

## Lortzing - Der Wildschütz (1963/1990)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 21 May 2018 14:26 -

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Disk: 1 1.Overtüre 1. Der Wildschütz (1990 - Remaster): Overtüre 2.Act I: Es lebe das Brautpaar! So munter und so fröhlich 3.Act I: ABCD der junggesellenstand tut weh 4.Act I: Ein Schreiben vom Herm Grafen 5.Act I: Dialog 6.Act I: Laß Er doch hören! 7.Act I: Auf des Lebens raschen Wogen 8.Act I: Dialog 9.Act I: Was meint ihr, lieber Freund 10.Act I: Dialog 11.Act I: Seht dort den muntern Jäger 12.Act I: Dialog 13.Act I: Lasset uns nach Hause gehen 14.Act I: Bin ein schlichtes Kind vom Lande 15.Act II: Strahl der Sonne, schönstes Licht 16.Act II: Dialog 17.Act II: Bleiben soll ich und stets sie sehen 18.Act II: Dialog

Disk: 2

1.Act II: Was seh' ich? Mir aus den Augen! 2.Act II: Dialog 3.Act II: Ihr Weib? - Mein teures Weib! 4.Act II: Dialog 5.Act II: Ich habe Numro Eins 6.Act II: Dialog 7.Act II: Fünftausend Taler! 8.Act III: Wie frendlich strahlt die helle Morgensonne-Heiterkeit und Fröhlichkeit 9.Act III: Dialog 10.Act III: Um die Laube zu schmücken 11.Act III: Dialog 12.Act III: Komm liebes Gretchen 13.Act III: Dialog 14.Act III: Was seh' ich? - Alle Teufel! 15.Act III: Kann es im Erdenleben wohl Schön'res noch geben 16.Act III: Unser Herr lebe hoch 17.Act III: O du, der du die Tugend selber bist

Graf von Eberbach - Hermann Prey (baritone) Die Gräfin, seine Gemahlin - Gisela Litz (contralto) Baron Kronthal, Bruder der Gräfin - Fritz Wunderlich (tenor) Baronin Freimann, Witwe, Schwester des Grafen - Anneliese Rothenberger (soprano) Nanette, Kammermädchen - Gertrud Vordemfelde (mezzo-soprano) Baculus, Schulmeister - Fritz Ollendorff (bass) Gretchen, seine Braut - Lotte Schädle(soprano) Pancratius, Haushofmeister - Walter Ehrengut (bass) Ein Gast - Karl-Heinz Schmidpeter Ein Kinderchor Chor der Bayerischen Staatsoper München Orchester der Bayerischen Staatsoper München Robert Heger - conductor rec: 26-31.V, 1963 Bürgerbräu München

Albert Lortzing (1801-1851) is too little known outside of Germany where his operas have remained ever popular. Lortzing's works reside firmly in the German singspiel tradition started by Mozart and continued by Weber, Beethoven (in Leonore), and Nicolai. Der Wildschütz is regarded as Lortzing's masterpiece.

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Der Wildschütz, composed in 1842, is a delightful pastoral comedy that hinges on mistaken identities between the peasantry and the nobility. The opera boasts a famous overture, an equally famous aria, “Auf des Lebens raschen Wogen,” outstandingly sung by Anneliese Rothenberger, and wonderful ensembles and choruses often reminiscent of Mozart. Robert Heger leads a distinguished cast in this rich-sounding 1964 recording. Along with Rothenberger, Hermann Prey is excellent and Fritz Wunderlich is, well, Fritz Wunderlich. I suspect that collectors who are not even partial to Lortzing will want this recording because of the tenor's contribution, but Der Wildschütz is an opera that belongs in every collection.

I would enthusiastically recommend Der Wildschütz and Fritz Wunderlich, especially, as an ideal introduction to Albert Lortzing. ---James Camner, Fanfare, [arkivmusic.com](http://arkivmusic.com)

It is not too hard to understand why, despite its enduring popularity in Germany owing to its plethora of good tunes and high spirits, Lortzing's “komische Oper” - or, more properly, “Spieloper” – has failed to travel beyond the borders of German-speaking countries. The preponderance of dialogue presents an obstacle unless, as with many productions of “Die Zauberflöte”, it is cut. Whereas Mozart's “Singspiel” can survive that treatment, the speech in “Der Wildschütz” is necessary to clarify the twists of a labyrinthine plot stuffed with improbable cross-dressing disguises and impenetrable hidden kinships.

I confess that I am inclined to ignore the niceties of the plotline and sit back to enjoy the melodies and an authentic singing style emerging from the performers' immersion in the traditions of German operetta –although, insofar as these distinctions matter, there is a case to be made that “Der Wildschütz” is not an operetta but a proper comic opera the equal of “Don Pasquale”.

The first performance of Lortzing's masterpiece was in Leipzig on New Year's Eve, 1842. It is in the German Romantic mould more closely related to its predecessors, Weber's “Der Freischütz” and Marschner's “Der Vampyr”, premiered in 1821 and 1828 respectively, but it is of course much more light-hearted and also borrows, especially in its vocal ensembles, elements from “Die Entführung aus dem Serail”, Mozart being the composer Lortzing most admired. The kinship of titles with Weber's opera is co-incidental, “Wildschütz” meaning “poacher” as in “one who illegally shoots wild game”, and “Freischütz” meaning ... well, no-one has ever satisfactorily or neatly translated it but “The Marksman”, “The Freeshooter” - yuk – and “The Trial Shot” are

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some attempts.

There are not too many extant recordings in the catalogue; this, the latest, is already thirty years old, being a bargain edition from the Brilliant label of the 1980-82 recording which first appeared on Berlin Classics; the highlights disc has already been favourably reviewed by MusicWeb International colleague Bob Farr. There is another likely-looking version, presumably from the 1960s, on Eurodisc and conducted by Wilhelm Schüchter, starring Renate Holm, Erika Köth, Gottlob Frick, Rudolf Schock and Marcel Cordes and also a live Orfeo performance conducted by Heinz Wallberg with another attractive cast including Irmgard Seefried, Waldemar Kmentt, Renate Holm (again), Hilde Rössel-Majdan, Georg Volker and Karl Dönch but I have heard neither of those and they are not easily available. Thus the main competition remains the 1963 EMI recording starring Anneliese Rothenberger, Hermann Prey, Giesela Litz, Fritz Ollendorff and, above all, Fritz Wunderlich. This has appeared in various EMI guises on Electrola, EMI Studio and, most recently, EMI Classics, in a neat cardboard box. Neither Brilliant nor EMI provides a physical libretto but you can download one from their websites.

As you may see from the above summary of recordings, “Der Wildschütz” has attracted an impressive roster of native, post-war German singers to sing it and it’s not hard to hear why. In addition to the melodic inventiveness, the opera offers the opportunity for a true singer-actor to deliver the comic dialogue in accents ranging from the exaggerated, drawling Hochdeutsch of the Countess to the Saxon dialect of the steward Pancratius. To the English-speaking listener, there is an element of “G&S in Lederhosen” about the patter songs – and Lortzing has Sullivan’s gift for a catchy tune, too. ---Ralph Moore, musicweb-international.com

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