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My Heart and I - Songs by Clara Schumann & Nancy Dalberg

This program presents 5 songs by Clara Schumann (1819 - 96) and 16 songs by Danish composer Nancy Dalberg (1881 - 1949). 9 of these songs by Dalberg have not previously been recorded. Schumann's songs have come into their own now, but Dalberg's are little known in the US. This is the first time I've heard any of them. Born into a wealthy Danish family, she studied under notable composers such as Johan Svendsen and Carl Nielsen, the latter becoming a good friend and a significant figure in her life. She was the first Danish woman composer known to write a symphony. In addition to the orchestral and chamber works, she wrote about 50 songs from 1909 to the 1930s.

Hearing the songs of Dalberg is the chief appeal of this album. Dalberg chose Danish poems as texts that range widely from the cheerful to several more serious lyrics that reflect her own life. Her marital dreams were unfulfilled owing to her lifelong health challenges and her husband's increasing mental illness.

Here's a chance to expand your range of art songs. Clara Schumann's songs have good substance. Dalberg's have less familiarity but are well composed. Bols and Bjorkoe have been performing together since 2020 and do a conscientious job of presenting these songs. Nina Bols Lundgren sings well but with limited range of nuance and tonal variety. Christina Bjorkoe's collaboration is fine.

Notes, texts and translations of Dalberg songs only. © 2026 American Record Guide