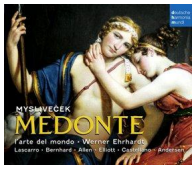
Joseph Myslivеček – Medonte (2012)



Disc: 1 *1. Sinfonia 2. Deh S'affretti Astri Tiranni (No. 1: Aria) 3. Come O Signore? Alto Silenzio Intorno Tutta Ingombra la Reggia (Recitativo Scena I) 4. Merta Gli Allori Al Crine (No. 2: Aria) 5. Misero, Che Faro! (Recitativo Scena II) 6. FRÀ GL' Affanii Oh Dio (No. 3: Aria) 7. Si Lagrimoso Arsace? (Recitativo Scena III) 8. Chi È Presso Del Soglio (No. 4: Aria) 9. Marcia (No. 5) 10. Questo, Che Vedi, O Sposa È Il Regno Tuo (Recitativo Scena Iv) 11. Al Caro Ben Vicina (No. 6: Aria) 12. Prence, Vane, E Disponi L'apparato, la Pompa (Recitativo Scena V) 13. E' Che Vuol Dire, Evandro la Mestizia in Selene? (Recitativo Scena Vi) 14. Pensa Che Sol Per Poco (No. 7: Aria) 15. In Libertade Alfine Respirar Qui Poss'io (Recitativo Scena Vii) 16. Tu Parli Di Morire? (No. 8: Scena E Duetto)* Disc: 2 *1. Principessa T'inganni (Recitativo Scena I, Act II) 2. Vedrò Per Sempre in Calma (No. 9: Aria) 3. Forse M'ingannerò (Recitativo Scena II) 4. Quanto Sai, Quanto Vedi (Recitativo Scena III) 5. Se Vuoi Dell'indegno (No. 10: Aria) 6. Si Chiuda Pur Nel Petto Per Poco Il Mio Furor (Recitativo Scena Iv) 7. Ah Son Perduto! (Recitativo Scena V) 8. Serba Costante Il Core (No. 11: Aria) 9. Principessa, Cotanto Confuse Io Son (Recitativo Scena Vi) 10. Dove, Ahi Dove Son Io? (NR. 12: Recitativo Ed Aria) 11. Tu Sei Salva Alma Mia (Recitativo Scena Vii) 12. Marcia (No. 13) 13. Di Vassallo Al Dover, Signor (Recitativo Scena Viii) 14. Cedere È Forza, O Cara, Al Rigor Del Destin (No. 14: Scena E Rondo) 15. Evandro, Evandro... Ah Non Partir (Recitativo Scena Ix) 16. Vedrai Se Un Fido Core (No. 15: Aria) 17. Pur Troppo Il SÒ, Che Invano Io Mi Lusingo (Recitativo Scena X) 18. Chi Vide Mai Di Quella Più Ostinata Costanza (Recitativo Scena Xi) 19. Pietosi Dei, Quanto VI Deggio (Recitativo Scena Xii) 20. Perfidi, Al Mio Furore Non Spate Involarvi (Recitativo Scena Xiii) 21. Tremate, Empi Tremate (No. 16: Terzetto) 22. Ecco Sciolti (Recitativo Scena I, Act III) 23. Perfidi, I Vostri Lacci Furo Spezzati Invan (Recitativo Scena II) 24. Perfidi, Io Sciologo Il Freno (No. 17: Aria) 25. Vadasi (Recitativo Scena III) 26. Sciogli, O Cara, Un Dolce Riso (No. 18: Aria) 27. Oh Dei, Parte Il Mio Bene (Recitativo Scena Iv) 28. Mesti Affanni, Fiere Pene (No. 19: Aria) 29. Ah Per Pietà (Recitativo Scena Ultima) 30. Oggi, Che Stringe Imene (No. 20: Coro)*

Medonte – Thomas Michael Allen Selene – Juanita Lascarro Arsace – Susanne Bernhard Evandro – Stephanie Elliott Zelinda – Lorina Castellano Talete – Ulrike Andersen L'Arte del mondo Werner Ehrhardt - conductor Live rec. 12 december 2012, Leverkusen, Bayer Kulturhaus

When this opera's oratorio was rediscovered in 1928, it was first believed to be composed by Mozart. But in fact it was a piece of the last opera of the Prague composer Josef Myslivecek (1737–1781), with whom Mozart had friendly relations and who indeed was inspired by Mysliveceks work. This world premiere recording of the opera "Medonte" by the ensemble l'arte del mondo shows imposingly the exceptional skills of this wrongly neglected composer.

Il Boemo – the composer of Medonte.

In 1928 an Italian pianist and music scholar thought he could amaze the public with a sensational discovery: he had unearthed "an unknown and as yet unpublished oratorio" by Mozart, Isacco figura del redentore. But the work wasn't actually as unknown as its misled discoverer believed; he could easily have found proof of its existence under the name of its real composer, one Joseph Mysliveček. At least the unfortunate scholar could take comfort in the fact that he had attributed a truly first-rate composition to none other than Mozart!

But who was this Joseph Mysliveček, a composer able to write music that sounded like Mozart? On closer investigation, we find to our surprise that the opposite is true: Mozart actually took inspiration Mysliveček, and not the other way round! While still only a boy, Mozart had met Mysliveček on his travels through Italy, and the Czech composer's music seems to have made an impression on him. This much is clear from a letter the young Mozart wrote to his sister from Milan, asking her to "find out whether they have this symphony by Mislievecek in Salzburg or not; if they don't, we'll bring it back with us".

Mysliveček was actually one of the very few fellow composers with whom Mozart maintained a friendship for any length of time. We learn from letters written by Mozart's father Leopold that the two composers first met in Bologna in 1770: "Herr Misliwetschek visited us several times in Bologna, and we repaid his visits. He is a gentleman, and we became very good friends with one another." The young Mozart for his part certainly continued to cultivate the friendship, and as he eagerly absorbed any interesting music that came his way, it's no surprise that he studied Myslivečeks works too – especially as the Czech composer had become firmly established on the Italian music scene. Evidence of Myslivečeks direct influence can be found in Mozart's instrumental music from the early 1770's, and likewise in the first steps that Mozart took in the field of opera and oratorio—e.g. in Mitritdate or La Betulia liberata. Some musicologists have also assumed connections with Mysliveček in later works from Mozart's pen, and this hypothesis possesses a certain plausibility, although watertight proof cannot be found.

It seems nothing short of amazing that Myslivečeks name has sunk into almost complete oblivion over the centuries. The fact that he, a foreigner, was able to make a name for himself as a composer of Italian operas, is in itself remarkable. His music was held in such respect that he was even honoured with his own nickname—“il Boemo”, the Bohemian. And “il Boemo” even managed to make his own mark on the genre of opera seria, which had become bogged down in its own rigid traditions. Inspired by the innovations of Christoph Willibald Gluck, he retained the basic structures of Italian opera, but rejected its almost mechanical artificiality in favour of catchier melodies; he strove for harmonic richness, and increasingly wrote arias no longer in the standardized da capo form, but as rondos instead. Myslivečeks life story is colourful enough to have been taken from a novel, and it did actually serve as the basis for more than one book, e.g. for Carl von Pidoll’s Boemo divino. In 1912 Stanislav Suda even composed a MMysliveček opera! The composer’s origin was in itself unusual for 18th century musical circles: his father was a miller, and the young Joseph initially followed in his footsteps and trained to be a miller too, before he turned his full attention to music. Myslivečeks aristocractic patron, Count Vinzenz von Waldstein, enabled the young composer to go to Venice in 1763 to perfect his skills, and four years after this he achieved his breakthrough with the opera Il Bellerofonte, composed for Naples. Numerous opera commissions followed, and as far as we know today Myslivečeks oeuvre included no fewer than 26 operas. Alongside his artistic reputation, he also became known as a spendthrift, and only a year after his death one biographer noted that “he often found himself in such dire straits that he had to borrow money. Honour and fame were much more important to him than all the riches in the world”. What’s more, Mysliveček apparently had a fondness for sexual excess, and the resulting syphilis tormented him in the last years of his life. In 1777 he submitted to an operation which, to put it mildly, was not a success: Mozart visited him afterwards and wrote home to Salzburg that “Chirurgus Cuco, the idiot, has burnt his nose off – one can only imagine the pain!” The story ends on a sad note: one of his last operas, Armida, flopped at its première in Milan in 1780, and a good year later the composer died aged only 43—abandoned by fortune, in poverty and disfigured by illness.

Like Armida, Medonte was written in 1780; but after the disaster he experienced in Milan, Mysliveček had its first performance given at the Teatro Argentina in Rome. But the different venue didn’t bring Medonte any more success at the première than Armida had had. The poor reception accorded to Medonte was certainly undeserved, and it wasn’t long before Arsarce’s rondo aria “Luci belli, se piangete”, for example, was being reprinted in music journals and sung all over Europe. We can only speculate what caused the work to flop: was it such musical innovations as the daring trio at the end of Act Two, which the Roman audience didn’t like at all? Or was it the fault of Giovanni de Gamerra’s libretto? There were no circumstances, however, that prevented Mysliveček from composing marvellous music, such as Selene’s scene in Act Two („Dove, ahi dove son io?“) with its remarkable harmonic diversity. After the end of its run in Rome, Medonte disappeared from the public eye—unfairly, it must be said. A copy discovered in St. Petersburg—albeit without any secco recitatives—enabled the first modern production to be put on in 1961. Then, a few years ago, the music scholar Olaf Krone found another manuscript in Paris, and this one turned out to be more or less complete. Thanks to his discovery, we can now hear Medonte almost as the composer intended for the first time in over 230 years—the only number missing is the conciliatory closing chorus. Werner Ehrhardt took a

comparable chorus from Myslivečeks opera Tamerlano and used it to fill the gap, and thus Medonte comes to a well-deserved happy end. ---Wolfgang Behrens, lartedelmondo.de

download (mp3 @320 kbs):

yandex 4shared mega mediafire uloz.to cloudmailru

back