

## Ewa Podles - Russian Arias (2002)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Prince Igor (Knyaz Igor), Act II - Cavatina, Merknet svet dnevnoy (Daylight fades) (Konchakovna)* 2. *Alexander Nevsky, Op. 78 - IV. The Field of the Dead* 3. *The Maid of Orleans, Act II - Aria, Da, chas nastal! Dolzhna provinovatsa nebesnomu velen'yu Ioanna* 4. *Moskva (Moscow) - Mne li dolg velit stiaq bor bi podniat (Is it my duty to raise the banner of struggle)* 5. *Ne Tol'ko Lyubov' (Not for Love Alone) - Po lesam kudriavim, po goram gorbatiim (Along the leafy forests, along the hump-backed hills)* 6. *Oedipus Rex - Aria, Nonn' Erubescite, reges (Are you not at all embarrassed, princes)* 7. *Pesni i plyaski smerti (Songs and Dances of Death - I. Cradle Song)* 8. *Pesni i plyaski smerti (Songs and Dances of Death - II. Serenade)* 9. *Pesni i plyaski smerti (Songs and Dances of Death - III. Trepak)* 10. *Pesni i plyaski smerti (Songs and Dances of Death - IV. The Warrior)* Ewa Podles - contralto Philharmonia of Russia Constantine Orbelian – conductor

This disc is altogether delectable. With few exceptions, Russian opera is little known or appreciated in this country. Perhaps, if it always had interpreters as stupendously capable as Ewa Podles, the story might be different. She is a true contralto, and, as such, more than capable of bringing appropriate power, flexibility and idiomatic darkness to these largely unfamiliar arias. Even more impressively, she uses her magnificent talent to get inside the character of each piece. The result is a virtuoso variety of texture. The sumptuous richness of her sound makes even the finest counter-tenors seem rather thin-voiced. Do not let the unfamiliarity of most of the pieces put you off. Full translations are provided, with the Russian being helpfully rendered in Roman letters. So, let this superrb and thrilling singer introduce you to some very fine music. ---Jim Grogan

Ewa Podles claims to be the only true contralto in the world. Yet the Polish singer - whose

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unique, almost masculine voice, with its tremendous chest notes, encompasses a range of almost three octaves - is often called anything else. --- theoperacritic.com

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