



Franz Liszt: Sardanapalo - Mazeppa

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Vintage music from Liszt, highly recommended

This is vintage Liszt, the unfinished opera Sardanapalo and the symphonic poem Mazeppa. It is a pity that Liszt did not get to complete his opera, but only act I. It is monumental, with such powerful music and great arias and chorus. It is sung beautifully on the CD, and both the soprano and the tenor have great voices, with clarity and great expression. Joyce El-Khoury has such a beautiful voice, and in this opera her singing captures so well the emotions and the drama of the action. The orchestra is also excellent. Sardanapalo is the last king of Assyria, who after a life of luxury and debauchery, hesitated before taking up arms, but after ineffectual resistance, committed suicide to avoid capture.

Mazeppa is a lovely piece of music, quite dramatic, evoking the suffering Mazeppa endures until he finally comes victorious. It is nowadays played to portray the suffering in the world. According to legend, Mazeppa ended up in the Ukraine after being sent off from Poland tied to a loose horse as a punishment for his misdemeanour. The tone poem was revived in the Ukraine when they gained their independence in 1991.

I recommend this audio CD.





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Reviewed in the United Kingdom on February 16, 2019

Verified Purchase

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