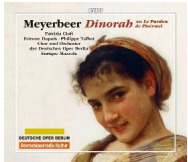


## Giacomo Meyerbeer – Dinorah (2014)

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Disc 1 1 1. Akt: Overture - Chœur Salve ! Salve ! 13:29 2 1. Akt: Chœur villageois Le jour radieux 4:17 3 1. Akt: Récitatif et Berceuse Bellah! 7:50 4 1. Akt: Air de cornemuse 0:54 5 1. Akt: Dialog Diantre! 0:25 6 1. Akt: Couplets Dieu nous donne à chacun en partage 2:37 7 1. Akt: Dialog Hein? 0:22 8 1. Akt: Duo Ah ! Encore ! 8:33 9 1. Akt: Dialog Holà ! Père Alain ! 1:46 10 1. Akt: Grand Air Ô puissante magie ! 4:42 11 1. Akt: Dialog C'est moi... 2:27 12 1. Akt: Duo bouffe Un trésor ! 3:32 13 1. Akt: Terzettino de la clochette Ce tintement... 4:26  
Disc 2

1 2. Akt: Entracte 1:36 2 2. Akt: Chœur des Bucherons Qu'il est bon 2:01 3 2. Akt: Récitatif et Romance Me voici ! 3:57 4 2. Akt: Scène et Air Comme cette nuit est lente à se dissiper ! 10:36 5 2. Akt: Dialog Avance donc ! 0:42 6 2. Akt: Couplets Ah ! que j' ai froid ! 2:39 7 2. Akt: Dialog C'est toi, sonner ? 0:55 8 2. Akt: Légende Sombre destinée ! 3:05 9 2. Akt: Dialog Le traître ! 0:14 10 2. Akt: Grand Duo Bouffe Stt ! 4:40 11 2. Akt: Dialog Mais, je te répète... 1:29 12 2. Akt: Grand Trio final Est-ce une ombre 7:56 13 3. Akt: Entracte 1:50 14 3. Akt: Chant du Chasseur En Chasse ! 2:55 15 3. Akt: Chant du Faucheur Les blés sont baons à faucheer 2:40 16 3. Akt: Villanelle des deux Pâtres Sous les genevriers 3:09 17 3. Akt: Scène et pater noster Bref, nous retrouvons 3:45 18 3. Akt: Mélodrame Comment ? 1:04 19 3. Akt: Dialog Pouvait-on prévoir... 0:23 20 3. Akt: Scène et Romance Et maintenant, mélasse! 5:05 21 3. Akt: Dialog Dieu ! 0:51 22 3. Akt: Duo et Final Un rêve ! 16:54  
Dinorah – Patrizia Ciofi Hoël – Etienne Dupuis Corentin – Philippe Talbot Jäger – Seth Carico Erste Schäferin – Elebenita Kajtazi Zweite Schäferin – Christina Sadak Mäher – Gideon Poppe Orchester der Deutschen Oper Berlin Chor der Deutschen Oper Berlin Enrique Mazzola - conductor "Live", Philharmonie Berlin, September 29 - October 1, 2014.

Dinorah was the penultimate opera by Meyerbeer and the last to be premiered during his lifetime. When L'africaine reached the stage on 28 April 1865 the composer was already dead. Meyerbeer collaborated primarily with Eugène Scribe but for Dinorah he turned to the highly successful duo of Jules Barbier and Michel Carré, responsible for most of Gounod's librettos, including Faust and Rómeo et Juliette; also Offenbach's Les contes d'Hoffmann. Considering the quality of the operas mentioned above, the Dinorah libretto must be regarded as an also-ran. It is not one of those monumental historical canvases, where Meyerbeer was at his

best – Les Huguenots or Le prophète. This is an opéra-comique in a semi-pastoral setting with ghosts and super-natural tidings. The story takes place in Brittany and goes like this:

“Dinorah is desperately mad, having been deserted on her wedding-day. She wanders about in the countryside, searching her beloved, the goatherd Hoël. She falls asleep in the cottage where Corentin lives. Hoël tells Corentin how a terrible storm destroyed his home on his wedding-day. Since he doesn't want to force his bride to lead a life filled with hardship, she had gone away to search for a treasure she had heard a magician talk about. Corentin joins Hoël in the search for the treasure. Since the elves who are watching over the riches, kill everybody who tries to steal the treasure, neither of them wants to be the first to touch it. When Dinorah appears – and Hoël runs away since he believes her to be a ghost, Corentin tries to persuade her to touch the treasure. She faints however and Hoël returns in time to wake her up. The sudden shock when she recognizes him has the fortunate effect that she forgets that she had been abandoned and the time she had been separated from her husband. Hoël hurries to convince her that nothing has happened and decides to give up the treasure. The happy couple return to Ploërmel to carry on the interrupted wedding.”

Not exactly a story in the Nobel Prize winner category, perhaps, but around this Meyerbeer wove a tasteful and elegant score and there is a plethora of beautiful arias and duets, expertly orchestrated and full of inventive ideas. Meyerbeer was the most successful opera composer of the entire 19th century and the neglect of his works when they gradually fell out of fashion must not obscure the fact that he had a professionalism and sense of what was efficient scenically and dramatically. This shines through even today and even in this rather cheap setting.

Only familiar with the ubiquitous Shadow song and a couple of other excerpts I was wholly engrossed in the development of the proceedings. The long overture followed by a couple of choral scenes – his handling of the choruses is overwhelming – shows his structural mastery. The chorus of the villagers gives a rural feeling and his melodic inventiveness may be regarded as ingratiating. He touches the heart-strings of the listener every so often. He also teases the listener with a lot of vocal acrobatics – the long duet Ah! Encore! (CD 1 tr. 8) is a wonderful example. There is a lot of spoken dialogue but it is delivered with conviction and flair and seldom outstays its welcome. With libretto and translations at hand it is easy to savour also this feature of the opéra-comique tradition. There are also several entertaining buffo scenes and at the opening of the third act there is a rural intermezzo where we meet a hunter, a reaper and two shepherdesses who all sing charming songs. The hunter has a dialogue with the French horns of the orchestra and the shepherdesses perform a beautiful villanelle.

Dinorah is the central character and her solos are the cream of the performance. Ombre légère

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is the hit song and Patrizia Ciofi negotiates the coloratura with expertise and beautiful tone. She is well partnered by Etienne Dupuis and Philippe Talbot. Together with the forces from the Deutschen Oper Berlin they have produced a delightful opera, well worth resurrection – at least as an aural experience. The recording from the Philharmonie in Berlin is excellent and although it obviously was made live there are no signs of an audience.

A pleasant surprise that should please everyone with a Francophone inclination. ---Göran Forsling, musicweb-international.com

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