

Marc-Antoine Charpentier – Medee (1984)

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 21 October 2009 20:40 - Last Updated Monday, 30 September 2013 22:59

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CD1 1. Prologue. Ouverture 2. Louis est triomphant 3. Paraissez, charmante Victoire 4. Le Ciel dans nos vœux s'intéresse 5. Loure-Canaries-Suite des Canaries 6. Dans le bel âge, si l'on n'est volage 7. Ouverture (reprise) 8. Acte I. Scene 1. Pour flatter mes ennemis 9. Scene 2. D'où vous vient cet air somber 10. Scene 3. Que serois heureux 11. Scene 4. L'Allegresse en ces lieux 12. Scene 5. Seigneur, la Thessalie attaquant vos Etats 13. Scene 6. Courez aux champs de Mars 14. Acte II. Scene 1. Il est temps de parler CD2 1. Acte II. Scene 2. Princesse, c'est sur vous que mon espoir se fonde 2. Scene 3. Enfin à ton amour tout espoir est permis 3. Scene 4. Prince, venez apprendre une heureuse nouvelle 4. Scene 5. Quand son amour seroit extrême 5. Scene 6. Puisqu'un fier ennemi 6. Scene 7. Qu'elle est charmante 7. Acte III. Scene 1. L'orage est violent 8. Scene 2. Vous savez l'exil qu'on m'ordonne 9. Scene 3. Quel prix de mon amour 10. Scene 4. Croiras-tu mon malheur 11. Scene 5. Noires filles du Stix 12. Scene 6. L'Enfer obéit à ta voix 13. Scene 7. Je vois le don fatal CD3

1. Acte III. Scene 7 (fin). Dieu du Coccyte & des Royaumes sombres 2. Acte IV. Scene 1. Jamais on ne la vit si belle 3. Scene 2. Ah! Que d'attraits 4. Scene 3. Si-tôt que je parois 5. Scene 4. Vous soupçons estoient vrais 6. Scene 5. D'où me vient cette horreur 7. Scene 6. Vos adieux sont-ils faits 8. Scene 7. Objets agréables 9. Scene 8. Mon pouvoir t'est connu 10. Scene 9. Noires Divinités 11. Acte V. Scene 1. On ne peut sans effroy 12. Scene 2. Si la pitié vous peut trouver sensible 13. Scene 3. Venez, parlez 14. Scene 4. Eh bien, barbare 15. Scene 5. Quel feu dans mes veines s'allume 16. Scene 6. Ah, Roy trop malheureux 17. Scene 7. Elle est morte, et je vis! 18. Scene 8. C'est peu, pour contenter la douleur

Jason – Gilles Ragon (tenor) Medee – Jill Feldman (soprano) Nerine – Sophie Boulin (soprano) Creon – Jacques Bona (bass) Oronte – Philippe Cantor (baritone) Creuse – Agnes Mellon (soprano) Les Arts Florissants (Musical group) William Christie - conductor

This is one of the earliest recordings by William Christie and his famous Les Arts Florissants, and one of their first great successes. This recording won the Gramophone award for the Best Early Opera in 1984, one of the first historically informed performances to win such universal acclaim. Everyone interested in period performance practice should have this recording, together with Christie's 1995 rerecording of this fabulous opera. The comparison between the

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two versions of the opera reveals a lot about Christie's genius. It is amazing how much the two versions are alike, and yet it is even more amazing, given how great the first version was, how much improvement Christie was able to achieve with his second recording of Medee. Christie's vision of Medee remained fundamentally unchanged between the two recordings, but within that uniform framework he was able to identify and highlight the greatest strengths of Medee as a remarkably dramatic work, combining the intensely beautiful music with the poignantly dramatic libretto. The second recording followed a series of stage performances that gave Christie and his performers a deeper insight into the work. As a result, the 1995 recording of Medee is truly a thing unto itself; but the 1984 recording nevertheless is more than a mere predecessor - it is also a masterpiece. The recording features a marvelous cast of soloists, with Agnes Mellon especially memorable as Creuse. The singing here is more reserved than on the second Medee; and this is perhaps the main reason Christie chose to rerecord. The 1984 recording also suffers from minor cuts, because of the constraints of the original LP format. The most noticeable cut is the gorgeous solo aria of the Corinthian in the final scene of the first act. Obviously, if you can't spare \$\$ to buy both recordings, buy the second one. But if you can afford to buy both, you will learn a lot from a comparison between the two. If you're already a Christie fan, you will come away with an even greater respect for him. And if you're relatively new to this kind of music, you will come away with a better understanding of why it deserves your attention. ---amazon.com

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