

onist, alone with himself in a fragile world", and whom Kimmig describes as "an outsider because he is a dreamer". The director explains that in the post-World War II era of the opera's genesis, "Bachmann and Henze dream of a freer form of existence—without humiliations, without destructive hierarchies."

English baritone Robin Adams, singing with clarity and tonal variety, is a sympathetic and ruggedly sexy Prince. As his love interest, Princess Natalie, Vera-Lotte Boecker is an expressive actress with a free and bright soprano. The Elector and his wife (Stefan Margita and Helene Schneiderman) are the epitome of tenuous power, and the supporting roles are all filled to perfection. Locke was unmoved by Henze's "disjointed vocal lines", but the sterling cast renders them with a graceful ease that extracts whatever essential beauty lies beneath the thorny surface.

The video has another advantage. During the exciting instrumental interludes, the camera cuts to conductor Cornelius Meister, whose apparent joy at leading the Stuttgart Opera Orchestra through this presumably arduous score is infectious.

ALTMAN

**MAHLER: *Romance, Death, and Triumph***  
*Symphony 1 & Wayfarer Songs*  
Thomas Hampson, bar; Estonian Symphony/  
Neeme Jarvi—VAI 4605—100 minutes

As I've gotten older I've become more aware that Time is finite and one only has so much time to explore what one loves. As I am an Opera Nut I tend to spend my free time listening to the umpteenth pirated *Tosca* or Ring cycle rather than exploring new fields of music. That doesn't mean I don't like other music. On the contrary, I enjoy musical theater, operetta, lieder, ballet, chamber music, jazz, and symphonic music very much (I even enjoy rock and country music!) Because of my love of the human voice I've enjoyed Mahler's song cycles or symphonies with choral music the most. I know his other music is magnificent, but one only has so many hours in a day.

I've written the above to explain why I enjoyed this video so much. Jason Starr's documentary about the evolution and composition of Mahler's first symphony is what all explications should be: revealing, moving, and interesting. Using musicologists and actors as well as an actual performance, Starr explores why Mahler began his symphonic career, how the melodic ideas germinated in him and how

those ideas evolved, what each of the movements is, and how the music mirrors the composer's own life. The musicologists, led by Peter Franklin, explain the ins and outs of Mahler's creativity without seeming stuffy or condescending. We are shown how *Symphony 1* influenced and inspired the *Wayfarer Songs* and how the musical ideas of one work are carried over and developed in the other.

Along the way, we're told of various performance traditions. Never having heard Mahler's first symphony in the hall I didn't know, for example, that at one point the brass stand to deliver a passage in one of the later movements. I learned many things from this disc while being thoroughly entertained. I know Starr has created a similar film about *Das Lied von der Erde*, also available on VAI (Nov/Dec 2013). I have every intention of exploring that too. In fact, as I watched this, I kept wishing that Starr would make films about all of Mahler's symphonies. That's probably not financially possible, but one can dream.

In my next lifetime I will get to know Mahler more intimately.

REYNOLDS

**MASSENET: *Cendrillon***

Danielle de Niese (*Cendrillon*), Kate Lindsey (Prince Charming), Lionel Lhote (Pandolfe), Nina Minasyan (Fairy Godmother), Agnes Zwierko (Madame de la Haltiere); Glyndebourne/John Wilson

Opus Arte 1303 [Blu-ray] 148 minutes; also DVD

The esteemed Irish actress and opera director Fiona Shaw devised a magical *Cendrillon* for Glyndebourne aimed at telling the story to a modern audience. To her credit, her rethinking is generally rooted in Massenet's music and the text by Henri Cain, after Perrault. As seen in this 2019 performance the staging is richly detailed in characterizations, imagery, and stage effects (including a canny use of holograms), yet never feels overstuffed. Cinderella's adventure is a dream, populated with key figures from her life whom we meet in pantomimes. Her dead mother becomes the Fairy Godmother, and the kind maid who is her only safeguard against the malignant women of the household (her father is caring but ineffectual) becomes her Prince Charming. As that role is written for a woman, the association is pregnant with psychological possibilities. When he first approaches Cinderella, the Prince has the demeanor of an