

Lorraine Hunt Lieberson – Recital At Ravinia (2006)

Written by bluesever

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01. *Ruhe, Süßliebchen, im Schatten*, song for voice & piano (*Die schöne Magelone*), Op. 33/9
02. *Von ewiger Liebe ('Dunkel, wie dunkel in Wald und in Feld!')*, song for voice & piano, Op. 43/1
03. *La Lucrezia (O Numi Eterni)*, cantata for soprano & continuo, HWV 145: *O Numi eterni! / Già superbo del mio affanno*
04. *La Lucrezia (O Numi Eterni)*, cantata for soprano & continuo, HWV 145: *Ma voi forse nel cielo / Il suol che preme*
05. *La Lucrezia (O Numi Eterni)*, cantata for soprano & continuo, HWV 145: *A voi, padre, consorte / Già nel seno comincia compir*
06. *Chansons de Bilitis (3)*, song cycle for voice & piano, L. 90: *La Flûte der Pan*
07. *Chansons de Bilitis (3)*, song cycle for voice & piano, L. 90: *La chevelure*
08. *Chansons de Bilitis (3)*, song cycle for voice & piano, L. 90: *Le tombeau des naïades*
09. *Dans un bois solitaire*, song for voice & piano, K. 308 (K. 295b)
10. *Als Luise die Briefe ('Erzeugt von heisser Phantasie')*, song for voice & piano, K. 520
11. *Abendempfindung an Laura ('Abend ist's')*, song for voice & piano, K. 523
12. *Die ihr des unermesslichen Weltalls Schöpfer ehrt*, cantata for voice & piano, K. 619
13. *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, opera, HWV 17: Act 1. Duet. *Son nata a lagrimar*
14. *Deep River*
15. *Bagdad Cafe*, film score: *Calling Sou*

Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, mezzo-soprano
Peter Serkin, piano

Lorraine Hunt Lieberson's 2004 recital recorded live at the Ravinia Festival includes samples from the Baroque and Classical repertoire for which she is best known, as well as forays into territory less usual for her, including Romantic lieder, Impressionist chansons, and American

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popular song. These songs offer further proof, if any were needed, that Hunt Lieberson excelled in whatever she gave her attention to. With accompaniment by Peter Serkin, one of the most scrupulous and refined pianists of his generation, this recital is a stellar addition to the growing number of recorded performances that have been released since the singer's death in 2006. Hunt Lieberson was in absolutely top form for this recital, her voice limpid, luminous, radiant, and her interpretations characteristically profound in the piercingly honest emotion she brings to each work. The three middle-period Brahms songs are among the departures from her familiar territory, but the warmth and richness of her voice and the intensity of her performances are ideal for this repertoire. Her rapt serenity at the opening of "Unbewegte laue Luft" (Motionless balmy air) is a marvel of evocative text-painting. Debussy's *Trois Chansons de Bilitis* are also pieces that aren't generally associated with Hunt Lieberson (although late in her career, soon before this recording was made, she sang *Mélisande* in Boston and New York), but she brings to them an unerringly idiomatic understanding and an unmannered naturalness that go straight for the heart. In the duet from Handel's *Giulio Cesare* (with counter tenor Drew Minter), the desolate, intimate sense of grief for which she was renowned in Baroque repertoire is on full display, and that sentiment allied with a nobility and a pulse-quickening fury make her performance of excerpts from the composer's early cantata *La Lucrezia* an emotional powerhouse. "Deep River" was a popular encore of hers, and she follows it here with an understated, melting performance of Bob Telson's song "Calling You," from the film *Bagdad Café*. The sound is open and natural, with a few ancillary noises that are a reminder that this is a live performance, but that aren't intrusive enough to be much of a problem. ---Stephen eddins, Rovi

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