
NEWS & INFORMATION

From: Nat Silverman (708) 328-4292

For Release: September 1994

For: Cedille Records
700 W. Barry St., Suite 3-E
Chicago, IL 60657-4587
(312) 404-0758

Biography

PATRICE MICHAELS BEDI, SOPRANO

Coloratura soprano Patrice Michaels Bedi, an increasingly prominent opera and concert singer, reveres earlier 20th-century singers such as Nellie Melba and Luisa Tetrazzini for their wide repertoires, vocal flexibility, and musical individualism.

Ms. Michaels Bedi brings these same rare qualities to her own performances. "Patrice Michaels Bedi has a supple voice with the ring of Waterford crystal, and seems able to sing anything effortlessly," noted the *Chicago Tribune*.

She's making her solo recording debut with 25 songs by 25 Romantic-era composers -- surprising selections for a coloratura best known for her interpretations of early music, Mozart, baroque, and contemporary music. The CD, *Songs of the Romantic Age*, is on Chicago's Cedille Records label (CDR 90000 019). Ms. Michaels Bedi performed the same program for her September 25, 1994, New York recital debut.

"I don't fit into any standard category," she says. "I enjoy bel canto singing, which is the basis for my entire vocalism."

Ms. Michaels Bedi earned a master of fine arts degree in composition and voice from the University of Minnesota, where she was mentored by composer Dominick Argento and tenor-historian-opera director Vern Sutton. (She's currently a pupil of Margaret Harshaw.)

But Ms. Michaels Bedi, whose voice is often described as silvery and crystalline, says she never planned to be a singer. Rather, she intended to coach singers and use her vocal

training as a foundation for composition. Her emphasis changed when an audition in Vancouver, Canada, led to an invitation to cover a role at Chicago's Lyric Opera in 1984.

"No one who knew me as a child would be surprised that I became a musician," she says. "But most people would be surprised that I became a singer, because I was shy and bookish."

Rather than single-mindedly pursue a performing career, Michaels Bedi chose to have a traditional family life at the same time. She married Rajinder Bedi, a lawyer and businessman of Indian descent, and they have two young sons, Harji and Sat Nam.

Ms. Michaels Bedi was born September 11, 1956, in Pasadena, Calif. She earned bachelor's degrees from Pomona College, Claremont, Calif., in theater as well as music. Not surprisingly, listeners remark on the apt dramatic dimensions she brings to everything she sings, whether opera roles or lieder. That, combined with intelligence and a composer's mindset, fuels her performances with uncommon musical and human insight.

Reviewing her performance as Euridice in Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, the *Chicago Sun-Times* praised Ms. Michaels Bedi for transforming simple melody lines patterned on spoken conversation into powerfully expressive music. And her vocal embellishments "made conversational and dramatic sense. They became an added emphasis, an expression of ardent conviction, rather than simply a musical convention."

Among her professional credits, she points most proudly to singing Handel's *Messiah* and Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* under Robert Shaw in Atlanta (1993). She also cites her engagements with the Minnesota Orchestra under Joseph Silverstein and Nicholas McGegan; the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra under Zdenek Macal; and the Cleveland Opera, where she sang the role of Marzelline in Beethoven's *Fidelio*.

In addition to *Songs of the Romantic Age*, she has recorded Argento's *Six Elizabethan Songs* with the Rembrandt Chamber Players for Cedille (CDR 90000 011). Among her other recordings are Mozart's C minor Mass with Chicago's Music of the Baroque and Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with Sir Georg Solti and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for London Records.

###

September 1994

NEWS & INFORMATION

From: Nat Silverman (708) 328-4292

For Release: September 1994

For: Cedille Records
700 W. Barry Ave., Suite 3-E
Chicago, IL 60657-4587
(312) 404-0758

SOPRANO SOLOS WITH SURPRISING SONG RECITAL

Taking Big Breadth, Coloratura Patrice Michaels Bedi Roams Beyond Requisite Repertoire in Romantic Getaway

Coloratura soprano Patrice Michaels Bedi, best-known for her interpretations of early music, Mozart, baroque, and contemporary music, makes her solo recording debut with 25 Romantic songs by 25 composers on *Songs of the Romantic Age* (Cedille 90000 019). She subsequently performed the same program for her recent New York recital debut.

The *New Yorker* (September 26, 1994), which received the new CD in advance of her recital, says "the recording suggests a formidable interpretative talent."

But why is Ms. Michaels Bedi emphasizing music that's outside her "specialty"? "It's something I think all singers should be able to do," she says. "A couple generations ago, it wouldn't have seemed odd. The best singers were expected to perform Rachmaninov as well as Handel."

The disc showcases Ms. Michaels Bedi's bel canto vocalism through a comprehensive collection of songs spanning 85 years and eight languages. Alongside works by vocal stalwarts Fauré and Schumann are rarely recorded songs by Godard, Pierné, Medtner, Mussorgsky, Respighi, and even Chopin.

ROMANTIC SONGS -- 2

The songs are grouped on the CD according to national flavor: France is represented by Godard, Debussy, Chausson, Bachelet, Fauré, and Pierné; Poland, by Chopin; Germany, by Schumann, Mendelssohn, Medtner, Brahms, Wolf, and Strauss; Russia, by Stravinsky, Mussorgsky, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov, and Prokofiev; America, by Ives and Ganz; Scandinavia, by Sibelius; Italy, by Donaudy and Respighi; and Spain, by Falla and Delibes (a French composer whose song is very Spanish in character).

Ms. Michaels Bedi, whose voice is often hailed for its clarity and silvery radiance, is an increasingly prominent performer in her hometown of Chicago and throughout North America. She's concertized with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Atlanta and Milwaukee Symphonies, Chicago's Grant Park Symphony, and Boston's Banquette Musicale. She'll make her Chicago Lyric Opera debut during the 1994-95 season.

"Not surprisingly, she is now the most sought after singer in the city, for her voice and for the esprit de corps she encourages," noted the *Chicago Reader*.

Accompanying her on the new CD is pianist Deborah Sobol, who has performed with Shlomo Mintz and Nobuko Imai, among other soloists, and is a founding member of the Chicago Chamber Musicians.

Cedille's CDs are distributed by Empire Music Group and are available nationally at finer classical record stores. For a free catalog and the whereabouts of local retail outlets, consumers are invited to write to Cedille Records, 700 W. Barry Ave., Suite 3-E, Chicago, IL 60657-4587, or call (312) 404-0758.

###

Songs of the Romantic Age
Patrice Michaels Bedi, soprano
Deborah Sobol, piano
Cedille Records CDR 90000 019

September 1994