

Fischer-Dieskau windfall

Previously unreleased, perhaps the finest Fischer-Dieskau Brahms recital on disc

Having already commented on one fine collection celebrating **Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau's** 85th birthday (EMI, 6/10), I'm delighted to report four separate CDs from Audite that are if anything even more valuable. Being "previously unreleased" helps, but so often the "unreleased" tag has a negative cause. Not so here, certainly not in the case of a 1974 Berlin Brahms recital with pianist Tamás Vásáry (23 Lieder in total). I'm tempted to claim this as the finest Fischer-Dieskau Brahms recital on disc, the musical rapport with Vásáry often electric, especially in such songs as "Abenddämmerung" and "Sonntag". The combination of unspoiled vocal velvet, interpretative intelligence and spontaneity is quite irresistible and the sound quality is excellent.

Next best is a 1977 programme of Schumann duets with Fischer-Dieskau, his wife **Julia Varady** and pianist Cord Garben, some of them famous from adorable old RCA recordings with Lotte Lehmann and Lauritz Melchior, though here the approach tends to be more relaxed. But what singing! Varady is on superb form. The remainder of the disc is devoted to Beethoven and Mahler songs recorded in the early Fifties.

Being a bit of a Reger nut, I was delighted to encounter a sequence of sacred songs for voice and organ, beautiful miniatures, richly harmonised and superbly performed. The same disc also includes a piece by the Swiss composer Heinrich Sutermeister based on Psalms 70

and 86 (also with organist Ulrich Bremsteller) and a gritty sequence of Hindemith songs with pianist Aribert Reimann. Lastly, an all-Mahler recital with **Daniel Barenboim** recorded in Berlin in 1971 includes two *Rückert-Lieder*, "Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen" at a daringly slow 8'43" though somewhat hampered by a noisy audience. The high-point of this memorable recital (17 songs in all) is *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, especially "Ich hab ein glühend' Messer", a passionate, even disturbing onslaught. Again, the sound is excellent, though as with these other discs you'll need to search out song texts and translations. ©

THE RECORDINGS

Brahms Lieder Fischer-Dieskau

Audite © AUDITE95 635

Schumann Duets Fischer-Dieskau, Varady

Audite © AUDITE 95 636

Reger Sacred Songs Fischer-Dieskau

Audite © AUDITE 95 637

Mahler Lieder Fischer-Dieskau, Barenboim

Audite © AUDITE 95 634

