

RICHARD BONYNGE

CONDUCTOR

Classical CD

**Meyerbeer: Semiramide, Riedel/ Janes/ Adami/ Altensteig Rossini
Choir/ Württemberg Philharmonic/ Bonyngé**
(Naxos, two CDs)

Tim Ashley
Friday July 28, 2006
The Guardian

Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791–1864) is primarily associated with the establishment of French grand opera, though his *Semiramide*, first performed in 1819, dates from the time of his apprentice years in Italy, when he was seen as a rival to Rossini.

Semiramide was a queen of Babylon, whose name was synonymous with sexual excess. Meyerbeer presents her in drag, posing as her own son in order to make life difficult for her ex-lover Scitalce, who has had the temerity to fancy someone else. **The recording, made at last year's Wildbad festival, is conducted with elan by Richard Bonyngé**, and there are vocal pyrotechnics from Deborah Riedel (*Semiramide*) and Fiona Janes (*Scitalce*). Best of all is tenor Filippo Adami, superbly athletic as *Scitalce*'s rival Ircano.

Colbert Artists Management Inc.

111 West 57th Street, New York, New York 10019
(212)757-0782 - Fax (212)541-5179 - West Coast (858)794-0182
E-mail: NYColbert@ColbertArtists.com