Wagner – Tannhäuser (Sinopoli) [1988]



CD1 1. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version - Overture 10:50 2. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 1 - "Naht euch dem Strande" (Venusberg Music) 12:07 3. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 1 - "Geliebter, sag, wo weilt dein Sinn?" 4:53 4. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 1 - "Dir töne Lob! Die Wunder sei'n gepriesen" 2:47 5. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 1 - Dank deiner Huld, gepriesen sei dein Lieben 2:54 6. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 1 - "Geliebter, komm! Sieh dort die Grotte!" 4:17 7. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 1 - "Stets soll nur dir, nur dir mein Lied ertönen" 1:50 8. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 1 - "Stets soll nur dir, Nur dir mein Lied ertönen" 1:50 8. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 1 - "Zieh hin, Wahnsinniger, zieh hin!" 9:57 9. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 1 - "Frau Holda kam aus dem Berg hervor" 2:40 10. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 1 - "Zu dir wall ich, mein Jesus Christ" 7:05 11. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 1 - "Wer ist der dort in brünstigem Gebete?" 5:22 12. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 1 - "Als du in kühnem Sange uns bestrittest" 6:31 CD2

1. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 2 - "Dich, teure Halle, grüß ich wieder" 5:29 2. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 2 - "Dort ist sie; nahe dich ihr ungestört!" - "Der Sänger klugen Weisen lauscht' ich sonst"8:53 3. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 2 -Gepriesen sei die Stunde (Elisabeth, Tannhäuser) 4:10 4. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 2 - "Dich treff ich hier, in dieser Halle" 7:47 5. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris Version / Act 2 - "Freudig begrüßen wir die edle Halle" 5:41 6. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 2 -"Gar viel und schön" Matti Salminen 6:07 7. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 2 - "Blick ich umher in diesem edlen Kreise" 4:35 8. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 2 - "O Wolfram, der du also sangest" 2:01 9. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 2 - "Heraus zum Kampfe mit uns allen" 1:59 10. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 2 - O Himmel! Lass dich jetzt erflehen! (Wolfram) 1:58 11. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 2 - "Ha, der Verruchte! Fliehet ihn!" 2:18 12. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 2 - "Zurück von ihm! Nicht ihr seid seine Richter!" 7:15 13. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 2 - "Zum Heil der Sündigen zu führen" 4:19 14. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 2 - "Ein furchtbares Verbrechen ward begangen" 3:38 15. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 2 -"Mit ihnen sollst du wallen" Andreas Schmidt4:43 CD3

1. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 3 - Introduction 8:38 2. Wagner: Tannhäuser -Paris version / Act 3 - "Wohl wußt' ich hier sie im Gebet zu finden" 2:52 3. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 3 - "Beglückt darf nun dich, o Heimat" (Pilgrims Chorus) 5:33 4. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 3 - "Allmächt'ge Jungfrau, hör mein Flehen!" 9:33 5. Wagner:

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Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 3 - "Wie Todesahnung Dämmrung deckt die Lande"1:35 6. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 3 - "O du, mein holder Abendstern" 3:00 7. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 3 - "Ich höre Harfenschlag - wie klang er traurig"4:29 8. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 3 - "Hör an, Wolfram! Hör an! - Inbrunst im Herzen"8:43 9. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris version / Act 3 - "Dahin zog's mich, wo ich der Wonn und Lust"2:19 10. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris Version / Act 3 - "Willkommen, ungetreuer Mann!" Clemens Bieber 4:39 11. Wagner: Tannhäuser - Paris Version / Act 3 -"Heil ! Heil! Der Gnade Wunder Heil!" Matti Salminen 2:46 Placido DOMINGO (Tannhäuser, tenor) Cheryl STUDER (Elisabeth, soprano) Agnes BALTSA (Venus, mezzo-soprano) Andreas SCHMIDT (Wolfram, baritone) Matti SALMINEN (Le Landgrave, bass) William PELL (Walther, tenor) Kurt RYDL (Biterolf, bass) Clemens BIEBER (Heinrich, tenor) Oskar HILLEBRANDT (Reinmar, bass) Barbara BONNEY (Un jeune patre, soprano) Covent Garden Choir London Philharmonia Orchestra Giuseppe SINOPOLI (direction)

Another Paris Tannhäuser recording, this one seeing the adaptable Placido Domingo take a break from the world of Italianate opera to try on the mantle of Heldentenor. Domingo's clear, manly voice is well suited to the transformation--precisely why Italians usually don't think of him as a bella voce. Agnes Baltsa approaches the role of Venus in a less shrill and more human manner than often is heard in portrayals of the excitable goddess. The sound is exceptionally clear in the recording, a comparatively newer digital mastering from the late 1980s. The chorus work is good, though not quite on the sublime plane reached in the Georg Solti recording. Maestro Giuseppe Sinopoli conducts the Philharmonia Orchestra and the Chorus of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in a measured, stately manner. ---Christian C. Rix, amazon.com

After Jessye Norman's Carmen for Philips, it's Placido Domingo's Tannhhuser—the big names in parts that they wouldn't attempt on stage. Domingo's third attack on a Wagnerian role (the others being Walther and Lohengrin) is a success in almost every respect. He evokes the erotic passion of the Venusberg scene and brings to it just the right touch of nervous energy. This is boldly contrasted with the desperation and bitterness of the Rome Narration after the hero's fruitless visit to the Pope seeking forgiveness: Domingo's description of how Tannhãuser avoided every earthly delight on his pilgrimage is delivered with total conviction. In between he berates the slightly prissy attitude of his fellow knights on the Wartburg with the dangerous conceit of someone who knows a secret delight that they will never enjoy in their measured complacency.

His tenor must be the steadiest and most resplendent ever to have tackled the part. He has his disadvantages. Even now, Domingo's German is far from idiomatic with several vowel sounds distorted, which sometimes detracts from the strength of his declamation. Then, occasionally, his voice seems in a different acoustic from the orchestra and his vocal partners—listen to the encounter with Venus—but this hardly diminishes an appreciable achievement, another jewel in a many-sided recording crown.

I like the intensity Domingo and Baltsa, as Venus, bring to their scene together, suggesting a foreunner of the Kundry/Parisfal encounter (maybe they'll now record those roles). Baltsa also has some difficulties with her German, and her voice doesn't always sound as seductive as it ought, but she has the range and attack, particularly in the upper register, for an awkwardly lying part. Here comparisons have to be made with Christa Ludwig in one of her most successful assumptions heard on the Solti version (Decca). Ludwig is not only more familiar with her role but also has the more voluptuous voice. She is aided by her creative use of the text—something that, for all her vocal acumen, isn't available to Baitsa. And Ludwig is superbly seconded by Solti.

That brings me to Sinopoli. It is obviously his concern throughout to bring out every last ounce of the drama in the piece, both in terms of orchestral detail, which receives very special attention from the Overture, given a big, full-blooded reading, onwards, but as in his direction of the work over the past few years at Bayreuth, Sinopoli is aware in this opera of the longer line, often sustained by the upper strings. The Philharmonia's violins respond with their most eloquent playing. The kind of frisson Sinopoli offers is evident in the anticipatory excitement at the start of Act 2 and the iron control he maintains in the big ensemble later in the same act. Nor does he overlook the elevated side of the score. All Elisabeth's music is delivered with the right sense of serenity tinged with sorrow. But he can sometimes relapse into his self-indulgent vein: the middle section of Elisabeth's solo in her duet with Tannhäuser is unendurably slow; so is her colloquy with the Landgrave. At the end one isn't surprised to find that he takes quite a few minutes longer over each act than Solti, himself not exactly a speed merchant in this piece.

Cheryl Studer's secure, beautiful voice has no difficulty coping with Sinopoli's deliberate tempos. She has taken this part to universal acclaim at Bayreuth, and repeats it here with total conviction, both vocal and interpretative, phrasing with consistent intelligence. Andreas Schmidt is a mellifluous, concerned Wolfram, his voice a trifle light for the part. He often recalls FischerDieskau, but his approach is rather more intent on firm line. Saiminen is a rugged, characterful Land grave, not quite as smooth but more interesting than Sotin (Solti). Barbara Bonney is an ideally fresh Shepherd Boy.

The Covent Garden Chorus have obviously benefited by being trained specifically for this work by Bayreuth's Norbert Balatsch. As knights, ladies and pilgrims they sing with consistent beauty of sound, and have been sensibly balanced with the orchestra. They need not fear comparison with Decca's Vienna choir, also Balatsch trained.

As Sinopoli has chosen to conduct the Paris version, the Solti set is its main rival. It has always been one of Solti's most recommendable opera recordings, and in its CD format it remains a formidable achievement. Its cast has no weaknesses and many strengths. Solti is no less vital than Sinopoli in conveying the rich sonority, the elemental passions, and the sublime clarity experienced in the best parts of this uneven work. The Vienna Philharmonic play superbly for Solti, but as I have implied the Philharmonia on this form are just about as impressive. Decca attempt much more 'production' than DG. If that appeals to you and you are satisfied with Kollo's thoughtful, deeply felt but sometimes uningratiating Tannhäuser then you may prefer the older version. You will also enjoy (apt word) Ludwig's unrivalled Venus and the sympathetic Elisabeth of Dernesch. But I think Domingo and Studer just incline me towards the new version, as does the wide range of the finely engineered recording, which makes the excellent Decca seem just a shade dated. --- Gramophone, arkivmusic.com

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