

Heroines of love and loss

Ruby Hughes *soprano*
Jonas Nordberg *Theorbo / Lute*
Mime Brinkmann *Cello*

Toccata Arpeggiata (3')
Giovanni G. Kapsberger (1580-1651)

Lead me to some peaceful gloom (Boudicca) (3')
Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Cello sonata in G minor- I. Preludio. Largo
Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Venus's birds (3:45)
John Bennett (1575-after 1614)

Cello sonata G minor- II. Allemanda. Andante
Antonio Vivaldi

L'Eraclito Amorososo (8')
Barbara Strozzi (1619-1677)

Ciaccona for theorbo solo
A. Piccinini (1566-1638)

Occhi io vissi di voi (1:30)
Claudia Sessa (1570-1619)

The willow song (4:40)
Anonyma 1600's

INTERVAL

Lagrime mie (9')
Barbara Strozzi (1619-1677)

Lasciatemi qui solo (7')
Francesca Caccini (1587-1640)

Cello sonata in G minor- III. Sarabanda. Largo
Antonio Vivaldi

O magnum mysterium (4:15)
Lucrezia Vizzana (1590-1662)

Dido's Lament (4:30)
Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Cello sonata in G minor- IV. Giga. Allegro
Antonio Vivaldi

O death rock me asleep
Anne Boleyn (...)

Instrumental music; this is the order on the BIS recording and follows a careful key structure. This can be changed for performance purposes.

Introduction to our Heroines program – Ruby Hughes

'Love and Loss' in various manifestations plays the principle role in this trio recital program. The music of the 16th and 17th centuries has always fascinated me, especially in its intimate and revealing chamber music. The universal themes of love and loss were often at the heart of the composer's message, which would be at times earthbound, tragic and full of woe, or overflowing with elation and an otherworldly sense of the spiritual.

Jonas Nordberg and I have collaborated and performed regularly as a duo partnership in recital and recordings throughout Sweden, the UK and Europe. Our project 'Heroines of love and loss' is a celebration of female Italian composers and classical Heroines, mostly of the 17th century. It was premiered in Stockholm Kulturhuset together with the renowned Kenneth Kvanstrom Dance Company. Further performances of variations on this program have included the Lockenhaus International Festival in Austria (broadcast for EUB and ORF), at Change Music festival in Kungsbacka (broadcast for P2), and for the Försaparkett concert series in Stockholm.

Throughout this program and on our recording for BIS Jonas Nordberg and Mime Brinkmann play multidimensional roles, sometimes as soloist, sometimes supporting the voice in playful counterpoint. This trio of plucked and bowed instruments with voice is one of the richest, most dramatic and expressive of musical combinations.

In this repertoire we are often experimenting with sound and colour in relation to the words, and are astonished to always discover an abundance of possibilities within the dynamics of the trio. Scores in the 16th and 17th century were often not fully realised and this allows us ample room for improvisation and spontaneity.

The music we researched and eventually chose spans the late 16th and the 17th century, beginning with Caccini, Sessa and Bennett who form the bridge between the late renaissance and early baroque. We also have a much earlier lament attributed to Ann Boleyn as well as the anonymous 'Willow song' with no exact date confirmed.

Francesca Caccini and Barbara Strozzi, were true musical pioneers as composers and performers and wrote magnificent music for the voice. Very little music remains of the Benedictine nuns Lucrezia Vizzana and Claudia Sessa but in these rare examples we hear their natural affinity for writing deeply moving and spiritual music.

We were inspired to perform and record these rarely heard Italian gems together with 17th century songs and laments of celebrated classical heroines. Our aim in making this selection is to cast a spotlight on our favourite female composers by putting them together with already celebrated classical heroines of that time. It would be wonderful to see these brave female pioneers brought out of relative obscurity and placed alongside the more celebrated composers in recital.

Press:

SWD Swedish broadsheet newspaper 2014

‘The heroines in this production are unknown baroque female composers highlighted from oblivion in a beautiful performance by Norberg and Hughes. Barbara Strozzi, Francesca Caccini, Claudia Sessa and Lucrezia Vizzana were all active in the 1600s. Their sound world is equal to their contemporary Henry Purcell, whose well-known "Dido's lament" forms an effective endpoint to the hour-long performance. The soprano Ruby Hughes is a new star in opera heaven - a graceful beauty with a warm, soft voice. She performed supreme interpretations of two dramatic cantatas by Strozzi with lyrical timbre...Ruby Hughes gives soul to Dido's words : Remember me but forget my fate’

Aftonbladet Kultur Sweden 2014

‘The movements that gently wander like meditation, the delicate string instruments and Hughes’ soprano with an exquisite pianissimo, gives the audience a unique insight into these composers' music.’

Dagens Nyheter, 2014

”...painfully beautiful. Sweetly alive art in a rare fine combination...”

Expressen, 2014

”...astonishing music, seamlessly presented by Nordberg who plays it clearly, listening, strong...”

Hallands Nyheter, 2014

“...Jonas Nordberg has an unusual physical expressivity in his handling of the theorbo and baroque lute. He treats the baroque chords emotionally, expressing rises and falls with his face almost as were it jazz improvisation. “

CONTACTS

For all enquiries please contact managers Nicki Wenham or Rebecca Considine at Maxine Robertson Management Ltd

Press photographs of the trio are also available on request

nw@maxinerobertson.com

rco@maxinerobertson.com

Telephone number +44 2070961574

Musicians:

Ruby Hughes voice
www.rubyhughes.com

Jonas Nordberg lute/theorbo
www.jonasnordberg.com

Mime Yamahiro-Brinkmann
<http://coco.dk/en/musicians/cello/mime-yamahiro-brinkmann/>

Record Label:

BIS records

www.bis.se