

HISTORICAL VOCAL RECORDINGS

ROSSINI: Le Comte Ory. Michel Roux, basso (Robert); Jeannette Sinclair, soprano (Alice); Juan Oncina, tenor (Count Ory); Monica Sinclair, contralto (Ragonde); Ian Wallace, baritone (The Governor); Cora Canne-Meijer, mezzo-soprano (Isolier); Sari Barabas, soprano (Countess Adele); Dermot Troy, tenor (A Young Nobleman); The Glyndebourne Festival Orchestra and Chorus; Vittorio Gui, conductor. EMI RLS 744.

"The delicious Comte Ory," wrote Chorley in 1854, "has, with all the beauty of its music, never been a favorite anywhere. Even in the theater for which it was written, the Grand Opéra of Paris, where it still keeps its place - when Cinti-Damoreau was the heroine - giving to the music all the playfulness, finish, and sweetness which could possibly be given - the work was heard with but a tranquil pleasure..." He goes on to blame the libretto (by Scribe and Delaistre-Poirson) which in its day was indeed rather shocking, with Count Ory's "gang" gaining admission, disguised as nuns, to the castle of the Countess he is pursuing - male voices and all! The opera was rediscovered in the 1950's and enjoyed a real success at Glyndebourne in 1954. The recording was made two years later. The New York City Opera finally got around to Le Comte Ory a year or so ago.

There are several obvious reasons for the neglect of this gem of an opera. Though the score is full of delights there is no Largo al factotum or Una voce poco fa. The arias are brilliant but not sure fire. It is not a vehicle; the soprano and tenor roles call for virtuosity of a high order, but this is an ensemble opera and no one can take over the spotlight. The first act finale is Rossini at his finest, and the duet with chorus that opens the second reminds me of Berlioz.

This recording, the only one likely in the foreseeable future, reflects the skillful guiding hand of conductor Vittorio Gui. The singers are all trained to teamwork, and each to express himself with a natural grace. Not that they are perfect. Sari Barabas (whose voice reminds me of Beverly Sills) is not so secure in her intonation as one might wish, and Cora Canne-Meijer is a little too pert, as is often the way with sopranos cast as page boys. Oncina is the hero in more ways than one; the high tessitura gives him no trouble, and his coloratura is graceful and tidy. Roux, the only real Frenchman in the cast, delivers Robert's pattery narrative in the second act with great gusto. The rest of the cast is thoroughly satisfactory; chorus and orchestra are well up to Glyndebourne standards. Sonically, the recording is still more than acceptable.

BACH: Mass in B minor. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano; Marga Höffgen, contralto; Nicolai Gedda, tenor; Heinz Rehfuss, basso; Chorus of the Society of the Friends of Music, Vienna; Geraint Jones, organ continuo;

Manoug Parikian, solo violin; Gareth Morris, solo flute; Sidney Sutcliffe & Peter Newbury, solo oboes d'amore; Dennis Brain, solo horn; Orchestra; Herbert von Karajan, conductor. EMI RLS 746, 3 discs.

Recorded in November 1952, Karajan's B minor Mass was in many ways the finest in the early days of LP and has remained a classic. It also dates from the early days of "authentic" Bach performances, utilizing forces comparable to those the composer worked with. It still sounds remarkably good for a mono recording of that vintage, and it boasts an outstanding solo quartet, not to mention the horn obbligato of Dennis Brain. The sonics are impressive for clarity; the fugal entries stand out most effectively and one can follow each part with ease. The first Kyrie works up cumulatively from a beautiful pianissimo entry to a fine solid close. The two voices in the Christe are well matched. Karajan seems to have insisted on unusually thorough preparation of all the solos so that they are musically neat but never mechanical. Laudamus te, allotted in the score to the second soprano, is here sung by Schwarzkopf, with every trill in place and characteristically just a faint veil over her diction. In her duet with Gedda the tenor keeps his voice admirably in balance with hers, and in the Benedictus it is a delight to hear the tenor's voice in all its youthful bloom. Rehfuss proves himself able to cope with both the low tessitura of his first aria and the high range of his second, and Höffgen's voice is rich in both the Qui sedes and the Agnus Dei. The choral sound may not match the best of stereo recordings, but it is always more than acceptable. Real virtuosity is demanded of the singers by Karajan's rapid tempi, especially in Et resurrexit. I am not completely convinced by the tempo of the Crucifixus, in which the conductor may have been reacting against the usual slow pace in performance. One hears it now almost as an angry protest rather than a lament for the world's tragedy. And so, for a remarkable reading of the score, for the work of the soloists, or for a still effective mono recording, the set merits reissuing.

GAY AND PEPUSCH (arr. Austin): The Beggar's Opera. (The original 1920 Lyric Theatre Hammersmith production & 1922 revised version). Frederick Austin & Scott Russell, baritone (Peacham); Arthur Wynn & Tristan Rawson, baritone (Lockit); Frederick Ranalaw, baritone (Macheath); Alfred Heather, tenor (Mat-o-the-Mill); Nellie Walker, soprano (Mrs. Peacham; Diana Trapes); Sylvia Nelis & Kathryn Hilliard, soprano (Polly Peacham); Violet Marquesita, soprano (Lucy Lockit); Nonny Lock, mezzo-soprano (Jenny Diver); Dorothy Smithard, mezzo-soprano (Molly Brazen); Phyllis Blackburne, mezzo-soprano (Suky Tawdry); Colin Ashdown, tenor (Robin of Bagshot); Frederic Davies, tenor (Filch); Chorus and Orchestra of the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith; Frederick Austin, conductor. Selections. The Eighteenth Century Orchestra; Frederick Austin, conductor, EMI World Records RTRM 501.

29 January 1728 is an important date in musical history, for it saw the first performance of The Beggar's Opera at Lincoln's Inn Field Theatre. As everyone knows, the resounding success of this lampoon dealt

the death blow to the Italian opera that had dominated London for so long. John Gay, who had provided the libretto for Handel's Acis and Galatea, now fitted new lyrics to popular songs of the day (also drawing on such respectable composers as Purcell and Handel); his original intention was to have the tunes sung without accompaniment in the course of his play, but in rehearsal this was found impractical. So Dr. John Christopher Pepusch was called in to supply orchestral accompaniments.

The opera was frequently revived down the years, even into the Victorian age, with such singers as John Braham, Sims Reeves and Sir Charles Santley. One feels sure the libretto must have been adapted for Victorian ears, and how the songs were accompanied is another question, since no full score had survived the original production. After the final performances with Reeves (1886) and Santley (1887) The Beggar's Opera was not heard again for a couple of generations. But on 7 May 1920 it came very much alive in a new production at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, newly arranged and orchestrated by Frederick Austin, under the direction of Sir Nigel Playfair. Austin was primarily a baritone, but he had had some success as a composer, and on occasion, like some of our contemporary singers, he could also conduct. Austin worked from Gray's notation of the tunes and Pepusch's figured bass. His restoration was hailed at the time as beautifully in keeping, and it has remained the basis, at least, for most of the many subsequent revivals. He himself revised the score in 1922.

The 1920 production was one of the sensational successes of the London theatre, running for 3-1/2 years, some 1,463 performances. It was revived periodically after the original run and was several times brought to America. In the first blush of its success HMV recorded three discs of selections (D 524-26), which immediately became best sellers. After the revision of the score in 1922, two more discs were added (D 615-16). These records were in no way a "performance" of the opera, but the songs were put together in haphazard order, somewhat like an expansion of Victor's old "gems from" various operas. In this excellently dubbed reissue the songs from the two sets have been put back into sequence. Certain difficulties arise from the fact that we actually have a double cast, though only the first is listed on the back of the album. I have undertaken to set this straight in the listing above. The 1920 issue, according to HMV, was "Recorded by seven of the Artists from the original cast, with the assistance of Miss Nellie Walker..." Two additional sides, on which Austin conducts orchestral selections (D 699) are added by way of overture and postlude. The voices are typically British, much as we know them in the early D'Oyly Carte recordings, and they do very well making themselves understood.

Most subsequent recordings have been based on the Austin score. A notable exception is the late Max Goberman's performance, for which he reconstructed the original orchestration, issued in 1961 by the Library of Musical Masterpieces (BO 1). The opera is complete with 69 songs, and there is a double cast of singers and actors. In coordination with this a reproduction of the 1729 libretto was published by Argonaut Books

"with commentaries by Louis Kronenberger and Max Goberman." Of special interest is a final chapter in which Goberman traces the songs to their original sources.

GLINKA: La Vie pour le Tsar. Boris Christoff, basso (Ivan Soussanine); Teresa Stich-Randall, soprano (Antonida); Nicolai Gedda, tenor (Bogdane Sobinine); Mela Bulgarinovitch, contralto (Vania); Belgrade Opera Chorus (Oscar Danon, chorus master); Orchestre de l'Association des Concerts Lamoureux; Igor Markevitch, conductor (Recorded in Paris, 26 November to 18 December 1957). EMI HMV 2C 163-73011/3, 3 discs.

A Life for the Czar (first heard 9 December 1836) is the first great landmark in the history of Russian opera. And it is the source of several fine arias, most notably Soussanine's great scene in the final act (memorably recorded by Chaliapin). Glinka's imagination, abetted by his studies in Western Europe, led him into new paths where the later great Nationalists were to follow him. His use of the chorus foretells Musorgski and Borodin. Though with the exception of Soussanine the figures in the opera are not very strongly characterized, they are identified by musical motives. The story of the opera is based on an incident in Russian history, when the peasant Soussanine saved the Czar's life at the expense of his own, by leading a band of Polish marauders astray. The original title was Ivan Soussanine, but to honor the reigning Czar, the opera was renamed at the premiere. Until the Revolution it was the standard work to open the opera seasons both in Moscow and St. Petersburg. The Soviets have reverted to the original title and made some adaptations. Before them some revision was done by Rimski-Korsakov and Glazunov.

The Kurtz Myers Index to Record Reviews has five entries for this opera, the first an abridged performance and the last a disc of excerpts. The Markevitch performance was the third to appear (at least in this country) and was unanimously hailed as superior. Recorded in Paris, it is an international production, with an Italian-Russian conductor, an American soprano, a Bulgarian basso, a Swedish-Russian tenor, a Yugoslavian contralto and a chorus imported from Belgrade. It remains the standard recording, since a Bolshoi performance reviewed in 1962 received nothing better than lukewarm reviews. A fresh hearing after several years confirms a generally good impression. Markevitch may have been uniquely qualified by his background to interpret this Italian-influenced Russian national opera, and in the central role Christoff has had few rivals in his time. Gedda, in his best voice, throws himself into his role with real conviction, and Bugarinovitch reveals that rare commodity, a true Russian-type contralto voice. There is room for some disagreement about Stich-Randall, whose straight-lined singing has an almost detached effect here, as though she were carefully placing each tone (not invariably squarely). Still, there is something fascinating about the quality of her voice, especially when she floats it upward.

The monophonic recording is generally good, though there is a kind of boxiness in the orchestral sound; but this is a minor quibble. Still,

the recording may be responsible for a lack of nuance in the voices, and the fact that the duet of Vania and Soussanine seems rather langweilig. The reissue comes from France, and the accompanying brochure contains an essay by the late Vladimir Fedorov (replacing the English introduction by Leonard Scott) along with the libretto in French only.

ROBERT STOLZ, EIN LEBEN IN MELODIEN, Jubiläumsausgabe zum 100. Geburtstag: Das Glücksmädel--Der Herrgott, der hat viel zu tun; ...Das Glücklerl. Alexander Girardi, tenor (1); Das Lied ist aus--Ja, wenn das Wörtchen "wenn" nicht wär. Dajos Béla und sein Orchester; Leo Frank, Refraingesang. Heute Nacht--eventuel--Ich hab' bei der Trude das Küssen studiert. Siegfried Arno, Gesang; Ein Tango für dich--Du bust mein Greta Garbo. Oskar Karlweis, Gesang (1); Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt--Walzerlied. Dajos Béla und sein Orchester; Frank; Herbstmanöver--Oft fängt das Glück beim Walzer an. Hedwig Jungkurth, soprano (2); Der Raub der Mona Lisa--Warum lächelst du, Mona Lisa? Willi Forst, Gesang (3); Warum gehört dein roter Mund nicht mir allein (Foxtrot). Marek Weber und sein Orchester; Der Raub der Mona Lisa--Du dummer, kleiner Korporal. Forst (3); Mein Herz ruft nach dir--Mein Herz ruft immer nur nach dir, o Marita. Comedian Harmonists; Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt--In Wien, wo der Wein und der Walzer blüht. Irene Eisinger, soprano (4); Wenn die kleinen Veilchen blühen--Du, du, du, schliess deine Augen zu. Herbert Ernst Groh, tenor (5); Ein Lied, ein Kuss, ein Mädel--Nur um dich zu lieben, möcht' ich ewig leben. Marta Eggerth, soprano (8); Liebeskommando--Im Traum hast du mir alles erlaubt. Richard Tauber, tenor (6); Das Lied ist aus--Das Lied ist aus. Marcel Wittrisch, tenor (1); Ich liebe alle Frauen--Ob blond, ob braun, ich liebe alle Frau'n. Jan Kiepura, tenor (7); Im Weissen Rössl--Mein Liebeslied muss ein Walzer sein. Wittrisch; Ein Lied, ein Kuss, ein Mädel--Ein Lied, ein Kuss, ein Mädel. Eggerth (8); Mein Herz ruft nach dir--Ich sing' mein Lied heut nur für dich. Charles Kullman, tenor. Mein Herz ruft nach dir--Mein Herz ruft immer nur für dich, o Marita. Kiepura (1); In Wien hab' ich einmal ein Mädel geliebt (Wienerlied). Tauber (6); Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt--Auch du wirst mich einmal betrügen. Irene Eisinger, soprano; Erik Wirl, tenor (4); Servus, du (chanson). Herbert Ernst Groh, tenor (5); Zauber der Bohème--Weine nicht, bricht eine schöne Frau dir dein Herz. Kiepura (1); Mir sagt dein Blumenstrauss (Walzerlied). Wittrisch (1); Ich liebe alle Frauen--Schenk mir dein Herz heut Nacht. Kiepura (7); Der Favorit--Du sollst der Kaiser meiner Seele sein. Vera Schwarz, soprano; Im Prater blüh'n wieder die Bäume (Wienerlied). Tauber (9); Das Lied ist aus--Adieu, mein kleiner Gardeoffizier. Liane Haid, soprano (1); Herbstmanöver--Auf der Heide blühh die letzten Rosen. Groh (5); Vor meinem Vaterhaus steht eine Linde (Lied im Volkston). Willi Domgraf-Fassbaender, baritone (5); Ich liebe alle Frauen--Ob blond, ob braun, ich liebe alle Frau'n. Nicolai Gedda, tenor (1); Im Weissen Rössl--Die ganze Welt ist himmelblau! Marco Baker, baritone (10); Mein Herz ruft nach dir--Ich sing' mein Lied heut' nur für dich. Gedda (1); Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt--Auch du wirst mich einmal betrügen. Anneliese Rothenberger, soprano (1); Das Lied ist aus--

Das Lied ist aus. Sári Barabás, soprano (11); Hello, du süsse Klingelfee (Lied und Onestep). Harry Friedauer, tenor (1); Venus in Seide--Spiel auf deiner Geige das Lied von Lied und Lust. Rothenberger; Hans Wiesbeck, solo-violin (1); Wohin ist das alles, wohin? (Lied im Volkston). Gottlob Frick, basso (1); Ich liebe die Welt (Lied). Gedda (1); Lieutenant warst du einst bei den Husaren (Marschlied). Dagmar Koller, soprano (1); Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt--Walzerlied. Rothenberger, Gedda (1); Wenn die kleinen Veilchen bluehen--Wenn due kleinen Veilchen bluehen. Dagmar Koller, soprano; Harry Friedauer, tenor (1); Herbstmanöver--Auf der Heide blühh die letzten Rosen. Frick (1); Ein Tango für dich--Musikant, Musikant, wo ist deine Heimat? Rothenberger (1); Frühling im Prater--Du bist auf dieser Welt. Rothenberger, Gedda (1); Servus, du (Chanson). Gedda (1); Komm in den Park von Sanssouci (Lied und Slowfox). Wolfgang Anheisser, baritone (1); Himmelblaue Träume--An so einem Tag wie heute. Rothenberger (1); Die lustigen Weiber von Wien--Ich lieb' nur eine. Rothenberger, Harry Friedauer, tenor (1); Zauber der Bohème--Ich liebe dich. Gedda (1); Im Weissen Rössl--Mein Liebeslied muss ein Walzer sein. Anneliese Rothenberger, soprano (1); Salome (Lied und Foxtrot). Friedauer (12); Angelo (Lied). Rothenberger (1); Signorina--Arrivederci, bella Italia. Gedda (1); Vor meinem Vaterhaus steht eine Linde (Lied im Volkston). Frick (1); Das susseste Schwindel der Welt--In der Bar vom Montmartre. Johannes Heesters, tenor (13); Im Prater blü'h'n wieder die Bäume (Wienerlied). Rothenberger (1); Wer zuletzt küsst--Ungerküsst sollst du nicht schlafen gehn. Friedauer (1); Wien wird bei Nacht erst schön (Wienerlied). Renate Holm, soprano (14); Das Sperrsechserl--A klahne Drahreri. Ferry Gruber, tenor (1); Die Deutschmeister--Mir ist's gleich. Hans Moser, Gesang; Das Mädél vom Rhein ist ein Frühlingsgedicht (Walzerlied). Anheisser (1). Conductors: Robert Stolz (1); Bruno Seidler-Winkler (2); Peter Kreuder (3); Clemens Schmalstich (4); Otto Dobrindt (5); Frieder Weissmann (6); Werner Schmidt-Boelcke (7); Dajos Béla (8); Ernst Hauke (9); Wolfgang Geri (10); Carl Michalski (11); Kurt Graunke (12); Bert Grund (13); Karl Grell (14). EMI 1C 137-46 100/03, 4 discs (2 mono, 2 stereo).

It may come as a surprise to many whose memories go back to the twenties and thirties that they owe so much pleasure to Robert Stolz. As one who used to frequent the German movies in those days (primarily to sharpen my ears for the language) I remember the period as a kind of golden age. Stars like Leo Slezak, Willi Domgraf-Fassbaender, Dorothea Wieck, Lilian Harvey, Willy Fritsch, Marlene Dietrich and many more appeared in pictures that were sometimes unforgettable. We were not concerned with the producer, the writer of the script, or even the composer of the music. But here comes a lavish celebration of the Robert Stolz centennial, almost as full of quotations as Hamlet. Stolz died in 1975, just five years short of enjoying his own memorial.

Robert Stolz came of a musical family. His father was an opera director in Graz, also a teacher and head of a music school. His mother was a pianist. Brahms was a friend of the family and Teresa Stolz, Verdi's favorite soprano, was Robert's aunt. Like his colleague Franz

Lehár, Stolz received a classical training in music. The groundwork was laid by his parents, and later he studied with Fuchs and Humperdinck. He served in various opera houses as repetiteur and conductor before meeting Johann Strauss in 1899, after which he turned his attention to light music. A first operetta, Studentenulke, produced in Marburg in 1899 was hardly sensational, and it was not until after he had conducted Lehár's new smash hit, The merry widow, that he emerged as a composer in his own right. Das Glücksmädel, produced in Vienna, 28 October 1910, was his first big success. In 1912 one of his many independent songs made a resounding and lasting hit - Servus, du. As a portent of things to come he provided a score for the silent movie Der Milliononkel in 1913. Perhaps his most familiar song, Im Prater blüh'n wieder die Bäume, dates from 1916, and Salome, the first European foxtrot, from 1919. But most of the Stolz favorites came later, in films or from the musical stage. Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt (1929) has been called the most popular Viennese waltz after the Blue Danube (but what about The merry widow?) and certainly Auch du wirst mich einmal betrogen from the same movie is as insidious as any tune I know. Though Im Weissen Rössl (White Horse Inn) was Benatzky's show, two of the most memorable numbers in it were supplied by Stolz - Mein Liebeslied muss ein Walzer sein and Die ganze Welt ist himmelblau! And I am grateful for a couple of period pieces resurrected here - Du bist meine Greta Garbo and Warum lächelst du, Mona Lisa?

Stolz is credited with something like 800 published works, 90 of which are for the stage. About 2000 compositions remain unpublished. Like Mozart, he has his Köchel, for in celebration of the centennial a Robert-Stolz-Werke-Verzeichnis (RSVW) assigns numbers to all the selections in this set.

The four discs cover Stolz's career with what would seem like complete thoroughness. The first two discs are monaural recordings mostly of the singers identified with the various songs; sides 5 to 8 are later performances in stereo, with well known contemporary artists usually singing under the composer's baton.

The program opens with two mementos of that first success, Das Glücksmädel, recorded in 1910 by the star, Alexander Girardi. He was a popular cabaret singer, and if his voice was not notably beautiful he surely knew the secret of putting it over. In general the artists who follow share this secret, and some of them, needless to say, add vocal charm. I need only mention Tauber, Wittrisch, Kullman and Vera Schwarz. Several very popular recording groups are also included - the Comedian Harmonists (a vocal quintet with piano), the Dajos Béla and Marek Weber orchestras. In the second half Rothenberger, Gedda and others show that they have not lost touch with the style. For the most part the recordings come through very well, though in a few a certain shallowness in the originals and some surface noise has not been possible to overcome.

SCHUBERT: Der Wanderer, D.489; Meeresstille, D.216; Wanderers Nachtlid I, D.224; Gesänge des Harfners, I-II-III, D.478; Geheimes, D.719; An

die Musik, D.547; Pilgerweise, D.789; Atys, D.585; Abschied, D.475; Orest auf Tauris, D.548; Liedesend, D.473; Alinde, D.904; Die Liebe hat gelogen, D.751; Der Wanderer, D.649; Greisengesang, D.778; Das Zünglein klein, D.871; Orpheus, D.474; Des Sängers Habe, D.832; An den Tod, D.518; Tiefes Leid, D.876; Todtengräbers Heimweh, D.842; Der Kreuzzug, D.932; Der Schäfer und der Ritter, D.517; Schiffers Scheidelied, D.910. Hans Hotter, bass-baritone; Michael Raucheisen, piano. I Grandi Interpreti IGI 386, 2 discs.

Hans Hotter must have been in his early thirties when he broadcast this magnificent Schubert recital - a program divided more or less evenly between fairly familiar lieder and some that are little known. The voice was certainly at its peak, fuller and richer than the instrument we knew in his days at the Metropolitan, and his penetration of the songs is as impressive as in his later recordings. He was a lieder singer essentially of the old school, one who delivered the texts simply, on the music. If there is a slight lack of clarity in the recorded voice at times, and if the piano tone wavers a bit, one accepts these inadequacies, thankful for these splendid performances.

At the outset he provides a lesson in how to deal with so familiar a song as Der Wanderer. I confess I had been inclined to write off this one-time favorite as something less than a masterpiece, but Hotter wins me over quickly; the tempo is just right, the quality of the voice very appropriate, the delivery of the text altogether convincing. One remembers his post-war recordings of Meeresstille and Wanderers Nachtlied as outstandingly fine, but it seems to me these versions are very close to perfection. The three Harfenspieler-Lieder are beautifully contrasted - now pathetic, now defiant and bitter, now resigned. Geheimen is really a light song for so dark a voice, yet he does not overweight it; An die Musik is simple and well paced, with natural broadening at the climax. Even though he takes a more leisurely tempo in Der Kreuzzug than at first seems right to me, he makes it all convincing. Much more could be said of the less familiar songs, some perhaps a bit long and drawn out, but not dull as Hotter sings them. To be sure he makes some cuts in Schiffers Scheidelied. But even Todtengräbers Heimweh, a really outlandish conception, somehow for once makes sense.

SONGS AND DUETS: LOEWE: O susse Mutter; Die Blume der Ergebnis; Abendstunde; Fruhlingsankunft; Fruhling; Sonnelicht; Liebesliedchen; März; Abschied; WEBER: 3 Duetti per due voci di soprano, Op. 31--Mille volte mio tesoro; Va ti console, addio; Se il mio ben; REGER: Wiegenlied, Op. 142, no. 1 Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano; Lia Piltti, soprano; Michael Raucheisen, piano. I Grandi Interpreti, IGI 385.

Schwarzkopf began her serious studies in Berlin in 1932, training first as a mezzo-soprano, then as a coloratura soprano. She had already embarked on her career when she met Maria Ivogün, who transformed her into a lyric soprano. These performances from the Berlin Radio in the early forties, may be the earliest recordings of Schwarzkopf; she was

then in her late twenties. They show not only the fruits of her work with Ivogün but the influence of Ivogün's husband, Michael Raucheisen. What Raucheisen did for music in Berlin during the war years might be a good subject for extended study. Various broadcast performances by a veritable parade of famous singers have recently been coming to light on records. Obviously he got them all exploring the byways of the lieder repertoire, for which we are now the richer. Lia Piltti was a Finnish soprano whose career was made in Germany and in Vienna. Had she not reached her prime during the war years and returned to Finland in 1944 she would undoubtedly be better known on this side of the world.

The hand of Raucheisen is easy to detect in this program. Loewe, to those who know him at all, was the great master of the art ballad, but the seventeen volumes of his collected songs contain a goodly proportion of more conventional lieder. A few of them are occasionally performed - Süsses Begräbnis, Canzonetta, Niemand hat's gesehn - but here are some lesser known examples. Perhaps not "great" songs, but neither are all of Schubert's. O süsse Mutter is a spinning song on the not unfamiliar theme of love interfering with the work in hand. It has a graphic spinning wheel in the piano part (not like Schubert's, however) and it goes like a whirlwind. Die Blume der Ergebnis is a lovely, simple song and Abendstunde and Frühling have charm. The duets - for once sung by equal voices - Sonnelicht, Liebesliedchen, März, Abschied - are quite spectacular in their interplay of voices, though they have no great musical significance. In Piltti, Schwarzkopf found the perfect match, for the voices are so alike one can hardly tell them apart. Granted such teamwork the music is great fun. I am afraid the Weber pieces have even less substance (and the composer is quoted as having a low opinion of them). Still, they are sung with such panache that they will give pleasure. As a kind of encore Schwarzkopf sings a lovely Wiegenlied of Reger (not Op.97, no.1 as labeled, but Op.142, no.1).

Philip L. Miller