Kaikhosru Sorabji - The Complete Songs for Soprano (2002)



Trois poèmes pour chant et piano 1. Correspondances (text by Charles Baudelaire) 2. Crépuscule du soir mystique (text by Paul Verlaine) 3. Pantomime (text by Paul Verlaine) 4. Chrysilla (text by Henri de Régnier) 5. Roses du soir (text by Pierre Louys) 6. The Poplars (text by Iovan Ducic) 7. L'heure exquise (text by Paul Verlaine) 8. Vocalise pour soprano fioriturata 9. I was not sorrowful (text by Ernest Dowson) 10. L'étang (text by Maurice Rollinat) 11. Hymne à Aphrodite (text by Laurent Tailhade) 12. Apparition (text by Stephané Mallarmé) Trois Chants

13. Le Faune (text by Paul Verlaine) 14. Les Chats (text by Charles Baudelaire) 15. La dernière fête galante (text by Paul Verlaine)

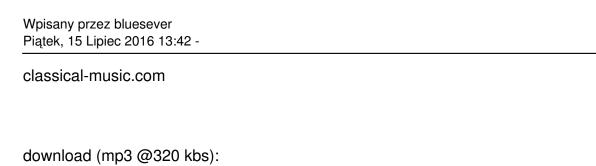
Trois fêtes galantes de Verlaine

16: L'allée 17: A la promenade 18: Dans la Grotte 19: L'irrémédiable (text by Charles Baudelaire) 20: Arabesque (text by Shamsu'd-Din Ibrahim Mirza)

Elizabeth Farnum - Soprano (Vocal) Margaret A. Kampmeier - Piano

Notorious for his Brobdingnagian piano works, many hours long and of mind-numbing difficulty (most famous of all being Opus clavicembalisticum), Kaikhosru Sorabji was also an adept miniaturist. At the start of his extraordinary career, around 1915-20, he wrote many songs, plus a few later, almost all for soprano and mostly to French texts. (His mother was a professional singer; he himself was a connoisseur of the soprano voice and a friend of Blanche Marchesi, among other famous names.) By turns languid, ecstatic, capricious and texturally and harmonically spangled, the 20 songs on this disc, premiere recordings all, display a gifted songwriter whose rapidly forming style fits intelligibly into the company of such contemporary post-impressionist exotics as Scriabin, Szymanowski, Ornstein or Cyril Scott. Sorabji's favoured poets – Baudelaire, Dowson, Mallarmé, Verlaine, Louÿs – are pretty solidly fin de siècle, but his treatment of them borders at times on the Expressionist. The fantastic filigree of his piano parts will intermittently turn to a dancing mock-Baroque directness, as in the 'Dernière fête galante' from his last set of songs, written in 1941. The piano tone on Centaur's recording is sometimes a bit thin, and Elizabeth Farnum shows occasional strain in some of the cruelly high-lying passages in Sorabji's intricate and wayward vocal lines, but this is a very rewarding disc of totally unknown, highly individual and often very beautiful music. --- Calum MacDonald,

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