

*So will ich frisch und fröhlich sein.
Och, Moder, ich well en Ding han!
Wie komm' ich denn zur Tür herein?
Soll sich der Mond nicht heller schei-
nen. Es wohnt ein Fiedler. Du mein
einzig Licht. Des Abends kann ich
nicht schlafen geh'n. Schöner Augen
schöne Strahlen. Ich weiss mir'n
Maidlein. Es steht ein' Lind'. In stiller
Nacht. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, so-
prano, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, bari-
tone, and Gerald Moore, piano. Angel
B 3675, \$9.79; stereo SB 3675, \$11.58
(two disks).*

Unfamiliar as the title of this release may seem, especially in its "duet" context, its contents are not nearly that unfamiliar. The self-accompanying baritone Ernst Wolff offered a selection of them in a Columbia 78-rpm album, and Lotte Lehmann is but one of several artists who have not only programmed but recorded such favorite items as the beguiling "Da unten im Tale," the delightful "Erlaube mir, fein's Mädchen" and "Mein Mädlein hat einen Rosenmund." Add another favorite such as "Schwesterlein" and the range of interests represented here may be better gauged.

What is best about the offering of the totality rather than a selection is that it permits the listener to seek out his own favorites rather than depend on the whim of a performer. For example, it is a possible question whether in making a choice of excerpts for a sequence of a dozen or so that a soprano would necessarily elect "Maria ging aus wandern." But as performed here by Miss Schwarzkopf with just the right shade of "white" sound suitable to its sermonette on the moral that "even Heaven suffers God's rule," it adds a dimension to our appreciation of Brahms's variety.

As it happens, some of the "variety" derives from the scheme of performance (possibly by Walter Legge) in which the two voices are heard alternately, as suits the dialogical character of many of the songs. When such dialogue is absent, no effort is made to enforce the pattern willy-nilly. Rather such a song is assigned to the female or male voice according to character or suitability: the aforementioned "Maria ging aus wandern" to the soprano, because it recites the wanderings of Mary; "Wach' auf, mein' Herzensschöne" to the baritone because it is clearly the apostrophe of a man to a woman, and so on. This, it may be noted, was no part of Brahms's intention; nor, probably, did he intend the forty-two (solo) songs to be heard at a sitting. Dividing them between two such skillful performers as Schwarzkopf and Fischer-Dieskau not only provides a desirable amount of diversity but also heightens the effort of each by the stim-

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Powerfully Persuasive "Don Carlo"

CONSIDERING the extent to which it has risen in public favor in the last decade and a half, Verdi's *Don Carlo* has hardly had its share of phonographic consideration. The principal versions to date (one on RCA Victor, pre-stereo, the other, and more recent, from DGG) have both been conducted by Gabriele Santini, and while they served in the absence of anything better, the justice they rendered to one of Verdi's greatest scores has been more than a little circumscribed.

All that has been changed now, thanks to the enterprise of London (A 4432, \$19.16; stereo OSA 1432, \$23.16), which has turned the responsibility over to Georg Solti, and reaped rich dividends thereby. Taking one thing with another—which is to say, taking the *Ring* with *Falstaff* and now *Don Carlo*—it is fair to say also that Solti has taken a pre-eminent place among conductors of opera for the phonograph. He not only understands what is desired to create aural drama, but has steadily developed the sense of perspective to give both the voices and the instruments their due without sacrificing one or penalizing the other.

Thankfully, too, London has settled on the four-act version which Verdi made for Vienna in 1882 (minus the ballet music). This includes the so-called Fontainebleau scene, which has, unfortunately, been lacking at the Metropolitan since the work was reborn there in 1950. It cannot be defended as the greatest Verdi, but it is certainly good Verdi; and it has the incontrovertible importance of being the source for certain recurrent ideas with which the composer illuminates the drama as it unfolds. Without it, the late reference to them loses more than a little.

With this as a starting point, Solti has built a substantial structure from one act to the next. It strikes me as even a more consistent, well balanced effort than the performances he directed at the Metropolitan during the season of 1964-65, which may well be because he has had the opportunity to evolve an ensemble from his performers. This means not only a fine singing cast but also the orchestra of the Royal Opera House (Covent Garden) of which he is, of course, the principal conductor.

The cast is not only as fine as one could ask for in most particulars, but in one, at least, unlikely to be available for most opera houses. That is the Posa of

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. This artist's voice is not only ideal in sound for Verdi's music, but he can actually sing a "shake" without making it sound uncomfortably like that colorful word. In addition, he has the knack of creating something visual with his sound. This supports the grand kind of drama Nicolai Ghiaurov is capable of creating, which offsets to some extent the rather bland Carlo of Bergonzi. Beautiful in sound it is, of course, but not terribly committed to any of the premises—emotional, philosophic, or filial—on which Verdi based the character. The rank of male voices is completed by a rich, deep-sounding basso named Martti Talvela (Inquisitor).

Indeed with Grace Bumbry as probably the finest contemporary Eboli (even though she sings most of the music better than she does the role's showpiece, "O don fatale"), the one weak effort of all is Renata Tebaldi's Elisabetta. It may be doubted that even in the time of her best vocal condition it was a role for which she had deep affection; and it now poses more than a few vocal burdens for her. Probably some of Tebaldi's following will relish this addition to her recorded literature but London could have improved its artistic position with another choice.

This consideration aside, Solti has advanced his own musical stature more than a little by the surety, directness and poise with which he pulls all the threads of this drama together. It is not only much the best *Don Carlo* ever recorded: it is one of the most powerfully persuasive examples of operatic recording yet accomplished, a credit to the unnamed John Culshaw.

—IRVING KOLODIN.



Bumbry—"finest contemporary Eboli."

RECORDINGS REPORTS I: Orchestral LPs

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA

REPORT

Berlioz: *Symphonie fantastique*. Colin Davis conducting the London Symphony Orchestra. Philips PHM 500-101, \$4.98; stereo PHS 900-101, \$5.98.

For something more than half the length of this performance, Davis amply justifies his reputation not only as a leading light among younger conductors, but one with a special affinity for Berlioz. It is a simple, eloquent, unaffected performance he offers in a straight line of descent from the first of all recorded *Fantastiques*, by Weingartner. His treatment of the "March to the Gallows" and "Witches' Sabbath" is also creditable to him as a musician, but his efforts to de-sensationalize Berlioz tend also to devitalize him. First-class orchestral performance and reproduction.

Martinu: *Fantasia Concertante*. Falla: *Noches en los jardines de España*. Margrit Weber, piano, with Bavarian Radio Orchestra directed by Rafael Kubelik. Deutsche Grammophon, 39 116, \$5.79; stereo 139 116, \$5.79.

Conductor Kubelik and soloist Weber apply themselves with equal devotion to both works, but there is little question which profits more. Miss Weber has something of a proprietary interest in the Martinu, which was written for her and which she has been playing since its premiere in 1959. As it is also one of his best pieces, the results are satisfactory on all counts. Not as much can be said for the Falla, which is earnest enough and musically fastidious, but without the atmospheric quality the music demands.

Mozart: Symphonies Nos. 29 in A and 33 in B flat. Herbert van Karajan conducting the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Deutsche Grammophon, 39 002, \$5.79; stereo 139 002, \$5.79.

There have been no lack of good performances of the A major since Beecham first revealed its fresh invigorating patterns, but the latest is also the best. Karajan has perceived more than the average conductor in its combination of elements—wood-wind warp to the woof of the strings and woven something of special distinction into the results. This applies particularly to the first and last movements, and the Andante. The Minuet plods a bit as though Karajan were not quite sure just how courtly a piece it is, but this, too, fascinates by the way it is put together. There is not so much to listen to in the B flat, a work of more external character than the A major. What can be done with it Karajan does well.

Mozart: Piano Concertos in E flat (No. 9, K. 271 and No. 14, K. 449). Alfred Brendel, piano, with the Solisti di Zagreb, Antonio Janigro conducting. Vanguard VRS 1154, \$4.79; VSD 71154, \$5.79.

Brendel and Janigro make a compatible pair in these works, which are well suited for the treatment they espouse. This is essentially a chamber music mode of performance, in which Janigro might very well have done his directing with a cello bow from a place in the ensemble rather than with a baton before it. As both works predate the great series written by Mozart for performance in Vienna before audiences, they do not demand more sonority than Janigro's ensemble provides. It would be a service for the same personnel to apply the same treatment to the other early Mozart works, for they are rarely regarded with so much affection. The label identifies the cadenzas of No. 9 as Mozart's, but says nothing about the authorship of those for No. 14.

Prokofiev: Piano Concerto in G minor, No. 2. Dagmar Baloghova, piano, with the Czech Philharmonic conducted by Karel Ancerl. Artia 707, \$4.98; stereo S-707, \$5.98.

According to the information provided with the recording, Baloghova is a pianist of Slovakian birth who is now a member of the faculty of her Alma Mater, the Academy of Music in Prague. She strikes a mood of eloquence and poetry in some of the quieter sections of this work, which suggests that she might do well with a Chopin concerto or, perhaps, the Dvořák. However her sound inclines to flatten out and become percussive in the more proclamative matter. Some of this may relate to the instrument itself, which is none too good, or the reproduction, which wavers in pitch now and then. Her qualities of musicianship and taste leave the impression of a performer one would like to hear more of, despite a not very good performance of Prokofiev.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 2. George Szell conducting the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra. Philips M 500-092, \$4.98; stereo PHS 900-092, \$5.98.

Asked once to summarize the difference between the Philadelphia Orchestra, which he had been guest conducting, and his own Concertgebouw Orchestra, the late Eduard van Beinum replied: "This one is platinum; mine is old gold." There is something brighter, more luminous about the sound of the Concertgebouw here than "old gold" (if not quite platinum), which means that Szell commands the identifying touch of mastery in making whatever orchestra he conducts responsive to his own tonal concepts. It is, indeed, a crisp, well-formed, beautifully articulated Sibelius No. 2 that he has achieved. It is lacking in the ultimate amount of oratorical effect in the finale, suggesting that Szell is too sophisticated a musician to go all the way with Sibelius' "nationalism." What he has chosen to do he has done superbly.

Telemann: *Water Music*; Concerto in F. Collegium Musicum of Paris directed by Roland Douatte, with Robert Gendre, Jean-Pierre Wallez and Nicole Laroque, violins and Laurence Boulay, harpsichord. Nonesuch H 1109, \$2.50; stereo H 71109, \$2.50.

Those who can take their Telemann or leave it will find that this record poses the dilemma of presenting one work in each category—"must have" and "need not bother." To my taste, the lesser of the two is the *Hamburger Ebb und Fluht* (*Water Music*), which pursues a mostly predictable course. The more interesting Concerto (part of the celebrated *Table Music*) is a work of imposing substance and the kind of individuality that distinguishes Telemann at his best. For those to whom there has been, previously, only one *Water Music* it may be mentioned that this one of 1723 followed Handel's by six years. It also pursues an allegorical course, relating the Naiads to a playful gavotte, Neptune to a loure, and Triton to a harlequinade. Roland Douatte's direction contributes substantially to the interest of the two performances, likewise the color of the recorders used in the *Water Music*.

—IRVING KOLODIN.