

George F. Handel - Giulio Cesare (Jacobs) [1992]

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Disc: 1 1. Ov - Con Koln/Rene Jacobs 2. Act 1, Scene 1. Cesare E Curio: Viva Il Nostro Alcide - Con Koln/Rene Jacobs 3. Act 1, Scene 1. Cesare E Curio: Aria: Presti Omai/Scene 2. Cornelia, Sesto E Detti - Jennifer Larmore 4. Act 1, Scene 3. Achilla, E Detti: Aria: Empio, Diro - Jennifer Larmore 5. Act 1, Scene 4. Curio, Sesto E Cornelia: Aria: Priva Son D'Ogni Conforto - Bernarda Fink 6. Act 1, Scene 4. Curio, Sesto E Cornelia: Aria: Svegliatevi Nel Core - Marianne Rorholm 7. Act 1, Scene 5. Cleopatra, Poi Nireno, E Dopo Tolomeo: Aria: Non Disperar - Barbara Schlick 8. Act 1, Scene 6. Tolomeo, Ed Achilla: Aria: L'Empio, Sleale - Derek Lee Ragin 9. Act 1, Scene 7. Cesare, E Poi Curio Che Introduce Cleopatra E Nireno: Aria: Alma Del Gran Pompeo - Jennifer Larmore 10. Act 1, Scene 7. Cesare, E Poi Curio Che Introduce Cleopatra E Nireno: Aria: Non E Sivago - Jennifer Larmore 11. Act 1, Scene 7. Cesare, E Poi Curio Che Introduce Cleopatra E Nireno: Aria: Tutto Puo - Barbara Schlick 12. Act 1, Scene 8. Cornelia, E Poi Sesto; Cleopatra E Nireno In Disparte: Aria: Nel Tuo Seno - Bernarda Fink 13. Act 1, Scene 8. Cornelia, E Poi Sesto; Cleopatra E Nireno In Disparte: Aria: Cara Speme - Marianne Rorholm 14. Act 1, Scene 8. Cornelia, E Poi Sesto; Cleopatra E Nireno In Disparte: Aria: Tu La Mia Stella - Barbara Schlick

Disc: 2 1. Act 1, Scene 9. Cesare, Tolomeo Ed Achilla: Cesare, Alla Tua Destra/Aria: Va Tacito/Scene 10... - Derek Lee Ragin/Jennifer Larmore 2. Act 1, Scene 11. Cornelia, Sesto, Ed Achilla: Aria: Tu Sei Il Cor - Furio Zanasi 3. Act 1, Scene 11. Cornelia, Sesto, Ed Achilla: Son Nata A Lagrimar - Bernarda Fink/Marianne Rorholm 4. Act 2, Scene 1. Cleopatra, E Nireno: Esequisti, O Niren - Barbara Schlick 5. Act 2, Scene 2. Nireno, E Poi Cesare: Sinf - Con Koln/Rene Jacobs 6. Act 2, Scene 2. Nireno, E Poi Cesare: Aria: V'Adoro, Pupille - Barbara Schlick 7. Act 2, Scene 2. Nireno, E Poi Cesare: Aria: Se In Fiorito - Jennifer Larmore 8. Act 2, Scene 3. Cornelia, E Poi Achilla - Bernarda Fink/Furio Zanasi/Derek Lee Ragin 9. Act 2, Scene 4. Cornelia, Tolomeo: Aria: Se A Me Non Sei Crudele - Furio Zanasi 10. Act 2, Scene 4. Cornelia, Tolomeo: Aria: Si Spietata/Scene 5. Cornelia, E Poi Sesto - Derek Lee Ragin 11. Act 2, Scene 6. Nireno, E Detti: Aria: Cessa Omai - Bernarda Fink 12. Act 2, Scene 6. Nireno, E Detti: Aria: L'Angue Offeso - Marianne Rorholm 13. Act 2, Scene 7. Cleopatra, E Poi Cesare: Aria: Venere Bella - Barbara Schlick/Olivier Lallouette 14. Act 2, Scene 8. Curio, E Detti: Aria: Al Lampo Dell' Armi - Jennifer Larmore

Disc: 3 1. Act 2, Scene 8. Curio, E Detti: Che Sento?/Aria: Se Pieta - Barbara Schlick 2. Act 2, Scene 9. Tolomeo, Cornelia, E Poi Sesto: Aria: Belle Dee/Scene 10. Achilla, E Detti - Derek Lee Ragin 3. Act 2, Scene 11. Sesto, E Cornelia. Aria: L'Aura Che Spira - Marianne Rorholm 4. Act 3, Scene 1. Achilla: Aria: Dal Fulgor - Furio Zanasi 5. Act 3, Scene 2. Tolomeo, Cleopatra: Sinf - Con Koln/Rene Jacobs 6. Act 3, Scene 2. Tolomeo, Cleopatra: Aria: Domero - Derek Lee

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Ragin 7. Act 3, Scene 3. Cleopatra, Solo Con Guardie: E Pur Così/Aria: Piangero - Barbara Schlick 8. Act 3, Scene 4. Cesare, Poi Sesto, Nireno, Ed Achilla: Aria: Dall' Ondoso/Aure, Deh, Per Pietà - Jennifer Larmore 9. Act 3, Scene 4. Cesare, Poi Sesto, Nireno, Ed Achilla: Aria: Quel Torrente - Jennifer Larmore 10. Act 3, Scene 5. Sesto, E Nireno: Aria: La Giustizia - Marianne Rørholm 11. Act 3, Scene 6. Cleopatra, E Poi Cesare: Voi, Che Mie Fide Ancelle - Barbara Schlick 12. Act 3, Scene 6. Cleopatra, E Poi Cesare: Aria: Da Tempeste/Scene 7. Cornelia, E Tolomeo - Barbara Schlick 13. Act 3, Scene 8. Sesto, E Detti: Aria: Non Ha Più - Bernarda Fink

Disc: 4

1. Act 3, Scene Ultima. Cesare, Cleopatra, Curio, Nireno, Sesto E Cornelia: Sinf - Con Köln/Rene Jacobs 2. Act 3, Scene Ultima. Cesare, Cleopatra, Curio, Nireno, Sesto E Cornelia: Caro/Bella - Barbara Schlick/Jennifer Larmore 3. Act 3, Scene Ultima. Cesare, Cleopatra, Curio, Nireno, Sesto E Cornelia: Ritorni Omai - Con Köln/Rene Jacobs 4. Appendice. Nireno - Qui perde un momento

Duetti e Cantate da Camera

5. Duetto- Tanti strali (soprano, alto & continuo) HWV 197 6. Cantata- Sento la che ristretto, HWV 161 7. Duetto- Beato in ver (soprano, alto & continuo) HWV 181 8. Cantata- Parti, l'Idolo mio (soprano & continuo) HWV 147 9. Duetto- Langue, geme (soprano, alto & continuo) HWV 188

Jennifer Larmore (mezzosoprano) Giulio Cesare Barbara Schlick (soprano) Cleopatra Bernarda Fink (mezzosoprano) Cornelia Marianne Rørholm (mezzosoprano) Sesto Derek Lee Ragin (countertenor) Tolomeo Furio Zanasi (bass) Achilla Olivier Lallouette (baritone) Curio Dominique Visse (countertenor) Nireno Concerto Köln René Jacobs – conductor

Handel's greatest heroic opera sports no fewer than eight principal characters and one of the largest orchestras he ever used. Undoubtedly this, and the singing of Francesca Cuzzoni (Cleopatra) and Senesino (Caesar), helped to launch Giulio Cesare into the enduring popularity that it enjoys to this day. But it's primarily the quality of the music, with barely a weak number in four hours of entertainment, that's made it such a favourite with audiences. Here the period instruments are an immediate advantage in giving extra 'bite' to the many moments of high drama without threatening to drown the singers in forte passages.

This performance is a particularly fine one with an excellent cast; Caesar, originally sung by a castrato, is here taken by the young mezzo, Jennifer Larmore. She brings weight and integrity to the role, seemingly untroubled by the demands of the final triumphant aria, 'Qual torrente'. Occasionally her vibrato becomes intrusive, but that's a minor quibble in a performance of this stature. Handel could just as well have called his opera 'Cleopatra' as she's the pivotal element in the drama, a role taken here by Barbara Schlick and sung with acuity and imagination. If Cleopatra represents strength in a woman, then Cornelia is surely the tragic figure, at the mercy of events. Her first aria, 'Priva son', here taken very slowly, shows Bernarda Fink to be more

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than equal to the role, admirable in her steady tone and dignity of character. Derek Lee Ragin's treacherous Ptolemy is also memorable, venom and fire injected into his agile voice.

A first-rate cast is supported by René Jacobs and Concerto Köln on fine form, though the continuo line is sometimes less than ideally clear. The recording is excellent. ---
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