

PROGRAM NOTE

P.D.Q. Bach was very parsimonious, not to say stingy, when he wrote HANSEL AND GRETEL AND TED AND ALICE, a decidedly not-so-grand opera. There are seven different roles in the work, but only two singers, who, in addition to singing multiple parts, must also play keyboard instruments in the overture and finale.

The dramatis personæ is:

Quaint Old Innkeeper

Gretel Red Riding Hood

Hansel Hunter

Village Idiot

Monk, later revealed to be Alice über Deutschland

Doctor

Teddy Nice

The Monk is a particularly interesting role, since, although he sounds like a man, he turns out to be a woman, who, however, has a beard. The term for this is gender slippage, and the part is performed, when it is performed at all, by a man.

In fact all the roles were sung by men; this was due not to prohibition of presenting women on the stage, but to the fact that the commissioning organization, the Vienna Opera Company, consisting, in 1785, of Mr. and Mrs. Fritz Vienna and their son, Rudi. Frau Vienna played the piano and the two male members of the family handled both the distaff and staff roles.

The text of the aria is a mixture of Latin and English, as was the singer who made the aria infamous, Enrico Carouso.

I just saw the TV star Kelsey Grammer in a restaurant last night, but that is, I suppose, beside the point.

HANSEL AND GRETEL AND TED AND ALICE was that rarity in P.D.Q. Bach's oeuvre: a *succès d'estime* (French for "a successful steam engine," a metaphor for something that works). The people doing the esteeming were not, of course, your usual opera crowd, but rather the composer's cronies at the Bore's Head Tavern (named after P.D.Q. Bach) in Wein-am-Rhein.

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Hoople, North Dakota (take U.S. Business 81 out of Grand Forks.)

The Monk's Aria

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Duration: c. 5'

"Et exspecto" from *Hansel and Gretel and Ted and Alice*

Opera Funnia in, at the very most, One Act

(S. 2ⁿ - 1)

for Basso Blotto and Piano

P.D.Q. BACH (1807-1742)?

Painstakingly excavated by

Professor Peter Schickele

$\text{♩} = \text{c. } 72$

Enter Monk wearing a large hood which conceals his face; swinging a censer.

mf sostenuto

No ~~red.~~

6

MONK

9 *mf*

1. Et ex - spe - cto re - sur - re - cre - a - tion

12

et in un - um dom - i - nos and check - ers. Qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun - di morn - ing.

18

mf

Me - a cul - pa Ky - ri - e e - le - i - Son - ny Tufts et