



Edition Fischer-Dieskau (IV) – Lieder by Beethoven and Brahms

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[Fanfare](#) (Lynn René Bayley - 01.03.2009)

This is yet another entry in Audite's recent series of early DFD recital broadcasts. The program is more centrist than his broadcast of Brahms's *Die schöne Magdalene*, which I reviewed in *Fanfare* 31:5, containing some better-known Brahms songs as well as the Lieder of Beethoven, which he was among the first to revive.

But this program is sung and played differently from many of his later recordings. In these performances, Fischer-Dieskau sings with much more rhythmic freedom, more in the mold of such artists of the older generation as Karl Erb, Leo Slezak, Gerhard Hüsch, and Herbert Janssen. There are touches of portamento in addition to more rubato and ritards than he used in later performances, whether this was his way at the time or a temporary diversion. Perhaps the playing of Hertha Klust, which is more lyrical, less rhythmically aggressive, and more in the background than that of Gerald Moore with whom he was often partnered from the mid 1950s to the late 1960s, had much to do with it. I know little to nothing about Klust, but to my ears she is a very old-fashioned pianist and not a particularly interesting Lieder partner.

Ah, but the singing – that is in a world of its own. Fischer-Dieskau sings what is certainly the most intimate and touching performance of that old war-horse, *In questa tomba oscura*, that I have ever heard, and even with the ritards and rubato his version of Brahms's *Ständchen* is one of the most delightful you'll ever hear. In those years, virtually everything DFD sang was golden in either voice, interpretation, or both, and this recital is no exception.

I would be remiss if I did not praise Ludger Böckenhoff for the superlative job he did in remastering these tapes. In addition to keeping both piano and voice forward, Böckenhoff has done himself and the label proud. His remastering process, professional and musically sensitive, has uncovered previously obscured details of DFD's interpretations. This one is unique, a disc one can compare interpretively to his famous LP of Strauss songs with pianist Gerald Moore. Highly recommended.