

The commission for a transcription, we learn, came from Clementi, the piano maker and publisher in London, in 1807, and the work was finally published in 1810 shortly before the appearance in London of the 'Emperor' concerto Op. 73. It thus represents a work of the peak of Beethoven's middle period. Interestingly one of the main sources is the second copy housed in the British Library (Add M 47 851) and thus easily accessed. But for study and performance we are fortunate to have these two beautifully produced new editions by Küthen, derived from Henle's 2004 Complete Edition of Beethoven's Works, Section III Volume 5 (HN 4111). One is the large performing Urtext with the second piano as orchestra, and the smaller compact Study Score containing the full orchestral score. Hopefully these will stimulate many more performances of this fascinating work.

Malcolm Miller

## Concerts

### DAZZLING STAR:

**Peter Feuchtwanger admires a Wigmore Hall debut recital by the young American mezzo Laurie Rubin**

AT London's Wigmore Hall on 19 June 2006, a large audience in attendance was generously rewarded by the debut of the young American mezzo-soprano Laurie Rubin. To open her richly varied programme, she chose Haydn's grand 'Scena de Berenice', written for the dramatic soprano Brigida Banti, who sang this aria at Haydn's benefit concert in the Kings Theatre London on 4 May 1775. The intensity, passion and unnerving spontaneity which Laurie Rubin



brought to this extremely difficult and brilliant work displayed an extraordinary virtuosity that set the seal for a memorable evening. The audience, treated to such an expansive and thrilling rendering, responded enthusiastically, realizing, one suspects, a star 'singer musician' had appeared in their midst.

Throughout the evening, the young singer did not spare herself from the arduous difficulties entailed in such a carefully chosen, varied, connoisseurs' programme. The taxing works evidently never tired her radiant voice, instead rather added strength, lustre and richness to it, proving that a firmly established vocal technique, founded on intelligence and innate musicality, is the basis for great singing. Not once during the recital did Laurie Rubin falter from her artistic aim and direction, at all times remaining tirelessly and prodigiously in command of her unique gifts, as one expects from an artist of the first calibre. Few professional singers nowadays – especially singers so young – present such a hugely challenging programme, requiring the singer to be fluent in different languages and idioms, involving a wide gamut of emotions, ranging from the pathos of the rarely performed Schubert Lieder 'Ellens Gesang' I and II D.837-8 and 'Lied der Anne Lyle' D 830 from 1825, to the dazzling coloratura singing called for in Pauline Viardot's three songs, 'Hail luli!', 'Havanaise' and 'Les filles de Cadix', revealing Laurie Rubin to be an ideal Rossini singer in the making.

Young as she is, only an accomplished, mature artist would deign to take on such a repertoire and succeed in being so artistically involved, a reminder that "Many are born, but few are chosen".

The same can be said for the ideal accompanist, on this occasion the American pianist David Wilkinson. And what an artist he proved to be! To begin to describe the extent of his artistic merits is, again, to be thrust into the presence of another

young musician of the highest order. Wherever required, his remarkable effortless technique, his sensitive and cultivated playing traced, embroidered and magically wove around the singer's voice. An added bonus to the audience was his lack of exhibitionism and unnecessary movement at the keyboard. A welcome contrast to the unacceptable and unattractive gyrations associated with so many pianists on today's concert platforms.

After the interval we were treated to four songs by Chabrier and some lesser known, but no less rewarding and engaging American composers: Gabriela Lena Frank (b. 1972), Mark Koval (b.1959) and Dominick Argento (b.1927), followed by more American music, four songs by Aaron Copland and five songs by Ned Rorem. The recital closed with an encore in the form of a bitter-sweet Hebrew song, leaving the audience enraptured with memories of an evening to be cherished, thanks to these two young artists, a 'dream-team' whom we are bound to hear much more of in the future.

**DUSTIN GLEDHILL, piano  
Wigmore Hall, 8 November 2006**

YOUNG American pianist Dustin Gledhill earned his Wigmore Hall debut by winning last year's Jaques Samuel Intercollegiate Piano Competition. Although a new name on the music scene in this country, Gledhill's success is no surprise to the members of the Beethoven Piano Society of Europe who already had an opportunity to hear him on two occasions in London earlier this year (in the Regent Hall in April and St. James's Piccadilly in July).

The Wigmore Hall recital presented a varied programme starting with a very exposed Handel Chaconne which Gledhill delivered with pinpoint clarity. But at times the clarity seemed exaggerated by a dry piano (Fazioli provided an instrument for this occasion). This was particularly the case in