

ANNETTE DASCH

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This is a different way to review a CD which was chosen to simplify details.

I am very grateful to Annette Dasch for introducing me to the Baroque Art song in a splendid CD issued by Harmonia Mundi entitled *Les Nouveaux Musiciens* (HMN 9118350).

This type of early German song was not an area I would have bothered with since very early music is not the music that I am enamoured with.

But this disc was lovely. The singing was choice and the diction as clear as any sung words. The ensemble was very good as well, and I knew none of the composers such as Heinrich Albert, Johann Kreiger, Andreas Hammerschmidt, Philip Heinrich Erlebach, Adam Krieger, Johann Cristian Dedekind and Erasmus Kindemann.

This CD was a lesson to me and should be a lesson to everybody.

It does not pay for anyone to limit themselves to just one area, or a few areas of music. I foolishly did this for 30 years and dismissed early music. I particularly found early church music by such people as Palestrina dull and static and, like a novel by Jane Austen, nothing ever happens.

I realise that some professional musicians do specialise and we should be grateful for their command of the music of their choice which they have studied and learned to understand. But not everyone is a David Munrow.

Among musicians and music lovers there is a lot of unfair prejudice and what is unfair is wrong. Unworthy composers are sometimes elevated very highly and better composers are ignored.

For many people it is right and indeed a sport to rubbish modern music such as Schoenberg and Boulez and yet if anyone finds genuine faults in traditional composers such as Bach, Mozart, Chopin, Schubert, Mahler etc., it seems to become a crime and worthy for the miscreant to be ostracised and punished with ridicule or verbal battering.

The German baroque songs on this Harmonia Mundi CD are

- Heinrich Albert [1604-1651]
 - 1 O der rauhen Grausamkeit!
- Johann Krieger [-]
 - 2 Mein Herz ich liebe dich
- Andreas Hammerschmidt [1611-1675]
 - 3 Schönheit, du kanst zwar wol binden
- Philipp Heinrich Erlebach [1657-1714]
 - 4 Amor, eile und erteile treuen Rat
- Adam Krieger [1634-1666]
 - 5 Flug, Psyche, fleug
- Andreas Hammerschmidt [1611-1675]
 - 6 Canzona 3 zu drei Stimmen in d-moll / ré mineur



- Heinrich Albert [1604-1651]
 7 Letzte Rede einer vormals stolzen und sterbenden Jungfer
 Johann Christian Dedekind [-]
 8 Alles Ding vergeht geschwinde
 Philipp Heinrich Erlebach [1657-1714]
 9 Unser Leben ist mit viel Not umgeben
 Erasmus Kindermann [-]
 10 Gott sey gedanckt, der Fried steht noch
 11 Ach Herr, wie lange haben wir
 Johann Krieger [-]
 12 Abend-Andacht
 Heinrich Albert [1604-1651]
 13 Seelchen, habt ihr nicht gesehen
 14 Der Mai des Jahres Herz
 Adam Krieger [1634-1666]
 15 Kommt wir wollen ausspazieren
 Johann Krieger [-]
 16 Sonata G-dur für 2 Violinen und basso continuo / Sol majeur
 Philipp Heinrich Erlebach [1657-1714]
 17 Fortuna, du scherzest mit mir
 Johann Krieger [-]
 18 Wol dem der sich vergnügt

As you will see there are two instrumental pieces, a Canzona in D minor by Hammerschmidt and a Sonata by Johann Krieger.

The songs are in five sections namely Love, Precariousness, Peace, Nature and Luck

The first song in the 'love' section is by Heinrich Albert (1604-1651), the organist at Königsberg Cathedral, who studied with his cousin Heinrich Schutz (1585-1672). Albert's song is a gem. It is genuinely lovely with a vocal line realised with clarity, perfect diction and pure notes even the high ones. It is a 'catchy' item and Dasch lends it the minimum but effective use of drama.

The second song is a jolly song by Johann Kreiger (1651-1735)

Next, we have a strong song by Andrea Hammerschmidt (1611 or 1612 -1675) who came from Bohemia.

Track four is a song of contrast with a toccata like opening and closure with a more restrained middle section. It calls for a singer of great virtuosity and Dasch is that. The song is by Philipp Heinrich Erlebach (1657-1714)

Track 5 is said to be by Adam Kreiger but the notes refer to Andreas Kreiger (1634- 1666). Is this the same Kreiger? This song lasts over six minutes and is operatic in style. He was a poet as well as a composer and some of his texts he turned into songs and arias which offended the moralists of the day when everyday pleasures were frowned upon and not to be made public in any way. The song has a gorgeous accompaniment and the variety of colour in Dasch's voice is very appealing.

The 'love ' section ends with a fine Canzona in D minor played magnificently by Membres de l'Academie fur Alto Musick

The second section refers to precariousness. Track 7 gives another song by Albert, a song of great sensitivity sung beautifully with a very effective touch of drama.

Track eight introduces us to Johann Cristian Dedkind (1628-1715) and the following track is a lengthy song of longing by Erlebach which calls for a more dramatic voice and interpretative skill. Dasch does not disappoint us.

These three songs in this section are slow and thoughtful.

Section three (tracks 10 to 12) deals with the subject of peace and introduces us to Erasmus Kindemann (1616-1665) a much respected musician of his time associated with the Nuremberg School. His two songs are somewhat static but sung with an enviable composure.

Track 12 takes us back to Johann Kreiger and begins unaccompanied showing us again Dasch's perfect intonation. It is a beautiful song. There is a sumptuous instrumental coda.

Section Four (tracks 13 -16) deals with nature. The first song Seelchen, habt ihr nicht gesehen is one of the best songs on this CD as is the first song also by Albert. It has a lovely melody. The second song in this section is also by Albert and is a powerful concertante song of almost epic proportions. Listen to Dasch's amazing skill, virtuosity and an impeccable clarity. Who else could sing this repertoire as well as this?

Track 15 is a jolly and charming song by Johann Kreiger followed by a sonata in G by the same composer.

The final section (tracks 17 and 18) is entitled Luck or Fortune with a fine song by Erlebach and a gem by Johann Kreiger with humming, whistling and a brief choral part to end it.

Annette Dasch was born in Berlin on 24 March 1976 and studied at the Hochschule fur Musik and Theater in Munich with Josef Loibi.

She also studied drama in Graz during 1998/89.

Her opera debut was as the Goose Girl in Humperdinck's Konigskinder with the Bavarian State Opera. Then at La Scala, Milan in Mozart's Don Giovanni as Elvira At the Salzburg Festival she was Amita in Mozart's Il re pasturale.

At the Paris Opera she was Antonia in Offenbach's Tales of Hoffmann.

In Wiesbaden she sung Schumann's Genoveva, an unrewarding opera.

Barenboim conducted her Elvira in Berlin

In Salzburg in 2007, she sang Haydn's Armida.

She has also sung Electra in Mozart's Idomeneo with John Mark Ainsley and Juliane Banse.

Dasch's Metropolitan Opera debut in 2009 was as the Countess in Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro.



Her debut at Bayreuth was singing Elsa in Wagner's Lohengrin.

In 2009 she sang in Don Giovanni alongside Bryn Terfel and Anna Samuil.

She is very versatile and very able. She has sung in

- Handel's Messiah
- Mendelssohn's Elijah
- Orff's Carmina Burana
- Pfitzner's cantata Von deutsche Seele
- Mahler's Das Knaben Wunderhorn
- Beethoven's Symphony no. 9
- Bach's St John Passion
- Haydn's Creation

Her repertoire also includes

- Freia in Wagner's Das Rheingold
- Rosalinde in Johann Strauss's Die Fleudermaus
- Liv in Puccini's Turandot
- Pamina in Mozart's The Magic Flute
- Gretel in Humperdinck's Hansel and Gretel
- Fiordiligi in Mozart's Cosi fan tutte
- She has also sung Britten's Les Illuminations

She has won many awards, the Maria Canals Competition in Barcelona and the Robert Schumann Lied Competition in Zwickau and the Geneva Competition. She had, or has a regular show in Berlin called Annette Dasch-Salon.

Apart from the Harmond Mundi CD there are others

- German Baroque songs (2011)
- Mozart Arias (CD 88697334512)
- Armida excerpts from Gluck, Jommelli, Handel and Haydn
- Beethoven Choral Symphony with Skrowaczewski
- Britten War Requiem conducted by Helmut Rilling (Hanssler Classics)

and two DVDs

- Mozart The Marriage of Figaro
- Mozart Il re Pastorale

She is an ambitious and successful woman, a very fine singer and if you have not come across her then please rectify this.

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