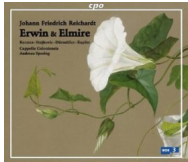


Johann Friedrich Reichardt - Erwin und Elmire (2013)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 27 August 2015 15:49 -

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DISC 1 1 Erwin und Elmire: Overture 00:05:28 2 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Duet: Wie schon und wie herrlich (Rosa, Valerio) 00:03:01 3 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Recitative: Ich drucke meine Freude dor, Geliebter (Rosa, Valerio) 00:01:48 4 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Aria: Ein Schauspiel fur Gotter (Valerio) 00:02:17 5 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Wie um uns ein Frühlingswelter (Rosa, Valerio) 00:00:53 6 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Accompagnato: Doch lass uns auch an ansre Freundin denken (Rosa, Valerio) 00:01:22 7 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Trio: Liebes Kind, du siehst uns wieder! (Elmire, Rosa, Valerio) 00:02:47 8 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Accompagnato: O susse Freundin! (Elmire, Rosa, Valerio) 00:03:14 9 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Trio: Ein Veilchen aud fer Wiese stand (Elmire, Rosa, Valerio) 00:01:36 10 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Accompagnato: Und dieses Madchen Elmire (Elmire, Rosa, Valerio) 00:01:38 11 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Aria: Erwin! O schau, du wirst gerochen (Elmire) 00:02:38 12 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Accompagnato: Ich komme hier mir uberflussig vor (Elmire, Rosa, Valerio) 00:04:40 13 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Trio: Ich muss, ich muss ihn sehen (Elmira, Rosa, Valerio) 00:02:39 14 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Accompagnato: Komm mit, Geliebte! (Elmira, Rosa, Valerio) 00:01:10 15 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Aria: Nein! Nein! Nein, nein, ich glaube nicht (Elmire) 00:01:41 16 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Accompagnato: So ist es denn nicht moglich (Valerio) 00:00:49 17 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Aria: Horet alle mich, ihr Gotter (Valerio) 00:03:02 18 Erwin und Elmire: Act I: Duet: Horst du, er hat geschworen (Elmire, Rosa) 00:03:44

DISC 2 1 Erwin und Elmire: Act II: Aria: Ihr verbluhet, susse Rosen (Erwin) 00:06:00 2 Erwin und Elmire: Act II: Accompagnato: O theurer Mann (Erwin) 00:00:49 3 Erwin und Elmire: Act II: Aria: Welch ein Lisper, welch ein Schauer (Erwin) 00:02:42 4 Erwin und Elmire: Act II: Accompagnato: Nein, es ist nicht genung (Valerio) 00:01:26 5 Erwin und Elmire: Act II: Accompagnato: Mein herz ist nun von aller Welt entfernt? (Erwin, Valerio) 00:03:52 6 Erwin und Elmire: Act II: Accompagnato: Hier ist der Platz! (Rosa) 00:01:13 7 Erwin und Elmire: Act II: Aria: Kannst du nicht besanftigt werden? (Rosa) 00:02:27 8 Erwin und Elmire: Act II: Accompagnato: Du jammerst mich (Rosa, Valerio) 00:01:17 9 Erwin und Elmire: Act II: Accompagnato: Erwin! Erwin! (Erwin, Valerio) 00:02:33 10 Erwin und Elmire: Act II: Aria: Mit vollen Athemzugen saug' ich, natur aus dir (Elmire) 00:06:34 11 Erwin und Elmire: Act II: Accompagnato: Welch eine Klage (Elmire, Valerio) 00:01:34 12 Erwin und Elmire: Act II: Lied: Sieh mich, Heil'ger, wie wie ich bin (Elmire) 00:02:06 13 Erwin und Elmire: Act II: Duet: Sie liebt mich! Sie liebt mich! (Erwin, Valerio) 00:02:03 14 Erwin und Elmire: Act II: Finale: Es ist nicht weit! (Elmire, Rosa, Erwin) 00:02:39

Simone Kermes
(Elmire), Johanna Stojkovic (Rosa), soprano Jörg Dürmüller (Erwin), tenor Michael Kupfer (Valerio), baritone Cappella Coloniensis Andreas Spering – conductor

The German composer Johann Friedrich Reichardt was a great admirer of the poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. In the 1780s he started to set some of his poems to music and in 1793 he put together the first of a planned series of six volumes with music on texts by Goethe, part of which was the 'Singspiel' Erwin und Elmire. This piece was already set to music by Johann André and had considerable success in Berlin in 1775. At the time it was a piece in one act. In 1787 Goethe had been in Italy, and had reworked several of his texts, among which Erwin und Elmire, which was extended into a two act play.

Reichardt was the son of a lutenist, and played the lute himself, as well as the violin and the keyboard, and he also acted as a singer. From 1771 he travelled extensively, meeting prominent representatives of the cultural life in Germany: composers like Franz Benda, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, J.A.P. Schulz, Hiller and Naumann and poets like Klopstock, Ramler and Lessing. Around 1780 he established friendships with Klopstock, Herder and Moses Mendelssohn, and his home in Berlin became a meeting-place for artists and intellectuals. In 1783 he founded the Concert Spirituel in Berlin, during which his own music was performed, together with works by Handel and Haydn.

In 1775 he became Kapellmeister of the Royal Opera in Berlin, where from 1786, under Friedrich Wilhelm II, he got the opportunity to perform his own dramatic works. In 1791 he was given a three year 'sabbatical' which he used to travel to France. When he came back he published his impressions, showing a pretty strong sympathy for the French revolution. This led to his dismissal as Kapellmeister of the opera, and also troubled his relationship with Goethe. The next years he lived in his country estate of Giebichenstein, where the Grimm brothers, Schleiermacher, Schlegel and Novalis were his regular guests.

The political differences between Goethe and Reichardt didn't undermine their artistic cooperation, though. For Goethe the perspective of his texts to be set to music by a composer of Reichardt's standing was too tempting. It was in 1793 that Reichardt finished his composition of Erwin und Elmire. But it took a long time before this work was performed in staged form. As far as we know only two concert performances took place in Berlin in 1793, and these were positively received by the audience.

The story of Erwin und Elmire is simple: Elmire deeply regrets that she and her friend Erwin have drifted apart due to her moods. The couple Valerio and Rosa are comforting her, but soon

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Rosa finds Valerio's enthusiasm a little suspicious. As a result the same thing happens to her which has happened to Elmire before: her friend leaves her.

In the second act Valerio meets Erwin, who has taken the place of an old and wise hermit. When the two girls are also coming to the hermit to seek his advice the two friends decide to play a trick on them in order to examine what their true feelings for them are. In the end both couples are happily reunited.

This may seem a little predictable, and Goethe's story doesn't move very quickly and isn't overly dramatic. It has a lot of poetic quality, though, and the characterisation of the protagonists is rather good. What makes this Singspiel really well worth hearing is the music by Reichardt.

Both acts are divided into recitatives, *accompagnati* and arias as well as some duets and *terzets*, but they are 'through-composed': all sections merge into each other without interruption, which strongly enhances the pace of the story.

In 1794 a critic wrote that it needed "a genius of Reichardt's standing to set the great poet's verses so fittingly to music without becoming flat or boring in the lengthy recitatives." Another writer told a friend that "every aria breathed the most profound expression, every tone love or sublime feeling or romantic enthusiasm."

One can only agree with this statement. The music by Reichardt is very good: colourful, dramatic or tender when needed. One of the dramatic highlights is Rosa's aria "Nein! Nein! Nein, nein, ich glaube nicht" which is a kind of rage aria, with strong dynamic contrasts in the orchestra.

Remarkable is also Erwin's aria at the beginning of the second act: "Ihr verblühet süsse Rosen" (You wither, sweet roses) which is introduced by 2 horns, 2 bassoons, low strings and fortepiano. Erwin then sings a song accompanied by the fortepiano. So what we see here is a mixture of aria and 'Klavierlied', which is a quite original concept. Another highlight is the meeting between Elmire and the 'hermit' (Erwin), when she acknowledges her guilt in the 'Lied' "Sieh mich, Heil'ger wie ich bin" (Look at me, holy man, as I am), in which she is accompanied by strings playing *pizzicato*, and after a short and strong *accompagnato* by Elmire Erwin bursts into jubilation: "Sie liebt mich" (She loves me).

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The performance does full justice to the score: all singers are very well suited to their respective roles. In the early stages of the play Rosa seems a little naive, which Johanna Stojkovic doesn't fully match, but later on she does very well in portraying her anger.

The playing of the orchestra leaves nothing to be desired. In particular in a piece like this the use of period instruments seems to be a requisite for a convincing performance, bringing the right amount of intimacy and warmth to this romantic story.

This is a first-class performance and can be strongly recommended as an ideal way to get acquainted to this musical genre. --- Johan van Veen, www.musicweb-international.com

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