



Barry McDaniel sings Schubert, Schumann, Wolf, Duparc, Ravel & Debussy

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[American Record Guide](#) (Ralph Moore - 2012.07.08)

Debussy's three Promenoir des Deux Amants (Walk of Two Lovers) with Reimann as accompanist joined by Finke, and Zoeller in the Ravel.

The gentleness of his style is evident immediately in the first song of the program, Schubert's 'Winterabend': he captures beautifully the wistfulness of thinking back on "a beautiful time now vanished". According to the notes, "he always imagined whispering his songs into the ears of a listener in the back row", and you can hear it in that song. He also sings with commanding authority, as is evident in 'Auflösung'.

The Wolf songs show him at his best, singing 'Abschied' with great abandon. The relationship between love and death suffuses the six songs of Duparc. In 'Chanson Triste' he catches the swooning quality of one seeking repose in a lover's presence and in 'Lamento' the apprehension of hearing a dove sing at night in a graveyard. McDaniel conveys movingly the grief that permeates 'Soupir' and 'Extace', with its Wagnerian chords suggesting the love duet from Tristan und Isolde. He employs a full range of expression in Ravel's great songs: the exhilaration of love, outrage over colonial exploitation of Madagascar, and the sweetness of natural life. The exoticism of Debussy's three Promenoir songs finds a fitting exponent in McDaniel. So good is his performance of these French songs that even Gerard Souzay could have taken a lesson from him. This is revelatory singing. Barry McDaniel was healed by music, and was able to bring the healing power of music to others with his gentle, lyric voice. The Schubert and Schumann songs were recorded in 1963-5; the Wolf, Debussy, and Duparc in 1973-4; and the Ravel in 1966. All were recorded in the same Berlin radio studio, giving consistent and adequate sound, though it is not spacious. Notes give a good biography, based evidently on an interview with him at age 81. Texts but no translations.