was a triumph at the Salzburg Festival in 2006 singing in Mozart's *Zaide*. In 2010 she sang in Wolfgang Rihm's extremely difficult *Dionysos*. That proves her musicianship. There are very many so-called great sopranos who could not achieve this proving that Erdmann is in a much higher league.

She was born in Hamburg and had violin lessons from the age of six. She studied singing with Hans Sotin and has won awards. She has also sung light music such as Kalman and Lehar.

I have always felt that a performer who is restricted to one genre is not a complete musician but Erdmann sings from Mozart to Mahler, Lehar to Rihm.

If there is one tiny observation about this CD, it is all of early music although it contains some rarities which are most welcome.

Fortunately, *Les Danaïdes* by Salieri is available in a complete recording.

Salieri is the subject of an evil myth that he murdered, or had murdered, Mozart due to jealousy. The trouble is that some people are so naive as to believe this. The fact is that Salieri was a greater composer than Mozart and Mozart's father, Leopold, led a campaign against Salieri because he always received the positions that Leopold wanted for his son.

There may be some truth in the fact that Salieri at the end of his days may have suffered from a type of dementia and said untrue things when his mind was confused.

Some have complained that Erdmann's singing is too precise. The real problem is that some singers take liberties with the music and use ghastly portamenti. Erdmann's voice is pure and flowing from

one note to another in a clarity that is enviable. His choice of tempi is her own and this aids clarity, although it must not be taken that everything is too slow. Far from it! Her whole range of voice is very good and her high notes are thrilling, although one reviewer calls them thin. What planet does he live on?

Perhaps she does not enter into each character separately but that would be difficult as she is only singing excerpts. You don't put a fur coat on if the weather is unbearably hot! Actors and opera stars of great and earned repute have said that they have taken months, even years, to get into a character.

The voice sounds very young and innocent but that is better than sopranos who develop fruity and heavy voices. Opera is for singing and for not laying it on with a trowel! Singers pay too much attention to themselves and, sometimes, not enough to the composers' clear instructions!

The lament from J C Bach is quite superb and, just when you're thinking all these arias are slow and much the same, listen to the power and excitement in *Pere barbare arrache-moi la vie* from the Salieri opera.

The Paisiello is a delight and when did we last hear his opera *Nina*?

And listen to the variety in Holzbauer's *Die Klufte* in which the singer shows a range of dynamics and expression in what is a virtuoso piece.



Her singing is so secure.

The orchestra plays on period instruments and are very good. Listen to the attack in the Holzbauer aria which ends this CD

I have one concern. Erdmann is a very attractive woman and has a glamour about her. That must not be used to promote her. Her voice and her unquestionable talent and ability is where her greatest attraction lies.

I fear there are some international musicians who owe their fame to their good looks. Many have said, perhaps unfairly, that Nicola Benedetti's fame is due to her looks!



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