



HANS HOTTER: eloquent Schubert

yet as warm and resonant as ever. His 1942 performance is one of the most eloquent recordings of Schubert's 'Sei mir gegrüsst' I know; his Wolf 'Anakreons Grab' imperfectly recorded, but perfectly interpreted. Hotter and his accompanist/deviser Michael Raucheisen also enjoy Loewe as performance art and, like Fischer-Dieskau after them, are unafraid to champion the music of Hans Pfitzner. This treasureable disc includes 19 previously unissued early Hotter recordings.

While Hotter was focusing on Lieder in Berlin, the Russian tenor **GEORGI VINOGRADOV** was joining the Red Army Chorus and Ensemble, with whom he was to record a haunting song by Anatoly Novikov called 'Roads'. His wistful voice is eerily echoed by the chorus as they reflect on the many roads taken by Russian émigrés to escape the advancing Nazi armies. This is just one of many tracks which are of more historic and sociological than primarily vocal interest. Vinogradov, who was mysteriously 'retired' in the Fifties, was under-recorded in the Soviet era, and there are almost as many accordions and balalaikas as there are Lenskys and Wilhelm Meisters here. But Vinogradov's fragile, melancholy tenor offers a tantalising glimpse of Schumann's Op. 24 *Liederkreis*, and a complete, folksy *Die schöne Müllerin* – all in Russian.

Finally, two discs that really are for pedigree canary-fanciers only. **MARIA BARRIENTOS**, born in Barcelona in 1884, was a *soprano leggerissima d'agilità*, if ever there was one. Her voice thunders above the gently crackling transfers; and, although there are no song texts, this hardly seems to matter. Even Mozart's 'Deh vieni' and Verdi's 'Caro nome' turn into a type of high-class vocalise. And the concluding Strauss 'Voci di primavera', from 1917, almost completes an Ovidian metamorphosis on its winged flight.

In the larynx of the Dresden-born lyrico-spinto soprano **ERNA BERGER** these 'Voci di primavera' become 'Frühlingsstimmen': indeed, everything, from *Idomeneo* to *Bobème* and *Butterfly*, is sung in German here. Berger is the very incarnation of laughter as Adele from *Die Fledermaus*; and Ward Marston's production gives even the oldest brushstroke of this portrait vivid orchestral and vocal presence. **CD**

• BBC Music Magazine Direct – INA: £13.99; DG: £10.99; Music & Arts: £17.99; Nimbus: £6.99; Naxos: £4.99

## Songbirds from the archives

HILARY FINCH catches recordings of some great voices of the past in full flight

### VERLAINE ET SES MUSICIENS

Mémoires, etc  
Various performers  
INA Mémoire vive IMV 020 ADD/DDD  
mono/stereo (1949-96) 77:45 mins £ £

### ELISABETH SCHWARZKOPF

Arias, duets, etc  
Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano), etc  
Regis RRC 1167 AAD mono (1946-53)  
78:25 mins ..... £

### WUNDERLICH – THE LAST RECITAL

Fritz Wunderlich (tenor)  
Hubert Giesen (piano)  
DG 980 6790 ADD mono (1966)  
75:25 mins ..... £ £

### HANS HOTTER – IN MEMORIAM

Music & Arts CD-1063 AAD mono  
(1942-5) 119:40 mins (2 discs) ..... £ £

### GEORGI VINOGRADOV

Arias, duets, songs  
Guild Historical GHCD 2250-53 AAD  
mono (1938-54) 289:10 mins (4 discs) £

### MARIA BARRIENTOS

Nimbus Prima Voce NI 7908 ADD mono  
(1916-20) 76:20 mins ..... £ £

### ERNA BERGER – A VOCAL

Portrait  
Naxos Historical 8.110733 ADD mono  
(1934-49) 74:04 mins ..... £

particularly fine specimen, in the form of a disc which celebrates the poet, the composer and the song every bit as much as the singer.

**VERLAINE ET SES MUSICIENS** rifles the radio recordings in the archives of the French National Audiovisual Institute, where they are beautifully processed and restored. This disc, the first of its kind, presents settings of Verlaine by composers such as Debussy, Fauré, Bordes and Varèse. And, if the revelatory performances by Bernard Krusén accompanied by Poulenc (Debussy's 'Le son du cor') and Suzanne Danco (Fauré's 'Prison') are anything to go by, then it's going to be quite some series to follow.

A variably remastered but lovingly produced new anthology of the voice of **ELISABETH SCHWARZKOPF** celebrates her musical partnerships: with Karajan and the Vienna Philharmonic in a refulgent 'Porgi amor' from 1950, to a coy, yodelly Swiss folksong in the indulgent company of Gerald Moore. There's *Hansel and Gretel* with Irmgard Seefried, there's Lehár's 'Vilja', smothered in Schlagobers and, best of all, there's a uniquely chilling fusion of fear

and fearlessness in an unforgettable performance with Edwin Fischer of Schubert's 'Die junge Nonne'.

In 1967 a badly damaged family copy of a recording of **FRITZ WUNDERLICH**'s extraordinary last recital was exhumed and brought to new life by a small miracle of technology (details copiously described within). This was given in Edinburgh in 1966; and it's one of the most perfect Lieder recitals I know on disc. All the more pity there are no song texts. But any quibbles about verbal or acoustic deprivation pale before Wunderlich's noble, ardent Beethoven; the sheer intimacy of engagement in his Schubert; and an almost unbearably moving *Dichterliebe*. That night, Wunderlich found a perfect balance of vocal poise, aching grief and youthful virility: every emotion is raw and keen, and Hubert Giesen's playing breathes as one with the voice.

It's the German Radio Archive we have to thank for a new compilation of splendidly restored wartime recordings of **HANS HOTTER**. The great bass-baritone was then in his thirties, with the voice still light, wonderfully flexible,

Aviary after aviary of recorded songbirds continue to be designed for the canary-fanciers of the world. And it's good to start this latest survey with a