



EXPANSIVE, LUMINOUS, EVOCATIVE

Symphonies by Albéric Magnard





8.574082
Price Code: NXP



Playing Time:
74:23

Albéric Magnard by Ondine Magnard-Vlach
Photo courtesy of Milena Vlach and Association Albéric Magnard

Albéric MAGNARD (1865–1914)

Symphonies Nos. 3 and 4

Philharmonisches Orchester Freiburg
Fabrice Bollon

Listen to an excerpt from
Symphony No. 3 in B flat minor,
Op. 11: II. Danses: Très vif



Albéric Magnard became a French national hero when he died defending his home at the outbreak of the First World War and, although he wrote relatively little, his catalogue is full of expansive and beautifully crafted music. Magnard was a symphonist at heart, and with its evocations of landscape and expressive lyricism his *Third Symphony* was admired by Paul Dukas for its 'perfect clarity' and as an 'all too rare creation'. The luminous *Fourth Symphony* is one of Magnard's last surviving works – a masterpiece that successfully synthesises Wagnerian high drama with Classical transparency.

Key Features:

- Albéric Magnard's music struggled to gain true momentum during his lifetime and became neglected after his death, but recent years have seen a surge of interest in his superbly crafted and expressively communicative works. This new recording of the 3rd and 4th symphonies – the most renowned of the four – is set to attract a new generation of fans.
- The Freiburg Philharmonic Orchestra has been nominated several times as the orchestra of the year in the professional journal *Opernwelt* and was awarded the German Music Publisher's Prize for the best program in the 1998–99 and 2011–12 seasons. Among the orchestra's many recent albums, the award-winning *Francesca da Rimini* conducted by Fabrice Bollon was highly praised as a reference recording.
- Conductor Fabrice Bollon's work on Freiburg has received international acclaim including the UK performances of *Parsifal* and *Tannhäuser*, as well as *Gramophone* Editor's Choice and Diapason d'Or awards, among others. His recording of Korngold's *Das Wunder der Heliane* (8.660410-12) admired by *Gramophone* as 'a warm, sculpted sweep of music, the Freiburg forces clearly unfazed by the multi-layered intricacy of Korngold's orchestral writing.' This team's acclaimed DVD and Blu-ray recording of Massenet's *Cendrillon* (2.110563 / NBD0079V) was 'seriously and movingly done' (*Gramophone*).



“The music of Albéric Magnard demands a lot from its interpreters. Magnard’s orchestral output starts with a suite in neo-classical style, long before the likes of Ravel and Stravinsky themselves explored this concept, and ends with the *Fourth Symphony*. This latter work not only has the late Romantic feel of Dukas or Chausson, it also expresses great knowledge and love of German music. The resulting wide union of styles was significant in its time, sometimes even anticipating new ideas. The beginning of the *First Symphony* reminds one of Mahler’s *Sixth* before taking a more lyrical direction, using music as a way to proclaim pacifism. It is very important to find an individual approach to this music and not present it as a puzzling mosaic of styles or a kind of experimental mix. One must discover its real secrets.

The first reading of each score was for me always a kind of surprise, the feeling of being before a wall, and not finding the door. Working on the pieces with the orchestral musicians met with the usual resistance against unknown music. But at the end of the process we all discovered that it is indeed great music, having found hidden doors and successfully opened them. As part of that discovery one had to forget everything one knew about composers like Bruckner, Mahler, Brahms. Chausson and d’Indy, who surely influenced Magnard, but no more than Bach or Haydn influenced Mozart.

As with a *Sleeping Beauty*, it takes a long time and many attempts before being able to bring her back to life. Similarly with Magnard’s music. Once you hear the recording you will indeed feel like Prince Charming, who discovers that the bride is even more beautiful than first thought.”

– Fabrice Bollon

About Fabrice Bollon

Fabrice Bollon has been general music director/chief conductor at Germany’s Theater Freiburg since 2009. In September 2016 Bollon was unanimously re-elected for another term and began recording for Naxos, releasing a remarkable interpretation of Korngold’s *Das Wunder der Heliane* in 2018 (8.660410-12). His work in Freiburg has garnered international acclaim, including Editor’s Choice accolades in *Gramophone* magazine and Diapason d’Or Awards, among others. Bollon appears regularly with the Moscow State Opera Stanislavsky, several German radio orchestras, and in Japan, Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Austria and Monte Carlo. Bollon is also an acclaimed composer: his opera *Oscar und die Dame in Rosa* was highly praised by both critics and audiences.

About the Philharmonisches Orchester Freiburg

The **Freiburg Philharmonic Orchestra** was founded in 1887 and quickly established itself as the official orchestra of the city at the Theater Freiburg, collaborating with musicians such as Clara Schumann and Richard Strauss in its early days. The Freiburg Concert Hall has served the orchestra as a second home since its opening in 1996. With a hundred performances annually, also appearing as the opera orchestra, the Philharmonic has for many years been involved in chamber music series as well as concerts and collaborations with schools in Freiburg and in the region. Composers such as Wolfgang Rihm, Manfred Trojahn and Reinhard Febel have written works for the orchestra. Fabrice Bollon has been general music director since the 2008–09 season.



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Previous releases featuring Fabrice Bollon and the Freiburg Philharmonic



2.110563

'Conductor Bollon keeps a firm hand on dynamics and pace.' – *Gramophone*



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Blu-ray (NBD0079V)



7 47313 55635 9



8.660410-12

'Bollon is adept at gauging the dramatic temperature and pacing matters to best effect.'

– *Limelight Magazine* ★★★★★

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SPECIAL RECOMMENDATION
OF THE MONTH

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pizzicato

RITMO

classical ear

OPERA NEWS

CLASSICA

★★★★★

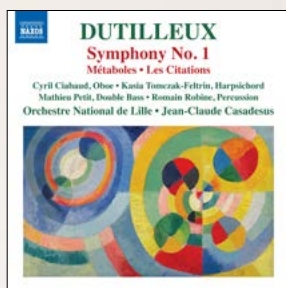
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★★★★★



7 30099 04107 2

Other interesting recordings of French orchestral music



7 47313 37467 0

8.573746

'Jean-Claude Casadesus returns to Dutilleux's *First Symphony* with a highly colourful and well elaborated account.'

– *Pizzicato* ★★★★★

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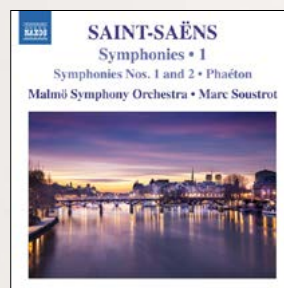
8.573858

'The Malmö Symphony Orchestra under conductor Darrell Ang...provides lively readings that breathe.'

– *AllMusic.com* ★★★★★

pizzicato

★★★★★



7 47313 31387 7

8.573138

'The performances...are strong and carefully considered, which admirably suits the symphonies.'

– *The Guardian* ★★★★★

ICMA

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7 47313 28867 0

8.572886

'A solid, balanced, well-paced *Symphonie Fantastique*... Slatkin draws the listener's attention to the beauty, nuance, and carefully wrought inner detail of the music.'

– *American Record Guide*

GRAMMY

MusicWeb

D'APASON

mUSIC

pizzicato

AUDIOPHILE

★★★★★

Also available on Blu-ray Audio
(NBD0029)