

SINGING SONDHEIM: FROM PAGE 41

Among the highlights from the Bernstein-Sondheim collaboration: a delicately powerful "Something's Coming" by Aaron Lazar (late of *A Tale of Two Cities*) and an operatic "Somewhere" delivered by Sarah Uriarte Berry (from *Taboo*).

The "Trumpets" might be reason alone to buy the disc, but tucked in are other gems, including Marc Kudisch's powerful renditions of "Who Will Love Me As I Am?", a song from Henry Krieger and Bill Russell's *Side Show*, and "I Was Here" from Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty's most recent off-Broadway outing, *The Glorious Ones*. Lorinda Lisitz, a favorite of New York's cabaret scene, delivers a sumptuous take on "Surabaya Johnny," and Beth Leavel (Tony Award-winner for *Droesey Chaperone*) delights with "Nobody Breaks My Heart" from the jazz-era musical, *Fine and Dandy*.

Together: Maxine Sullivan Sings the Music of Jule Styne (Harbinger Records)

Since the title for this disc, the last recording by jazz great Sullivan before her death in 1987, comes from a Styne-Sondheim song, it seems only fitting that

it be mentioned here. Sullivan made these recordings working with the Keith Ingham Sextet just before she passed away. Harbinger, celebrating its 25th anniversary,

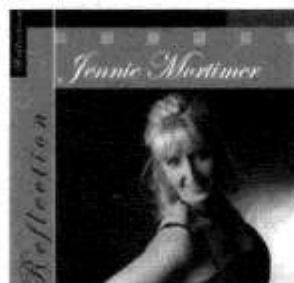
has just re-released *Together*, which is a treat both for those who did not put it into their collection then and those who did but who have forgotten Sullivan's



simple, yet incredibly rich, interpretations. From the opening track on the disc, "Sunday" with lyrics by Ned Miller from 1926 to its final one, "Together" from *Gypsy*, this recording is a jazzy delight. Sullivan and the sextet offer up some standards, "Just in Time" and "I Don't Want to Walk Without You," and some rarities, including "Talking to Yourself" (from *Hallelujah, Baby*, lyrics by Comden and Green). The singer's impeccable phrasing and mellifluously smoky voice and the never showy accompaniment allow Styne's music to breathe beautifully. While listeners are savoring the recording's 15 tracks, they can read the moving liner note tributes to Sullivan and Styne from George T. Simon and Edward Jablonski.

Jennie Mortimer – Reflection (www.JennieMortimer.com)

Listeners shouldn't be fooled by the exuberantly brash big-band sound of "You Took Advantage of Me," the opening track



on Mortimer's solo recording. This Australian singer sounds terrific, and the orchestra (uncredited, as are the arrangements) is equally impressive. But

Reflection is not just a contemporary take on songs of the Swing era. Not long after this track, Mortimer proves she can be a sultry pop-like singer with the classic "Fever." For one of the two Sondheim tracks on the disc, "Not While I'm Around," she moves over to a more pop-ballad delivery. Her rendition of "Losing My Mind" is pure musical theatre, albeit a bit overwrought.

The 12-track disc is rounded out with a mix of pop and musical theatre standards that further demonstrate Mortimer's versatility: a lazy, bluesy "Cry Me a River" and a curiously funky "Luck Be a Lady."

The Night They Invented Champagne – Operetta and Its Musical Legacy (Prosody Records)

Tucked in among the 30 songs on this densely packed disc is one for Sondheim fans — the ubiquitous "Send in the Clowns," which New York cabaret stalwarts K.T. Sullivan and Mark Nadler deliver with a haunting vulnerability. The fact that they're accompanied by a piano and carefully considered arrangement for string quartet adds to the palpable melancholy of

the track. But not everything on *Champagne* is so serious. In fact, there's an incredible buoyancy to other songs from the likes of Sigmund Romberg, Sir Arthu



Sullivan and Franz Lehar. The disc, which also features Craig Rubano, is a gorgeously curated overview of tunes from a period long gone. It might be most notable not for any one song but for a delicious medley of marches that includes not only such familiar titles as "Stouthearted Men" and "Song of the Vagabonds" but also "Soldiers! I'm Simply Mad About 'em" (from Offenbach's *The Grand Duchess*). [TSR]

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