

Joseph Haydn - Le Pescatrici (2009)

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Disc 1 1. Coro. 'Tira, Tira, Viene, Viene' 2. Recitativo. 'O, Voi Fareste Meglio' 3. Aria. 'Tra Tuoni, Lampi E Fulmini' 4. Recitativo. 'Vanta, Lesbina, Vanta' 5. Aria. 'So Far La Semplicetta' 6. Recitativo. 'Ma Io Non Son Sciocca' 7. Aria. 'Fra Cetre E Cembali Ti Sposero' 8. Recitativo. 'Povero Frisellino' 9. Aria (Cavatina). 'Voglio Amar E Vuo Scherzare' 10. Recitativo. 'O, Cara Liberta' 11. Orchestral Interlude 12. Recitativo. 'Amico' 13. Aria. 'Compatite La Vecchiezza' 14. Recitativo. 'Ah, Voglia Il Cielo, Amici' 15. Aria. 'Varca Il Mar in Sponda in Sponda' 16. Duetto, Recitativo E Aria. 'Lesbina, Ben Trovata' 17. Recitativo Insomma Così E' 18. Coro. 'Bell'ombra Gradita' 19. Recitativo. 'Amici' 20. Solo, Coro. 'Fiera Strage Dell'indegno' 21. Recitativo. 'Ah, Non Vorrei' 22. Finale (Quartetto). 'Principessa' Disc 2 1. Recitativo. 'Signore, in Segretezza' 2. Aria. 'Ha Gl'occhi Brillanti' 3. Recitativo. 'Eccomi Or Piu'che Mai' 4. Aria E Recitativo. 'Che Vi Par?' 5. Recitativo. 'Si, Si, Non Dubitate' 6. Aria. 'Pescatori, Pescatori' 7. Recitativo. 'Fanciulla in Ciel Vi Salvi' 8. Recitativo Accompagnato. 'Ahi Me' 9. Coro. 'Nel Mare Placidi' 10. Cavatina E Sestetto. 'Figliuoli, Lo Straniero' 11. Scena. 'Amici, in Ricompensa' 12. Recitativo E Cavatina. 'Ahi, Dove Sono' 13. Recitativo. 'Seguitemi, Signore' 14. Finale (Quartetto). 'Burlettino, Mio Caro' 15. Coro. 'Nume, Che Al Mare' 16. Recitativo. 'Si, Il Ciel Pietoso a Me, Cara' 17. Aria (Cavatina). 'Questa Mano' 18. Recitativo. 'Grazie, Signori' 19. Quartetto. 'Favorisca La Sua Bella Mano' 20. Recitativo. 'Pria Di Partir' 21. Coro. 'Soavi Zeffiri' 22. Recitativo. 'Andiam, Sposa Diletta' 23. Finale. 'Discendi, Amor Pietoso'

Lesbina - Ramutė Tumuliauskaitė (soprano) Nerina - Jolanta Ciurilaitė (soprano) Eurilda - Laima Jonutytė (contralto) Frisellino - Littay Gyula (tenor) Burlotto - Alexandr Agamirzow (tenor) Lindoro - Vytautas Juozapaitis (baritone) Masticco - Genedij Bergorulko (bass) Choir And Orchestra Of The Lithuanian Opera. Ceslovas Radziumas - Chorus Master Olga Géczy - Conductor

"This is the only recording I know of Le pescatrici. Although Hungaroton doesn't say so on the outside of the package, this is a reissue of a recording once available on the Drive label. A note at the bottom of page 23 reads, "Recorded in 1993 at the Lithuanian Haydn-Schubert Festival." The apparently all-Lithuanian singers are thorough professionals with pleasing voices, although the tenors push hard. There is very little ornamentation here, and no one is comfortable with the

limited coloratura. Nevertheless, the sopranos and contralto are excellent, especially Tumuliauskaitė; Lesbina's "Che vi par?" takes her beyond high C, where she continues to produce full, lustrous tone. The orchestra is a large, modern one; it does sound a bit old fashioned these days, but it is consistently tuned, and everyone plays well, from the sweet strings to the solid horns and trumpets. The performance does not have a particularly Haydn aura, but it has a strong ensemble feel, so credit conductor Géczy. The recorded sound is satisfactory; solo voices are bright and clear, chorus and orchestra less so. While I would welcome a fine period-practice recording of *Le pescatrici*, this eminently musical one rates a strong recommendation." ---FANFARE: James H. North, arkivmusic.com

This recording from the 1992 Lithuanian Haydn-Schubert Festival in Vilnius is the only one ever made of Franz Joseph Haydn's second opera for Eszterháza, *Le pescatrici* (The Fisher-girls). Performed three times in 1770 and then tucked away, the score was partly lost even during Haydn's lifetime, presumably damaged in a 1779 fire that destroyed the main theater at the palace. In 1965, top Haydn scholar H.C. Robbins-Landon supervised composer Karl Heinz Füssl in the composition of some patches to make up the missing music so that the work could be premiered, but that hasn't led to more than an occasional revival, and the opera wasn't given in the United States until 2009. This production was led by Hungarian-American conductor (and painter) Olga Géczy and was previously released in an inauspicious, subcutaneous package on an obscure label; Hungaroton has reissued it here with a much snappier and rather amusing cover depicting an underwater Haydn.

Carlo Goldoni's libretto is sort of a cross between the story of Cinderella and that of *Così fan tutte*; it had been successfully set before by Ferdinando Bertoni, whose version has not been recorded, and Florian Leopold Gassmann before Haydn got his hands on it. In a way, one wonders why Robbins-Landon was concerned enough about *Le pescatrici* as to reconstruct it, as it seems the very confirmation of the notion that Haydn as a composer whose temperament was unsuitable for the opera of his day. It abounds with ungracious and instrumentally conceived vocal lines for the singers and a very busy orchestration that is actually one of the most interesting things about *Le pescatrici*; an instrumental interlude in the first act really jumps out from the rest of the music, and the orchestra follows the singing so closely that at times it even doubles the soloists. Of course, in later works such *L'isola disabitata* Haydn obviously got the hang of it, and after the big fire at Eszterháza, he was no longer as pressured to produce opera as assiduously as before, something that proved a great relief to Haydn. Here though, Haydn is an operatic piker, and not of the walleyed kind.

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This recording is notable through the inclusion in its cast of one of the most amazingly named sopranos in history, Ramutė Tumuliauskaitė; moreover, in the role of Lesbina she is definitely the strongest among the singers here. At the other end of the spectrum is tenor Gyula Littay, who just doesn't seem to have a good sense of timing and tends to lag behind Haydn's peppy orchestration. For her part, Géczy leads the band with strong conviction and a clear enthusiasm for the music; the playing of the Lithuanian Opera Orchestra isn't bad. The booklet only contains a summary of the plot of Le pescatrici. This Hungaroton recording is probably best suited for folks who must hear all of Haydn's operas or those readying to take in a production of Le pescatrici and wanting to familiarize themselves with the music first. As it's not a strongly memorable -- and kind of silly -- opera, one might not need such preparation. ---Uncle Dave Lewis, AllMusic Review

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