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SCHUMANN

DICHTERLIEBE, Op. 48

GERHARD HÜSCH, HANNIS UDO MÜLLER

- | | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1 | Im wunderschönen Monat Mai | 1:16 |
| 2 | Aus meinen Tränen sprießen | 1:08 |
| 3 | Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne | 0:33 |
| 4 | Wenn ich in deine Augen seh | 1:52 |
| 5 | Ich will meine Seele tauchen | 0:40 |
| 6 | Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome | 2:06 |
| 7 | Ich grolle nicht | 1:38 |
| 8 | Und wüßten's die Blumen, die kleinen | 1:09 |
| 9 | Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen | 1:20 |
| 10 | Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen | 1:41 |
| 11 | Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen | 0:49 |
| 12 | Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen | 1:47 |
| 13 | Ich hab' im Traum geweinet | 2:02 |
| 14 | Alhächlich im Traume | 1:57 |
| 15 | Aus alten Märchen winkt es | 2:44 |
| 16 | Die alten, bösen Lieder | 4:13 |

Recorded 29th and 30th January, 1936, Abbey Road Studios, London
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SAKL Pristine Audio, Le Bourg, 24610 St. Méard de Gurçon, France - Tel +33 (0)5 53 82 18 57 - Internet: www.pristineclassical.com

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Dichterliebe, 'The Poet's Love' (composed 1840), is the best-known song cycle of Robert Schumann (Op. 48). The texts for the 16 songs come from the *Lyrisches Intermezzo* of Heinrich Heine, composed 1822-1823, published as part of the poet's *Das Buch der Lieder*. Following the song-cycles of Franz Schubert (*Die Schöne Müllerin* and *Winterreise*), those of Schumann constitute part of the central core of the genre in musical literature.

Author of the sarcastic *Die Romantische Schule*, Heine was a vocal critic of German romanticism. In some of his poetry, and notably in *Deutschland. Ein Wintermärchen* of 1844, the romantic lyrical conventions are used as vessels to deploy content of biting, satirical nature. Schumann's *Dichterliebe* was composed before Heine's *Deutschland* and does not appear to portray this ironic dimension: scholarship is divided as to what extent Schumann intended to express it.

Heine's *Lyrisches Intermezzo* consists of a verse *Prologue* and 65 poems. The Prologue (*Es war 'mal ein Ritter trübselig und stumm* - There once was a Knight, woeful and silent..) tells of the sorrowful knight that sits gloomily in his house all day, but by night is visited by his fairy (nixie) bride, and dances with her until daylight returns him to his little poet's room (Poetenstübchen). The 65 poems follow, of which the 16 of the *Dichterliebe* are a selection. The conclusion of it all is that he is going to put the old bad songs and dreams, all his sorrowful love and suffering (and possibly himself) into a huge coffin, which twelve giants will throw into the sea. This catastrophe is slightly reminiscent of Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin*, in which the hero ends by drowning himself in the brook which he has followed through the cycle.

Das Buch der Lieder was given its second edition, with preface from Paris, in 1837, the songs were composed in 1840, and the first edition of *Dichterliebe* was published in two volumes by Peters, in Leipzig, 1844. Though Schumann originally set 20 songs to Heine's poems, only 16 of the 20 compositions were included in the first edition. (*Dein Angesicht* (Heine no 5) is one of the omitted items. *Auf Flügeln des Gesanges*, On Wings of Song (Heine no 9), is best known from a setting of Felix Mendelssohn's).

The very natural, almost hyper-sensitive poetical affections of the poems are beautifully mirrored in Schumann's settings, with their miniaturist chromaticism and suspensions. The poet's love is a hothouse of nuanced responses to the delicate language of flowers, dreams and fairy-tales. Schumann adapts the words of the poems to his needs for the songs, sometimes repeating phrases and often rewording a line to supply the desired cadence. *Dichterliebe* is therefore an integral artistic work apart from the *Lyrisches Intermezzo*, though derived from it and inspired by it. Schubert's selection of lyrics for his own Heine songs had sought different themes.

Although frequently associated with the male voice, the work was dedicated to the great soprano Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient, so that the precedent for performance by a female voice is primary. The first complete public recital of the work in London was given by Harry Plunket Greene, accompanied from memory by Leonard Borwick, on 11 January 1895 at St James's Hall.

Gerhard Heinrich Wilhelm Fritz Hüsch (Hanover, February 2, 1901 - Munich, November 23, 1984) was one of the most important German singers of modern times. He specialized in Lieder, and to a lesser extent in opera.

Between 1925 and 1942, Hüsch sang regularly at several German (as well as British and Italian) opera houses, primarily in Berlin from 1930 onwards. The role for which he is best remembered is that of Papageno in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, but his repertoire included most of the standard lighter baritone roles, including Wagner's (he appeared at Bayreuth, most notably as Wolfram in *Tannhäuser*) and Richard Strauss's (he appeared in the premiere of Strauss's *Intermezzo*). Lacking the vocal amplitude of his contemporaries Hans Hotter and Gottlob Frick, Hüsch concentrated on beautifully lucid diction and an unfailingly smooth vocal line.

Nowhere were these qualities better displayed than in his pioneering pre-war Lieder records. Here he shows the art which conceals art. He performed the first more-or-less-uncut versions of Schubert's *Winterreise* and *Die Schöne Müllerin* song-cycles, and Beethoven's *An die Ferne Geliebte*; his discs of songs by Hugo Wolf, made under Walter Legge's auspices, helped introduce that composer to thousands of music-lovers previously unfamiliar with Wolf's output; and he released a generous selection of songs by Hans Pfitzner, these recordings bearing the imprimatur of Pfitzner himself at the piano. The obscure Finnish composer Yrjö Kilpinen found in Hüsch a steadfast champion. Sometimes Hüsch performed in choral masterpieces as well, his recorded work in this field including an exceptional Jesus in a wartime set - severely abridged - with Günther Ramin conducting, of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*.

After World War II, Hüsch, whose political naiveté during the Third Reich (and, in particular, closeness to Rosalind von Schirach, the sister of Baldur von Schirach) was unlikely to endear him to the Allies, mostly abandoned concert and operatic appearances, preferring to concentrate on teaching. A professor at the Munich Hochschule für Musik, he numbered among his pupils the British tenor Nigel Rogers. He gave master classes not only in Europe but in Japan. By now most of his large discography has been reissued on compact disc.

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