

PETER
WATERS

ROTHALDE 333, CH-9055 BÜHLER, SWITZERLAND, TELEFON (0)71 / 793 27 74, FAX (0)71 / 793 22 84

To whom it may concern:



MICHAEL WALTHER:

25 Lieder nach Gedichten von Joseph Kopf Teil 1 (Nein, ich rufe Dich nicht)
25 Lieder von Joseph Kopf Teil 2
(Jauchzend aufhüpft in den Mund des Engels)

When I first heard Michael Walther's 50 Kopf songs, I must say I was honestly shocked. Michael had merely sent them to me for an honest opinion, and as is so often the case when one is asked for an opinion or a reference, it was without the slightest hint of expectation that I finally approached them.

I had certainly not expected that I would want, after the initial hearing, to perform them! They are full of fantasy, a dramatic understanding of the text which shows just how much intuition and hard work has gone into writing them, and an uncanny use of harmonies which always beguiles and interests the ears of the listener.

It is this, above all, the extraordinary use of harmonies, which show that Michael Walther has made an enormous leap forward as a musician. Or maybe we are confronted with a case of the fact that, as Michael is not too "vorbelastet" with a particular technique of composition, and can approach the songs in a fresh and personal way, he is able through a deep insight into the text to come upon a highly original way of setting them to music.

His use of harmony is sparse and, at first hearing, simple, as he has confined himself to a mere lattice of chords in a strict rhythm, so that one hears the simple cells that he hears: the seed itself, so to speak. But this is also remarkable and brave: In this way we have the space to hear his very interesting chordal changes (the harmonies), and I, personally, as a pianist, have space to hear how I would modulate and play them: this would excite me tremendously as I know that these texts are worth hearing in this way, in a style that is timeless. Please imagine the German Liedgut translated into a free use of modern rhythms (from the Bauch, nicht kopf- sondern mehr Kopflastig, Konzertflügel pur) with a highly communicable harmonic structure that transports these texts into an ideally suitable atmosphere: add an appropriate singer (I would have some excellent ideas here!) and there you have it: I find the project of Michael Walther's Joseph Kopf songs to be one of highly artistic and extremely exciting quality, and certainly worthy of being performed in the most suitable setting imaginable.

Peter Waters

Peter Waters, Bühler, Sept. 2 2003