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Recollections Of Gustav Mahler



Synopsis

First published in English in 1980, this important early memoir of Gustav Mahler is by Natalie Bauer-Lechner (1858-1921), a viola player and close and devoted friend of Mahler until his marriage to Alma Schindler in 1902. She visited him in Hamburg and frequented his circle in Vienna, also accompanying him and his family on a number of the summer vacations during which the Second, Third and Fourth Symphonies came into being, together with many of the Wunderhorn songs. Compiled from Bauer-Lechner's private journal, these Recollections are a vital, invaluable record of Mahler's personal, professional and creative life during the last decade of the nineteenth century. A large part of the book recounts, at first hand, conversations with Mahler concerning his works and his ideas about performance (both in the opera-house and on the concert platform.)

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Customer Reviews

I wish I had read this book years ago. It is a fascinating and vivid portrayal of a musical genius. The author was hopelessly on love with her subject, but there is very little of herself in these memoirs -

the focus is almost entirely on Mahler himself, his lifestyle, preoccupations, thoughts on music and the genesis of his great works. The chapter 'Mahler's Personality and Appearance' is a particular treasure. I found it amusing that this lady, whom Mahler allegedly kept as a friend only, was able to give such a detailed description of his disordered bedroom. The pages that were torn out of the original manuscript must be a real unretrievable loss. A precious document for genuine devotees of Mahler.

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