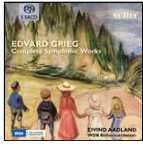


Herbert Schuch



Edvard Grieg: Complete Symphonic Works

Edvard Grieg

5SACD aud 21.439

[Note 1 - Neuheitenheft](#) Oktober 2019 (- 2019.10.01)



Gelungene Gesamtschau

Die vielfach ausgezeichnete Gesamteinspielung der sinfonischen Werke von Edvard Grieg mit dem norwegischen Dirigenten Eivind Aadland und dem WDR Sinfonieorchester bei AUDITE ist hier in einer Box zusammengefasst. Neben originalen Orchesterwerken wurden dabei auch Transkriptionen von Klavierstücken sowie Bearbeitungen lyrischer und patriotischer Lieder berücksichtigt. Bekanntes und Populäres wie die Peer Gynt-Suiten oder das Klavierkonzert stehen dabei neben reizvollen Raritäten wie der überzeugenden Jugendsinfonie c-Moll. Exzellente Solisten (darunter die Sopranistin Camilla Tilling) runden diese gelungene Gesamtschau ab.

[Stretto – Magazine voor kunst, geschiedenis en muziek](#) Oktober 17, 2019 (Michel Dutrieue - 2019.10.17)

source: <http://www.stretto.be/2019/10/17/edvard-...>



De volledige editie van Edvard Griegs symfonische werken met het WDR Symphony Orchestra onder Eivind Aadland is nu verkrijgbaar als een 5 SACD-boxset. Deze editie is vooral overtuigend dankzij de authentieke aanpak van de Noor, Eivind Aadland. Hij dirigeert nl. met veel energie en opwinding, een zeer goed orkest.

Vol. 1 en 2 zijn gewijd aan de originele orkestwerken, terwijl Vol. 3 een deel van de transcripties bevat van werken die Grieg oorspronkelijk voor piano componeerde. Hij orkestreerde ze om als populaire componist en dirigent meer symfonisch materiaal tot zijn beschikking te hebben. Niet zelden overtreffen de transcripties de originelen in termen van volheid en rijkdom aan kleur. Vol. 4 van deze serie combineert het populairste werk van Grieg met zijn minst bekende stuk, zijn Pianoconcerto en zijn Symfonie. Hoewel het pianoconcerto in la klein, hier met Herbert Schuch (foto) als solist, de doorbraak van de 25-jarige componist tot internationale bekendheid was, had hij besloten zijn symfonie in te trekken, slechts enkele jaren eerder geschreven.

Toch overtuigt elke pagina van de partituur ondanks invloeden van Schumann, Gade en Mendelssohn, dankzij Griegs jeugdige inspiratie en uitstekend vakmanschap. Het afsluitend Vol. 5 van de volledige opname van de orkestwerken van Edvard Grieg onthult een minder bekende kant van de Noorse nationale componist, nl. als arrangeur van zijn eigen lyrische en patriottische liederen, hier gezongen door de sopraan, Camilla Tilling (6 Orkestliederen) en de bariton, Tom Erik Lie (Den Bergtekne (De Bergtrol), op. 32), met elegische en dansachtige melodieën. Opgenomen in de Philharmonie en de Bismarck-zaal in Keulen.

Hoewel het grootste aandeel van Grieg aangaande het zoeken naar een eigen Noorse nationale stijl, voornamelijk gebeurde met pianocomposities, componeerde hij prachtige orkestmuziek die wereldwijd veel te weinig gespeeld wordt en (nog) grotendeels onbekend is. De box is de viering van de rijke en veelzijdige esthetiek van Grieg, die een idealistische humanist was en wiens muziek en geschriften de mooie harmonie tussen mens en natuur beklemtoonden. Het gevoel van sentimentele nostalgie en 'postkaart lyriek' vaak geassocieerd met Grieg, worden ruimschoots ontkracht en gelogenstraft door de vaak wilde energie, oerkracht, pessimistische emoties en onstuimige romantiek, aanwezig in zijn orkestmuziek. Ontdek daarom het sonoor universum van deze "norsk nasjonalromantisk komponist".

De Noorse dirigent en violist, Eivind Aadland (° 1956) (foto) is concertmeester van het Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra. Aadland was van 2004 tot 2010, chef-dirigent en artistiek leider van het Trondheim Symphony Orchestra en onderhoudt een regelmatige relatie met veel Scandinavische orkesten, waaronder de Oslo en Bergen Philharmonics, Stavanger Symphony en het Zweeds Kamerorkest. Bij Den Norske Opera in Oslo heeft hij producties van Don Giovanni, Le nozze di Figaro, Die Zauberflöte en Die Fledermaus uitgevoerd. Recente seizoenen omvatten optredens met het Orchestre du Capitole de Toulouse, de Zweedse Radio en Melbourne Symphony Orchestras, de Lausanne en Scottish Chamber Orchestras en de Symphony Orchestras van Göteborg, de Finse Radio, SWR Stuttgart en WDR Keulen. Betrokkenheden tijdens het seizoen 08/09 omvatten concerten met het Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra en het Queensland Orchestra, Royal Flemish Philharmonic en het Nationaal Orkest van België.

De bijhorende boekjes bevatten interessante teksten van Michael Struck-Schloen (foto) over de composities, een heuse meerwaarde. Michael Struck-Schloen modereert de WDR 3-programma's "Mosaik", "Lieblingsstücke" en concerten, "Musik der Zeit". Hoewel qua uitgave niet echt een primeur, toont de algemene kwaliteit van deze uitgave nog maar eens aan, wat we missen als we de Orkestmuziek van Grieg niet kennen. Een must!

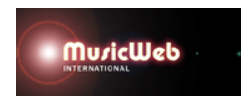
Note 1 - Neuheitenheft Weihnachtsbroschüre (- 2019.11.01)



Die außerordentlich erfolgreiche und vielfach ausgezeichnete Gesamteinspielung der sinfonischen Werke von Edvard Grieg mit dem norwegischen Dirigenten Eivind Aadland und dem WDR Sinfonieorchester ist hier in einer Box zusammengefasst. Bekanntes und Populäres wie die Peer Gynt-Suiten oder das Klavierkonzert stehen dabei neben reizvollen Raritäten wie die überzeugende Jugendsinfonie in c-Moll.

www.musicweb-international.com Monday, December 16th 2019 (Nick Barnard - 1999.11.30)

source: <http://www.musicweb-international.com/cl...>



Over a period of roughly five years from 2009 – 2014, Audite recorded five discs which they describe as "Edvard Grieg – Complete Symphonic Works" with Eivind Aadland conducting the WDR Sinfonieorchester. Now, in 2019, they have been brought together in a box – slightly lazily, the liner booklet from each of the volumes is retained, thereby duplicating all the orchestral and biographical detail but retaining the adapted Edvard Munch painting from the original release. There is some saving to be had by buying the box – roughly speaking, a five-for-the-price-of-four ratio in the UK.

The key for many collectors will rest on how complete is "complete". This set is one of four currently available professing varying degrees of totality. First up was Neeme Järvi on DG in Gothenburg recorded back between 1986 – 93. He needs six generously-filled discs. Then from Bergen on BIS came Ole Kristian Ruud in excellent SACD sound in 2002 – 08 needing eight discs (and winning a Diapason d'Or for his trouble). Lastly, Bjarte Engeset on Naxos, either in Malmo or with the RSNO from 2003 – 13, also requiring eight discs. Rather entertainingly, none of these sets can agree on which works should constitute part of

the complete orchestral canon or not. Clearly, the set under consideration has the fewest number of discs and the least number of works. The main work "missing" here but included in the other three sets is the complete incidental music to Peer Gynt. Aadland chooses to include just the two standard orchestral suites plus a couple of extra songs and excerpts, which I find a little arbitrary and odd. In the same way Aadland does include some vocal works – the Six Orchestral Songs and The Mountain Thrall but not Bergliot or Before a Southern Convent. If there is a logic to that it eludes me. Järvi and Aadland do not include the opera excerpts Olav Trygvason or the cantata Landkjenning which Engestet and Ruud do. Engestet uniquely adds some orchestrations of piano works by other composers which I enjoy a lot – the Slåtter and the Ballade. Of course, the 'core' works are present in all the sets and for many that may be more than enough. Personally, if the word complete is going to be bandied around I want it to be really complete.

So to consider the discs in order: certain characteristics are clear across the set. Audite provide a very dynamic, quite closely detailed recording. I listened to the stereo SACD layer – perhaps the surround sound tempers the degree of closeness. Certainly the playing of the WDR Sinfonieorchester can stand such forensic inspection. Aadland's style is founded on contrast and drama. This works well across all of Volume 1 which consists of the Four Symphonic Dances Op.64, the two Peer Gynt Suites and the Funeral March for Rikard Nordraak. The latter in Grieg's own version for wind band – Järvi uses this version too, the other two sets preferring Halvorsen's orchestration.

The Symphonic Dances are thrilling. Aadland's approach makes them miniature tone poems with the wide dynamic range of the orchestra very well caught. Even this early into hearing the set, there is a sense that Aadland 'pushes' the music rarely letting it relax let alone smile. Make no mistake, this is a very exciting interpretation but one that never 'lilts'. This stylistic limitation becomes more of an issue in the reflective more sensuous movements of Peer Gynt. Neither Anitra's Dance nor the Arabian Dance has any degree of seductive sway. It is no surprise that In the Hall of the Mountain King and Peer Gynt's Homecoming both respond well to this approach, but conversely The death of Åse loses any kind of fragile or touching intimacy as Aadland seems determined to create saturated walls of symphonic string sound. Technically its very impressive – musically it seems misguided to me.

If Volume 1 could be considered a mixed interpretative bag, Volume 2 dedicated to the famous string works seems a complete failure. The fault for this is wholly Aadland's, who again seems to strive for the epic rather than the intimate. If this were Tchaikovsky's Serenade for Strings, I would applaud the style. That is a work that really needs a large symphonic-sized string section with muscular dynamic playing. These Grieg works do not require this approach. Last Spring epitomises for me the wrongness of Aadland's approach. He seems intent on building an epic Mahlerian tragedy with overly mannered phrasing and a fuller vibrato from the orchestra. Listen to Ruud who takes almost exactly the same amount of time but there is a version that breathes simplicity and unaffected beauty. Played in that manner, this is one of Grieg's most affecting and heart-stoppingly beautiful works – Aadland makes it into over-heated melodrama. The same is true of his Holberg Suite too. This music should bubble along with directness of utterance and lack of mannerisms. It really is one of the most joyful string pieces to play precisely because it is unaffected and simple. With Aadland it creaks under the weight of its alleged importance. Time and again he seems fixated on the heavy-handed pointing of an accent rather than letting them serve a function of rhythmic impetus. Interestingly, the liner makes repeated significance of Aadland's affinity with the music and the insights this affords. Before becoming a conductor, he was an international-calibre violinist and lived and worked near Grieg's birthplace in Bergen. The liner notes occasions where Aadland seeks a folklorish 'authenticity' by avoiding vibrato or marking off-beat accents. This is all true and no doubt carefully considered but it does seem that somewhere along the creative process the open-sky essence of this music has been lost. Here the Audite sound, so effective on the first disc, adds more burden of up-front dynamism and inflated sound. I am not sure when I have enjoyed this music less despite the easy excellence of the actual playing. Perhaps it is worth noting that although this is nominally Volume 2, it was the first disc to be recorded and the only volume to be recorded in the Klaus-von-Bismarck-Saal Cologne as opposed to the more generous (forgiving?) acoustic of the Philharmonie.

The 'house' style of sharp contrasts, dynamic performances with forceful accentuation allied to close and detailed recording continues into the third volume. Whereas in the string-dominated volume 2 this proved to be a mixed blessing, the return to the full orchestra brings better results. Indeed, in many ways the

opening work In Autumn could have been written for just such an approach. Surgingly powerful, wide dynamic range, virtuosic playing all contribute to the impact of the work which on occasion can sound just a tad generic. As the piece continued – and indeed this disc – I did begin to wonder whether this approach was in the "sonic spectacular" school of performance/production which is certainly a label you would not expect to associate with Grieg. The Lyric Suite that follows is more of a mixed bag again. It is important to remember that this suite consists of orchestrations of a small selection of the many Lyric Pieces that Grieg wrote for solo piano. This was music intended for the salon and I find Aadland's striving for maximum 'effect' too often undermines the brilliant simplicity of the music. So while No.1 Shepherd Boy starts beautifully – lovely lyrical [pardon the pun] string playing - Aadland then overplays the climax. Likewise, I still do not enjoy his penchant for strongly marked accents as in the second movement Norwegian Rustic March. That said the third movement Notturmo is delightful. The closing March of the Dwarves [Trolls] is played with all the energy and flair one could wish for – at almost exactly the identical tempo to Engeset in Malmo but here the effect is spoilt by the over-large soundscape from the Audite engineers. The percussion – never the subtlest or most imaginative part of Grieg's scoring – is allowed to dominate in a rather unappealing way. It was a good idea to include the elusive, distinctly impressionistic Bell-ringing as a quasi-appendix to the published work – all the other 'complete' sets do as well, although Engeset's is rather perversely a single track on a different disc.

The Old Norwegian Romance with Variations gets a strong performance with – no surprise – the variations well contrasted. Relatively speaking, I do not find this to be one of Grieg's most compelling works; it is lacking in the variety and evocation of colour that say Dvořák finds in his Symphonic Variations. Aadland's approach is to maximise contrast whereas Engeset or Ruud seek continuity with less sharply contrasted variations – Ruud is a full two and a half minutes slower as well. Certainly Ruud does not feel slow with Aadland in contrast seeming occasionally impatient. The disc ends with the 'standard' suite of three excerpts from Grieg's incidental to Sigurd Jorsalfar Contrary to developing expectations, Aadland conducts a beautifully reflective central Borghild's Dream although that is followed by as bombastic a Hommage March as you are ever likely to hear with bass drum and cymbals again overly prominent in Audite's vibrant mix. Aadland plays these three excerpts running to just shy of seventeen minutes. Järvi and Ruud provide an eight-movement synopsis which roughly doubles the amount of music to be heard and it is good Grieg to boot. Certainly it gives a greater range of mood and scene-painting than the three-movement standard work allows. Across the five-disc set there is room to include this music and its omission is serious in any set claiming "completeness".

Volume 4 contains just two works: the early Symphony and the ubiquitous Piano Concerto. The symphony was written when Grieg was just twenty-one and such were his concerns over its quality and value that he wrote "never to be performed" on the score by the time it came to be deposited in the Bergen City Archive. This sanction was obediently followed until 1980 when a photocopy, sent to the Soviet Union "for research purposes", was used to generate a set of parts and the work was performed. Since then the embargo has been lifted and this work features in every 'complete' survey of Grieg's music. The impetus for its composition came from the Danish composer Gade, who told Grieg to go home and "write something valuable". Grieg wrote the symphony at some speed but one can only imagine that on reflection he felt it lacked the value of being distinctively Nordic or Grieg-ish. For sure, the shadow of the German Conservatoires lies over the work and there is little of the characteristically folk-inflected idiom that Grieg was to make his own, but surely he was too harsh a self-critic. Not only as a marker of his development but in its own right this is a very enjoyable and substantial. Aadland gives it an excellent performance with his penchant for energy and brightly sprung tempi finding a perfect platform in this youthful work. Curiously – and it had me leafing through the liner – for this disc the Audite engineering is not quite as close or consciously wide in its dynamic range as the preceding three discs. Given that it is exactly the same technical team of producer and engineer I do not know why this should be. Suffice to say the music benefits substantially from this approach. On disc – once it became known – this symphony has fared well. This is a well-crafted but not profound piece so it responds to a direct, unfussy approach and it is no surprise that this finds Neeme Järvi in good form – and in fact Järvi's timings are very close to Aadland. It has to be said that the Järvi set on DG still sounds very good and of course his Gothenburg Orchestra are very fine. Away from the 'complete' surveys, I rather enjoy Dmitri Kitajenko's performance with the Bergen PO which is a more measured, weightier affair. Indeed, the more one listens to this work the more its century of solitary confinement seems absurd.

The coupling of the Piano Concerto in A minor makes sense when you realise they are the only two extended, multi-movement orchestral works Grieg wrote. In his own lifetime, as much as the symphony was ignored the concerto became his calling card. Reviewing another performance, I wrote how this work's sheer ubiquity and popularity can easily mask just how unusual and sophisticated it is. The pianist here is Herbert Schuch and it must be said that this is a very impressive and intelligent performance. Schuch's is a considered and poetic account, favouring the lyrical and reflective over bombast or display. That said, he is technically in total control and is very well accompanied by Aadland and his Cologne orchestra. He phrases sensitively and effectively, allowing just the right amount of lyrical ebb and flow in the music without it falling into sentimentality or empty gesture. I would say this is one of the more wholly successful volumes in this series. That said, in a highly competitive field neither would supplant pre-existing favourites individually or as part of a series or set.

The fifth and final volume has something of a bitty, odds-and-ends feeling to it, pulling together pieces that did not quite fit onto earlier discs. This is evidenced by the range of recording dates which implies these works were put in the can at the same time as the other pieces they are linked to but then not included on earlier discs in the series. Possibly a little more careful planning of the repertoire could have avoided the frustration of having to swap discs to listen – say – to all of Aadland's Peer Gynt excerpts. Instead, you need to refer to volume 1 for the two standard suites and then swap to volume 5 here for another – slightly arbitrary – two, additional orchestral excerpts: At the Wedding and the sinuous Dance of the Mountain King's daughter. The liner note makes a case for this pair as being more 'modernist' than the simple lyricism of Morning Mood or Anitra's Dance. I would accept that as true – but rather than hearing 'just' these additional two excerpts surely that reinforces the case for the full incidental music which covers a very broad musical and theatrical canvas. Aadland is good in both these excerpts and the skill of his Cologne players is again never in doubt.

The Six songs with Orchestra were drawn together by Grieg to showcase his considerable skill as a songwriter. There is no particular continuity through the six, with the first two again excerpted from Peer Gynt. Soprano Camilla Tilling has a suitably attractive light soprano but with enough heft to make the most of the latter songs in the set which are more overtly dramatic. Possibly Marita Solberg for Ruud and Barbara Bonney for Järvi find an even greater degree of simple radiance but in its own right Tilling's approach is very beautiful. I still find Aadland's over-heated approach to the sung version of Last Spring to undermine the essential directness of the song as it did in the string transcription. But the final song in the set – Henrik Wergeland – responds to this almost operatic approach, which makes the omission of Landkjenning or Olav Trygvasson all the more baffling. Another head-scratcher is why no texts are included in the booklet. Generally across the whole set the German/English liner notes are very well written and full of useful information. The absence of texts of songs sung in Norwegian is an error. A couple more orchestrated Lyric Pieces – characterful wind playing again – and another vocal piece, the six-minute Mountain Thral add to the piece-meal feel of this disc. The latter is sung by baritone Tom Erik Lie. He has a lighter voice than Palle Knudsen for Engeset and is less overtly dramatic than the great Håkan Hagegård for Ruud. Again, in isolation, Lie is perfectly good but with luxury of choice, his would not be a first one.

The set closes as it opened, with a suite of orchestral dances; here it's the Norwegian Dances Op.35. As with the Symphonic Dances, this music very much plays to Aadland's strengths of strong contrasts in dynamics and tempi as well as showcasing the brilliance of the Cologne orchestra. This is a strong performance of a delightful set of four contrasting dances, three of which were interpolated into the complete Peer Gynt score for some editions of the work. Again, I do not quite follow the logic of this set since – for all the delights of this music – the orchestrations are not Grieg's own, thereby contradicting Audite's own description of the music included on the five discs.

So, this set proves to be something of a mixed bag. The playing is uniformly very good indeed, with the exception of the string orchestra disc, the performances are all good and some better than that. However, not a single performance I would not prefer above any other. The final nail in the coffin for me has to be the omission of so much music of real substance, interest and quality. For those in the market for a single purchase of Grieg's orchestral music including the operatic excerpts, the complete Peer Gynt plus other vocal works all recorded in SACD sound and idiomatically performed by Grieg's "own" orchestra in Bergen

there really is no need to look further than the set on BIS. This is currently available in the UK where you can get this 8-disc survey for around £10 cheaper than the 5-disc Audite set under consideration here. If the SACD format is not a priority but cost is, I would still choose either Engstedt – £15.00 cheaper, or Järvi – a full £25.00 cheaper over Aadland.

France Musique Jeudi 16 janvier 2020 (- 2020.01.16)

source: <https://www.francemusique.fr/emissions/l...>



BROADCAST

L'intégrale des oeuvres symphoniques d'Edvard Grieg par l'Orchestre symphonique du WDR de Cologne

Voilà la grande force de Grieg, au piano ou à l'orchestre : parvenir en quelques secondes, à créer une atmosphère particulière... à planter un décor, à peindre un paysage, à décrire une émotion. Ce génie de la miniature arrive à nous émouvoir et à nous passionner. tout comme le chef de cette intégrale et son orchestre symphonique du WDR de Cologne.

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.

www.classicalcdreview.com December 2019 (Robert Benson - 2019.12.01)

source: <http://www.classicalcdreview.com/MC734.H...>

CLASSICAL CD REVIEW
a site for the serious record collector

Eivind Aadland is a perfect conductor for this repertory. The WDR Orchestra is in top form, and the engineers have provided a superb multi-channel sonic picture. [...] This is an important collection. Don't miss it!

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.

Gramophone February 2020 (Rob Cowan - 2020.02.01)

GRAMOPHONE
THE WORLD'S BEST CLASSICAL MUSIC REVIEWS

Grieg's 'Complete Symphonic Works' receive bracing and entirely sympathetic performances from the WDR SO under Eivind Aadland, especially the Symphonic Dances: try either the first or the fourth – both marvellous performances. Herbert Schuch gives his all in the Piano Concerto, and Peer Gynt is represented by the two suites plus vocal scenes on the last CD. The Holberg Suite compares with the best available from elsewhere, the youthful Symphony in C minor as played almost levels with Bizet's equally youthful Symphony in C, and the rest conveys Grieg as a master orchestrator, especially when it comes to writing for strings. Excellent sound ensures a wholehearted recommendation.



Edvard Grieg: Complete Symphonic Works, Vol. IV

Edvard Grieg

SACD aud 92.670

BBC Music Magazine November 2014 (MSR - 2014.11.01)



Grieg's most popular piece alongside his most forgotten, the amiable Symphony he withdrew soon after it was written. The Concerto performance lacks fire, but it's an agreeable combination.

<http://theclassicalreviewer.blogspot.de> Sunday, 19 October 2014 (Bruce Reader - 2014.10.19)



Audite's fourth volume in their edition of The Complete Symphonic Works of Edvard Grieg is another fine release that leaves this series set to become a real winner

Altogether this is another fine addition to Audite's ongoing complete symphonic cycle. The recording from Köln Philharmonie is excellent and there are informative booklet notes. This series is set to become a real winner.

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.

Neue Musikzeitung 10/14 Oktober 2014 (Hanspeter Krellmann - 2014.10.01)



Unüberhörbar

[...] vier zur Serie gebundenen CDs in einer durchgehend resolut angegangenen wie sensibel nachempfundenen Darstellung.

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.

Muzyka21 listopad 2014 (Stanisław Lubliński - 2014.11.01)



Płyta urzekła mnie po pierwszych dźwiękach. Poziom orkiestry jest znakomity pod względem sprawności technicznej i precyzji, nienagannej intonacji, spójności barwowej i elegancji odpowiedniej dla muzyki Norwega. [...] Herberta Schucha prawdziwym mistrzem klawiatury. Jego niezwykła elastyczności w podejściu do koncertu Griega zachwyca.

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.

www.pizzicato.lu 29/10/2014 (Remy Franck - 2014.10.29)



Lebendige Grieg-Interpretationen

In seiner Gesamtaufnahme von Edward Griegs symphonischem Werk kommt Eivind Aadland nicht an der viel und nicht zuletzt vom Komponisten selber geschmähten Symphonie vorbei. Aadlands motiviertes Dirigieren kann die uncharakteristische Musik nicht ins Positive wenden: Das Werk zieht vorbei und hinterlässt kaum Spuren.

Im Klavierkonzert geht der Dirigent recht sachlich mit der Musik um und arbeitet zusammen mit Herbert Schuch ein Maximum an Nuancen und Kontrasten im Grieg-Konzert heraus. Das führt zu einer lebendigen Darstellung, in der kraftvolle Bravour und poetische Lyrik mit klarem Kopf platziert und dosiert werden.

Lively and stylish performances in a very natural sound. However, even in such a good interpretation, Grieg's Symphony remains a rather uncharacteristic and unsatisfying work.

[Musik & Theater](#) 11/12 November/Dezember 2014 (Reinmar Wagner - 2014.11.01)



Verbotene Sinfonie

Beschwingt, akzentuiert klingt das, mit Elan und einer Portion eher jugendlichem als romantischem Pathos, Herbert Schuch ist der tadellose Solist im Klavierkonzert.

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.

International Record Review December 2014 (Colin Anderson - 2014.12.01)



Edvard Grieg would prefer that we did not know his Symphony in C minor. But his cover was broken in the late days of the LP when Decca issued a digital recording by Karsten Andersen and the Bergen Philharmonic. The work has not been hidden since, although it is hardly a staple of the repertoire, and is unlikely ever to be. One may well understand the composer's reluctance to have the music played, yet there are some attractive ideas in a symphony that is concise, confident and lyrical, and certainly with numerous trademarks of the Norwegian's style. It's a warm-hearted score, and not a little evocative in places, cast in the traditional four movements and playing for just over half an hour. So it doesn't outstay its welcome; and, anyway, Grieg wasn't about putting on a big show. Rather he invented some pleasing melodies, developed and orchestrated them well if modestly, and his dynamic palette is wide, which Eivind

Aadland ensures we appreciate; furthermore, when needed, the composer invests moments of drama to keep the listener engaged and the music on a clear-cut journey.

There is something of a chivalrous fee I to the first movement. If the slow one is a relative disappointment, it's because the very opening is quite lovely but then the music doesn't quite bloom as the initial promise suggests it might. It's tenderly played here, though, as part of a sympathetic and well-prepared reading that continues with a robust, dancing scherzo, itself contrasted with a pastoral trio. The finale drives along with a sense of purpose and direction and also with a sense of emotional urgency, and lightly trips, too, in a very attractive way. The cited stylistic likenesses that are made in Audite's annotation to composers such as Niels Gade, Mendelssohn and Schumann are justified, if applicable more to the former than the two Germans. Yet, ultimately, Grieg is characteristically Grieg in this work, not quite fully formed, doubting himself, but leaving us a work that can be much enjoyed.

The excellent music-making and recorded sound is carried into a piece at the polar extreme of Grieg's popularity, the Piano Concerto. Eric Morecambe may have made hay with it more than 40 years ago, with André Previn his willing and brilliant accomplice. Herbert Schuch, with the full support of the orchestra and conductor, gives a fresh and flowing, feisty even, account of music easy to take for granted. There is much that is gentle and tender, too, and the slow movement is especially soulful, beautifully brought off, and the finale has an invigorating impetuosity as well as idyllic romance and final triumph. Throughout, a positive collaboration informs this honest outing for such a familiar concerto. (The earlier volumes in this series were reviewed in July / August 2011 and September 2013).

Klassisk Musikkmagasin Nummer 4/2014 (Martin Anderson - 2014.10.01)



Schuch's very first entry is made with such precision and power that you sit up in surprise – you know that something special is ahead of you, and so it proves, in one of the best accounts of this constantly recycled concerto that I've heard. [...]

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.

Der Tagesspiegel 07.12.2014 (Frederik Hanssen - 2014.12.07)



Stille Nacht? Von wegen!

Tagesspiegel-Kritikerinnen und -Kritiker empfehlen: Die besten CDs zu Weihnachten

[...] leidenschaftliche Musik, handwerklich tadellos gearbeitet und genuin romantisch.

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hifi & records 1/2015 (Uwe Steiner - 2015.01.01)



Wie schon in den vorangegangenen drei Folgen seiner Einspielung sämtlicher Orchesterwerke Griegs macht Eivind Aadland auch diese Musik so stark wie irgend möglich, vor allem gönnt er ihrem poetischen Zauber die erforderliche Transparenz und die Vielfalt der Orchesterfarben. Auf vordergründige Effekte verzichtet zumal die Wiedergabe des Klavierkonzerts. Herbert Schuch musiziert ganz auf dieser Linie, indem er bei tadelloser Technik, niemals vordergründig den Virtuosen ausstellt, um stattdessen vielmehr die Schönheiten dieser Partitur lyrisch und sanglich zu entfalten. Eine Empfehlung!

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Gramophone December 2014 (Rob Cowan - 2014.12.01)

GRAMOPHONE
THE WORLD'S BEST CLASSICAL MUSIC REVIEWS

'Must never be performed' is an obvious red rag to any musical bull and although Grieg's youthful C minor Symphony reveals numerous influences, some more obvious than others, it's confidently built, thematically appealing and mildly memorable in a way that recalls similarly derivative early symphonic works by Dvorak and Glazunov. Its first recording, by the Bergen Symphony Orchestra under Karsten Andersen, is now out on Decca Eloquence (appropriately coupled with Goldmark's equally engaging Rustic Wedding Symphony), and shares the market with worthy versions under Ari Rasilainen, Okko Kamu, Terje Mikkelsen and Neeme Järvi. Up until now I would probably have rated the latter as top contender but this newcomer from Eivind Aadland and the Cologne WDR Symphony Orchestra, which is captured in admirably natural sound and appears in the context of Grieg's 'Complete Symphonic Works, Vol 4', is a fresh, lightly sprung performance that avoids any inappropriate feelings of portentousness and highlights the mazurka-style third movement as the most characteristic in terms of its thematic material.

A good idea to couple Grieg's least familiar orchestral work with its totally familiar near contemporary, the A minor Piano Concerto, in a not insubstantial reading by the excellent Herbert Schuch, who sounds-as if he's worked over every semiquaver with infinite care. Not that the performance lacks spontaneity, more that inner voices, crisp rhythms and a sculpted brand of poetry suggest a truly 'settled' interpretation, one that happily compares with (but hardly replaces) the best available. Again Aadland and his Cologne players provide an excellent account of the orchestral score, supportive of Schuch and distinctive on its own terms, and the recorded balance is excellent.

[Infodad.com](http://infodad.com) November 13, 2014 (- 2014.11.13)

INFODAD.COM:

The extent of the symphony

His Piano Concerto, however, is of crucial importance, and it shares the SACD with the symphony and gets a grand, sweeping and altogether winning performance from Herbert Schuch.

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Piano News Januar/Februar (I/2015) (Carsten Dürer - 2015.01.01)

Mit seiner Eigenschaft der nicht nur brillierenden, technischen Sicht auf diese Musik weiß Schuch dieses Konzert eindringlich zu gestalten, mit Lyriismus, mit Vehemenz, mit famoser Agogik und Phrasierung. Und er bildet mit dem Orchester eine derartig grandiose Einheit, dass man sich kaum erinnert, dieses Konzert jemals besser gehört zu haben. Eine Referenzeinspielung!

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Diapason N° 631 Janvier 2015 (Nicolas Dorny - 2015.01.01)

«Rentre chez toi et écris une symphonie», conseille Niels Gade au jeune Grieg, qui s'était alors frotté qu'aux petites formes. L'apprenti s'exécute. Mais note en 1867 «Ne doit jamais être jouée» sur le manuscrit de son unique tentative. Conventiennelle dans sa construction, la symphonie offre pourtant de beaux atouts mélodiques.

Depuis la levée de l'interdiction en... 1981 par la bibliothèque qui la détenait, les gravures ne manquent pas. La nouvelle, bien ancrée sur son large socle (mais pas empesée pour autant), doit beaucoup au geste nerveux d'Eivind Aadland. On peut rêver, dans l'ondoyant Adagio espressivo, de couleurs plus «boréales» que celle de l'orchestre de Cologne, mais l'élan populaire que le chef confère au scherzo et l'énergie trépidante du finale enthousiasment plus que de coutume. Un joli coup de frais.

Soliste et maestro travaillent ensuite à caractériser au mieux les différents épisodes du concerto pour piano. De la vigueur parfois un peu dure au lyrisme le plus chantant, Herbert Schuch montre l'étendue de sa palette expressive et veille à l'élégance du rubato. En outre, les compères semblent prendre un malin plaisir à accentuer ici l'influence de Chopin, à tirer là des fusées lisziennes, ou à annoncer Rachmaninov. Personnel, bel et bon, mais trop contrôlé. Un peu d'abandon n'aurait pas nui.

Image Hifi 2/2015 (Heinz Gelking - 2015.02.01)**Hörenswertes**

In Köln entstand keine stürmische, sondern eine eher frische und kraftvolle, am Klavier brillant gespielte und trotzdem nicht vom Solisten dominierte, sondern auch durch ein prägnantes und transparentes Orchesterspiel getragene Version. [...] Lange habe ich keine Aufnahme mit Klavier plus Orchester gehört, in der Parameter wie Transparenz, Energie und Raum so gut unter Dach und Fach gebracht wurden.

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[Vårt Land](#) Tirsdag 13. Januar 2015 (Olav Egil - 2015.01.13)

vårtland

Grieg med dyp pust

Blant uendeligheten av innspilte Grieg-toner føyer de nyeste seg inn blant dem som tar det store overblikket - uten tusser, tuer og norske kratt

Det er en forrykende tolkning. Aadlands utgave er, som alt i denne serien, preget av moden vurdering og sikker sans for at musikken bærer, om den bare får tid til å puste og ikke piskes opp. I Aadland hånd – opplever jeg – blir Griegs Symfoni for første gang virkelig interessant. Naturlig virtuositet (ved behov) avløses av klassisk, symfonisk refleksjon, kall det gjerne alvor, en lys form for alvor.

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[Fanfare](#) 26.03.2015 (Jim Svejda - 2015.03.26)

fanfare

For the fourth (and next-to-last) installment of its stunning series of the complete symphonic works of Edvard Grieg, Audite made the canny decision to combine the composer's least-known major work with the one performed with the most monotonous frequency. Incredibly enough, these two youthful half-hour works, written barely five years apart, hardly seem the work of the same composer.

Composed for Copenhagen at the suggestion of Niels Gade when Grieg was only 20, the Symphony in C Minor is an amiable, well-made stylistic hodge-podge that mixes Schumann, Mendelssohn and—for those with a very discerning ear—Gade himself. Finished in 1864, the symphony was not performed until 1980, when it was finally heard against the composer's wishes and instructions. The premiere was given—wouldn't you know it—in the Soviet Union, by the Russian conductor Vitali Katayev, who asked the Bergen city library for a photocopy for "research purposes only" and then performed it anyway. (One more reason not to lament the passing of The Evil Empire.)

The brilliant young Norwegian conductor Eivind Aadland treats the piece like the early work it is, wisely choosing never to overstate the case or try to turn it into the youthful masterpiece it clearly isn't. Still, everything is done with such loving care and meticulous attention to detail—listen especially to the incredibly refined and sensitive phrasing in the lovely Adagio espressivo—that it's difficult to imagine a stronger case ever being made for the piece.

The version of the piano concerto is as fresh-minted and spontaneous sounding as everything else in the series, with the WDR Symphony again playing in a way that suggests it's coming to the music for the very first time (in the best possible sense). The Romanian-born Herbert Schuch is a probing and imaginative soloist, often acting like the first among equals in a fine chamber music recital. The playing itself is lithe and endearingly capricious, especially in the concerto's cadenza, which for once sounds like cadenzas were meant to sound: as though someone were making it up on the spot. There's also plenty of fire and muscle when the music requires it, most notably in a finale which steps off at a pace that manages to seem both cracking and completely comfortable. Again, the orchestra performs countless little expressive miracles along the way. Try sampling the flute solo about two and a half minutes in: You can actually smell the chilly morning air.

As in the previous installments in the series, the recorded sound is as warm and natural as the performances themselves. Alas, the concluding Volume Five must now be anticipated with equal amounts of eagerness and regret: as in, what a pity Grieg didn't write more things for this bunch to record.

[American Record Guide](#) 31.03.2015 (Paul L Althouse - 2015.03.31)



Over his entire career Grieg wrote only two orchestral works in the traditional multimovement format: this symphony and concerto. Both are early works. The symphony was completed in 1864, when the composer was 20; the concerto followed in 1868. The symphony had a curious fate because after some partial performances Grieg withdrew it, declaring it should not be performed. And so it wasn't until 1980, and since then a few recordings have appeared. The work shows debt to Mendelssohn and Schumann but probably doesn't have enough interest to enter the general repertory. It does have, though, catchy themes and lovely moments that show the remarkable skill and finesse of a young composer. The sweet romanticism we associate with Grieg is not yet part of his style—it really sounds more like Mendelssohn!—and it is clear that after these two early orchestral works he directed his career in other directions.

The symphony performance under Eivind Aadland has everything you would hope for: lots of energy and excitement, with a very fine, well-prepared orchestra. The music emerges with a sense of youth and enthusiasm, and rhythms are crisp. With the concerto, of course, we are on familiar ground. The catalog lists dozens of fine recordings, and a relative newcomer like Schuch (now in his mid-30s) won't gain notice easily. But this is a fine performance. He throws himself into the piece with lots of excitement in the outer movements and plenty of virtuosic display, mainly in the big cadenza. He also gives us ample poetry in the slow movement and the finale (before the strange stop in the middle!) Schuch is ably backed by Aadland, who brings the same level of excitement here as in the symphony.

This is Volume IV of Audite's complete edition of Grieg's orchestral work in five volumes (see our index). It comes with fine, detailed notes, and the sound is first rate. A fine job all around!

Scherzo Número 305 - Marzo de 2015 (Juan Carlos Moreno - 2015.03.01)



Mejor, como siempre, Eivind Aadland, quien vuelve a demostrar su empatía con Grieg en este poco agradecido programa.

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.

www.limelightmagazine.com.au June 2015 (Greg Kune - 2015.06.01)



A warhorse gets a good trot alongside a forgotten pony

I've raved about Eivind Aadland's recordings with the excellent West Deutsche Rundfunk Orchestra in his Grieg cycle and this vivid performance and lovely recording maintain the standard. [...] One review exclaimed "his shadings have shadings" - exactly! His tone is gorgeous and so is this CD.

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.

Record Geijutsu 2015.2 (- 2015.02.01)

japanische Rezension siehe PDF!

www.opusklassiek.nl januari 2016 (Aart van der Wal - 2016.01.01)



Het is duidelijk, Aadland en het orkest hebben dit repertoire zo goed in de vingers, er zoveel affiniteit mee dat dit project alleen daarom al als ijzersterk mag worden gekwalificeerd Daar komt dan nog bij dat het orkestspel van hoog gehalte is en dat de in de Keulse Philharmonie en de Bismarck-zaal gemaakte opnamen tot de beste mogen worden gerekend die ik tot nu toe uit die bron heb gehoord.

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Bayerischer Rundfunk BR-Klassik, CD-Tipp vom 06.10.2014 (- 2014.10.06)



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CD-TIPP

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WDR 3 01.03.2016 (- 2016.03.01)

source: <http://www1.wdr.de/av/audio-edvard-grieg...>



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[The New Listener](#) 09/04/2016 (Oliver Fraenzke - 2016.04.09)



Perlen des Nordens

Eivind Aadland geht dem Orchesterwerk dieses grandiosen Komponisten auf den Grund, gemeinsam mit dem WDR-Sinfonieorchester Köln spielte er es auf fünf CDs für audite ein. Das Orchester spielt klar und durchhörbar, der Dirigent verzichtet auf alle unnötigen Romantizismen und überdehnte Tempi rubati. [...] Es entstehen vielfarbige Schattierungen und das Ganze wird nicht wie viel zu häufig zu hören in einem einzigen monochromen „Grieg-Klang“ verschmolzen.

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.

ionarts.blogspot.com Tuesday, August 30, 2016 (Jens F. Laurson - 2016.08.30)

source: <http://ionarts.blogspot.com/2016/08/dip-...>

IONARTS

SOMETHING OTHER THAN POLITICS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

Dip your ears

[...] It's almost eerily similar to another recent (also live) recording that combines the concerto with Lyric Pieces (although four of Ott's twelve choices overlap), namely that of Javier Perianes on Harmonia Mundi with the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Sakari Oramo. If I had to choose between the two, Ott would win out; when she differs, however marginally, in tempos, she's a touch fleeter, which I like... and the recorded sound (and orchestra's wind section: no hiss with the Bavarians) is slightly better on DG, which becomes notable in the slow movement. Compared to Herbert Schuch's recording on Audite (a very delicate, favorite performance, with the WDR SO Cologne and Eivind Aadland) the sound is more direct and almost (and only in comparison) brash.

In the Lyric Pieces Ott (and the acoustic) is a little drier, a little leaner, while Perianes indulges in a freer rubato. Incidentally that's closer to Grieg, whose rubato was very free-wheeling, indeed. Another fine, slightly specialist release, of Grieg's Piano Concerto and select Lyric Pieces (played on Grieg's piano and trying to emulate Grieg's own performances) shows this to be the case, namely that of Sigurd Slåttembrekk with the Oslo Philharmonic under Michail Jurowski on Simax (ionarts review here: Musical Journey Through Norway). Alice Sara Ott navigates her way through these pieces in similar manner as with the concerto. She won't indulge, and while her butterfly is fast and sufficiently nervous, she doesn't deliberately undercut the romantic cliché, either. Like that butterfly, the pieces flit by with great pleasantness and slight blandness.

If that sounds like a gentle bashing, it's not intended that way. These qualities are no detriment to the music or recording. Actually, this disc could be considered an ideal Griegroduction™: it does not overly color the canvas of the music and leaves the ears ready, thereafter, to open-mindedly receiving and considering any number of differing interpretations. The only snag: There is one similar recording already, which does all that, a little more of it, arguably a little more interestingly while doing it, and certainly no worse at it. That's Leif Ove Andsnes' first, super-stormy, recording of the concerto with the Bergen Philharmonic under Dmitri Kitayenko which, in a coupling on a Virgin twofer (now Erato, if only Warner only re-issued it at last, hopefully with the same Delacroix' "Orphan girl seated in cemetery" on the cover), added many more lyric pieces and the Piano Sonata on two discs priced lower than the DG release. [...]

Classical CD Choice December 13, 2014 (Barry Forshaw - 2014.12.13)

source: <http://www.cdchoice.co.uk/?p=829>

Classical CD Choice  The pick of the best classical CDs and SACDs.

[...] the concerto is given a reading of great spirit and colour.

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.

Das Orchester 02/2015 (Susanne Rudolph - 2015.02.01)
source: http://www.dasorchester.de/de_DE/journal...



Da der norwegische Dirigent Eivind Aadland mit dem WDR Sinfonieorchester all diese Attribute mit liebevoller Detailgenauigkeit und sprühendem Elan ausspielt und weder kernige Klangwucht noch Empfindungstiefe scheut, dürfte es dem Zuhörer ähnlich gehen wie einst Rubinstein und Bernstein: Je öfter er die Sinfonie anhört, desto lieber wird sie ihm... Kurz: Diese bemerkenswerte Talentprobe des jungen Edvard Grieg, in der sein typisch nordisches Idiom schon aufscheint, ist eine bereichernde Entdeckung.

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.

Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk MDR FIGARO | Take 5 | 03.11.2014 | 18:05-19:00 Uhr (Andre Sittner - 2014.11.03)
source: <http://www.mdr.de/kultur/rueckblick/mdr-...>



BROADCAST CD-Empfehlung

Alles in allem also sehr gelungen und eine würdige Fortsetzung der zu Recht vielgelobten Grieg-Reihe bei Audite.

Full review text restrained for copyright reasons.