

THE LOUIS SPOHR LIED EDITION

A review by Keith Warsop

Louis Spohr: Gesamtausgabe der ein- und zweistimmigen Klavierlieder/Complete Lieder for Voice and Piano, edited by Susan Owen-Leinert and Michael Leinert; published in twelve volumes by Verlag Dohr, Köln.

THIS new critical edition of Spohr's complete Lieder in 12 volumes is a landmark publication because of the scholarly dedication of the editors in ensuring that it is truly complete. In his now out-of-print Garland Edition of 1988, *The Complete Lieder Sets*, Clive Brown noted seven songs which "have proved impossible to obtain in any form" but here they are, tracked down thanks to editors Susan Owen-Leinert and Michael Leinert plus the help of Kassel-based Spohr researcher Wolfram Boder.

These seven songs are as follows (including year of composition and name of poet):

Die sieben Schwestern, WoO 102 (1839), four-hand piano, Ludwig Wihl (1806-82);

Abendlied, WoO 104 (1841), Konstantin Julius Becker (1811-59);

Immerdar Liebe, WoO 113 (1845), Karl Emil Konstantin von Göchhausen (1778-1855);

Wenn sich zwei Herzen finden, WoO 120 (1851), duet for soprano and alto, Christian Konrad Schad (1821-71);

Mein Verlangen, WoO 122 (1854), Friedrich Konrad Müller von der Werra (1823-81);

Grüsse, WoO 123 (1855), Auguste Linden (pseudonym for Auguste Harnier, an in-law of Spohr's);

Immer dasselbe, WoO 124 (1856), Auguste Linden (again, the pseudonym for Auguste Harnier).

In addition, *Wohin?*, WoO 125 (1856), poet Julius Karl Reinhold Sturm (1816-96), appears in printed form for the first time, having been reproduced by the Garland Edition in a facsimile of the composer's autograph. Also included is Spohr's own four-hand arrangement of the *Matrosenlied*, a piece originally composed for voice and orchestra as part of the incidental music for the play, *Der Matrose*, produced in Kassel in 1839.

Spohr's Lieder output contains a number of songs with four-hand piano accompaniment in addition to the well-known set with clarinet obbligato (Op.103), the one with violin (Op.154) and a single song with horn (WoO 92), all of which can be found in these volumes as can the 12 vocal duets. Indeed, the edition goes further by adding as appendices, songs which appeared in later years to different texts from Spohr's originals, including one or two with English words so that, if anything, this edition is even more complete than complete!

The introduction states that "The research of Louis Spohr's Lieder is not easy due to the situation of unclear sources" and the editors quote from Simon Moser's 2005 study of Spohr's songs that the German Spohr Society "lost the largest part of its valuable holdings, systematically gathered since the year 1908, through confiscation in 1933 and one year later the Mayor of Kassel ordered that they be destroyed." They sum up that Spohr's estate in the truest sense of the phrase was "scattered to the far ends of the earth."

The editors point out that Spohr set 66 authors in his 105 Lieder but there are 11 songs whose poets are anonymous. Extensive research has enabled the editors to identify some of these and also to establish the correct name of a few who are ambiguously identified in the original prints.

Perhaps the most intriguing identification is that of the author of the *Schottisches Lied*, Op.25, No.2, one of the poets Spohr failed to name. The suggestion is that it is by Goethe, based on

research by the editors into a published lecture in the *Zeitschrift für Deutsche Philologie* in 1876. There, Bernhard Ludwig Suphan (1845-1911) presented three unknown Goethe poems from the collection of Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) including the one set by Spohr. Also in the same handwritten collection were the two authentic Goethe poems also used by Spohr in Op.25.

The editors set out their conclusions in a lengthy introduction why they feel that the ‘Scottish Song’ is most likely to be by Goethe but because convincing proof is lacking they note under the Lied title that it is ‘probably’ by Goethe.

Another find is that the poem *Maria*, Op.139, No.2 was by Austrian poet and playwright Ignaz Franz Castelli (1781-1862) which the editors located in his collected works as ‘Marie’ which presumably Spohr altered slightly so as to make the name more singable. Perhaps, more importantly, in searching for the author of *Jägerlied*, Op.139, No.3, the discovery was made of Spohr’s long-lost autograph of the song.

In studying the autograph of *Immerdar Liebe*, WoO 113 (the text is by Karl Emil Konstantin von Göchhausen, 1775-1855) from the archives of the Internationale Louis Spohr Gesellschaft in Kassel, the editors found *Jägerlied* on the reverse side, written in Spohr’s hand. The identification of Göchhausen as the author of this song too is confirmed because he wrote to Spohr a letter dated April 16, 1845, thanking him for setting his two poems to music.

A fascinating story is revealed behind the pseudonym Cäcilie von W., noted by Spohr as the poet of *Die Stimme der Nacht*, Op.39, No.3, and *Liebesschwärmerei*, Op.37, No.6. In reality, she was Julie Louise Cäcilie von Werthern-Beichlingen-Frohndorf, born Baroness von Ziegesar (1773-1831). She was not yet 16 when she married her 53-year-old Baron husband though she was already deeply in love with Ludwig von Brockes, friend of the poet Heinrich von Kleist. After the Baron’s death in 1800 the two lovers were still unable to marry because of problems caused by the Baron’s will.

Eventually, the engaged pair were able to arrange their marriage for September 23, 1815, but tragedy struck when Ludwig von Brockes died in the arms of his bride on the way to Bamberg for the wedding ceremony. Her passionate poems on the pains of love are more comprehensible against this background and we can understand why they appealed to the romantic side of Spohr when he set them at Carolath Castle in 1815.

There is also a completely different fascinating background story to *Was mir wohl übrig bliebe*, Op.139, No.5, which shows the close links between Spohr, Mendelssohn and Schumann. Mendelssohn was compiling a song album to present to his bride, Cécile Charlotte Sophie Jeanrenaud, at Christmas 1836 and in a letter of November 24, 1836, he wrote to Spohr asking for a composition for the album.

Spohr responded immediately and on December 13 Mendelssohn replied with thanks for “the dear, beautiful song, that will just suit the voice of my bride and will bring her so much joy.” A year later, on November 20, 1837, Mendelssohn suggested to Schumann that Spohr’s song should be printed in his *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. He wrote: “In my wife’s album there is a pretty, unpublished Lied from Spohr, what would you think about writing a few lines to him and ask him, if it could be published for the purposes of the magazine? He didn’t include it in his newest collection and it would be a pity if it remained unpublished. It would certainly be a credit to your collection.”

Schumann took up Mendelssohn’s suggestion the next day and wrote to Spohr, saying: “In the enclosed lines from our cherished and splendid Mendelssohn, you find a request, which I would not have dared without such a supporter.” On November 26 Spohr replied: “The Lied in the album of the wife of my friend I regard completely as their possession; therefore if they express

to you they want it published and you find it appropriate for your journal, to see it printed can only please me." In 1848 Spohr included the song in his Op.139 collection of Lieder.

The examples we have given here cover only a small proportion of the diligence of editors Susan Owen-Leinert and Michael Leinert. The 12 volumes are published by Verlag Christoph Dohr and are available from Edition Dohr Köln whose internet site is www.dohr.de and e-mail address is info@dohr.de. Contents of the volumes are as follows:

Volume One

Sechs deutsche Lieder Op.25; Sechs deutsche Lieder Op. 37; Supplement: Op.25, No.1 and Op.37, No.4 with later texts. ISMN M-2020-1951-1.

Volume Two

Sechs deutsche Lieder Op.41; Sechs deutsche Lieder Op.72. ISMN M-2020-1952-8.

Volume Three

Sechs deutsche Lieder Op.101 (three songs for piano, four hands); Sechs deutsche Lieder Op.105. ISMN M-2020-1953-5.

Volume Four

An Sie am Clavier, Op.138; Fünf Lieder, Op.139. ISMN M-2020-1954-2.

Volume Five

Sechs deutsche Lieder Op.94; Das Wirthshaus zu ..., WoO 93. Supplement: Op.94, No.3 with English text. ISMN M-2020-1955-9.

Volume Six

Sechs deutsche Lieder Op.103 (with separate clarinet part). ISMN M-2020-1956-6.

Volume Seven

Sechs Gesänge, Op.154 (with separate violin part). ISMN M-2020-1957-3.

Volume Eight

Duets One: Drei Duetten, Op.107 (soprano, tenor) and Op.108 (two sopranos). ISMN M-2020-1958-0.

Volume Nine

Duets Two: Jenseits, WoO 98 (soprano and tenor); Mein Heimatland, WoO 116 (two sopranos); Drei Lieder, WoO 117 (two sopranos); Wenn sich zwei Herzen finden, WoO 120 (soprano, alto). ISMN M-2020-1959-7.

Volume Ten

Separate songs One: Matrosenlied, WoO 80 (for piano, four hands); Mitternacht, WoO 97 (for piano solo and piano, four hands); Die sieben Schwestern, WoO 102 (for piano, four hands); Räthselhaft, WoO 103 (for piano solo and piano, four hands). ISMN M-2020-1960-3.

Volume Eleven

Separate songs Two: Lied des verlassenen Mädchens, WoO 90; Nachgefühl, WoO 91; Was treibt den Waidmann, WoO 92 (for horn and piano or harp, with separate horn part); Verlust, WoO 99; A la bien aimée/An die Geliebte, WoO 100; Unterwegs, WoO 101; Abendlied, WoO 104; Lied/Singet die Nachtigall, WoO 105; Wolle keiner mich fragen, WoO 106; Thränen, WoO 108; Liebt er mich? WoO 109; Gruss, WoO 110; Mein Vaterland, WoO 111; Ermuthtigung, WoO 112. ISMN M-2020-1961-0.

Volume Twelve

Immerdar Liebe, WoO 113; Everywhere, far and near/Sehnsucht, WoO 114; Herbst, WoO 115; Glockenklänge, WoO 118; Drei Lieder "1001 Tag im Orient", WoO 119; Erwartung, WoO 121; Mein Verlangen, WoO 122; Grüsse, WoO 123; Immer dasselbe, WoO 124; Wohin?, WoO 125; Die verschwiegene Nachtigall, WoO 126; Neue Liebe, neues Leben, WoO 127. Supplement: WoO 121 with later text. ISMN M-2020-1962-7.