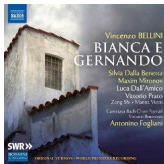


Bellini - Bianca e Gernando (2016)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 28 August 2017 16:10 -

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Act I 01. *Ten fuggi orrida notte!-Questa è mia reggia!* [Live] - Zong Shi 02. *A tanto duol* [Live] - Maxim Mironov 03. *Uggero sol, non altri meco resti-Al seno-Viscardo, or ora al porto* [Live] - Maxim Mironov 04. *Estinto! ...Che ascoltai!* [Live] - Vittorio Prato 05. *È quegli il mio signor* [Live] - Marina Viotti 06. *Trio. Di Gernando son le cifre* [Live] - Vittorio Prato 07. *All'annunzio feral* [Live] - Marina Viotti 08. *Viva Bianca! Viva ognora-Viva!* [Live] - Poznań Camerata Bach Choir 09. *Miei fidi amici* [Live] - Silvia Dalla Benetta 10. *Per lui che in sen racchiude* [Live] - Silvia Dalla Benetta 11. *Mira, Bianca* [Live] - Vittorio Prato 12. *Lieto apparve questo giorno* [Live] - Silvia Dalla Benetta Act II 01. *Che vuoi tu dirmi?-Viscardo a te parlò?* [Live] - Maxim Mironov 02. *Allor, che notte avanza* [Live] - Vittorio Prato 03. *Ove son? Che m'avvenne?* [Live] - Silvia Dalla Benetta 04. *Sorgi, o padre* [Live] - Silvia Dalla Benetta 05. *Da te chiamato, or dianzi-T'inoltra* [Live] - Mar Campo 06. *No! Mia suora, più non sei* [Live] - Maxim Mironov 07. *Mi lasciate! ...Ah crudeli!* [Live] - Luca Dall'Amico 08. *Da gelido sudore* [Live] - Luca Dall'Amico 09. *Ecco la tomba che rinserra il padre!* [Live] - Maxim Mironov 10. *Fra tante pene e tante* [Live] - Maxim Mironov 11. *Quai colpi!-Discendi-Mora l'usurpator!* [Live] - Maxim Mironov 12. *Or che stringo al seno i figli* [Live] - Luca Dall'Amico

Bianca - Silvia Dalla Benetta, Gernando - Maxim Mironov, Carlo - Luca Dall'Amico, Filippo Vittorio Prato, Clemente - Zong Shi, Viscardo - Marina Viotti, Uggero - Gheorghe Vlad, Eloisa - Mar Campo. Camerata Bach Choir, Poznań, Virtuosi Brunensis (Karel Mitáš, Artistic Director), Antonino Fogliani, Conductor. Recorded in concert at the Trinkhalle, Bad Wildbad, Germany, 15th and 23th July 2016 for the XXVIII ROSSINI IN WILDBAD Festival. World premiere.

Such was the success of Adelson e Salvini composed for his fellow students in Naples, the young Bellini was asked to write a work for the great San Carlo theatre. He was just twenty-four at the time, and responded to such an opportunity with a highly charged and dramatic two act opera, Bianca e Fernando. The booklet, that comes with this new release, then rather confuses me, as I have always understood that its original name was only temporarily changed to Bianca e Gernando out of respect for the recent death of King Ferdinand. So what we have here is, I believe, Bellini's original score of that 1826 opera, Bianca e Fernando, based on Carlo Roti's drama Bianca e Fernando alla tomba di Carlo IV, Duca di Agrigento. It is a basic opera plot

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used in so many different guises where the ageing ruler was deposed by a usurper while his son is abroad, the pretender intending to marry the daughter of the former ruler to make his rule complete. Here it comes to a happy ending with the return of his disguised son with his many soldiers, thus saving both his incarcerated father and his sister. In this performance, the son, Fernando, is given the name Gernando. There was also a later revision premiered in 1828, but in this release of a concert performance at the 2016 'Rossini in Wildbad Festival', we do return to the actual score used in 1826. Truth to tell, the opera's neglect has probably done Bellini a favour, for it is couched in the operatic conventions of the previous era, and does not fit into his place as the begetter of the Italian Romantic era in opera. As is usual with this annual festival, the cast is largely a mix of Italian and East European singers, the imposing tenor, Maxim Mironov, taking the highly taxing role of Gernando, singing a massive and challenging aria not long after the opera begins. I am also taken by the baritone, Vittorio Prato, who sounds too pleasing for the nasty usurper, Filippo, and he too has a long aria when his voiced has hardly warmed. In the role of Bianca, the young coloratura, Silvia Dalla Benetta, does not make her first entry until the finale to the first act, and then she does not have a particularly rewarding aria. Heard to much better effect in the second act where she realises Gernando has come to save her from marrying Filippo. In the role of Clemente, the aid to Gernando, Zong Shi is a lightweight bass, while the other bass, Luca Dall'Amico, in the cameo role of the father, has problems with intonation in his recitative and brief aria. The chorus sing with suitable vigour, though I have heard the Virtuosi Brunensis in better form for the conductor, Antonino Fogliani. Pity they didn't ask the audience not to applaud during acts, but let us be very grateful to Southwest German Radio for this recording of a rarity—whatever its name. --- David Denton, naxos.com

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