

4th April 2009

Awesome power, ravishing beauty

Review

BSO and Chorus, Lighthouse, Poole

BRAMWELL Tovey's humorous introductory remarks about the relationships of Wagner set the romantic scene.

The notion of running the Prelude to Act III of Tristan and Isolde as a scene-setter for the Wesendonck Lieder also worked well with their shared theme.

However, what he did not prepare us for was the ravishing beauty of Katarina Karneus' voice. Five songs set to poems by Mathilde Wesendonck relating nature with death made such morbid views seem heavenly as the luminous quality of Karneus' mezzo-soprano brought a moving, evocative embrace to this cycle.

At the pinnacle of voice and poetry set to music stands the finale of Beethoven's Symphony No 9. Tovey loosed all his considerable expertise to give us the performance of the season.

The Bournemouth Symphony Chorus eclipsed their own impeccable standards with the male chorus delivering awesome power and the entire choir rising to what seemed unsurpassable magnificence.

Soloists Lisa Milne, soprano, Paul Charles Clarke, tenor, and James Rutherford, bass joined Katerina Karneus in an outstanding combination of powerful, impressively integrated singing.

Mike Marsh