



## Robin Johannsen

### Soprano

#### **TELEMANN *Miriways*, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Bernard Labadie, CD Pentatone**

In the trouser role of Sophie, Robin Johannsen is also heroic, but finds a touching wistfulness in the aria that concludes the second act.

*Richard Lawrence, Gramophone, August 2020*

#### **BEETHOVEN *Leonore (Marzelline)*, Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, Rene Jacobs CD Harmonia Mundi**

Johannsen enjoys herself with Marzelline's florid part – in this 1805 version she is effectively promoted to the role of co-principal with Leonore.

*Mike Ashman, Gramophone, February 2020*

Robin Johannsen's Marzelline is a joy, sung with purity of tone and encompassing both shrewish delight in her exchanges with Jacquino and winning warmth in her infatuation with the disguised Leonore.

*Brian Robins, Opera, March 2020 DISC OF THE MONTH*

#### **HANDEL *Judas Maccabeus*, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra**

... splendidly matched by soprano Robin Johannsen, whose Israelitish Woman offered a wealth of pointed, crystalline singing. The Act 2 aria 'From mighty kings he took the spoil,' a virtuoso display of technical prowess and expressive specificity, was only one delight among many.

*Joshua Kosman, San Francisco Chronicle, December 2019*

To soprano Robin Johannsen, the Israelitish Woman, were handed the most extensive runs and coloratura, which she handled with ease while also spinning fine legato phrases in arias such as 'Come, ever smiling liberty.'

*Michael Zwieback, San Francisco Classical Voice, December 2019*

While the gentlemen were superb, it was the ladies – radiant soprano Robin Johannsen as the Israelitish Woman and velvety mezzo-soprano Sara Couden as the Israelitish Man – who performed the main heavy lifting among the principals. The two characters function as high-profile everyday Israeli figures. With a pleasantly soft, clear voice and honeyed textures, Johannsen was sublime in her Act 1 air 'Pious orgies, pious airs,' 'O liberty, thou choicest treasure,' and 'Come ever-smiling liberty' and she had more gems in store, including the Act 2 air 'From mighty kings' and her Act 3 air 'So shall the lute and harp awake.'

*James Ambroff-Tahan, San Francisco Examiner, December 2019*

#### **PURCELL *King Arthur*, Staatsoper Berlin, Rene Jacobs**

Her fellow soprano, Robin Johannsen ('A Priest, Honour, A Shepherdess, She, A Siren, A Nymph') was another standout singer, her sweet, clear voice delightful to listen to and dramatically effective, and her diction convincingly British (though the singer herself is American).

*Elyse Lyon, Opera Wire, November 2019*

#### **La Folia Barokorchester, arias by Telemann, Bad Arolsen**

In rasanter, verlachender Wut des „Se giunge un dispetto“ aus *Agrippina* brillierte sie mit aller galanter, zierlicher Vehemenz.

She shone with gallant, graceful vehemence in the rapid, wailing rage of 'Se giunge un dispetto' from *Agrippina*.

*Jens Klier, Bachtrack.com, May 2019*

**Cantatas by Vivaldi, Scarlatti, Bach, and Pergolesi with Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin at Innsbrucker Festwochen für Alte Musik and Bachwochen Thun**

Robin Johannsens lyrische Zartheit und leise Verhangenheit, ihr Lächeln, das sie auch in die Stimme legt, verschmolzen mit dem Stilbewusstsein und Charme des in jeder Stimme bedeutungsvollen, doch perfekt sich integrierenden Akamus-Ensembles.

Robin Johannsens' lyrical tenderness and softness, her smile – which she also puts into the voice – merged with the sense of style and charm of the meaningful and perfectly-integrated Akamus ensemble.

*Ursula Strohal, Tiroler Tageszeitung, August 2019*

Als Fixstern des barocken Abends erwies sich zweifellos die Sopranistin Robin Johannsen. Sie verstand es, mit ihrem herrlich warmen Sopran die anspruchsvollsten Koloraturpassagen zu einem Hörerlebnis zu machen. Wie strahlend und triumphierend «Scheide denn und lass uns in Schmerz und mit wehem Herzen zurück» in einer Bach-Kantate klingen kann, führte die amerikanische Künstlerin mit Bravour vor. Zu Herzen ging das «Vidit suum» aus «Stabat Mater» von Giovanni Battista Pergolesi in Reinfassung als letzte Zugabe, das zuvor in einer Bearbeitung für die Mittelstimme der Bratsche von Bach erklungen war.

The star of the baroque evening was undoubtedly the soprano Robin Johannsen. She knew how to turn the most demanding coloratura passages into a listening experience with her wonderfully warm soprano. How radiant and triumphant 'Scheide denn und lass uns in Schmerz und mit wehem Herzen zurück' in a Bach cantata, the American artist performed with flying colours. The 'Vidit suum' from 'Stabat Mater' by Giovanni Battista Pergolesi, as a last encore, went to the heart in the purest form.

*Christina Burghagen, BZ Thunder Tagblatt, August 2019*

**'Parnasso in festa' Pentatone, Andrea Marcon conductor**

Robin Johannsen's assumption of this, the biggest female role [Clio], comes close to stealing the show. Hers is a lovely bright soprano, full of character, a voice that comes with a high level of technical accomplishments which include excellent diction and beautifully turned, agile ornaments that encompass several perfectly executed cadential trills.

*Brian Robins, Opera Magazine, March 2018*

**Beethoven's "Leonore" on European tour with the Freiburger Barockorchester and René Jacobs**

*Robin Johannsen sang an impressive Marzelline with pristine musicality and appropriate pertness.*

*Jonathan Sutherland, Bachtrack.com, October 26, 2017*

*Robin Johannsen gave us a beguiling Marzelline, the voice seemingly floating on air through the hall, with a liquid legato matching the crystalline tone.*

*Operatraveller.com, October 29, 2017*

**Handel's "Il Parnasso in festa" conducted by Andrea Marcon in Het Concertgebouw, Amsterdam**

The revelation was American soprano Robin Johannsen, superbly agile and fresh-sounding—but also expressive—in Clio's taxing music.  
*David Shengold, Opera News, "Il Parnasso in festa," February 2017*

**Amor vien dal destino ~ Staatsoper Berlin im Schillertheater**

Robin Johannsen is responsible for some of the evening's most seductive and accomplished singing as unhappy sister Giuturna.  
*Shirley Apthorp, Financial Times, April 27, 2016*

As both Venus and Giuturna, Robin Johannsen brought a luminous soprano and an at times instrumental quality to her arias, such as in the Act Two number "Turn the captain back to shore," in which she begs Turnus to turn back from the coast (Lavinia) to the shore (herself).  
*Rebecca Schmid, classicalvoiceamerica.com, April 28, 2016*

In her twin roles of Venus and Giuturna, Robin Johannsen had more prominent numbers, through which she was able to display all the emotion and technique of her refined soprano. Giuturna, driven near-insane by her forbidden love for Turno, repeated three times her metaphorical helmsman's aria. Johannsen especially shone in Venus's prologue lament arias, in which, accompanied by oboe, she fears for the fate of her son, Aeneas.  
*Waltraut Anna Kautz, Bachtrack.com, "Love comes from fate," April 27, 2016*

**Die Entführung aus dem Serail conducted by René Jacobs with the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, (Harmonia Mundi) - October 2015**

[Jacobs's] Entführung unfolds with potent theatrical energy. It aims to entertain, to bring the situations to continuously animated life...I found it an uninterrupted pleasure to listen to the aria singing of Robin Johannsen's bright-toned, intensely involved heroine.  
*Opera Magazine, February 2016*

Johannsen, though, is a superb Konstanze, with impeccably expressive coloratura and a beautiful silvery tone reminiscent at times of Anneliese Rothenberger on Josef Krips's recording (EMI, 10/70).  
*Tim Ashley, Gramophone, October 2015*

Robin Johannsen is the very excellent soprano who sings Konstanze...Johannsen copes with the formidable demands of the role of Konstanze extremely well.  
*Iain Burnside, BBC Radio 3, October 31, 2015*

Robin Johannsen sings Konstanze, and her lovely, pristine voice is a pleasure to behold, with its impeccable tuning and precise trill.  
*Robert Levine, www.classicstoday.com, December 2015*

**Emma und Eginhard (Emma) ~ Staatsoper Berlin im Schillertheater (conducted by René Jacobs)**

Of a solid cast, Robin Johannsen's Emma stands out for her easy purity and well-rounded musicality.  
*Shirley Apthorp, Financial Times, April 28, 2015*

American soprano Robin Johannsen led the pack as Emma. Her elegant voice gently wafted over the Schiller Theater (hardly the best place to hear Baroque opera). With freshness and legato, she gave the evening's most fully defined performance, from her precise and measured coloratura to the warm notes of



her lower range during the tender 'alphabet of love' that she sings with Eginhard.

*A.J. Goldmann, Opera News, July 2015*

**"In dolce amore" ~ World premiere CD recording of Arias and Cantatas by Antonio Caldara with Alessandro De Marchi and Academia Montis Regalis**

A pair of warbling recorders adorns Sabina's touching siciliano 'Numi, se giusti siete' from Adriano in Siria (1732), and Johanssen sings with limpid sweetness in Emilia's 'In dolce amore' from Scipione Africano (1735). There are judicious contrasts in dramatic situations and musical moods, such as the unjustly condemned Dircea's chromatically expressive 'Se tutti i mali miei' from Demofonte (1733) in comparison to the flirtatious comedy of Dorina's 'Una donna' from I disingannati (1729).

Academia Montis Regalis and Alessandro De Marchi accompany with robust directness or lighter delicacy as required, and Johanssen's versatile singing helps to reveal an enriching glimpse of Caldara's virtues.

*David Vickers, Gramophone, September 2014*