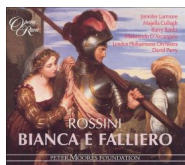


Gioacchino Rossini – Bianca e Falliero (2000)

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Gioacchino ROSSINI – Bianca e Falliero (2000)



CD1 1 Act 1.: *Sinfonia* 6:50 2 Act 1.: *"Dalle lagune Adriache"* 4:11 3 Act 1.: *"Pace alfin per l'Adria splende"* 5:30 4 Act 1.: *"Esce il Doge"* 3:19 5 Act 1.: *"Ministri del Consiglio"* 2:23 6 Act 1.: *"Viva Fallier"* 2:13 7 Act 1.: *"Inclito Prence"* 2:46 8 Act 1.: *"Se per l'Adria il ferro io strinsi"* 3:27 9 Act 1.: *"Il ciel custode"* 3:32 10 Act 1.: *"Grata Vinegia"* 0:47 11 Act 1.: *"Nigli orti di Flora"* 4:55 12 Act 1.: *"Come sereno il dì"* 2:26 13 Act 1.: *"Della rosa il bel virmiglio"* 3:40 14 Act 1.: *"Oh! serto beato"* 4:14 15 Act 1.: *"Costanza? ebben? che rechi?"* 2:53 16 Act 1.: *"Se l'amor mio ti è caro"* 0:50 17 Act 1.: *"Pensa che omai resistere"* 3:05 18 Act 1.: *"Figlia mia, se forza al core"* 3:54 19 Act 1.: *"Il piacer di mia ventura"* 2:50 CD 2 1 Act 1.: *"Mai con maggior coraggio"* 2:13 2 Act 1.: *"Divisi noi!"* 0:46 3 Act 1.: *"Sappi che un Dio crudele"* 5:24 4 Act 1.: *"Ciel! qual destin terribile"* 3:28 5 Act 1.: *"Deh! Va', ti scongiuro..."* 3:25 6 Act 1.: *"Ella mi fugge"* 0:52 7 Act 1.: *"Fausto imene"* 2:53 8 Act 1.: *"Si, congiunti"* 4:03 9 Act 1.: *"Bianca, alla mia ventura"* 6:42 10 Act 1.: *"Ecco espressi in questo foglio"* 2:19 11 Act 1.: *"Inportuno! in qual momento"* 4:15 12 Act 1.: *"Con qual dritto il piè ponesti"* 5:46

CD3

1 Act 2.: *"Al mio timor, deh! cedi"* 2:46 2 Act 2.: *"Dell'onor tuo!"* 0:37 3 Act 2.: *"Va' crudel!"* 4:37 4 Act 2.: *"Ch'io t'abbracci..."* 4:45 5 Act 2.: *"Fermate... siam perduti"* 3:05 6 Act 2.: *"Come potesti, indegna"* 0:57 7 Act 2.: *"Non porferir tal nome"* 4:12 8 Act 2.: *"Cadde il Fellone"* 3:22 9 Act 2.: *"Prendi il foglio"* 1:15 10 Act 2.: *"Sorte amica"* 2:24 11 Act 2.: *"Ah! qual notte di squallore"* 2:56 12 Act 2.: *"Qual funebre apparato"* 2:35 13 Act 2.: *"Alma, ben mio, sì pura"* 3:58 14 Act 2.: *"Vieni, signor"* 1:28 15 Act 2.: *"Tu non sai qual colpo atroce"* 2:26 16 Act 2.: *"Lasso! cessar di vivere"* 2:50 17 Act 2.: *"Ma più che onore e vita"* 2:58 18 Act 2.: *"No, non è reo"* 1:50 19 Act 2.: *"Donna chi sei?"* 1:11 20 Act 2.: *"Cielo, il mio labbro inspira"* 5:31 21 Act 2.: *"Parla dunque"* 4:30 22 Act 2.: *"Grazie, o Cielo!"* 3:02 23 Act 2.: *"Inoltra il dì... lassa!"* 1:06 24 Act 2.: *"Vieni, vieni per te tremante"* 1:04 25 Act 2.: *"Perdona, o mia Costanza"* 1:48 26 Act 2.: *"Teco resto, in te rispetto"* 3:42 27 Act 2.: *"Oh padre! oh eroe benefico!"* 4:04

Bianca, figlia di Contareno - Majella Cullagh Falliero, generale di Venezia - Jennifer Larmore Contareno, senatore - Barry Banks Capellio, senatore - Ildebrando D'Arcangelo Costanza, nutrice di Bianca - Gabriella Colecchia Priuli, Doge di Venezia - Simon Bailey Pisani - Ryland Davies Un cancelliere del Consiglio dei Tre - Dominic Natoli The Geoffrey Mitchell Choir The London Philharmonic Orchestra David Parry - conductor Recorded: IX, 2000, Henry Wood Hall, London

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Though not absolutely top-drawer Rossini, *Bianca e Falliero*, which was composed between *La donna del lago* and *Maometto II*, nonetheless has enough fine music to get the blood boiling, the toes tapping, and the hands clapping. What it lacks is memorable, hummable melodies (except for Bianca's final aria and cabaletta, which Rossini had used to close his previous opera as well), but it is ferociously strong in rhythmically exciting pieces and showy, virtuosic singing--and this performance gives us just about everything we could want in those two departments. (Stendhal thought that the second act quartet was "among the noblest conceptions with which any maestro in the world has ever been inspired." It's a fine piece of ensemble writing, but it's not that good.)

Jennifer Larmore is a properly aggressive Falliero (he's an army general), and she gets through the character's very difficult opening scena (and the rest of his music) with incredible aplomb, attention to the text, and a truly handsome tone. Her (his) warmhearted second-act aria, "Alma ben mio, si pura", with its long, Bellini-like line, is just as impressive as the more razzle-dazzle moments. Majella Cullagh's Bianca is almost as technically fine as Larmore's Falliero, and she also pays close attention to expressing her predicament, but the voice itself has an unappealing edge to it--and subjective though a statement like that is, it affects my appreciation of everything she does.

Contareno, Bianca's cruel father (he wants her to marry Capellio, a bass, rather than the travesti Falliero), is sung by the exciting, accomplished tenor Barry Banks, who seems to realize instinctively that Rossini occasionally used high notes and difficult roulades as expressive weapons. Ildebrando d'Arcangelo, with no solos to call his own and playing the unsympathetic Capellio, nevertheless impresses with his warm bass voice. The minor characters are just that, and it's nice to hear the veteran British tenor Ryland Davies singing well in one of these bit parts. David Parry obviously loves this music and he knows that one of the secrets to successful Rossini performances lies in the build-ups: both the first-act finale and the can-be-run-of-the-mill aria/interruption/allegro/more allegro scenes for soloists have an inner tension that keeps the listener riveted. The playing of the LPO is terrific and Opera Rara's sonics, which in the past occasionally have been problematic, add to the overall quality of this outing. As I said, *Bianca e Falliero* is perhaps not a great opera, but it's a smashing ride, especially for bel cantists.
---Robert Levine, ClassicsToday.com

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