

It would be easy to continue extolling these performances and the insights they stand to incite. In ceding now to the reviewers of the 34 remaining discs, I applaud Johnson and his band of marvellous singers for serving Schubert well. But they have done more. Despite enormous recent progress, the walls that too often have divided musical performance and scholarship in the past still stand. HSE2 lays down an imposing gauntlet. Above, I barely scratched the surface of a number of issues awaiting further scrutiny. Hyperion deserves our gratitude; backed by the vision (and bankbook) of Ted Perry and magnificently presided over by Graham Johnson, the full measure of their gift only partially has begun to sink in.

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Discs 7–12

Some 50 years after Franz Schubert's death Johannes Brahms told his composition student Gustav Jenner: 'There is no song by Schubert from which one cannot learn something'.¹ The Hyperion Schubert *Complete Songs* offers the welcome chance to test this statement, especially in respect of songs that have not generally received much critical attention and have been unable to secure an established place in the lied recital repertoire (apropos of which, as Graham Johnson has noted, 'the public has always been content to hear the well-known Schubert songs again and again').

These six CDs contain a total of 133 lieder dating from the beginning of June 1815 to the end of February 1816, giving cause for contemplation of Schubert's sheer productivity as well as astonishment at his 18-year-old achievement in, frequently, the depth of his poetic interpretation. As Graham Johnson reminds us, it is on account of this remarkable production that 1815 has been dubbed 'an *annus mirabilis* in the history of song'. The chronological arrangement of the Hyperion reissue was an excellent idea. Among other benefits, it enables such well-known songs as the delicately poised setting of Goethe's 'Heidenröslein' (19 August 1815) and the intensely dramatic 'Erlkönig' (?October 1815) to take their place in the context of Schubert's lieder of the period generally, and in the context of his settings of the particular poet concerned. Thus 'Heidenröslein' (CD 9, track 5, performed by Patricia Rozario) and 'Erlkönig' (CD 10, track 15 with vocal trio and 11, track 14, solo version with Sarah Walker), form part of a whole group of Schubert's early Goethe settings featured on these discs, beginning with 'Jägers Abendlied' D. 215 (June 1815), sung by Simon Keenlyside on CD 7, track 8, and including 'Erster Verlust' D. 226, from the following month (performed by Janet Baker: CD 7, track 17). I personally did not take so well to the multiple-voiced version of 'Erlkönig', finding Sarah Walker's solo rendering much more focused and less distracting, yet vividly contrasted in register and tone-colour among the different characters and moods. For me this supported the notion that in art metaphorical representation often works better than a more 'realistic' effect.

Many, although not all, of these songs were chosen by Schubert to send in the famous and ill-fated package to Goethe in 1816. The Goethe songs on the discs also include two items from Schubert's setting of the Singspiel *Claudine von Villa Bella*,

¹ Quoted in John Daverio, *Crossing Paths: Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002): 4.

'Hin und wieder pfliegen die Pfeile' and 'Liebe schwärmt auf allen Wegen' (D. 239 nos. 3 and 6), attractively presented here by Arleen Auger (CD 8, tracks 23 and 24), who is particularly effective elsewhere too in the more operatic of Schubert's song-settings such as 'Lambertine' D. 301 (Stoll, on the subject of 'he loves me not': CD 10, track 17). The poets range from such household names as Goethe and Schiller to lesser-known and often very interesting talents, among them the Austrian woman poet Gabriele von Baumberg, whose erotic outspokenness is remarkable: 'Mouth on mouth, heart to heart ...' ('Der Morgenkuss', CD 9, track 13; Margaret Price). Baumberg's verses were adopted by Schubert for a handful of the lieder reviewed here, all dating from August 1815, and they manifest some highly sensuous responses to the poems: 'Der Morgenkuss' has a Romantic openness of phrase and tonal structure.

For my taste each of these CDs, with the varied nature of its chronologically arranged contents, forms a satisfying package, except possibly for the miscellaneous collection of lieder on CD 12, which juxtaposes such a great Goethe song as 'An Schwager Kronos' D. 369 (track 17, sung by Simon Keenlyside) with tiny trifles such as 'Am ersten Maimorgen' D. 344 (track 10, Christoph Prégardien) and the extended dramatic setting of the Ossian 'Lodas Gespenst' D. 150 (track 14, strongly sustained by Lucia Popp throughout its nearly 11 minutes). The CDs altogether feature a superb team of singers, both long-established figures (including Thomas Allen, Felicity Lott and Peter Schreier) and the younger generation (Ian Bostridge, Jamie MacDougall, Patricia Rozario and others). Certain singers are particularly prominent in terms of the numbers of items they contribute to these discs, Elly Ameling, Janet Baker and Martyn Hill among them. In a sense, the performer most to be admired is the pianist, Graham Johnson, for his adaptability in collaborating with such a variety of artists. For these, as for the other discs in the complete collection, he has also provided the extensive and informative notes on the songs, highlighting in particular the close relationship of texts and music.

Both the length and the character of the songs on these six discs cover a wide range. To give some statistics: among the shorter solo songs are the 'Vaterlandslied' D. 287 (Klopstock: CD 10, track 8) with its slightly startling patriotism, sung by Lorna Anderson, at 0'54", and the 'Lied' (attributed to Schiller), D. 284 (CD 10, track 5) at 1'07". The shortest of all is the beautiful 'Wonne der Wehmut' (Goethe: CD 9, track 7) at 48" – what a haunting impression is made by those relatively few seconds of music, here soulfully expressed by Janet Baker, who also sings the 'Lied'. The longest item and Schubert's longest-ever song is the chivalric ballad (more truly a miniature opera in monologue) *Adelwold und Emma* (Bertrand: CD 7, tracks 1–4), divided into four sections: 'Hoch und ehern schier von Dauer', 'Adelwolden bracht als Weise', 'Gold, Gestein, und Seide nimmer' and finally 'Dein ist Emma! Ewig dein!', totalling altogether 28'05", finely sung by Martyn Hill, supported by Graham Johnson's sympathetic accompaniment, and disproving John Reed's remark that performances of this work are 'unlikely, to say the least'.² This fascinating and neglected piece, here given a fastidious, expressive and gripping performance, contains some lovely music. Generally the songs receive as fine and committed performances as could be wished for, rich in expressive nuance but not overblown.

² John Reed, *The Schubert Song Companion* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985): 12.

Janet Baker contributes a marvellous performance of Schubert's celebrated second setting of Goethe's 'An den Mond' D. 296 (CD 12, track 8), fully responding to what John Reed recognized as its 'sense of the voice as a kind of vehicle for the soul'.³ Some aspects of the performances will be very much subject to listeners' personal taste; thus the metallic edge in the tone produced at times by some of the female voices is likely to disturb some listeners more than others. An example of the total commitment given by all the performers to the less familiar repertoire is 'Kolmas Klage' D (CD 7, track 11) sung by Margaret Price in splendid dramatic voice, with Graham Johnson producing orchestral effects at the keyboard; this performance draws the listener in utterly. (It perhaps ought to be taken for granted but is nevertheless worth remarking that the singers' enunciation of the German texts is generally flawless, though it must be said that Lucia Popp's diction leaves something to be desired in clarity.)

Many of the songs are in simple strophic form, some with numerous verses; in the latter cases generally a selection of the verses is sung rather than all. The only example that might be seen as problematic is 'Wiegenlied' D. 304 (not the famous cradle song D. 498, but a setting of Körner's poem on the subject of what Shakespeare called the 'ages of man' – from birth to death: CD 10, track 20) where John Mark Ainsley sings only the first two verses, beginning with the mother's love for the child, then breaks off, thus missing the succeeding enumeration and description of the separate phases of life – three altogether here, in the later verses. In one case Schubert miscalculated; having added extra syllables to a line in the first verse of Kumpf [pseudonym Ermin]'s 'Mein Gruss an den Mai' D. 305, he rendered the remaining eight verses unsingable to the music of the first verse: Elly Ameling's performance on CD 10, track 21 simply repeats the first verse once more.

It is noticeable that the singers give a quality of attention to even the (apparently) simplest songs, lending them their maximum effect. Thus the almost *Singspiel*-style Hölty setting 'Der Traum' D. 213, conceived in Schubert's most transparent manner (yet with subtleties of texture and chromatic touches), seems an absolute gem in Martyn Hill's performance, with the singer's perfectly judged response to tiny nuances in the text of the different verses. Martyn Hill also contributes an exquisite rendering of another gem, 'Labetränk der Liebe' D. 302 (Stoll: CD 20, track 18), a song in which John Reed perceived the perfect union of poem and music;⁴ Hill and Johnson achieve an equally perfect fusion of voice and accompaniment, taking their cues from Schubert's marking 'Zart', and from the prevailing gentleness expressed in the poetic language (adjectives such as 'leise' and 'sanft', and images such as 'Engelbild' and 'Engelmelodien', are strewn through the poem).

The Kosegarten settings from this period form an attractive series of the simpler type of strophic songs: Schubert set this poet's verses in an intense creative phase during June to October 1815. Several of them are addressed lovingly to Rosa ('An Rosa I' and 'II'), others to 'Ida' (in some editions, she is named Agnes, but Schubert used a version in which the name became Ida). Jamie MacDougall renders a number of these songs in a lyrically tender performance, producing a lovely, sweet tone. Other songs of 1815 are set in a 'Classical', specifically Haydnesque, manner, crafted with a pleasing rhythmic variety and irregularity of phrase-structure: such are the Stolberg 'Morgenlied' D. 266 (CD 9, track 13,

³ Ibid., 27.

⁴ Ibid., 299.

sung by Lorna Anderson) and to some extent the setting of 'Der Weiberfreund' D. 271 (freely translated by Ratschky from Abraham Cowley's 'The Inconstant': CD 9, track 19, sung by Martyn Hill), which also has echoes of Papageno.

Quite a number of songs are transposed from their original key, and indeed in some cases the original key was unfeasible. The only obvious casualty of these transpositions is the wonderfully sensitive setting of 'Die Mondnacht' (Kosegarten), D. 238, Schubert's one and only lied in the key of F# major, here sung by Sarah Walker in the far more common key of D major (CD 8, track 13): her slightly breathless style suits the mood. The transpositions inevitably, of course, affect the perception that certain keys in Schubert are associated with certain types of mood. Where songs are performed in their original keys these associations suggest themselves sometimes very readily, as with F minor for the dramatic dialogue and heightened emotion of Schiller's 'Hektors Abschied' D. 312 (CD 11, track 3) here powerfully performed in Schubert's second revised version by the baritone Thomas Hampson with soprano Marie McLaughlin; though even Hampson together with Graham Johnson cannot rescue Schubert's unconvincing A \flat major ending. A \flat major is more characteristically associated with the expression of reflective and lofty feelings, as in 'Die Laube' D. 214 (verses by Höltz, sung by Martyn Hill on CD 7, track 7), a song demonstrating Schubert's remarkable maturity of understanding; while A minor, Schubert's key of bleakness, conveys the required plaintiveness for such intensely melancholy verses as the Harfenspieler's in 'Wer sich der Einsamkeit ergibt' D. 325, from Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* (CD 11, track 16, beautifully and movingly sung by Martyn Hill: the *Wilhelm Meister* songs are discussed further below.)

To a considerable extent these early songs show Schubert experimenting structurally in ways that sometimes draw near to the sound-world of Robert Schumann's song settings of some 25 years later. Off-tonic or tonally enigmatic openings are a notable feature characteristic of Schubert's artistic subtlety in many of these settings. Other songs, as I have already suggested, breathe the simpler air of the Singspiel; inevitably this is true of the Papageno/Papagena sequel 'Wer kauft Liebesgötter' D. 261 (Goethe: CD 9, track 9, sung by Elly Ameling). The project encompasses not only all the solo songs but also as a bonus the piano-accompanied part-songs, several of which are featured among these discs, with John Mark Ainsley and Jamie MacDougall (tenors), Simon Keenlyside (baritone), and Michael George (bass) contributing finely blended performances in suitably robust style for drinking-songs such as Schiller's 'Punschlied' D. 277 (CD 8, track 22). Jamie MacDougall brings the same energetic quality (while still alert to textual nuance) to his performance in solo versions of the genre, including 'Skolie' D. 306 of October 1815 (Deinhardstein, in 'carpe diem' mode: CD 10, track 22). Some of the lieder – both solo and part-songs – belong in the category of fragments (either unfinished originally or partly lost), and are performed here in the versions crafted with such restraint and skill by Reinhard Hoorickx; see for example his completion of 'Lorma' D. 327 (CD 11, track 17: sung by Catherine Wyn-Rogers) and the lovely 'An Chloen' D. 363 (CD 12, track 4: sung by Christoph Prégardien).

Several songs appear in more than one version, as for example with the multiple settings from Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* included here, marking the start of Schubert's almost lifelong fascination with these poems. It is necessary to distinguish between the different settings of a poem and the different versions of the same setting: thus for example CD 11 includes Mignon's 'Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt' from *Wilhelm Meister* in the two versions of Schubert's first-

ever setting of this evocative poem of longing (D. 310 and 310a, both dating from 18 October 1815: tracks 1 and 2 respectively, most sensitively sung by Elly Ameling, responding to Schubert's markings of 'mit Ausdruck' for D. 310 and 'mit höchstem Affekt' for D. 310a, and with the first version transposed from A_♭ to G_♭ major, presumably for greater comfort, the second in its original key of F major). A few days later, on 23 October 1815, Schubert produced his only setting of that other famous expression of longing, Mignon's 'Kennst du das Land?' D. 321 (CD 11, track 12: also sung by Elly Ameling), notable for the early appearance of the questioning motif (augmented sixth to dominant) which was to form such a significant part of Schubert's musical language in the later vocal and instrumental works.

Like so many nineteenth-century song composers, Schubert was also fascinated by the quasi-ancient atmosphere evoked in the poems of 'Ossian' (James MacPherson). Most of his Ossian settings date from this period, and they evoke some fine performances on these discs. Certain other poetic themes recurring in Schubert's oeuvre make an early appearance here. Several genuinely titled 'swansongs' appear before the famous collection of D. 957 published under that title posthumously; these include two from among altogether seven Kosegarten settings composed on one day, 19 October 1815, the lover's farewell (in 17 verses) 'Idens Schwanenlied' D. 317 (CD 11, track 8 sung by Elly Ameling) and the solemn seven-verse 'Schwanengesang' D. 318 (CD 11, track 9: Michael George), both reasonably enough performed with a selection of their verses only.

If ever we needed reminding, this collection makes us vividly aware of the richness of Schubert's song production. In many of these early songs the later Schubert can be seen emerging, for example in the freely ranging tonal structure of 'Adelwold und Emma', and in the adventurous exploration of key incorporated even into some of the much shorter settings. The accompaniments cover a wide range of styles, and the use of meaningful, brief piano preludes, interludes and postludes is already present. The vocal range and word-setting often stretch the voices but equally often provide distinctively grateful material for the expressive lied singer – a species most splendidly represented on these discs.

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Discs 13–19

Discs 13–19 contain over 170 songs written during a twenty-month period from March 1816 to November 1817. For the first ten of these months, Schubert was still living with his father and working at his father's school. His frustrations with school teaching are well known, and in December of 1816 he finally moved out of the family home to live with Schober, a somewhat licentious figure whose carnal exploits seem to have encouraged Schubert in the same direction, which may well have resulted in the syphilis that brought about his untimely end. As things turned out, Schubert lived with Schober only until the end of August 1817, when the latter's sick brother unexpectedly returned home from the military to die; thus, for the last three months in which the music on these discs were composed, Schubert found himself back at his father's home.

It seems that the liberation that Schubert felt away from home was less conducive to composing song, as he produced about one-third the number of