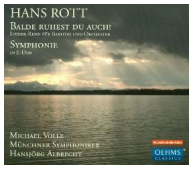
Hans Rott - Balde Ruhest du Auch! & Symphonie in E-dur (2014)



Balde Ruhest du Auch! *1. Prolog 01:29 2. Wandrers Nachtlied 02:59 3. Intermezzo 02:02 4. Das Veilchen 02:18 5. Intermezzo 01:24 6. Zwei Wünsche 01:06 7. Intermezzo 01:33 8. Das Vergissmeinnicht 02:02 9. Intermezzo 01:15 10. Der Sänger 05:04 11. Epilog 01:32*
Symphonie in E-Dur
12.I. Alla breve 08:47 13.II. (Adagio). Sehr langsam 08:58 14.III. Frisch und lebhaft 12:45 15.IV. Sehr langsam 20:51
Michael Volle - baritone Münchner Symphoniker Hansjörg Albrecht - conductor

The gifted Austrian composer Hans Rott (1858-1884) has become a figure of note in our day due mainly to his only completed and very fine youthful Symphony in E major(1880), the centerpiece of the present recording. The highlight of this disc however, comes in the form of the first recording of his eleven-song cycle for baritone, Balde Ruhest du Auch!' adapted for orchestra by the composer Enjott Schneider. Baritone Michael Volle sings; Hansjörg Albrecht leads the Munich Symphony. ---Editorial Reviews, arkivmusic.com

Hans Rott is best known for one work, his Symphony in E major, which became a sensation over a century after it was written. However, much of the attention paid to this strikingly original symphony has had less to do with its genuine merits than with several comparisons that have been made with Gustav Mahler's symphonies, particularly with the Scherzo of his Symphony No. 1. (There are more than a few surface similarities, though many passages point to the influence of Rott's teacher, Anton Bruckner.) With this Oehms release, Hansjörg Albrecht and the Munich Symphony present Rott's symphony with the song cycle for baritone, Balde ruhest du auch! (Soon you will have rest!), a setting of verses by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Vincenz Zusner, in a new orchestral adaptation by Enjott Schneider. This somewhat

modernized orchestration of Rott's original version for voice and piano gives a sense of the obsession with death and longing for release that afflicted the young composer, and which strangely bring to mind Mahler's late works on those themes. The performance by baritone Michael Volle does justice to Rott's poignant melodies, and Albrecht and the orchestra give readings that are sure to enhance Rott's reputation, though Schneider's arrangement gives the music an anachronistic Mahlerian edginess that may confuse some listeners. ---Blair Sanderson, AllMusic Review

A student of Bruckner's in Vienna, Hans Rott (1858–1884) was a promising composer whose music was looked on with scorn by his superiors, and he died at the age of 25 following a mental breakdown and prolonged period of depression. We might never have heard of him or his music had it not been for the palpable influence he subsequently had on his friend and close contemporary Gustav Mahler. Mahler himself wrote of Rott in 1900: 'It is completely impossible to estimate what music has lost in him. His First Symphony soars to such heights of genius that it makes him – without exaggeration – the founder of the New Symphony as I understand it. His innermost nature is so much akin to mine that he and I are like two fruits from the same tree, produced by the same soil, nourished by the same air. We would have had an infinite amount in common.' The reappearance of several ideas from Rott's E major Symphony in Mahler's own Second, Third, Fifth and Seventh Symphonies reinforces this glowing tribute.

It was not until the a century after Rott's death – and some determined detective work by musicologist Paul Banks – that Rott's Symphony was brought to long overdue public light. First recorded by Gerhard Samuel and the Cincinnati Philharmonia (a capable student orchestra from the University of Cincinnati) on Hyperion in 1989, it has steadily won admirers among audiences and musicians. This new disc from Hansjörg Albrecht and the Munich Symphony Orchestra brings the tally of recordings to ten: an impressive total given Rott's relative obscurity, and a tribute to this music's forward-looking late-Romantic appeal as much as its influence on his more famous friend.

The Munich Symphony Orchestra may be the least well-known of Munich's professional orchestras (much of its time is spent recording movie soundtracks), but here they turn in a performance of passionate commitment and wide dynamic range, the music lovingly shaped without being over-moulded. This is one of the most natural-sounding accounts the Symphony has had on disc, and the middle movements – the ones which had a particularly strong influence on Mahler – are especially successful, the slow movement beautifully poised but giving way to feelings of intense angst, the wide-ranging Scherzo splendidly animated.

What makes this new disc of added interest is the generous coupling: an arrangement and orchestration of five of Rott's songs by German composer Enjott Schneider (born in 1950). Originally composed for voice and piano to texts by Goethe and Zusner, they are imaginatively re-scored, and framed and linked by a series of short intermezzi in a sympathetically modernist idiom, contrasting nicely but never glaringly with Rott's own late-Romantic soundworld. The songs themselves are sung with superb sensitivity by baritone Michael Volle, making this a very attractive release indeed.

If you don't already know Rott's Symphony, you really should try this; and if you already do, you'll no doubt want to add this to your collection, not least to explore the songs.
---europadisc.co.uk

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