NAXOS Historical

GREAT SINGERS • TEYTE

ADD

8.110757-58

Maggie TEYTE

A Vocal Portrait

DEBUSSY
BERLIOZ
RAVEL
DUPARC
PURCELL
FAURÉ
HAHN

Historical Recordings 1932-48

2 CDs

GREAT SINGERS: Maggie Teyte (1888-1976)

A Vocal Portrait

The significance of recording played a considerable part in reviving the career of Maggie Teyte in the mid-1930s. Following her divorce from her second husband, the American Sherwin Cottingham, in 1931, she attempted to revive her career that had been largely dormant during the previous decade. Unfortunately she seemed unable to find her proper course, landing up in music hall and variety which involved 24 performances a week at the Victoria Palace in London. She also appeared as Mrs Fitzherbert in an operetta *By Appointment* by Kennedy Russell that opened in the New Theatre in London on 11th October 1934. Two of the songs from the score appear in the present release. The success was short-lived and the production closed after a short run. Her future seemed uncertain.

Then in 1935, Joe Brogan, an Irish-American record collector and dealer in New York City, wrote to EMI suggesting an album of French songs by Maggie Teyte for inclusion in their newly-formed series of Society Editions. The producer Walter Legge was not convinced but his superior Fred Gaisberg was much taken with the project and even suggested the distinguished French pianist Alfred Cortot as her accompanist. Their historic collaboration was cemented in March 1936 with the recording of Debussy to be found in this set. Such was the artistic and commercial success of these recordings, with Brogan alone selling over a thousand sets, that Teyte's career was reborn. The artist, however, always claimed never to have had a gramophone.

Born Margaret Tate on 17th April 1888 in Wolverhampton, Maggie Teyte was one of ten children from two marriages. Her half-brother, James William Tate, would become a composer who is now best remembered for his songs *A Paradise for Two* and *A Bachelor Gay*, which were included in Harold Fraser-Simson's musical play *The Maid of the Mountains* in 1917. Tate died five years later, at the age of 46. His half-sister Margaret possessed an excellent memory and applied herself to music from an early age. After a short period of study at the Royal College of Music in London, she went to Paris in 1904 to work with the Polish tenor Jean de Reszke for two years, in time becoming his most successful pupil. She was a natural learner and quickly absorbed his teaching methods. It was also a particularly fortunate circumstance that she was able to work with Debussy, who was considered a most exacting taskmaster. Many years later Teyte would recall: "I studied the part of Mélisande with him every day over a period of five to six months. Whether my temperament or the colour of my voice had anything to do with it I do not know, but he never got angry with or corrected me, through all the lessons of Pelléas or his repertoire of songs".

Her concert début as Margaret Tate was in Monte Carlo, while she was still studying, in 1907, the year which also saw her first appearance on the stage as Tyreis in Offenbach's *Myriame et Daphne*. Her Paris début was at the Théâtre National de l'Opéra-Comique on her nineteenth birthday in Hillmacher's *Circe*. Three years later she came to London to sing with the Beecham Opera Company at His Majesty's Theatre, appearing as Cherubino in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* followed by Blonde in the same composer's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail.* Cherubino was also her début rôle at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, in the autumn of the same year.

Maggie Teyte made her first appearance in America in Chicago, again as Cherubino, in 1911. With the outbreak of the Great War she remained in the United States, and returning to Britain in 1919 she created the rôle of Lady Mary Carlisle in Messager's operetta *Monsieur Beaucaire* at the Prince's Theatre on 19th April. Following her second marriage in March 1921, she all but retired from the singing profession until 1930 when she gave a solitary performance as Mélisande in Debussy's opera in addition to taking the title-rôle in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly.* She would return to the Royal Opera House in 1936-37 both as Hansel and Gretel in Humperdinck's opera, Euridice in Gluck's

Orphée and Butterfly. The years 1938-39 saw famous broadcast performances of Massenet's *Manon* in English in addition to an ill-advised attempt as Eva in Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*.

The outbreak of the Second World War saw Maggie Teyte remaining in Britain, enthusiastically throwing herself into war work in addition to much concert activity. It was a result of an invitation to visit the Unites States in 1946, however, through the efforts of Joe Brogan, that brought about an Indian summer in her career. She was then 58 and the American public and critics were astonished how remarkably untouched her voice was by time. It was during her second visit that she made an album of French and Italian arias for RCA with the conductor Jean Paul Morel, two of which are here included. Although by now most of her work was in the concert hall, she did reappear as Mélisande at the New York City Opera in 1948. Three years later she sang Belinda in the famous Mermaid Theatre's production of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* with Kirsten Flagstad in the title-rôle. Sadly, she was dropped for EMI's commercial studio recording, but there survives an off-the-air recording with a ten-minute rehearsal sequence which was filmed by the BBC on 14th September 1951.

Teyte continued to perform in recital until a final Royal Festival Hall appearance in 1955. Created a Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur by the French government in the 1950s, she was made a Dame of the British Empire in 1958. It was also during this year that her largely ghosted autobiography *Star at the Door* was published. She remained active well into her seventies, teaching (not entirely successfully, it has to be said), giving broadcast interviews and lectures. She still came over as a strong and feisty woman with independent views. She died in London on 26th May 1976.

Maggie Teyte's recording career began in Paris in 1907 for The Gramophone Company, continuing in the United States from November 1913 until February for both Columbia and the Edison companies. Then she made selections from *Monsieur Beaucaire* in London, in April 1919, for the British Columbia label. There followed a thirteen-year gap until she undertook a series of sessions for the emerging Decca Recording Company, including the two delicious arias from *Véronique* and *La Périchole* to be found here. The next sessions, in October 1934 and March 1934, have been referred to already. An album of French songs, paid and made for The Gramophone Shop in July and August 1940, prompted EMI to sign her on 19th February 1941 on a one-year contract. This was renewed on an annual basis until 1948, her last recordings being made on 8th September that year. All her wartime recordings, which were produced by Walter Legge in EMI's No. 3 Studios, were released in the top-price status: she was the only British-born artist to be so honoured.

Two years later in 1950 Teyte recorded a recital for the BBC which was published posthumously, a disc which also included an excerpt from her final broadcast as a singer on 25th November 1958. Thus ended a musical performing career which had lasted more than half a century.

Maggie Teyte's voice was one of marked purity with perfect placement of tone, allied to considerable spontaneity of presence together with her strong and vivid intuitive skills as an interpreter and great care for diction, all of which contributed to her pre-eminence as an artist of international renown.

Malcolm Walker

Ward Marston

In 1997 Ward Marston was nominated for the Best Historical Album Grammy Award for his production work on BMG's Fritz Kreisler collection. According to the Chicago Tribune, Marston's name is 'synonymous with tender loving care to collectors of historical CDs'. Opera News calls his work 'revelatory', and Fanfare deems him 'miraculous'. In 1996 Ward Marston received the Gramophone award for Historical Vocal Recording of the Year, honouring his production and engineering work on Romophone's complete recordings of Lucrezia Bori. He also served as re-recording engineer for the Franklin Mint's Arturo Toscanini issue and BMG's Sergey Rachmaninov recordings, both winners of the Best Historical Album Grammy.

Born blind in 1952, Ward Marston has amassed tens of thousands of opera classical records over the past four decades. Following a stint in radio while a student at Williams College, he became well-known as a reissue producer in 1979, when he restored the earliest known stereo recording made by the Bell Telephone Laboratories in 1932.

In the past, Ward Marston has produced records for a number of major and specialist record companies. Now he is bringing his distinctive sonic vision to bear on works released on the Naxos Historical label. Ultimately his goal is to make the music he remasters sound as natural as possible and true to life by 'lifting the voices' off his old 78 rpm recordings. His aim is to promote the importance of preserving old recordings and make available the works of great musicians who need to be heard.

The Naxos historical label aims to make available the greatest recordings in the history of recorded music, in the best and truest sound that contemporary technology can provide. To achieve this aim, Naxos has engaged a number of respected restorers who have the dedication, skill and experience to produce restorations that have set new standards in the field of historical recordings.

CD 1 — 77:48

1 **PURCELL: King Arthur: Fairest Isle** **2:29**
Rec. 1st August 1941; Mat. OEA 9339-3; Cat. DA 1790

2 **PURCELL: The Libertine: Nymphs and Shepherds** **3:15**
Rec. 1st August 1941; Mat. OEA 9340-3; Cat. DA 1790

3 **MARTINI: Plaisir d'amour** **3:43**
Rec. 16th January 1942; Mat. OEA 9687-1; Cat. DA 1810

4 **GRÉTRY: Le tableau parlant: Vous étiez ce que vous n'êtes plus** **3:07**
Rec. 21st September 1946;
Mat. D6-RB 2868; Cat. 10-1371

5 **PERGOLESI: La servante maîtresse: Air de Zerbina** **3:32**
Rec. 21st September 1946;
Mat. D6 RB 2870; Cat. 10-1369

BERLIOZ: Nuits d'été:

6 **II Le spectre de la rose** **4:39**
Rec. 31st July 1940; Mat. CTPX 11583-1; Cat. JG 177

7 **IV Absence** **4:35**
Rec. 31st July 1940; Mat. CTPX 11584-1; Cat. JG 177

8 **LISZT: Oh! quand je dors** **4:07**
Rec. 26th October 1947; Mat. 2EA 12453; Cat. GSC 23

9 **TCHAIKOVSKY: Les larmes** **2:51**
Rec. 26th October 1947; Mat. 2EA 12454; Cat. GSC 24

10 **BIZET: Chanson d'avril** **2:45**
Rec. 7th June 1943; Mat. OEA 10004-1; Cat. DA 1833

11 **CHAUSSON: Le Colibri** **2:46**
Rec. 7 June 1943; Mat. OEA 10005-1; Cat. DA 1833

12 **OFFENBACH: La Périchole: Tu n'es pas beau…Je t'adore brigand** **3:47**
Rec. 22nd September 1932; Mat. FGA 4932; Cat. T 201

13 **MESSAGER: Véronique: Petite dinde, ah quel outrage / Ma foi! Pour venir de Provence** **3:41**
Rec. 22nd September 1932; Mat. FGA 4931; Cat. T 201

14 **DUPARC: Phidylé** **4:43**
Rec. 31st July 1940; Mat. CTPX 11586-1; Cat. JG 178

15 **DUPARC: L'invitation au voyage** **4:05**
Rec. 31st July 1940; Mat. CTPX 11585-1; Cat. JG 178

16 **SZULC: Clair de lune** **3:55**
Rec. 22nd August 1941; Mat. 2EA 9393-3; Cat. DB 5937

17 **FONTENAILLES: Obstination** **2:28**
Rec. 20th July 1944; Mat. OEA 10258-1; Cat. DA 1847

18 **FAURÉ: Après un rêve** **2:41**
Rec. 26th March 1941; Mat. OEA 9221-1; Cat. DA 1777

19 **FAURÉ: Nell** **1:49**
Rec. 10th February 1943; Mat. OEA 9972-1; Cat. DA 1831

20 **FAURÉ: Clair de lune** **3:13**
Rec. 6th January 1942; Mat. OEA 9694-1; Cat. DA 1876

21 **PALADILHE: Psyché** **2:51**
Rec. 26th March 1941; Mat. OEA 9223-1; Cat. DA 1779

22 **HAHN: L'heure exquise** **2:49**
Rec. 17th April 1941; Mat. OEA 9247-1; Cat. DA1821

23 **HAHN: Offrande** **2:44**
Rec. 17th April 1941; Mat. OEA 9223-1; Cat. DA 1821

24 **HAHN: Si mes vers avaient des ailes** **2:13**
Rec. 20th September 1932; Mat. GB 4909; Cat. LXT 6126

All tracks sung in French except tracks 1 and 2 which are sung in English
Tracks 1-3, 8-11, and 16-23 recorded for HMV with piano accompaniment by Gerald Moore
Tracks 4 and 5 recorded for RCA Victor with orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel
Tracks 6, 7, 14, and 15 recorded for English Columbia with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leslie Heward, and issued by the Gramophone Shop
Tracks 12, 13, and 24 recorded for English Decca
Track 24 with piano accompaniment by George Reeves

CD 2 — 75:39

DEBUSSY: Fêtes galantes I

1 **Clair de lune** — **2:44**
Rec. 12th March 1936; Mat. OEA 3146-1; Cat. DA 1472

2 **En sourdine** — **1:19**
Rec. 12th March 1936; Mat. OEA 3147-1; Cat. DA 1471

3 **Fantouches** — **2:52**
Rec. 12th March 1936; Mat. OEA 3148-1; Cat. DA 1471

DEBUSSY: Fêtes galantes II

4 **Les ingénus** — **2:01**
Rec. 12th March 1936; Mat. OEA 3149-1; Cat. DA 1472

5 **Le faune** — **1:40**
Rec. 12th March 1936; Mat. OEA 3150-1; Cat. DA 1473

6 **Colloque sentimental** — **3:22**
Rec. 12th March 1936; Mat. OEA 3151-1; Cat. DA 1473

DEBUSSY: Trois Chansons de Bilitis

7 **La flûte de Pan** — **2:32**
Rec. 12th March 1936; Mat. OEA 3152-1; Cat. DA 1474

8 **La chevelure** — **3:06**
Rec. 12th March 1936; Mat. OEA 3153-1; Cat. DA 1474

9 **Le tombeau des Naïades** — **2:42**
Rec. 12th March 1936; Mat. OEA 3154-1; Cat. DA 1475

DEBUSSY: Le Promenoir des deux amants

10 **Auprès de cette grotte sombre** — **2:22**
Rec. 13th March 1936; Mat. OEA 3155-3; Cat. DA 1475

11 **Crois mon conseil, chère Climène** — **2:01**
Rec. 13th March 1936; Mat. OEA 3156-1; Cat. DA 1476

12 **Je tremble en voyant ton visage** — **2:02**
Rec. 13th March 1936; Mat. OEA 3157-3; Cat. DA 1476

13 **Ballades des femmes de Paris** — **2:06**
Rec. 13th March 1936; Mat. OEA 3158-3; Cat. DA 1477

14 **DEBUSSY: Proses lyriques: II De grève** — **3:37**
Rec. 13th March 1936; Mat. OEA 3159-3; Cat. DA 1477

15 **DEBUSSY: Ariettes oubliées: V Green** — **2:01**
Rec. 17th April 1941; Mat. OEA 9246-1; Cat. DA 1893

16 **DEBUSSY: Beau soir** — **2:34**
Rec. 10th February 1944; Mat. OEA 10141; Cat. DA 1838

17 **DEBUSSY: Romance** — **2:21**
Rec 10th February 1944 Mat. OEA 10140; Cat.DA 1838

18 **RAVEL: Histoires naturelles: IV Le martin-pêcheur** — **2:09**

19 **RAVEL: Deux épigrammes: II Anne jouant de l'espinette** — **2:08**
Rec. 5th October 1947; Mat. 2EA 12377; Cat. GSC 22

RAVEL: Shéhérazade

20 **Asie** — **9:06**
Rec. 12th and 13th July 1948;
Mats. 2EA 13214-2 and 13215-3; Cat. DB 6843

21 **La flûte enchantée** — **2:47**
Rec. 12th and 13th July 1948;
Mat. 2EA 13216-1; Cat. DB 6844

22 **L'indifférent** — **3:08**
Rec. 12th and 13th July 1948;
Mat. 2EA 13217-1; Cat. DB 6844

23 **ELGAR: Pleading** — **3:01**
Rec. 23rd December 1941;
Mat. OEA 9660-4; Cat. DA 1807

24 **QUILTER: Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal** — **2:12**
Rec. 23rd December 1941;
Mat. OEA 9661-3; Cat. DA 1807

25 **THOMAS: Night Hymn at Sea** — **3:12**
with John McCormack, Tenor
Rec. 25th November 1941; Mat. OEA 9651; unpublished

26 **RUSSELL: By Appointment: White Roses** — **3:34**
Rec. October 1934; Mat. OEA 861-5; Cat. B 8242

27 **ROMBERG: The Student Prince: Deep in my heart dear** — **2:59**
Rec. 22nd September 1932; Mat. GB 4930; Cat. M 425

Tracks 1-22 sung in French • Tracks 23-27 sung in English
Tracks 1-14 recorded for HMV with piano accompaniment by Alfred Cortot
Tracks 15-19 and 23-25 recorded for HMV with piano accompaniment by Gerald Moore
Tracks 20-22 recorded for HMV with the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Hugo Rignold
Track 26 recorded for HMV with orchestra • Track 27 recorded for English Decca with orchestra

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COMPACT disc DIGITAL AUDIO

8.110757-58

ADD

Maggie Teyte (1888-1976)

A Vocal Portrait

Playing Time 2:33:27

CD 1

1 PURCELL: King Arthur: Fairest Isle
2 PURCELL: The Libertine: Nymphs and Shepherds
3 MARTINI: Plaisir d'amour
4 GRÉTRY: Le tableau parlant: Vous étiez ce que vous n'êtes plus
5 PERGOLESI: La servante maîtresse: Air de Zerbina
BERLIOZ: Nuits d'été:
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11 OFFENBACH: La Périchole: Tu n'es pas beau…Je t'adore brigand
12 MESSAGER: Véronique: Petite dinde, ah quel outrage...
13 DUPARC: Phidylé
14 DUPARC: L'invitation au voyage
15 SZULC: Clair de lune
16 FONTENAILLES: Obstination
17 FAURÉ: Après un rêve
18 FAURÉ: Nell
19 FAURÉ: Clair de lune
20 PALADILHE: Psyché
21 HAHN: L'heure exquise
22 HAHN: Offrande
23 HAHN: Si mes vers avaient des ailes
24

CD 2

1-3 DEBUSSY: Fêtes galantes I
4-6 DEBUSSY: Fêtes galantes II
7-9 DEBUSSY: Trois Chansons de Bilitis
10-13 DEBUSSY: Le Promenoir des deux amants
14 DEBUSSY: Proses lyriques: II De grève
15 DEBUSSY: Ariettes oubliées: V Green
16 DEBUSSY: Beau soir
17 DEBUSSY: Romance
18 RAVEL: Histoires naturelles: IV Le martin-pêcheur
19 RAVEL: Deux épigrammes: II Anne jouant de l'espinette
20-22 RAVEL: Shéhérazade
23 ELGAR: Pleading
24 QUILTER: Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal
25 THOMAS: Night Hymn at Sea
26 RUSSELL: By Appointment: White Roses
27 ROMBERG: The Student Prince: Deep in my heart dear

Maggie Teyte's voice was renowned for its marked purity and perfect placement of tone. Her considerable spontaneity of presence, together with her strong and vivid intuitive skills as an interpreter and great care for diction, ensured her pre-eminence as an artist of international renown. Bringing together many different recordings, made at varying places and times, this wide-ranging and unrivalled programme displays the full range of Maggie Teyte's art, from the operas of Purcell and Pergolesi, to French operetta, and above all, the music of her teachers and contemporaries, Debussy, Hahn and Ravel.

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NAXOS Historical

Producer and Audio Restoration Engineer: Ward Marston
With thanks to Raymond Edwards, Jeffrey Miller and Lawrence F. Holdridge.

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A complete track list can be found in the booklet

Cover image: Maggie Teyte (Private Collection)

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