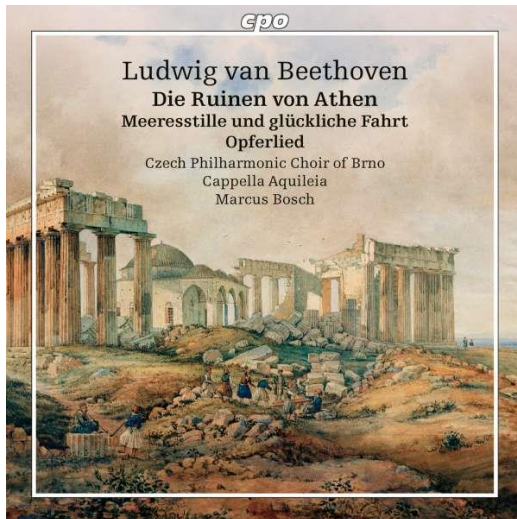




The Literary Beethoven – Music for the theatre Vol. 1

Cappella Aquileia releases second Beethoven album



Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)

- [1] The Ruins of Athens op. 113
- [2] Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt op. 112
- [3] Opferlied op. 121b

Valda Wilson *Soprano*
Simon Bailey *Bass*
Sidonie von Krosigk *Speaker*
Czech Philharmonic Choir of Brno
Cappella Aquileia
Marcus Bosch conductor

cpo // Release: April 27, 2020

The focus of the second collaborative venture of cpo records with the Cappella Aquileia and Marcus Bosch for the Beethoven Year is formed by the complete recording of „The Ruins of Athens“, an incidental composition penned by Beethoven for the opening of the recently constructed theater in Pest (today: Budapest) in 1812 and an occasional work set to a text by the then popular writer August von Kotzebue. Those who perform this work today are faced with a dilemma. If they perform Beethoven’s music without the spoken text, then a work in which language and music are closely intertwined is reduced to an arbitrary sequence of musical numbers. However, if they perform The Ruins of Athens with Kotzebue’s text, then they confront audiences with a political metaphor that without explanation would cause today’s listeners to shake their heads (at least) in bewilderment. In a new version Kai Weßler has endeavored to update Beethoven’s important idea of a classical-humanistic heritage embodied by Pallas Athena and to free it from the political connotations current during his times (and from Hungarian nationalism). The twofold goal was on the one hand to situate The Ruins of Athens in its time of composition during a period of social and political upheavals and on the other hand once again to render audible and intelligible the symbolism of the work (Athens as the cradle of European civilization, etc.). In order to find a language that can hold its own with the pathos of Beethoven’s music, Weßler assembled fragments from poems by Friedrich Schiller, mounting them in a collage. It hardly needs to be stressed that Beethoven not only esteemed Schiller as a poet but also shared his idea that art exists to change the world as a »moral instance« (instead of merely supporting the high and mighty). The fact that a text from Schiller’s »Ode to Joy,« the source of the European anthem, replaces the Hungarian nationalism concluding the original is an ironic marginal point that Beethoven surely would have understood. (*press information by cpo*)

Since its foundation by Marcus Bosch in 2011, the **Cappella Aquileia** has become an artistically renowned orchestra at the Heidenheim Opera Festival. Top-ranking musicians from Germany and

abroad come together in regular projects at the festival location Heidenheim. The Cappella Aquileia's work is characterised by an extraordinary high quality of playing, stage presence, the pleasure of musicians working together and an uncompromising love for detail. The musicians in a chamber music formation reveal an authentic insight into orchestral music of the Classical and Romantic periods.

A focal point of their recent activities is the complete record of Robert Schumann's symphonic works; the first issue in this series was immediately nominated for the ICMA (International Classical Music Award) in 2016. The premieres of the ambitious series begun in 2016 featuring Verdi's early operas will be broadcast by Deutschlandfunk Kultur and issued as a CD series by Coviello Classics. The record of „I lombardi“ was included on the long list of the prestigious German Recording Prize as also the first Beethoven record with violonist Lena Neudauer. They startet the Beethoven concert and record project with the his violin works and incidental music in 2018. Initial tours have recently taken the opera festival orchestra to Switzerland, France and Italy.

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