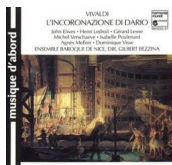


Antonio Vivaldi – L'Incoronazione di Dario (1997)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 14 June 2011 22:18 - Last Updated Wednesday, 25 June 2014 10:58

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Disc: 1 1. Ov - Ens Baroque De Nice/Gilbert Bezzina 2. Act I, Scene 1: 'Figlie Tergete I Lumi'/Act I, Scene 2: 'Che Vidi Oime!' - John Elwes/Gerard Lesne/Henri Ledroit/Michel Verschaeve 3. Act I, Scene 3: 'Dario Intro'/Act I, Scene 4: 'Di Ciro Il Gran Monarca' - Dominique Visse/John Elwes/Gerard Lesne/Henri Ledroit 4. Act I, Scene 5: 'Languire O Dio Mi Sento' - Henri Ledroit/Dominique Visse [play](#) 5. Act I, Scene 6: 'Flora'/Act I, Scene 7: 'Seguire Argene Io Devo' - Gerard Lesne/Dominique Visse 6. Act I, Scene 8: 'Udite, O Persi'/Act I, Scene 9: 'Ola Che Fai?'/Act I, Scene 10: Guerrieri, Ah... - Isabelle Poulénard/Agnes Mellon/John Elwes 7. Act I, Scene 11: 'Quanto Costui S'inganna'/Act I, Scene 12: 'Stolte Pretele' - John Elwes/Agnes Mellon/Isabelle Poulénard 8. Act I, Scene 13: 'Cosi Mi Sprezza Il Traditor?'/Act I, Scene 14: 'Ne L'alme Nostre' - Isabelle Poulénard/Michel Verschaeve/Gerard Lesne 9. Act I, Scene 14: 'Niceno Al Suon, Lo Vo Seguit' - Michel Verschaeve/Gerard Lesne
Disc: 2

1. Act I, Scene 14: 'L'occhio, Il Labro, Il Seno Il Core'/Act I, Scene 15: 'Niceno, Io Qui Ne Vengo' - Gerard Lesne/Michel Verschaeve/Henri Ledroit 2. Act I, Scene 16: 'L'Ambizion D'Argene, E Di Statira' - Michel Verschaeve 3. Act II, Scene 1: 'Cessa Tiranno Amor'/Act II, Scene 2: 'Signora' - John Elwes/Henri Ledroit/Dominique Visse 4. Act II, Scene 3: 'Verra Ne Le Mie Stanze'/Act II, Scene 4: 'Com E Costei Bizzara/Act II, Scene... - Henri Ledroit/Dominique Visse/Gerard Lesne 5. Act II, Scene 5: 'Lo Spietano, E Crudo Amor'/Act II, Scene 6: 'Lampa Eterna' - Dominique Visse/John Elwes/Agnes Mellon/Isabelle Poulénard/Michel Verschaeve 6. Act II, Scene 7: 'Ela Federe Io Deggio?'/Act II, Scene 8: 'Signora; Arpago Io Son;' - Gerard Lesne/Michel Verschaeve/Isabelle Poulénard 7. Act II, Scene 9: 'La Principessa Ho A Fronte'/Act II, Scene 10: 'Si; Ma Il Nodo E Ingiusto'... - Gerard Lesne/Michel Verschaeve/Agnes Mellon/Isabelle Poulénard 8. Act II, Scene 12: 'E Ancor Amo L'ingrato?' - Isabelle Poulénard [play](#)
Disc: 3

1. Act II, Scene 13: 'Dario Amato, E Dove Sei'/Act II, Scene 14: 'Vieni, Ed Affretta Il Passo'... - Henri Ledroit/Dominique Visse/John Elwes/Gerard Lesne/Michel Verschaeve 2. Act II, Scene 15: 'Sara Tua La Bella Sposa'/Act II, Scene 16: 'Da I Primi Albori Al Tramonta' - Henri Ledroit/Gerard Lesne/John Elwes/Michel Verschaeve 3. Act II, Scene 17: 'E Cosi Mi Lusinghi'/Act II, Scene 18: 'No No Chi Mi Rapisce' - John Elwes/Michel Verschaeve 4. Act III, Scene 1: 'Col Splendor Del Sacro Alloro' - Agnes Mellon/Isabelle Poulénard/Gerard Lesne 5. Act III, Scene 2: 'Cauti E Fidi Eseguite'/Act III, Scene 3: 'Pure Al Fin S'e Partita' - Gerard Lesne/Henri Ledroit/Michel Verschaeve/Dominique Visse/John Elwes 6. Act III, Scene 6: 'Misera, E Non S'avvede'/Act III, Scene 7: 'Son Stanca; E L'Orto

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*Ameno'/Act... - Agnes Mellon/Gerard Lesne/Michel Verschaeve/
Dominique Visse 7. Act III, Scene 10: 'Trovai Flora Cola Per La Boscaglia' - Gerard Lesne/John
Elwes [play](#) 8. Act III, Scene 11: 'Sola, O Popoli, Io Resto, E La Maggiore'/Act III, Scene 12:
'Vergine Altera... - Henri Ledroit/Isabelle Poulenard 9. Sc. Ul.: 'Meritato Castigo' - John
Elwes/Gerard Lesne/Isabelle Poulenard/Agnes Mellon/Agnes Mellon Dario, le
Fantôme de Ciro - John Elwes Statira - Gérard Lesne Argene - Henri Ledroit Niceno, l'Oracle
d'Apollo - Michel Verschaeve Alinda - Isabelle Poulenard Oronte - Agnés Mellon Arpago -
Isabelle Poulenard Flora - Dominique Visse Le Fantôme de Ciro - John Elwes L'Oracle
d'Apollo - Michel Verschaeve Ensemble Baroque de Nice Gilbert Bezzina - conductor, 1986*

This opera dates from very early on in Vivaldi's career, so it is a sort of a transition work between a developing composer incorporating the forms and musical language around him, and the mature Vivaldi with his distinct harmonic and rhythmic style. The libretto also harks back to an earlier period, with its long stretches of recitative, the varying structure of the arias and the use of comic characters within a serious work. Finally, this particular recording was made in 1986, the earlier days of the "Historically Informed Performance" movement, yet does not suffer from some of the more overtly "academic", dry interpretations of that period. None of this should dissuade potential listeners used to contemporary conductors such as Alessandrini, Spinosi or Sardelli recording some of Vivaldi's later, more mature operas such "L'Olimpiade" or the Orlando operas. It's simply a different animal, and in our own contemporary recording context it is a refreshing change of pace. For starters, the Ensemble Baroque de Nice plays with a much thicker sound, in orchestral passages as well as in continuo accompaniments in the recitatives. It's definitely a "period instrument" sound, but the larger orchestra and more voluminous texture of the strings and continuo (with booming bass lines handled by bassoon) are a contrast to more incisive, scrappier timbres of more recent groups. In addition, everything is handled at a much more gradual clip, and the relaxed (but never crawling) tempos allow improved pronunciation of the words and more room to show off the beautiful sounds of the singers, orchestra and occasional instrumental soloist (such as the rich, grainy gamba solo that starts Act I's final aria). This approach is particularly illuminating in the recitatives: proof positive that recitatives can still be music and not just monotone expressions of half-sung dialog.

The cast of mezzos, sopranos countertenors and tenors is uniformly excellent, blessed with clear, lyrical voices. Though the booklet does NOT provide an English translation of the Italian libretto (only English paraphrases of the action), Italian speakers can understand the words through the singers' clear diction, and English speakers will understand the emotions and theatricality through their emotive vocal delivery. As stated, the Ensemble Baroque de Nice under Gilbert Bezzina's direction is an aural tapestry, with a lush, passionate sound that allows the listener to feel how Vivaldi uses his music to move the text along (or as a beautiful sound to simply luxuriate in). The firm, grandiose brass are sprinkled throughout, and when we start to

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hear Vivaldi's signature sequences and percussive rhythm the strings are particularly powerful (though not as "transparent" as some other period groups). In contrast to the faster, more visceral readings of contemporary recordings, this is a very "grand" account of a transitional stage in the composer's development. Yet a part from being a curiosity or another way to approach the music, it's simply an exciting, beautiful and productive set. Highly recommended! ---M. Figg

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