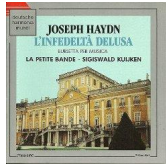


Haydn - L'Infedelta Delusa, Hob. Ia:11

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CD1 1. Atto Primo - Ouverture 6:31 2. Atto Primo - Scena 1 - Introduzione "Bella sera ed aure grate" 10:16 3. Atto Primo - Scena 1 - Recitativo "Si figliola" 2:47 4. Atto Primo - Scena 1 - Aria "Quando viene a far l'amore" 5:20 5. Atto Primo - Scena 2 - Recitativo "Povera me! Povero Nanni!" 2:27 6. Atto Primo - Scena 2 - Aria "Che imbroglio e questo" 3:46 7. Atto Primo - Scena 3 - Recitativo "Ora intendo cos'e" 1:13 8. Atto Primo - Scena 3 - Aria "Non v'è rimedio" 3:21 9. Atto Primo - Scena 4 - Aria "Come piglia si bene la mira" 6:12 10. Atto Primo - Scena 4 - Recitativo "Ecco fatto da cena" 1:37 11. Atto Primo - Scena 5 - Duetto "Son disperato" 4:21 12. Atto Primo - Scena 6 - Aria "Chi s'impaccia di moglie cittadina" 7:20 13. Atto Primo - Scena 6 - Recitativo "E qui l'amico" 4:23 14. Atto Primo - Scena 6 - Finale "O piglia questa!" 4:19

CD2

1. Atto Secondo - Scena 1 - Recitativo "ma Che Farai" - Scena 2 - Recitativo "sbrigati!" 2. Atto Secondo - Scena 2 - Aria "ho Un Tumore In Un Ginocchio" 3. Atto Secondo - Scena 3 - Recitativo "che Ne Dite ?" - Scena 4 - Recitativo "ehi Filippo, Sandrina!" 4. Atto Secondo - Scena 4 - Aria "tu Sposarti Alla Sandrina ?" 5. Atto Secondo - Scena 5 - Recitativo "che Faccenda è Cotesta ?" 6. Atto Secondo - Scena 5 - Aria "trinche Vaine Allegramente" 7. Atto Secondo - Scena 6 - Recitativo "ora Ho Scoperto Tutto" 8. Atto Secondo - Scena 6 - Aria "o Che Gusto" 9. Atto Secondo - Scena 7 - Recitativo "il Negozio Comincia" 10. Atto Secondo - Scena 7 - Aria "hotesa La Rete" 11. Atto Secondo - Scena 8 - Recitativo "tira In Qua Quella Tavola" 12. Atto Secondo - Scena 8 - Aria "e La Pompa Un Grand'imbroglio" 13. Atto Secondo - Scena 9 - Recitativo "servo Di Vosustrissima" 14. Atto Secondo - Scena 9 - Finale "nel Mille Settecento"

Nancy Argenta (Soprano), Lena Lootens (Soprano), Christoph Prégardien (Tenor), Markus Schäfer (Tenor), Stephen Varcoe (Bass), La Petite Bande Sigiswald Kuijken – conductor

According to tradition, L'infedelta delusa ("Infidelity outwitted") is the work which prompted the Empress Maria Theresa, who saw it at Prince Esterhazy's palace in 1773, to declare that when she wanted to hear a good opera she would go to Esterhaza. Some present-day critics have been more grudging in their praise for it, complaining that its characters all plebeians and deriving from commedia dell'arte types—have no depth and the music lacks the flair for building to a climax at which Mozart excelled. But at this date Mozart was still writing opera seria and

had not begun even *La finta giardiniera*, so the comparison is invalid: let us be content that the opera has an uncomplicated plot, well told, and that the score is full of delightful invention, offering opportunities for brilliant singing. This it certainly receives in this enjoyable recording, which differs from Dorati's equally admirable 1981 Philips performance (nla)—apart from it being on CD by the orchestra employing period instruments (at a lower pitch) and by the inclusion of quite a bit more recitative. The advantage of this last, however, will be lost on many by the extraordinary decision to print the Italian libretto in the booklet in the handwriting—neat but reproduced in very small size—of the nineteenth-century Haydn scholar Pohl, and to provide no translation: a clear case of spoiling the ship for a ha'porth of tar.

Kuijken's *Petite Bande* play not only with spirit and bite but with a sureness of intonation that, ten years ago, we dared not hope for from period instruments: as compared with the Dorati version the string tone is smaller and the wind more prominent (though this is not entirely constant in the course of the work, presumably because it was recorded in sessions separated by ten months). The leading role is that of the sharp-witted Vespina, who, like her near-namesake Despina, in pursuit of her plans dons various disguises—an old woman, a German manservant, a knight and a notary. The aptly named Nancy Argenta, with her silvery voice, is deliciously vivacious here, with a splendidly free high register, clean fioriture and exemplary enunciation; but (unlike Magda Kalmar in the 1977 Hungaroton recording of the opera—nla) she does not do very much to alter her vocal quality for her different impersonations and Edith Mathis (for Dorati) got greater fun from words like "patisco a respirar" ("It hurts me to breathe"). As the unhappy Sandrina, whom her peasant father wants to marry off to a well-to-do farmer, Lena Lootens makes a good impression, particularly in ensembles, though in her first aria she is rather more shrill than was Barbara Hendricks (in the Dorati set). Markus Schafer as the duped suitor is outstanding, with a light, easy production throughout his compass and great flexibility (only "Chi s'impaccia" has low notes that elude him, as they also eluded his counterpart for Dorati, Claes Ahnsjo), and he makes every point in the words, especially his misogynistic outburst in Act 1 and his vengeance aria in Act 2. Stephen Varcoe, as Sandrina's true love, has only one aria to sing, an extraordinary one, but he invests it with passionate character. The remaining role is well sung by Christoph Pregardien despite his being rather miscast, as his voice sounds too youthful for Sandrina's father. Despite these small reservations, and an occasional doubt about the placing of singers in the stereo image (two people talking together shouldn't sound from opposite ends of the spectrum), this is a thoroughly entertaining issue of a high-spirited work which can safely be recommended. ---
Lionel Salter, Gramophone [4/1990]

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