



SCHUMANN
 FRAUENLIEBE UND -LEBEN
 LIEDERKREIS OP. 39
 JESSYE NORMAN
 IRWIN GAGE

PATRIMONIO UC

*Imported
 from
 Europe*
 MADE IN THE NETHERLANDS



Side 1:

"Frauenliebe und -leben," Op. 42

(Adalbert von Chamisso)

1. "SEIT ICH IHN GESEHEN"
2. "ER, DER HERRLICHSTE VON ALLEN"
3. "ICH KANN'S NICHT FASSEN, NICHT GLAUBEN"
4. "DU RING AN MEINEM FINGER"
5. "HELFT MIR, IHR SCHWESTERN"
6. "SÜSSER FREUND, DU BLICKEST MICH VERWUNDERT AN"
7. "AN MEINEM HERZEN, AN MEINER BRUST"
8. "NUN HAST DU MIR DEN ERSTEN SCHMERZ GETAN"

Side 2:

"Liederkreis," Op. 39

(Joseph von Eichendorff)

1. IN DER FREMDE
"Aus der Heimat hinter den Blitzen rot"
2. INTERMEZZO
"Dein Bildnis wunderselig"
3. WALDESGESPRÄCH
"Es ist schon spät"
4. DIE STILLE
"Es weiss und rät es doch keiner"
5. MONDNACHT
"Es war als hätt' der Himmel"
6. SCHÖNE FREMDE
"Es rauschen die Wipfel"
7. AUF EINER BURG
"Eingeschlafen auf der Lauer"
8. IN DER FREMDE
"Ich hör' die Bächlein rauschen"
9. WEHMUT
"Ich kann wohl manchmal singen"
10. ZWIELICHT
"Dämm'ung will die Flügel spreiten"
11. IM WALDE
"Es zog eine Hochzeit den Berg entlang"
12. FRÜHLINGSNACHT
"Überm Garten durch die Lüfte"

Jessye Norman, soprano
Irwin Gage, piano

If we consider the poetic conception of the two song-cycles brought together here, only "Frauenliebe und -leben" (Woman's Life and Love) is strictly speaking, an actual cycle. It follows a course of events, even if predominantly in reflective mood. The composer himself assembled the poems for the "Liederkreis" from various sections of Eichendorff's collection which appeared in 1837. Their logically thought-out plan, together with their musical structure, welds them into an inner unity no less convincing than that unity imposed from outside — originating in the poet himself — of "Frauenliebe und -leben." This is not the first realisation of the idea of a song-cycle. Schubert's "Schwanengesang" (Swan-song) might be adduced as a precursor, though this cycle cannot be considered as a conscious work of art since it was put together, not unskillfully, only after Schubert's death, with editorial considerations in mind. We find forerunners of the "Liederkreis" in Schumann himself. Even the 26 songs after various poets, Op. 25, published under the title of "Myrten" (Myrtles), are carefully grouped according to keys and moods corresponding to, or contrasting with, each other. The "Kleine Heine-Zyklus" (Little Heine Cycle), Op. 24, and the "Kerner Songs," Op. 35, comprise poems by a single poet. Not, however, until the "Liederkreis," Op. 39, does Schumann succeed with a homogeneous fusion of various independent poems into a higher unity imposed by music. Whereas the later "Dichterliebe" (Poet's Love), Op. 48, and the "Kleine Heine-Zyklus" suggest a course of events by their juxtaposition of poems, this element is totally lacking in the "Liederkreis."

Schumann's procedure may incidentally have been a protest, cast in a major musical form, against contemporary practice in concertos. Songs at that time were mostly interspersed between instrumental items, without considering whether they were appropriate to those items or even whether they bore any relation to each other. Schumann's "Liederkreis" might thus be considered a model for a systematically planned form of programme such as any experienced Lieder singer nowadays takes for granted, in which one song is linked with another according to key and dynamics, by poets, or by similar or contrasting texts.

Schumann laid out his "Liederkreis" in two parts, with a caesura or break after the sixth song. This conception is to be seen as plainly in the key scheme (F sharp minor — A major — E major — G major — E major — B major; E minor — A minor — E major — E minor — A major — F sharp major) as in the sequence of thoughts in the individual poems. If one reads the latter attentively, it is strikingly obvious that their principal

themes are distance, impermanence, and longing; even the future is nothing but the past anticipated. Only the final song of each half turns from the realm of darkness to a positive emotion. The key relationship between them — B major as the subdominant of F sharp major — corresponds to the association of their ideas; the "great future happiness" is now in the present — "She is yours, she is yours!" On the other hand the opening songs of both sections are most definitely anchored in the concepts of distance and the past — concepts realised musically in No. 1 "In der Fremde" (In a Foreign Land) by a veiled tone quality ("with pedal") and in No. 7 "Auf einer Burg" (In a Castle) by the chorale-like style which conjures up music of other times: There are related metaphors in the texts — in No. 1 "Aber Vater und Mutter sind lange tot" (But father and mother are long dead) and "Rauscht die schöne Waldeinsamkeit" (The beautiful solitude of the forest will rustle); in No. 7 "Der Wald rauscht durch das Gitter" (The forest rustles through the grating) and "Sitzt er viele hundert Jahre" (He has sat for many centuries). There are various layers of depth in the other songs, both musically and poetically. So, for example, the confident longing anticipation of the eternal homecoming in No. 5 "Mondnacht" (Moonlit night), included by Eichendorff in the group entitled "Geistliche Lieder" (Spiritual Songs), provides a contrast to the shudder induced by the enigmatic transitoriness of all earthly things in No. 11 "Im Walde" (In the Forest) — the corresponding song of the second part. The rustling of the forest, an expression of man's estrangement from Nature, becomes a symbol of dread in No. 3 "Waldesgespräch" (Conversation in the Forest), and No. 10 "Zwielicht" (Twilight). In No. 9 "Wehmut" (Melancholy), the composer harks back to the sufferings and painful experiences which seem to be vanquished by the exultation of "Schöne Fremde" (A Beautiful Foreign Land) and "Frühlingsnacht" (Spring Night). That exultation too is the "Sehnsucht Lied" (Song of Yearning).

Nowadays one reads Chamisso's poems "Frauenliebe und -leben" with a slight feeling of unease; the woman is only too plainly allotted a role subordinate to the man's. Whereas he is "the most splendid of all," the "source of joy," her "master," she is made to describe herself as a "lowly maid," as the "poor one" who wants to "serve him, live for him, belong wholly to him" and "bow in reverence and humility before her master." Schumann's music nevertheless gives utterance to the uneasy doubts as well as to the unfettered rejoicing of love, to the happiness of the mother and the widow's sorrow. These are emotions which can always be experienced in retrospect, irrespective of period.

Comparing this cycle with the "Liederkreis," one is struck by a considerable difference in style. In the "Liederkreis" the song-like character is maintained even in No. 3 — a ballad — in Nos. 7 and 10 in strict form, and in the ecstatic flights of Nos. 6 and 12. But in "Frauenliebe und -leben" operatic elements have crept in, from an arioso (No. 2) to a recitative (No. 8). The songs as a whole have the quality of a monologue, occasionally reminiscent of Wagner's mature style. Again, both cycles are differently "orchestrated." The piano part in the "Liederkreis," using an extended compass, has much variety of light and dark shading, whereas the accompaniments in "Frauenliebe und -leben" are predominantly dark, with a preference for the middle and lower registers of the instrument. In Schumann, far more than in Schubert, for example, the piano part is significant in forming the picture, depicting moods by means of material which does not appear in the vocal line; it may also complete a vocal line on its own.

It is sometimes possible to imagine that one is looking at a piano-piece with an *ad libitum* vocal part, for all the musically relevant material occurs in the accompaniment (in "Wehmut" from the "Liederkreis," for example). In "Frauenliebe und -leben" the piano ultimately has the last word too, in an epilogue which has no previous parallel. Its task is to conclude the cycle, which comes full circle with a return to the original key. This cycle also falls into two parts; songs Nos. 1 to 5 embrace the period of anticipation and form an entity through the sequence of keys (B flat major — E flat major — C minor — E flat major — B flat major). However the open sixth at the end of No. 5 foretells the sequel — fulfilment (in the remote keys of G major and D major) and loss (in the tonic minor). The epilogue previously mentioned effects a reconciliation both musically (return to B flat major and a reference to the first song) and in the train of thought. The veil earlier referred to in the vocal line lies, as it were, over this epilogue. As if from a remote distance the calm melodic line of the piano reminds us of the words "Wie im wachen Traume schwebt sein Bild mir vor, taucht aus tiefstem Dunkel heller nur empor" (As in a trance his image hovers before me, emerging from the deepest gloom even brighter). But happiness is lost, the human voice falls silent with grief; it is the task of the piano to speak without words of sorrow and the consolation of remembrance.

Irwin Gage plays the "Liederkreis" from the original manuscript which occasionally differs in notation, phrasing, and dynamics from the printed editions.

Klaus Alexander Vokurka

JESSYE NORMAN

Jessye Norman, born in Augusta, Georgia, U.S.A. studied at Howard University in Washington with Carolyn Grant, with Alice Duschak at Peabody Conservatory, Baltimore, and with Elizabeth Mannion and Pierre Bernac at the University of Michigan resulted in a number of

Sung texts on insert card

International Music Competition in Munich resulted in a number of engagements in Germany. In December 1969 she made her operatic debut at the Deutsche Oper, Berlin, as Elisabeth in "Tannhäuser." Appearing in Italy first in 1970 with Riccardo Muti in Handel's "Deborah" at the Teatro Comunale, Florence, she sang later that year at the Spoleto Festival. In 1971, further performances in Italy included "Idomeneo" with Colin Davis for R.A.I. in Rome and the opening of the Maggio Musicale, Florence, singing the title role in Meyerbeer's "L'Africaine." It was also in 1971 that Miss Norman appeared at the Berlin Festival as the Countess in "Le nozze di Figaro," a role she has recorded for Philips under Colin Davis.

In 1972 she sang the title role in "Aida" in West Berlin and at La Scala, Milan, both under Claudio Abbado, and made her American operatic debut in the same work, with James Levine conducting, at the Hollywood Bowl. Appearances at the Edinburgh Festival and in America at Tanglewood and several other summer festivals followed, with her debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, as Cassandra in "Les Troyens," in September 1972.

Miss Norman's extensive tours have included performances with the world's leading orchestras and conductors, and numerous song recitals in Europe, North and South America, the Middle East, and Australia. She is an exclusive Philips artist and her recordings have included Wagner's Wesendonk Lieder and Liebestod, a song recital of Schubert and Mahler, Verdi's "Un giorno di regno" and "Il Corsaro," and Mozart's "La finta giardiniera."

Other Philips recordings featuring Jessye Norman include:



SCHUBERT
"Schwestergruss"
"Der Zwerg"
"Ellens Gesänge"
MAHLER
3 Songs from
"Des Knaben Wunderhorn"
2 "Rückert-Lieder"
Irwin Gage, piano
6500 412



WAGNER
Prelude and Liebestod from
"Tristan und Isolde"
"Wesendonk" Lieder
London Symphony Orchestra
Colin Davis
9500 031
(Grand Prix National du Disque, 1976)



MOZART
"Le nozze di Figaro"
Norman, Freni,
Ganzarolli, Wixell,
Minton, Tear,
and others
BBC Symphony Orchestra
and Chorus
6707 014 (4 LPs)
(Vienna Mozart Prize, 1972)

Colour photograph: Michael Evans

This stereo record can be played on mono reproducers provided either a compatible or stereo cartridge wired for mono is fitted. Recent equipment may already be fitted with a suitable cartridge. If in doubt, consult your dealer.

Printed in The Netherlands

WARNING - Copyright subsists in all recordings issued under this label. Any unauthorised broadcasting, public performance, copying or re-recording in any manner whatsoever will constitute infringement of such copyright. Licences for the use of recordings for public performance may be obtained from Phonographic Performance Ltd., Evelyn House, 62 Oxford Street, London W. 1.

PHILIPS

