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English Translation

We know the hypnotic Chamber music of Philip Glass (born 1937), his ground-breaking film scores, his operas, his symphonies, his piano music, but songs from Philip Glass? I must admit I was trying hard to imagine Glass songs in the vicinity of the European lied by Franz Schubert, Robert Schumann, or even Gustav Mahler, or perhaps in the more modern American song genre, such as those of John Corigliano and Ned Rorem. Glass a songwriter? Probably, not – and yet?

The good news (for me): My conjecture was wrong. This collection of songs from Philip Glass does not fail. It is not an attempt at the European art song nor does it strive for the tradition of the American lounge. Both approaches are quite honorable, and both approaches would be in open contradiction to Glass's personal style. But with Glass it's always different than you expect: this album represents a remarkably coherent "Glass approach" to the song genus: Unconventional, uninhibited tonality in proximity to the pop culture, executed without fear – and it's downright mesmerizing, thanks to a charismatic performer. On closer inspection, this is no ordinary Philip Glass CD. The interpreter (and lyricist), Tara Hugo has contributed at least as much on these songs as have Trevor Gureckis arranger and producer Kurt Munkacsi. Here are twelve hauntingly beautiful, understated songs created from existing compositions of Glass. Though typical glass trademarks are present (repetitive patterns, subtle Chamber music instrumentation, exquisitely beautiful melodies) the songs come alive, due to the emotional and authentic feel in the interpretation of texts - In addition to her own words, Tara Hugo sings lyrics by Leonard Cohen, Allen Ginsberg, Nathalie Merchant, Martin Sherman and the Persian mystic Jalaluddin Rumi. The key: Hugo is not only a great singer, but also an established actress. The songs fly because of her great passion (and her extraordinary talent!).

Consequently, the result sounds like a mixture of influences of American singer/songwriters and discreet references to Brecht/Weill and of course, Glass. However, the linchpin of this album is Tara Hugo herself. She gives a credible, stirring and profoundly compassionate voice to Philip Glass and shows with her very personal interpretation of the 'Song' (one can not speak of 'Song' in the classical sense really), how close to the pop and jazz influence contemporary music can be, without losing even a bit of seriousness and timelessness in. There are no labels -- just authenticity and originality.

If this is the start of a series of song CDs from Tara Hugo, she has already won a fervent fan in me. This special CD was released in January 2013.

Original here:

<http://blog.codaex.de/2013/04/tara-hugo-sings-philip-glass/>