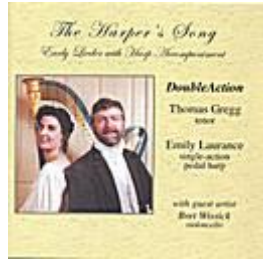


Mp3 Doubleaction (thomas Gregg And Emily Laurance) - The Harper's Song: Early Lieder With Harp Accompaniment



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An intimate, sometimes lyrical, sometimes dramatic collection of early German lieder performed with the unique sound of an 1829 single-action pedal harp. 16 MP3 Songs CLASSICAL: Traditional, FOLK: Gentle
Details: Our modern conception of the Romantic art song generally assumes the presence of piano accompaniment, and the handling of keyboard writing figures prominently in the story of the forms development. The piano provided an excellent combination of harmonic and rhythmic support with real expressive versatility, making it an ideal companion for a solo singer. But although keyboard accompaniment rapidly became standard, practice around the turn of the nineteenth century exhibited a greater fluidity than we tend to assume today. Since publishers were interested in reaching an expanding amateur market, many song collections avoided accompanimental virtuosity; the resulting instrumental writing was relatively simple and was easily adapted to several different instruments. Publishers encouraged such practice by specifying several possibilities keyboard, harp and guitar being the most frequent. This was true, for example, of many of Reichardt's song collections. Alice Hanson reminds us, the harp was a much more important and pervasive instrument in Schubert's day than is usually recognized. (City of Music, Schubert's Vienna, p. 116). Indeed, one could say that it was during this period that the pedal harp reached its pinnacle of popularity as a vocal accompanying instrument. There were several reasons for the harp's prominence in this regard. In many respects, it was simply at the right place at the right time. In the eighteenth century German instrument makers had greatly expanded the harmonic capabilities of the harp by fitting it with pedal-operated hook mechanisms for sharpening the pitch of the strings. These experiments led to further mechanical refinements, and by the late eighteenth

century the single-action pedal harp had been standardized, becoming available to a fashionable high-end market. The harps popularity as an accompanying instrument thus owed something to its harmonic versatility. There were, however, musical and aesthetic reasons for the use of the harp in the early German Lied. One was the Romantics interest in folk music and their attempt to impart folk-like sensibilities into their own musical writing. The harp, while only evoked in some instances, might be explicitly called for in others. This was especially true of folk music that had Alpine connections, since the harp was a prominent part of that regions folk music practice. In Vienna harpists frequently played folk and popular music in restaurants, beer halls, and public parks. But besides the harps strong association with folk music, it also had strong associations with a mythic medieval past, another favorite topos of the Romantic era. The harp, because of its ancient lineage, seemed to capture perfectly the Romantic ideal of the bard who accompanied himself while singing narrative ballads of his own composition. Both of these associations made the theme of the harp a very popular one and many accompaniments, even when written for keyboard, used arpeggiated figuration that suggested the plucking of strings. The Romantics used these two ideas of the harp in two contrasting styles of song composition, both of which are well represented on this program. On the one hand we find the shorter, simpler strophic compositions that sought to recall folk material. This style originated in the eighteenth century with the works of composers like Christian Gottfried Krause, who is often credited with founding the first Berlin school of song composition, and the Saxon Johann Valentin Grner, who was one of the most influential composers of the time and who helped popularize the refrain song. This nave aesthetic of song composition lasted well into the nineteenth century, and can be seen in the works of later composers like Reichardt, Zelter and Schubert. These folk sensibilities are mostly clearly evident in the two Zelter songs and the Swiss Air that follows. All three are settings of pastoral texts by Goethe. The first, *Wer kauft Liebesgtter?*, comes from Goethes sketch for a sequel to *The Magic Flute*. It is a song for Papageno, who is selling fickle lovebirds. In keeping with its theatrical origins, Zelters original conception has Papageno backed up by three maidens (all of whom are selling birds on stage) and accompanied by a piano hidden behind a screen. With its recurring instrumental *sinfonia*, *Wer kauft Liebesgtter?* exhibits the influence of the French pastoral romance. This pastoral theme continues with Zelters *Die Sprde* and *Das Mdchen auf der Wiese* by the Alsatian harpist-composer Franz Stockhausen. Both suggest Alpine folk music by their use of a wordless refrain. Stockhausens songs, written for performance by his wife Margarethe, were all of

this type, reflecting a certain folk-chic of the time. The association of the harp with narrative ballads also made it a logical choice for use in the longer narrative songs of the Romantic era. The Swabian Johann Rudolph Zumsteeg, who composed ballads with horrific themes and marked contrasts of gesture, first developed this genre of song. The use of the harp in narrative song also owed something to folk-music practice. At the turn of the nineteenth century Bnkelsnger performed in various public establishments, singing, yodeling and telling stories to the accompaniment of harps or guitars. According to Alice Hanson, They were especially famous for their ballads recalling the stories of natural disasters and sensational murders, and this tradition also seems to have left its mark on the through-composed narrative German art song. Both Reichardts Johanna Sebus and Conradin Kreutzers Der Snger represent aspects of this tradition. The first of these recounts the true story of a 17-year-old girl from the village of Brienen, who perished on the thirteenth of January, 1809, while helping with the breaking up of the ice on the Rhine when the dam at Cleverham burst. Conradin Kreutzer was a friend and contemporary of Schubert, although his music is rarely heard today. Kreutzers song is something of a meta-ballad, being a ballad about someone singing a ballad, pointedly recalling the medieval antecedents of this tradition. His grand setting of Goethes minstrel story is similar to one by Schubert; the instrumental passages of Kreutzers accompaniment, written clearly with a harp in mind, are extensive and soloistic. They serve to highlight the presence of the title character and to dramatize his story-telling musically. Although written earlier, Goethe later interpolated the text of Der Snger into his novel Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahr (1795), which became a heavily mined source for song texts. Songs sung by the character Mignon as well as her father, the mysterious harper Augustin, were widely set by composers of the Romantic age. Reichardt and Zelter were the first to do so, but these poems were perhaps most famously set by Franz Schubert. The harper of the novel ties together many key Romantic notions about the harp, embodying as he does the itinerant tradition of harp playing while recalling the glory days of minstrelsy. Schuberts settings of Goethes Harper Songs are serious and chromatic, taking the mental instability of the harpers utterances to extremes. The other works on this album were chosen less for their poetical associations to the harp and more for purely historical connections with the instrument. Louise Reichardt was the daughter of Johann Friedrich Reichardt and was a composer, singer, voice teacher, and conductor. She also played the harp, and her Italian songs, which she wrote either for herself or for her students to perform, work especially well with harp accompaniment. Finally, we are including the Mozart, Schubert and Lwe songs following the

example of more recent performers. In their tours of the 1970s, the British harp and tenor duo Osian Ellis and Peter Pears frequently performed the Mozart and Schubert examples. Our performance of Lwes lovely setting of Goethes Canzonetta from Faust is inspired by a historical recording from the early twentieth century by soprano Alma Gluck with harpist Francis Lapitino. Die Rose [The Rose] (translation by J. Lee Riccardi) Do you see that rose blooming, most beautiful one? So see yourself. Do you see the bees flying to it, Phyllis? So think of me. Your blossom draws the desires to the riches of nature and the love of sweet youth robs nothing from you but nurtures you instead. When I see them in the rows of blossoms, beautiful one, so I desire you. When I see you bent down to the rose, I wish, oh, that I be happy too. Your beauty, your splendor, is a wonder of this world. Blooming under the same sun, you have brightened my life. *****

Letztes Lied des Harfenspielers [Last Song of the Harper] (translation by Emily Ezust, recmusic.org/lieder) I will creep from door to door; quiet and humble will I stand. A pious hand will give me food, and I shall go on my way. Everyone will think himself lucky when he sees me before him; a tear will he shed, but I won't know why he weeps. *****

Nachtgesang [Night Song] (translation by Emily Ezust) O give, dreaming from your soft pillow, half an ear to me! To my lute's playing you sleep! what more do you want? Away from the earthly crowd you sever me only too abruptly, entrance me in this cool place; you sleep! what more do you want? You entrance me in this cool place, give me your ear only in your dreams. Ah, on your soft pillow you sleep! what more do you want? *****

Klrichens Lied aus Egmont [Claras Song from Egmont] (translation by Richard Morris, recmusic.org/lieder) Joyful and sorrowful, thoughtful, longing and anxious in constant anguish, sky-high rejoicing, despairing to death, happy alone is the soul that loves. *****

Johanna Sebus (translation by Thomas Gregg) The dam bursts, the field is noisy, the waves lap, the plains roar. I will carry you, mother, through the flood, it is not yet high, I can easily wade. Remember us, distressed as we are, your housemate and three poor children! The trembling woman! you are going away! She already carries her mother through the water. On the hill there you are safe! Wait there; soon I will return, and we will all be safe. On the hill it is still dry and a few steps away; but also take my goat with you. The dam crumbles, the field is noisy, the floods roll, the plains roar. She sets her mother on solid ground, pretty Susie immediately returns to the flood. Where, where? The distance increases, the water is deep on both sides. Bold one! Into the deep will you go? They must and shall be saved! The dam disappears, the waters burst in an ocean billow, it heaves and howls. Pretty Susie retraces her steps,

even upstream she doesn't lose her way; she reaches the hill and her neighbor, but she and her children are lost. The dam disappeared, the sea is noisy, the little hills are encircled. There groans and swirls the foaming abyss, and pulls the woman and her children to the ground, the horn of the goat held by one, but must they all be lost? Pretty Susie stands yet strong and well; who rescues the young one, the noblest blood?! Pretty Susie stands yet like a star, but all helpers are gone. All around her is a waterway, no little boat floats up to her, again she looks up to heaven, then the coaxing waves took her away. No dam! No Field! Only here and there a tree is noted, a tower marking the place. Everything is covered with water; yet Susie's image hovers over it all, the water sinks, the land appears, and everywhere was pretty Susie mourned. And those who will not sing nor tell this story, in life and death will not be remembered!

***** Wer kauft Liebesgötter [Who will buy Love Gods?] (translation by Thomas Gregg) Of all the lovely goods brought here to market, none will give you more pleasure than those we bring from foreign lands. O hear what we sing, and see the lovely birds: we offer them for sale. We don't need to praise them, you can try them yourself. They love new things, but about their faithfulness, don't ask for a signed and sealed letter; they all have wings. How charming are the birds; what a charming purchase!

***** Die Sprüde [The Coy Shepherdess] (translation by Thomas Gregg) On the clearest spring morning went the shepherdess and she sang, young and lovely and carefree, so that it rang through the fields: So lala! Lerallala! Thyrsis offered her two, no three lambs for a little kiss right there. She looked at him roguishly a while, then she went away singing and laughing: So lala! Lerallala! And another offered her ribbons, and the third his heart; but she made fun of heart and ribbons as with the lambs: only lala! Lerallala!

***** Das Mädchen auf der Wiese [The Maiden in the Meadow] (translation by Thomas Gregg) On the hillside I sat, watching the birds; they sang, they jumped; they built nests. In the garden I stood, watching the bees; they hummed, they buzzed, they built their hive.

***** Abendempfindung [Evening Feelings] (translation by Emily Ezust) It is evening, the sun has vanished, and the moon streams with silver beams; so fly life's fairest hours, flying away as in a dance. Soon all life's colorful scenes fly off, and the curtain comes rolling down. Our play is done, the tears of a friend already flow on our grave. Soon perhaps (I sense, like the gentle west wind, a quiet foreboding) I part from life's pilgrimage, flying to the land of rest. If you will then weep over my grave, mournfully gaze on my ashes, then oh friends, I will appear and waft you heavenward. Also, shed a little tear on me, and pluck a violet for my grave, and look gently down on me with our soulful gaze.

Consecrate a tear for me, and ah! do not be ashamed to weep; those tears will be in my crown the most beautiful pearls! ***** An Chle [To Chle] (translation by Emily Ezust) When love shines from your bright, blue, open eyes, and with the pleasure of looking into them my heart pounds and glows, and I hold you and kiss your rosy, warm cheeks, lovely maiden, and I hold you trembling in my arms, dear maid, and I press you tightly to my breast, which at the last moment, only at death, will I let you go; then my intoxicated gaze is covered by a dark cloud, and I sit then, exhausted, but content, next to you.

***** Vanne felice rio (translation by Thomas Gregg) Go happy river, go proudly to the sea! Oh, could I change my fate with yours! Soon you will bathe those charming eyes that envelop my life and my death. Giusto amor (translation by Thomas Gregg) Opportune love, you that ignite me, advise me and defend me from peril and fear, you alone are the cause of my happiness and sorrow. You guide me to a faithful soul, to oppose the barbarous longing. ***** Gesnge des Harfners I [First Harpers

Song] (translation by Emily Ezust) He who gives himself over to solitude, ah! he is soon alone; everyone lives, everyone loves, and everyone leaves him to his pain. Yes! Leave me to my torment! And can I only once be truly lonely, then I will not be alone. A lover creeps up and listens softly is his beloved alone? So, both day and night, does the pain creep up on my solitude, and the torment creep up on my loneliness.

Ah! only once, when I am alone in my grave, will it then truly leave me alone! ***** Der Snger [The Singer] (translation by Emily Ezust) "What do I hear outside the gate what are those sounds on the bridge? Let the song for our ears echo in the hall!" So the king said, and the page ran off. The page soon returned and the king cried: "Let in the old man!" "Greetings, noble lords, greetings fair ladies!

What a rich heaven! Star upon star! Who knows their names? In this hall full of splendor and magnificence, close, you my eyes; here there is no time to marvel with astonishment." The singer closed his eyes and played with full tones: the knights watched bravely and the ladies gazed down into their laps. The king, whom the song well pleased, decided to reward him for his song and sent for a golden chain.

"This golden chain give it not to me; give this golden chain to your knights, before whose bold faces the enemy lances splinter. Give it to the chancellor you have, and let him then bear this golden burden with all his other burdens. "I sing as does the bird that lives in the branches; this song that bursts from my throat is a reward its own rich reward. But if I may, I would ask one thing: give me your best wine in a goblet of pure gold." It was set before him and he drained the cup: "O libation full of sweet refreshment!

O, happy is the well-favored house in which this is considered a small gift! If you enjoy yourselves well,

think of me and thank God as warmly as I thank you for this drink. ***** Canzonetta [Song from Faust] (translation by J. Lee Riccardi) She was prettier than the prettiest day, and so one has to forgive me, because I cannot forget her, especially outdoors. She came into the garden to show her kindness; I feel it still and think of it and remain totally hers. *****

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