

Great Voices of the Opera (2011) CD4 - Lotte Lehmann



4-1 –Lotte Lehmann *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg: O Sachs, Mein Freund* 2:26 4-2 –Lotte Lehmann *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg: Gut'n Abend Meister! ... Doch Starb Eure Frau* 8:52 4-3 –Lotte Lehmann *Tannhäuser: Dich Teure Halle* 3:44 4-4 –Lotte Lehmann *Eugen Onegin: Letter Scene* 3:37 4-5 –Lotte Lehmann *Die Lustigen Weiber von Windsor* 6:51 4-6 –Lotte Lehmann *Der Freischütz: Wie Nahte Mir Der Schlummer ... Leise, Fromme Weise* 8:41 4-7 –Lotte Lehmann *Oberon: Ozean, Du Ungeheuer* 8:00 4-8 –Lotte Lehmann *Lohengrin: Einsam In Trüben Tagen* 3:33 4-9 –Lotte Lehmann *Lohengrin: Euch Lüften, Die Mein Klagen* 3:38 4-10 –Lotte Lehmann *Mignon: Elle Est Là, Près de Lui* 4:00 4-11 –Lotte Lehmann *Mignon: Connais-tu Le Pays?* 3:41 4-12 –Lotte Lehmann *Faust: Il était Un Roi de Thule* 3:58 4-13 –Lotte Lehmann *Faust: Il m'aime* 2:29

The celebrated German-born American soprano, Lotte Lehmann (1888 - 1976), was encouraged by her middle class father in practical careers, but she was determined to study singing. After some disastrous experiences, she finally found a suitable teacher in Mathilde Mallinger and after less than a year of study with her, landed an apprentice-level contract with the Hamburg Opera in 1910. At first clumsy and inept, she quickly moved to important roles and in 1914 sang for the first time at the Vienna Court Opera. It was also in 1914 that Lotte Lehmann made the first of her over 500 recordings.

In Vienna Lotte Lehmann found her true artistic home. Richard Strauss heard her sing as an understudy for the role of the Composer in his opera *Ariadne auf Naxos* and chose her to sing its world premiere. Thereafter she sang premiers of other Strauss operas as well as Vienna premiers of Puccini. Her total opera roles: 93!

During her years in Vienna Lotte Lehmann began to sing Lieder. Though she claimed later that she didn't do justice to this demanding art at this point of her development, she did record

Lieder at that time, and despite the corny sounding orchestral accompaniments, Lehmann sounds natural and unaffected. Her recordings of Wagner's *Die Walküre* and *Der Rosenkavalier* by Strauss were held in high esteem by critics of her day and are regarded as classics in our own time.

In 1934 Lotte Lehmann sang her debut at the Met in her favourite role: Sieglinde in *Die Walküre*. Problems with the Nazis had prevented her from singing for years in Germany, and when Austria was annexed in 1938, Lehmann left, concentrating her opera career at the Met and singing and recording more Lieder than previously. These recordings demonstrate high refinement of Lieder singing, rarely matched.

In 1914 Lotte Lehmann sang for the first time in London and was, by her final performance there in 1938, considered to be one of the greatest singing actresses of all time. She also appeared regularly (1926-1937) at the Salzburg festivals conducted by Clemens Krauss, Schalk, and Arturo Toscanini. Lieder recitals there paired Lehmann with 'pianist' Bruno Walter.

Lotte Lehmann's career in the USA continued during the war, mostly in concert performances and recordings. In 1951 she gave her final concerts and retired to an active teaching career, which she followed almost until her death in 1976.

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