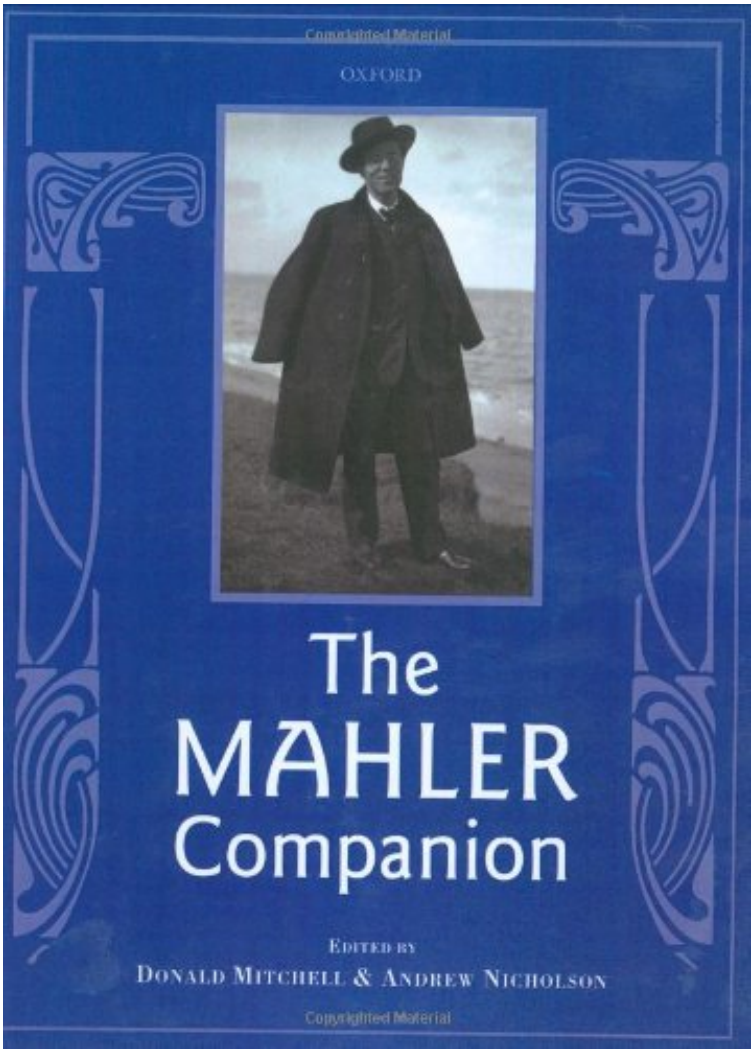
[Get free] The Mahler Companion

The Mahler Companion

From Brand: Oxford University Press, USA
**Download PDF | ePub | DOC | audiobook | ebooks*



DOWNLOAD READ ONLINE

#1971179 in Books Oxford University Press, USA 1999-05-15Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.80 x 1.70 x 7.40l, #File Name: 0198163762656 pages | File size: 46.Mb

From Brand: Oxford University Press, USA : The Mahler Companion before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Mahler Companion:

35 of 35 people found the following review helpful. A near-perfect Mahler resource.By Bob ZeidlerThis collection of essays, by a wide range of contributors, adds considerably to our collective knowledge of Gustav Mahler, his life and times and the cultural milieu in which he worked as composer and conductor, and of course his music.The editors, as they note in the Introduction, provided very loose guidelines to the contributing essayists: Beyond refereeing the broad topics for inclusion, the editors largely gave carte blanche to the contributors regarding style and content. This "looseness of control" has resulted in a volume of both very considerable strengths (some of which I highlight here) and a few perplexing weaknesses and oversights which I allude to at the end of my comments.The "logical bookends"

of this volume are an opening essay by Leon Botstein, titled "Gustav Mahler's Vienna," and a closing essay by Wilfrid Mellers, titled "Mahler and the Great Tradition: Then and Now." The former sets the cultural, socio-political and philosophical stage of fin-de-sicle Vienna onto which Mahler entered, and the latter nicely summarizes how Mahler might fit into a continuum of musical composition and practice that preceded and succeeded him. (This new paperback edition also includes. at the end, two new essays, not present in the hardback edition, covering recollections of his daughter, Anna, and recently discovered Mahler "juvenilia" in the form early chamber music and songs.) In between these bookends, all of Mahler's music, and much about his life and times, and how he and his music were accepted (or not accepted) inside and outside Vienna, are covered.The essays regarding Mahler's music are largely - and splendidly - informative, and provide alternative insights into the music not necessarily covered by the well-known analyses of Theodor Adorno, Constantin Floros and Henry-Louis de La Grange. (Interestingly, many of the music-analysis contributors reference Adorno's "Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy." Perhaps Adorno's time has come as well, some 40 years after his writing this difficult-but-epiphanic work.) But at least three of them are (to me, anyway) frustratingly idiosyncratic. Peter Franklin's essay on the Third Symphony ("A Stranger's Story: Programmes, Politics, and Mahler's Third Symphony") is heavy on largely-irrelevant minutiae and very light on certain matters of true import, such as the significance of the final Adagio of the work. David Matthews' "The Sixth Symphony," by his choice, largely limits his comments to the two well-known areas of conjecture/dispute: the ordering of the two inner (Scherzo, Andante) movements and the matter of whether the final movement should have two hammer blows or three. (I am personally in agreement with both of his choices, but that is largely beside the point.) And Colin Matthews' "The Tenth Symphony" is largely a technical analysis of the available raw materials of the work left by Mahler for realization by others but very little about what interests most Mahlerites regarding this final work: A detailed comparison of the various "performing versions" or "realizations" that exist.Among the many personal "resonances" for me are the following: A finely-crafted analysis of Mahler's "Opus 1," his "Das klagende Lied" (but absent the fact that a splendid recording of the 1997-discovered Ur-text score has been made by Kent Nagano); (finally) a musicological connection between Mahler and Hector Berlioz, by way of how the widely-separated octaves (of trombone pedal tones and high flutes) in the "Hostias" of the Berlioz Requiem might have influenced Mahler when he was composing the first "Nachtmusik" movement of his Seventh Symphony; and a fascinating footnote to the analysis of the final Adagio of the Ninth Symphony, where some apparently reliable documentation is provided for Mahler's awareness of the famous hymn, "Abide with Me," the tune that always comes to mind every time I listen to this gorgeous hymn-like passage.Elsewhere (and scattered throughout various essays) are frequent allusions to certain parallels between Mahler and Charles Ives. (They both wrote "music about music," incorporated "vernacular" music in their works, were almost-simultaneous "polytonalists" and of course contemporaries. The matter of whether Mahler had been aware of the music of Ives is put more in the affirmative than I've seen heretofore; hopefully this is the result of recent research about which there is more to follow.) Similarly, there are frequent parallels drawn between Mahler and Dmitri Shostakovich; the case for Shostakovich being the logical (and most significant by far) successor to Mahler is well-drawn without overlooking the obvious differences between them.There is an intriguing chapter on some not-so-obvious parallels between Mahler and Debussy (although the overt pentatonicism of "late" Mahler is made elsewhere, most obviously in the essay on "Das Lied von der Erde"). And, for me, one of the best contributions is by Edward R. Reilly, in his essay on "Mahler in America."The volume is exceedingly well-annotated, with liberal footnotes (many, such as the "Abide with Me" one, of considerable length), and, at the back, a full bibliography of source materials, a detailed index of works, and a general index as well. Clearly, a lot of work (both scholarship and "routine editorial") has gone into the preparation of this valuable resource.The book is not perfect in all respects, at least from my own personal point of view. Biographical details are not its strength, but there are the volumes by La Grange and Blaukopf Blaukopf to compensate. (Nonetheless, I would have liked to have seen a contribution by Herta Blaukopf, who is as knowledgeable about Mahler's Vienna Conservatory period as any.) But, as I noted at the outset, its very considerable strengths greatly outweigh its relatively minor weaknesses. If you consider yourself a Mahlerite, this book belongs in your library, alongside your copies of Adorno, Blaukopf, Floros and La Grange.Bob Zeidler

The Mahler Companion consists of a collection of original essays on Mahler written especially for the occasion by Mahler specialists from around the world. It addresses all parts of his life and work-- symphonies, songs and song-cycles (each of which is discussed individually), his conducting activities, compositional habits, and aesthetic development--and sets these within the cultural and political context of his time. In addition, it responds to the global spread of this remarkable composer's music, and an almost universal fascination with it, by attempting to give an account of the reception of Mahler's music in many of the countries in which it eventually came to flourish, eg. Holland, France, Japan, Russia, England, and the United States. This particular series of chapters reveals that the 'Mahler Phenomenon' earned its description principally in the years after the Second World War, but also that the Mahler revival was already well under way pre-war, perhaps especially in England and the States, and most surprisingly of all, Japan. The selection of contributors, who between them cover all Mahler's musical output, shows that here too this volume significantly crosses national boundaries. The very diverse approaches, analyses and

commentaries, amply illustrated with music examples, are evidence of the uniquely rich and complex character of a music that spans more than one culture and more than one century. The volumes includes the most significant and up-to-date Mahler research and debate, and illumines some hitherto unexplored areas of Mahler's life eg. his visit to London in 1892, his sculptor daughter, Anna, and the hall in which the Seventh Symphony was first performed in Prague in 1908. It has often been claimed that Mahler, born in 1860, was in fact a prophet of much that was to come in the 20th century. His later works undeniably anticipate, often with dazzling virtuosity, many of the principal techniques and aesthetics of the new century, only the first decade of which he lived to see. Small wonder that among his earliest admirers was a collective of some of the most important and innovative composers of our time, Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern. Their successors (Copland, Shostakovich, and Britten, to name a few) were to range across contrasting cultures and national frontiers. Drawing on the best resources and the most up-to-date information about the composer, this volume fulfils the need in Mahler literature for a genuinely comprehensive guide to the composer and will be the authoritative guide for Mahler enthusiasts for years to come.

"It is rare to find such an extensive treatment of one of Mahler's more popular works, and it certainly highlights the importance of the Fifth Symphony in the composer's oeuvre. This is volume produced on a lavish scale that few other publishers would risk. Its existence is testimony to the continuing interest in Mahler's music, and it's contents suggest directions yet to be explored."-- Journal of the American Musicological Society. About the AuthorDr Mitchell is a Trustee of the Britten-Pears Foundation and Chairman of the Britten Estate Ltd; Founder Professor of Music at the University of Sussex (1971 - 1976); and is currently visiting Professor at Sussex, York and King's College, London. Andrew Nicholson is a Research Fellow inRomantic Studies, Department of English, University of Bristol.