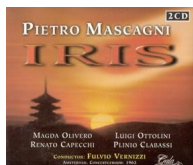Written by bluesever (Bogdan Marszałkowski)
Thursday, 02 July 2020 16:12 -

Pietro Mascagni - Iris (1962/2002)

  Disc 1   *1   Act 1. Introduktion 11:15   2   Act 1. Ho fatto un triste sogno pauroso 05:12   3   Act 1. È lei! è lei! 01:53   4   Act 1. Voglio posure ove à più caldo il sole! 01:30   5   Act 1. Al rio! al rio! È il plenilunio! Al rio! 04:12   6   Act 1. I pure stille, gaie scintilla, Scende la vita! 04:10   7   Act 1. Giù per la via ne viene un gaio suono 01:26   8   Act 1. Io son Danjuro il padre dei Fantocci 02:04   9   Act 1. Misera! Ognor qui sola! 04:30   10   Act 1. Ah! la istoria pietosa! 01:14   11   Act 1. Apri la tua finestra 02:44   12   Act 1. É questa poesia gran ciurmatrice 02:29   13   Act 1. Danze per la morte di Dhia: La Bellezza, la Morte, il Vampiro 03:49   14   Act 1. Grazie, Mousmé! A rivederci! Musica! 00:23   15   Act 1. Questo dramma è menzogna... tutto, tutto 08:05   16   Act 2. La che ci fate ancora mascherate? 10:05   Disc 2   1   Act 2. Ognora sogni, sogni e sogni 07:47   2   Act 2. Io pingo... pingo, ma il mio pennilo invano stendo, intengo! 04:20   3   Act 2. A un cenno mio manda le vesti e i doni 07:39   4   Act 2. Un di (ero piccina) al tempio vidi un bonzo 04:26   5   Act 2. Son le folle dei bonzi spavaldi e I 04:47   6   Act 2. Voglio il giardino mio! 02:13   7   Act 2. Colle piccine, gran maestra natural 03:03   8   Act 2. Annota! La gente dotta e ghiotta 03:15   9   Act 2. Oh, maraviglia dei maraviglia! 07:09   10   Act 3. Ad ora bruna e tarda 12:40   11   Act 3. Perché?... Perché? 00:51   12   Act 3. Ognun per suo cammino 01:22   13   Act 3. Rubai, fui bastonato 01:16   14   Act 3. Ahimè! Chi allumerà 01:16   15   Act 3. Ancora! Il triste sogno pauroso! 10:21*

 Iris - Magda Olivero (Soprano) Osaka - Luigi Ottolini (Tenor) Kyoto - Renato Capecchi (Baritone) II Cieco - Plinio Clabassi (Bass) Dhia - Jennie Veeninga Un Merciaivolo - Fred Bongers Un Cenciaivlo - Fred Bongers   Omroep Orchestra, Omroep Chorus Conductor - Fulvio Vernizzi

This is the opera in which Mascagni tried desperately to do everything in an attempt to prove that he wasn't a no-talent one-hit wonder living off the royalties from The Little One-Act Opera That Could: a crypt-like opening prelude contrasted with a massively explosive choral hymn (I will say more about that soon!), a Japanese girl (daughter of a blind old man) who is kidnapped by a psychotic admirer and forced into a brothel only for her to throw herself into a sewer (you heard that right), followed by a whole-tone prelude for the third act and a repeat of the massively explosive choral hymn from the beginning as she dies in the sewer. So, what could possibly go wrong? Well, if you ever wondered what the D.W. Griffith 1919 film Broken

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Blossoms starring Lillian Gish would look like set in Japan and involving a sewer shaft, this is essentially it except that the plot is meant to be more symbolistic than realistic. Actually this opera was successful, for a while, and is now considered to be among the top three Mascagni operas. It is not so infrequently compared to Madama Butterfly although to be honest the music sounds closer to Turandot if comparisons to a Puccini opera are to be made. Perhaps the connection to Butterfly in ones mind is because of the shared Japanese setting.

SETTING: Japan, 19th century. This has got to be one of the most depressingly sad plots in all opera: Iris (soprano), a young and innocent girl who loves nature (particularly the sun), is kidnapped during a puppet show by a rogue admirer named Osaka (tenor) and Kyoto (baritone) the keeper of a Geisha house at Yoshiwara (which are misidentified in the opera, and most of western culture, as being brothels which they are NOT!). Kyoto leaves money and a note for her blind old father (bass) cruelly implying that she has deserted him to become a prostitute. At the geisha house Osaka fails to seduce the innocent Iris and abandons her. Kyoto decides to try to market her but her father shows up and rebukes her, throwing mud at her. She then rushes back into the house and throws herself down a shaft into the sewer below where she dies the next morning. ---philsoperaworld.music.blog

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