



Franz Liszt: Sardanapalo - Mazeppa

aud 97.764

EAN: 4022143977649



www.amazon.co.uk (2020.01.24)

source: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Liszt-Sardanapa...>



This is fantastic!

First to get it out of the way, the Mazeppa performance is fine, but nothing special.

Now onto the single reconstructed act of the opera: This is fantastic stuff. Not just for Liszt completists. The music is thrilling, and the central love duet and finale particularly so. Melodic in a way that Liszt sometimes isn't, dramatic as the best of his work. Totally brilliant. Perhaps this isn't the best of librettos and the best of drama in the libretto, but the music, my goodness, the music! What a shame this is just one Act. It's a complete transfiguration of the Italian operatic style of the 1850s. To me, this has surprisingly little in common with the far more dignified dramatism of his oratorio on St Elizabeth, which was also semi-staged an opera by Liszt from time to time. I wasn't really expecting music as thrilling and barnstorming as this opera fragment.



RuralNinja

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Reviewed in the United Kingdom on 24 January 2020

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