



Solti

Richard Strauss: Salome



Audiences encountering *Salome* for the first time in the years following its 1905 premiere came away reeling. Not only was the subject matter (murder, eroticism and necrophilia) highly dubious for the world's opera houses, the music was also like nothing they had heard before. Before 1905 Strauss was best known for his orchestral tone poems that showcased his ability to tell stories through music. In *Salome* Strauss became musically more radical and distinctive, frequently using dissonance. Opera composers since Strauss have gone far further to shock audiences, both musically and dramatically, and it is easy for modern listeners to overlook the huge musical impact this opera had in 1905.

The role of Salome demands the impossible combination of a large Wagnerian voice capable of soaring over Strauss's thick orchestration in the body of a seductive young woman. Most sopranos capable of singing the role are both physically larger and older than the storyline desires. Recordings overcome this problem of course, with our mental image being shaped by what we hear rather than what we see. Birgit Nilsson, the supreme Brünnhilde, Isolde, Elektra and Turandot of her day, gives us all the vocal power that the role requires, but also scales down her voice for the quieter more intimate moments. The final scene is a tour de force, showcasing everything that made Nilsson the Salome of choice for opera house managers around the world.

Jochanaan is sung by Austrian baritone Eberhard Wächter, well known in European opera houses as a versatile performer in Mozart, Wagner and Strauss roles. Herod and Herodias are sung by Gerhard Stolze and Grace Hoffman. Stolze was renowned for his character tenor roles in Wagnerian opera such as Mime, Loge and David. Hoffman was born in the USA but spent nearly her entire career in Europe as a notable Brangäne, Fricka, and Waltraute.

Georg Solti is best known to modern day audiences as a Strauss and Wagner specialist. The first complete *Ring* cycle, recorded for Decca between 1958 and 1965, continues to be hailed by many as the ultimate in recorded opera. But Solti actually had a far more varied repertoire as an opera house director in Munich, Frankfurt and then London between 1946 and 1971. After 1971 he concentrated on orchestral conducting, mainly with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. As a conductor Solti had a reputation for precision, and in the Vienna Philharmonic he has a vastly experienced set of players capable of responding to his every direction. And with John Culshaw directing his legendary set of Decca engineers this *Salome* remains the best one ever committed to disc.



strauss

salome

disc one

1. Wie schön ist die Prinzessin Salome (2:52)
2. Nach mir wird Einer kommen (2:37)
3. Ich will nicht bleiben (1:48)
4. Siehe, der Herr ist gekommen (1:34)
5. Jauchze nicht, du Land Palästina (2:22)
6. Du wirst das für mich tun (3:16)
7. Wo ist er, dessen Sündenbecher jetzt voll ist? (9:47)
8. Jochanaan! Ich bin verliebt in deinen Leib (8:37)
9. Wird dir nicht bange, Tochter der Herodias? (7:46)
10. Wo ist Salome? (2:32)
11. Es ist kalt hier (1:28)
12. Salome, komm, trink Wein mit mir (2:37)
13. Sieh, die Zeit ist gekommen (0:49)
14. Wahrhaftig, Herr, es wäre besser (2:52)
15. Siehe, der Tag ist nahe (3:12)
16. Eine Menge Menschen wird sich gegen sie sammeln (2:05)
17. Tanz für mich, Salome (4:06)
18. Salomes Tanz der sieben Schleier (8:53)
19. Ah! Herrlich! Wundervoll (3:39)
20. Still, sprich nicht zu mir! (2:56)
21. Salome, bedenk, was du tun willst (2:48)

disc two

1. Man soll ihr geben, was sie verlangt! (1:52)
2. Es ist kein Laut zu vernehmen (2:07)
3. Ah! Du wolltest mich nicht deinen Mund... (11:48)
4. Sie ist ein Ungeheuer, deine Tochter (0:59)
5. Ah! Ich habe deinen Mund geküßt, Jochanaan (4:50)

CAST

Birgit Nilsson (soprano) – Salome
Gerhard Stolze (tenor) – Herod
Grace Hoffman (mezzo) – Herodias
Eberhard Wächter (baritone) – Jokanaan
Waldemar Kmentt (tenor) – Narraboth
Josephine Veasey (mezzo) – Page to Herodias
Paul Kuen (tenor) – First Jew
Stefan Schwer (tenor) – Second Jew
Kurt Equiluz (tenor) – Third Jew
Aron Gestner (tenor) – Fourth Jew
Max Proebstl (bass) – Fifth Jew
Tom Krause (baritone) – First Nazarene
Nigel Douglas (tenor) – Second Nazarene
Zenon Kosnowski (bass) – First Soldier
Heinz Holecek (bass) – Second Soldier
Theodor Kirschbichler (bass) – Cappadocian
Liselotte Maikl (soprano) – Slave

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
conducted by Georg Solti

BONUS TRACKS:

- SOLT conducts R. Strauss ELEKTRA (excerpts)
6. Allein! Weh, ganz allein (8:34)
 7. Ich will nichts hören! (16:37)
 8. Was willst du, fremder Mensch? (20:08)

Christel Goltz (soprano) - Elektra
Elisabeth Höngen (mezzo-soprano) - Klytemnestra
Ferdinand Frantz (bass-baritone) - Orest

Bayerisches Staatsorchester
conducted by Georg Solti

XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of Birgit Nilsson as
Salome (Met Opera)

R Strauss Salome
Rec. October 16-21, 1961
Sofiensaal, Vienna
A stereo recording

R Strauss Elektra
Rec. August 3, 1952
Amerika Haus, Munich
Presented in Ambient Stereo

CD1: 78:35
CD2: 66:55

Total duration: 2hr 25:30

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