

**R u b y H u g h e s**  
**Soprano**

**Heroines of Love and Loss, Mime Brinkmann, Jonas Nordberg, BIS Records**

She has a warm, almost mellow voice, well suited to this enterprising selection of 17th-century songs [...] to all of them Ruby Hughes brings an exemplary understanding and stylishness.

*Richard Lawrence, Gramophone Magazine, April 2017 (Editor's Choice)*

Hughes's rich soprano has deepened and has a middle range with body and penetration [...] 'Lasciatemi qui solo' by Francesca Caccini highlighted Hughes's purity of tone and absence of vibrato [...] the vocal effects including sobs and sighs, which Hughes was completely at one with.

*Amanda-Jane Doran, Classical Source, March 2017*

Hughes manages to make this world so much her own. I love the flexibility of her voice, the chameleon quality. Even within this disc she goes from operatic extremes to an intimate chamber place very effectively.... she gets the operatic dimensions of the music beautifully. It's so easy to overload emotions (this whole disc is very charged with anguish and abandonment) but she never overcooks it.... Dido's lament is beautifully sung. Its a young portrayal of Dido and there's an innocence here which you don't normally get and which I found intensely moving. This isn't a performance of grief, it's really internalised.

*Record Review on BBC Radio 3 with Andrew Macgregor and Alexandra Coghlan,*

For all its apparent thematic interest, his CD is really a showcase for the vocal skills of Ruby Hughes, and these turn out to be considerable indeed. In these songs accompanied by lute and cello there is no place to hide, but Hughes' impeccable technique and expressive imagination take us on a rewarding tour of this lovely repertoire. [...] she demonstrates a rich palette of vocal colours. These truly come into their own later in Hughes' intense account of Dido's Lament.

*Dr James Ross, Early Music Review (5\*), March 2017*

The outstanding singer Ruby Hughes gives sensual luster to the whimpering, sobbing and sighing music by Francesca Caccini, Barbara Strozzi, Lucrezia Vizzana and Claudia Sessa.

*Martin Nyström, Dagens Nyheter (5\*), March 2017*

We have here a very beautiful, coherent CD with a lot of delicate and truly moving singing by Ruby Hughes

*Remy Franck, Pizzicato Magazine, March 2017*

**Nocturnal Variations (debut recital disc) Joseph Middleton, Champs Hill Records (2016)**

Soprano Ruby Hughes moves effortlessly from Schubert's Nachtstucke to Mahler's Urlicht and then the sound worlds we've just heard (Berg Warm die Luft & Britten Evening from

This way to the tomb), finding moments of heart-stopping beauty as she explores these Nocturnal Variation [...] I found this a captivating recital.

*Andrew McGregor, Record Review, BBC R3, May 2016*

Well, there's no question, first of all, that we have two major talents here. Ruby Hughes has an exceptionally flexible high soprano voice; she can move from an almost toneless sotto voce through to a rich, full sound in the twinkling of an eye. And that hints at her approach to these wonderful songs; she is a natural story-teller, and is always on the look-out for colour and drama [...] This disc is very special [...] something to relish, and a great achievement.

*Gwyn Parry-Jones, MusicWeb International, RECORDING OF THE MONTH, May 2016*

Her singing is exceptional for its consistency. Though her tone is light and delicate, it's invariable true in pitch and capable of a surprising range of dynamic variety – a perfect instrument of its kind. Every word she sings comes through clearly."

*George Hall, BBC Music Magazine (5\*)*

### **PURCELL Songs Realised by Britten, Champs Hill Records (2016)**

What riches and pleasures this two-disc set contains....and a superb set of young singers offers ideal freshness and variety of timbre and colour. Highlights include 'The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation' and 'O Solitude' interpreted with exquisite chaste purity by soprano Ruby Hughes.

*Rupert Christiansen, The Sunday Telegraph (5\*) May 2016*

...the singers steer a convincing stylistic course, balancing the sometimes contradictory demands of the source material and the arrangement...the expressivity of Hughes and Rose's 'No resistance is but vain' is impressive and Middleton's playing is precisely coloured and characterised.

*Anna Picard, BBC Music Magazine (4\*)*

'As for the performance, this is just plain gorgeous singing. Hughes especially stands out with sublime and wondrously shaped phrasing of 'Evening Hymn' and 'The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation'.'

*R. Moore, American Record Guide*

### **RHIAN SAMUEL Clytemnestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Tecwyn Evans**

The second half was devoted to Samuels' Clytemnestra, a rich, substantial piece from a composer plainly at ease with both her material and her own voice. Hughes sang beautifully; by turn, chilling and heartrending in short, poetic imagery and longer melismatic lines.

*Steph Power, Wales Arts Review March 2016*

### **MAHLER Symphony No. 4, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, Jesús López Cobos**

The soprano soloist for the finale, Ruby Hughes, has the pure, youthful sound it was surely meant for...the gentle blend of voice and orchestra was near-perfect at the end.

*Robert Beale, Manchester Evening News Jan 2016*

Here, suddenly was a burst of sunlight, with thundering timpani and blazing brass heralding Ruby Hughes' Himmlische Leben. Her singing was beautiful in timbre and impressive in characterization of the text...a fitting end to an excellent evening.

*Rohan Shotton, Bachtrack, Jan 2016*

### **WATKINS Remember, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Garry Walker**

In Remember, the highly evocative cycle of four songs for soprano and orchestra – sung by Ruby Hughes and conceived for her – the second setting, Thomas Hardy's poem Shut Out That Moon, Hughes' expressivity together with Watkins' authoritative writing for strings conveyed huge emotional intensity.

*Rian Evans, The Guardian, Feb 2016*

**PURCELL The Fairy Queen Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Berliner Philharmonie, Rinaldo Alessandrini**

Outstanding here was soprano Ruby Hughes, who shaped with moving intensity the great lamentation aria 'O let me weep'.

*Ursula Wiegand, Neue Merkur Wien, January 2016*

Great praise is due to all the soloists [...] in particular, however to Ruby Hughes, who appears first as an attractive Titania in a long, bright red coat. Her beautiful, clear soprano voice radiates through the hall and almost moves the audience to tears in the 5th act as the role of the black-clothed, lamenting, weeping Laura. For me, this was the vocal climax of the performance.

*Kulturradio vom RBB (Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg) Jan 2016*

Next to that we experienced some extremely internal moments, which belonged entirely to the music. Songs such as the enchanting "If Love's a Sweet Passion, why does it torment?", and the grandiose "O let me weep", were sung with utmost expression by soprano soloist Ruby Hughes.

*Der Tagesspiegel, Jan 2016*

Wonderful insights were to be had with Maestro Alessandrini who is one of the most inspiring interpreters of early music today. His soloists are of an equally high standard; Ruby Hughes and Lawrence Zazzo being part of the ensemble.

*Peter Uelig, Berliner Zeitung Jan 2016*

The atmospheric impact was extremely touching, in particular when Ruby Hughes, personifying Night, pulled a white sheet over the chorus who snuggled up to each other, using torches, blinking like earthworms in the dark.

*Jan Brachmann, Frankfurter Allgemeine Jan 2016*