

In fact, that move toward the restoration of classic war-fighting doctrine also begged the question of how the U.S. could reach a strategic *modus vivendi* with the Soviet Union and a break from the entire Yalta structure, including the malthusian population warfare.

Unfortunately, Colonel Prouty did not choose to deal more extensively with the role of both McGeorge Bundy and Allan Dulles in the failed Bay of Pigs invasion. Prouty strongly implies that it was actually Bundy and Dulles who willfully sabotaged the invasion—knowing full well that President Kennedy would have no choice but to assume full public responsibility for the fiasco. It was a case of the secret government carrying out a calculated destabilization against an elected President who threatened to diminish their power.

This reviewer has always suspected that McGeorge Bundy was a pivotal player in the assassination of John Kennedy and the coverup. It was Bundy, speaking from Air Force One just hours after the Kennedy assassination, who declared that the President had been killed by a lone assassin—thereby ordering all investigations into a possible conspiracy to be shut down before they ever started. Bundy's unilateral declaration that there was no conspiracy came at a time when eyewitnesses on the scene in Dealy Plaza in Dallas were providing police with detailed accounts of shots having been fired from several different locations.

That role played by Bundy in the crucial hours after the Kennedy murder is the kind of singularity that begs further study. Given Prouty's account of Bundy's role in sabotaging the Bay of Pigs program, the Bundy issue is even more pressing.

Debunking the Vietnam War

One of the most chilling features of the Prouty book is his detailed account of the buildup of the United States' covert presence in Indochina. Prouty provides an absolutely unique assessment of the tragic policy blunders carried out by the CIA and others during the Eisenhower and Kennedy years. It is a story based on a deep appreciation of the socio-economic and cultural foundations of Vietnamese society and the impact of the forced relocation of over 1 million northern Vietnamese Catholics into the Buddhist south during the early years of the Republic of South Vietnam (1955-62). What Prouty draws out is the fact that much of the insurgency that U.S. advisers were quick to label as communist insurgency was in reality banditry brought on by the economic turmoil caused by the U.S. meddling incompetence.

The history of the Vietnam War as told by Fletcher Prouty is so important a feature of the Cold War tragedy and the buildup to the Kennedy assassination that it merits far more than the short shrift we can give it in the space of a review. It is mandatory reading for anyone struggling to understand the history of the past half century and committed to ensuring that the same mistakes are not repeated. Buy this book and read it carefully.

Complete Schubert Songs

A grand idea has mixed results

by Kathy Wolfe

Complete Songs

The Hyperion Schubert Edition

Vol. 2, Stephen Varcoe, baritone (CDJ 32002); Vol. 6, Anthony Rolfe Johnson, tenor (CDJ 33006); Vol. 7, Elly Ameling, soprano (CDJ 33007); Vol. 11, Brigitte Fassbänder, mezzo-soprano (CDJ 33011); Vol. 14, Thomas Hampson, baritone (CDJ 33014); Vol. 15, Thomas Allen, baritone (CDJ 33015); \$17.99 each

British lieder pianist Graham Johnson's grand idea of recording all of Franz Schubert's 600-plus lieder on CD for Hyperion is having mixed results, but given the size of the task, it's understandable.

The latest release, Vol. 14 by baritone Thomas Hampson, songs to poems of antiquity, is too romantic. Mr. Johnson, however, plays beautifully with the better singers, so Vol. 15, due out soon by baritone Thomas Allen, should be excellent, since Allen excels at lieder.

Johnson has wisely built the series one disc at a time, around a specific singer's voice and musicality. I also recommend those by soprano Elly Ameling, mezzo-soprano Brigitte Fassbänder, tenor Anthony Rolfe Johnson, and baritone Stephen Varcoe, all fine bel canto artists.

Best, the project allows us to study, one 70-minute collection at a time, the full overview of Schubert's songs (as published in the *Neue Schubert Ausgabe*, the complete edition compiled over the past two decades from the autograph scores, which added many new pieces as well as correcting errors in earlier "complete" editions, such as Peters). Johnson's intelligent program notes are a bonus. Avoiding a chronological approach, he introduces the 400 or so almost unknown Schubert songs along with the fewer famous ones, such that each disc draws attention to the "tiny gems which might otherwise be overlooked," as he says, and rewards us with a few familiar prizes.

It is a shame many songs are not in the original key, nor sung by the correct, specific voice species Schubert wanted. For example, "Der König in Thule," D. 367, originally for

soprano or tenor, is transposed down for mezzo-soprano Brigitte Fassbänder, while Elly Ameling transposes up “Des Mädchens Klage” D. 191, a song whose low register passages need a mezzo’s richer first register. This is not just a question of up or down. Schubert wanted certain passages sung in a particular register, low, high, or middle, of a specific voice, and that is missing.

‘More from the whole!’

The best study of Schubert’s lieder is in the observations by Johannes Brahms, cited by his student Gustav Jenner, in *Johannes Brahms as Man, Teacher, and Artist* (quoted in *A Manual on the Rudiments of Tuning and Registration*, Book I, Schiller Institute, 1992, pages 219ff; a full English translation of Jenner’s 1930 book is in preparation by the Schiller Institute). Brahms, trying to master the method by which Schubert wrote such wonderful songs, said that Schubert’s principle was: “More from the *whole!*”

Brahms told students that to compose like Schubert, one must first fully memorize and understand the text and assimilate all of the nuances of the poem, but then, must cast these aside, and concentrate upon understanding the core of the *single, underlying* concept of the poem. A good poem’s core idea is never specifically stated in the poem but is, as Keats said, the “unheard sound” of the poem, which is “sweeter still.”

Then, one writes a song as a new *unified idea*:

“He therefore advised me, if at all possible, not to proceed to the working-out of a song until its full plan was already in my head, or on paper. Whenever ideas come to you, go take a walk; then you’ll find that what you had thought was a finished idea, was only the beginnings of one,” Jenner wrote.

“Of all the song forms, Brahms considered that of the strophic song to be the highest. . . . ‘I like my little songs better than my big ones,’ ” he quoted Brahms, and continued, “in the case of a strophic song-text, there is an underlying mood which is maintained through all particulars or all the varied images.”

Brahms and his teaching assistant Eusebius Mandyczewski told Jenner that Schubert always avoided a *literal* setting of the poetic text in sequence. Of Schubert’s setting of Goethe’s “Nähe des Geliebten,” Jenner wrote:

“Schubert set this text to a simple melody in the compass of a few measures. But whoever thinks that this melody is in some way a composing-out of the first strophe of the Goethe poem, according to which the rest of them can be ‘sung off,’ is quite mistaken. Oh, no! This melody has welled up from the same single deep emotion from which flowed all the images which are so manifold and yet always say the same thing anew. It is a musical expression of what the *entire* poem left as an impression within the composer; and so we find that with each new strophe, as always with Schubert, it glows more fully and seems to say new things, because with the new text the underlying emotion becomes increasingly distinct and is expressed with increasing intensity.”

Schubert, in fact, often introduced something into the vocal line of a song which was contrary to a literal reading of the poem, to this purpose.

Jenner cites a story told by Mandyczewski, who was editing Schubert’s songs for the first time from the manuscripts, and saw that Schubert once crossed out a very good vocal line for the first verse of a strophic song, when he found a better setting for the song as a whole. Schubert used the second version because “the effect had to intensify, rather than flag,” throughout, Jenner said.

In “Nähe des Geliebten,” for example, Schubert avoided structuring a melody to the early verses, to the extent that his melody might seem to fit the beginning poorly. In verses one and two, there is no apparent poetic reason for the dramatic high G on the minor syllables: “in” (“ . . . in Quellen malt”) and “der” (“ . . . der Wandrer bebt”).

Only at the end, is it seen that Schubert proceeded from the underlying concept of the poem, revealed in the fourth verse. This same vocal line is entirely appropriate for the dramatic wish “O! wärst du da!” (“Oh! wouldst thou wert here!”) which concludes the song.

Unity and ‘cantabile’

The Hyperion artists cited above who execute this concept best, also turn out to be some of today’s best Mozart singers. This is lawful, for Mozart teaches how much true passion can be conveyed in a long, legato *cantabile* (singing) line—without getting tied up in each particular phrase. There’s no question that what is *in* the Schubert requires tremendous differentiation of expression in every line. Expression, however, must propel the song as a whole, never stopping to admire itself.

That was the major problem with the last effort at a complete Schubert lieder set, by baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and pianist Gerald Moore a generation ago (still only on LP). Fischer-Dieskau had one of the best voices of the era, but became unbearably *schmaltzy* as his stardom grew. As Moore was a repetitive pedant, the result was boredom after a few songs.

Despite studying with Moore, Graham Johnson is different. He frequently responds to the better singers by building a long legato line that truly expresses Schubert’s counterpoint. The Fassbänder disc’s “Thekla” D. 595 from Schiller’s *Wallenstein* and the Schiller mini-cantata “Elysium” D. 584 are good examples. Miss Fassbänder, daughter of operatic baritone Willi Domgraf-Fassbänder, has a lush, perfectly produced voice, and a mastery of German poetry learned from her father. When she unleashes that voice, the poetry emerges, extremely differentiated but always legato. Johnson responds by playing likewise and the duet is extraordinary.

Still needed: a large, if not complete, Schubert lieder edition in the original keys, with the correct voice species, on the *fortepiano* of Schubert’s day, so that all of Schubert’s vocal and piano registers may be heard.