



**Lotte
LEHMANN**

**Lieder Recordings, Vol. 1
1935-1937**

MOZART

SCHUBERT

SCHUMANN

BRAHMS

WOLF

BEETHOVEN

Lotte Lehmann (1888-1976)

1935-37 Recordings

Lotte Lehmann has gone down in history as the most celebrated Marschallin of her time in Richard Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*. Opera, however, was not all, and her abilities as a consummate Lieder singer must never be overlooked, nor her final career at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara. Emigrating to the United States in 1938, she continued singing at the somewhat critical age of fifty, then took citizenship and stayed on the West Coast as a successful voice teacher for the rest of her life.

Sixty years ago, singers trained for a longer time than they do today; they were more patient about working their way up from the bottom of the profession under a strict discipline, not, as now, under early pressure to perform. Conditions were such that the wisest of them, including Lotte Lehmann, sang from their vocal income, not from its capital.

Lotte Lehmann came from Mecklenburg in North Germany, was blessed with a pure voice from birth, but in spite of her father's discouragement (he was a civil servant) she was accepted as a pupil with free tuition at a private academy in Berlin. After a year she found herself at odds with her teacher, and the principal of the school dismissed the young Lehmann at the end of 1908 because she had 'no talent'. Her father's suggestion that she should become a teacher was a spur to the determined girl. She wrote to the great Mathilde Mallinger (Wagner's first Eva) and sang for her. 'No talent, indeed!' scoffed Mallinger, who took Lehmann as a special pupil, renewing her confidence and vocal freedom.

The Hamburg Opera accepted her in 1910 where she became friendly with another young soprano, Elisabeth Schumann. Thanks to Artur Nikisch, Enrico Caruso and Otto Klemperer, who were all helpful to her, she progressed from tiny parts to the major ones until, by early 1915, she was singing Elsa and Sieglinde - and Micaëla in *Carmen*. The last casting

turned out to be very important for her, because Hans Gregor, the new director of the Vienna Court Opera, had come to Hamburg to hear the Don José in *Carmen*, but he was far more impressed with Lehmann's Micaëla, and immediately offered her a contract. In the following October she gave a proving performance as Eva in *Die Meistersinger*.

Now she had become 'a property', and her new agent arranged appearances for her in London with Thomas Beecham, Hans Pfitzner in Cologne and at Zoppot with Richard Tauber, all before her first appearance in Vienna. On arrival she was regarded as a provincial in speech, manners and clothes, her Prussian coldness and stiffness equally unwelcome, but she sang well, and became a member of the company in August 1916 when her contract with Hamburg had expired.

The ways of the German northerners are very different from the central European Viennese who considered Lehmann to be bourgeois, badly dressed, with a curious accent and boorish. The great Maria Jeritzka never so much as spoke to her. This disconcerted Lehmann considerably. Soon after she arrived, however, she was given an important understudy rôle in a new opera by Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal. Very shortly before the première, the two creators told her that she was going to sing The Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos* because the famous Marie Guthell Schoder, originally cast, had missed too many rehearsals. After the first night (4th October 1916) everybody in Vienna had heard of Lotte Lehmann and her future was assured. This was the first of her three Strauss world premières (hers was also the first Arabella in Vienna).

Lehmann remained a member of the Vienna Opera until 1937, singing 54 different rôles. There were many dates in South America, London, Paris, Chicago, the Met and her always beloved Salzburg between 1927

and 1937 involving her in association with many fine singers and conductors, and a growing number of Lieder recitals. She enjoyed a substantial career between the years 1916 and 1938, and because her personality and voice were warm, with something of a mezzo-soprano's mellowness, it was inevitable that she should be a successful concert singer and recording artist, especially in major nineteenth-century Lieder. It is likely that Lehmann gave her first proper song recital in Argentina in 1922. It was not until Salzburg in 1934 that she and Bruno Walter gave the first of their 'Lieder Evenings' where she realised how easily she could hold audiences by this very personal form of music-making. The 'two darlings of Salzburg' were to pack the concert hall at the annual Salzburg Festival until 1937, as well as appearing together in Vienna.

Lotte Lehmann was a prolific recording artist. In the primitive studios before electrical recording, her introduction to the large acoustic horn was in 1921 with Richard Strauss's *Cécilie* and *Morgen* for Polydor. She was an Odeon artist between 1924 and 1933, and, because they favoured the 10-inch 78 rpm record, she was encouraged to extend her output of Lieder. The fashion of the time was for orchestrated accompaniments, often of an inappropriate and schmaltzy nature, rather than solo piano as originally intended. In 1933 Lehmann began recording for HMV, before transferring her allegiance to the Victor Recording Company in 1935. By the time she left Vienna, her operatic voice was no longer as luxurious as it had been, but these recorded Lieder reflect the care which she had always taken of that priceless asset, coupled with the years of experience which give great artists depths. Including previously unissued 'takes' which open up new discoveries about Lehmann, there

are 64 pre-war Victor recordings of Lieder, representing her voice and artistry at a very high level.

On 17th October 1935, her first day in the Victor studios, she recorded ten 10-inch 78 rpm discs. The Lieder programme of Mozart, Schubert, Brahms and Hugo Wolf would seem to be aimed at the specialist collector, but Lehmann's voice and personality won over new listeners. The second session in March the following year included five lighter songs, the first of which is by Ernő Balogh. The Hungarian pianist Balogh had studied composition with Bartók and Kodály in Budapest, but was known in the United States mainly as a fine accompanist. He said that his happiest artistic association was with Lehmann, and judging by the rate at which they completed through the session (with two recording machines going) it would appear that they worked as though it were a recital: one Lied after another, using the alternative recording machine to keep up the momentum. Certainly the frequency with which the first of two 'takes' was chosen indicates a spontaneity not always accomplished in the studio.

The next recording session took place a year later, shortly before the Anschluss in Austria, when Lehmann was already worrying about her husband and his (not her) four, part-Jewish, children in Vienna. She was occupied for the rest of 1937 and 1938 with many personal troubles. Her husband and the children had to be ransomed for a huge sum in order to get them out of Austria, and he never recovered from the anxiety and misery of this. There were no further recordings by Lehmann for Victor until January 1939 when Balogh yielded to another accompanist, Paul Ulanowsky, who became her recital partner until her retirement in 1951.

Alan Jefferson

Producer's Note

The present collection was originally released in 1994 by Romophone as the first disc in a two-CD set devoted to Lehmann's 1935-40 Victor recordings. In remastering my transfers for this Naxos reissue, I have removed many pops and clicks that were in the original release, and have re-equalised all the tracks in order to present a comparatively warmer sound. The miking of the original 78s was extremely close, and Lehmann's voice frequently overloads the recording equipment. In addition, the piano tone of the 1935 sides as recorded is very tinny; and while things seem to improve for the 1936 sessions, they regress somewhat by 1937. While not Victor's finest hour from an engineering standpoint, these recordings, many of which were unissued on 78 rpm, feature Lehmann in a variety of repertoire she never otherwise recorded, and are valuable despite their flaws.

Mark Obert-Thorn

- MOZART:**
1 *An Chloë, K. 524* 2:48
 17th October 1935; BS 95611-1 (Victor 1730 A)
- MOZART:**
2 *Die Verschweigung, K. 518* 3:06
 17th October 1935; BS 95612-1 (Victor 1730 B)
- SCHUBERT: Die schöne Müllerin:**
3 *Ungeduld, D. 795, No. 7* 3:13
 17th October 1935; BS 95613-1 (Victor 1731 A)
- SCHUBERT:**
4 *Im Abendrot, D. 799* 3:43
 17th October 1935; BS 95614-1 (Victor 1731 B)
- SCHUMANN:**
5 *Die Kartenlegerin, Op. 31, No. 2* 2:59
 17th October 1935; BS 95615-1 (Victor 1732 A)
- SCHUMANN: Liederkreis:**
6 *Waldeggespräch, Op. 39, No. 3* 2:34
 17th October 1935; BS 95616-2 (Victor 1732 B)
- BRAHMS:**
7 *Der Tod das ist die kühle Nacht,* 2:55
Op. 96, No. 1
 17th October 1935; BS 95617-1 (Victor 1733 A)
- 8** *Therese, Op. 86, No. 1* 1:27
- 9** *Meine Liebe ist grün, Op. 63, No. 5* 1:28
 17th October 1935; BS 95618-1 (Victor 1733 B)
- WOLF:**
10 *Anakreons Grab* 3:00
 17th October 1935; BS 95619-1 (Victor 1734 A)
- WOLF:**
11 *In dem Schatten meiner Locken* 2:10
 17th October 1935; BS 95620-1 (Victor 1734 B)
- BALOGH:**
12 *Do not Chide* 2:13
 13th March 1936; BS 99451-1 (Unissued on 78 rpm)
- GRETCHANINOV:**
13 *My native Land* 1:23
- WORTH:**
14 *Midsummer* 1:32
 13th March 1936; BS 99452-1 (Victor 1893 A)
- SODERO:**
15 *Fa la Nanna, Bambin* 2:36
 13th March 1936; BS 99453-1 (Unissued on 78 rpm)
- CIMARA:**
16 *Canto di primavera* 3:01
 13th March 1936; BS 99454-1 (Unissued on 78 rpm)
- BEETHOVEN:**
17 *Ich liebe dich* 2:44
 13th March 1936; BS 99455-1 (Victor 1995 A)
- TRADITIONAL:**
18 *Schlafe, mein süßes Kind* 3:10
 13th March 1936; BS 99456-1 (Victor 1995 B)
- HAHN:**
19 *D'une prison* 3:06
 13th March 1936; BS 99457-1 (Victor 1972 B)
- GOUNOD:**
20 *Vierges d'Athènes* 2:46
 13th March 1936; BS 99458-1 (Unissued on 78 rpm)

- PFITZNER:**
- 21 *Gretel* 2:06
16th March 1937; BS 06656-1 (Victor 1858 B)
- MARX:**
- 22 *Selige Nacht* 2:40
16th March 1937; BS 06657-1 (Victor 1858 A)
- WOLF:**
- 23 *Storchenbotschaft* 3:43
16th March 1937; BS 06658-1 (Victor 1860 B)
- WOLF:**
- 24 *Der Gärtner* 1:24
- 25 *Du denkst mit einem Fädchen mich zu fangen* 1:08
16th March 1937; BS 06659-1 (Victor 1860 A)
- FRANZ:**
- 26 *Für Musik, Op. 10, No. 1* 1:52
- 27 *Gute Nacht, Op. 5, No. 7* 1:18
16th March 1937; BS 06660-1 (Victor 1861 A)
- JENSEN:**
- 28 *Lehn' deine Wang' an meine Wang'* 2:09
16th March 1937; BS 06661-2 (Victor 1861 B)
- SCHUBERT:**
- 29 *Gretchen am Spinnrade, D. 118* 3:41
16th March 1937; BS 06664-1 (Victor 1856 A)
- SCHUBERT:**
- 30 *Schlafe, schlafe 'Wiegenlied', D. 498* 3:27
16th March 1937; BS 06665-1 (Victor 1856 B)
- SCHUMANN:**
- 31 *Du bist wie eine Blume, Op. 25, No. 24* 2:03
- SCHUMANN: Liederkreis:**
- 32 *Frühlingsnacht, Op. 39, No. 12* 1:25
16th March 1937; BS 06663-2 (Victor 1859 A)
- All tracks with Ernő Balogh, Piano
- Tracks 1-11, 17, 18, 21-32 sung in German
Tracks 12-14 sung in English
Tracks 15-16 sung in Italian
Tracks 19-20 sung in French



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Lotte Lehmann (1888-1976)

Lieder Recordings, Vol. 1 (1935-1937)

Playing Time 78:51

- 1 MOZART: An Chloë, K. 524
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- 5 SCHUMANN: Die Kartenlegerin, Op. 31, No. 2
- 6 SCHUMANN: Liederkreis: Waldesgespräch, Op. 39, No. 3
- 7 BRAHMS: Der Tod das ist die kühle Nacht, Op. 96, No. 1
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- 26 FRANZ: Für Musik, Op. 10, No. 1
- 27 FRANZ: Gute Nacht, Op. 5, No. 7
- 28 JENSEN: Lehn' deine Wang' an meine Wang'
- 29 SCHUBERT: Gretchen am Spinnrade, D. 118
- 30 SCHUBERT: Schlafe, schlafe, D.498 [Wiegenlied]
- 31 SCHUMANN: Du bist wie eine Blume, Op. 25, No. 24
- 32 SCHUMANN: Liederkreis: Frühlingsnacht, Op. 39, No. 12

From 1916-37 Lotte Lehmann (1888-1976) was one of the illustrious stars at the Vienna Opera, becoming the most celebrated Marschallin of her time in Richard Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier*. Lehmann was also noted for her intimate yet spontaneous interpretations of *Lieder*, particularly with Bruno Walter as her accompanist at the Salzburg Festival during the 1930s. This is the first of two Naxos discs of her complete *Lieder* recordings from 1935-40, including songs from Schubert's *Winterreise* (Lehmann was the first to record the complete cycle), Brahms and Wolf, one of the latter's most skilled advocates.

All tracks with Erno Balogh, Piano - Previously released on Romophone Producer and Audio Restoration Engineer: Mark Obert-Thorn
 Special thanks to Lawrence Holdridge, Alan Jefferson, Floris Juynboll, Peter Lack, Ward Marston, Peter Munves, David Norbeck and Jim Peters

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A complete track list can be found in the booklet
 Cover image: Lotte Lehmann (Tully Potter Collection)

