

A Symphonic Portrait

**DORA
PEJAČEVIĆ**

Complete Symphonic Works

Annika Schlicht mezzo-soprano

Martina Filjak piano

Staatskapelle Weimar

Ivan Repušić conductor

Dora Pejačević regarded her Symphony as her most important work. Yet at its premiere, one crucial detail was missing: her full name. In the programmes for the first performances in Vienna and Dresden, only “D. Pejacsevich” was listed. Why did the composer refrain from including her first name? And would the audience have reacted differently if they had known that the Symphony was written by a woman?



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Is there such a thing as “female” and “male” music? The life of Croatian composer Dora Pejačević clearly shows that – like many other women composers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries – she had far fewer opportunities in the musical world than her male colleagues. Yet her aristocratic background and a mother who was herself a composer afforded her certain freedoms. Step by step, Pejačević found her way into concert programmes throughout the Habsburg Monarchy, with works ranging from piano and vocal music to the symphony, a genre traditionally considered “male.”

The reception of her music illustrates how difficult it is to classify music according to gender: while some critics described her compositions as “feminine”, others recognised in them a “masculine” expressive power. What remains beyond doubt, however, is Dora Pejačević’s artistic significance – as one of the most outstanding women composers of her era.

Ord. no.: aud 23.449 (2 CDs in jewel case)

EAN: 4022143234490

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