Domenico Scarlatti - L'Ottavia Restituita al Trono (2008)



1. Ottavia Restituita al Trono 1 2. Ottavia Restituita al Trono 2 - 3 Nerone - Filippo Mineccia (contralto) Ottavia - Yolanda Auyanet (soprano) Poppea - Maria Grazia Schiavo (soprano) Floro - Maria Ercolano (soprano) Rosilda - Valentina Varriale (soprano) Balisa - Giuseppe de Vittorio (tenor) Dorillo - Paolo López (sopranist) Cappella della pieta de Turchini Antonnio Florio – conductor Basilique Notre-Dame de Beaune, July 5th, 2008

Antonio Florio rediscovers "Ottavia restituita al trono" written for Naples in 1703 by an eighteen-year-old Domenico Scarlatti. So in addition to a stunning line-up of singers, the Beaune production also gives us a long-forgotten score. An outstanding Maria Grazia Schiavo, who proved her high level of musical maturity, was flanked by the superb, albeit very young, counter-tenor Filippo Mineccia. The show was warmly and enthusiastically received by the public.

The Beaune Festival is never short of novelty. Director Anne Blanchard is always on the lookout for new titles and fresh performers. With "Ottavia restituita al trono" she has hit the bull's eye. Without a Palermo festival, the opus of the Scarlatti family – certainly Alessandro, but also his son Domenico – is waiting for the reappraisal it deserves. In fact Domenico Scarlatti wrote the score for "Octavia", which Antonio has brought out into the open and in part reconstructed, producing it for Beaune with the Festival of San Sebastian and the centre for early music of Naples. It is a sort of sequel to "L'incoronazione di Poppea" or, better still, a variation of it with a finale that is to Ottavia's advantage: in Scarlatti's opera, Nero keeps his bride and renounces Poppaea. Already at the age of eighteen, Domenico Scarlatti was flaunting his knowledge of musical writing by using a broad range of affetti with which he varied the arias. Quite dramatically, the result is an opera that never slackens. Yet the real discovery (or rediscovery) were the singers. First and foremost, Maria Grazia Schiavo was beyond recognition, her voice today as intense as ever; she lived her part to the full with a sonorous timbre of full-bodied low notes and graceful high notes, giving us a sensual and highly dramatic Poppaea. Schiavo was superbly flanked by Maria Ercolano and Valentina Varriale. By contrast Yolanda Auyanet did not

appear entirely at ease with her part. Then came the real novelty: the two young voices of sopranist Paolo Lopez and counter-tenor Filippo Mineccia. Florio seems to have changed idea about these voice types, for which we are grateful: Mineccia treated us with a Nero of variegated musical colour, demonstrating his agility and highly musical phrasing. A roaring success for a justifiably enthusiastic public. ---Alessandro Di Profio, giornaledellamusica.it

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