

Philip Glass - Symphony No.4 'Heroes' (2014)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 28 December 2019 16:23 -

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1 Movement I: Heroes 5:53 2 Movement II: Abdulmajid 8:53 3 Movement III: Sense Of Doubt 7:20 4 Movement IV: Sounds Of The Silent Age 8:18 5 Movement V: Neuköln 6:41 6 Movement VI: V2 Schneider 6:48 Sinfonieorchester Basel Dennis Russell Davies - conductor

Philip Glass' Symphony No. 4 ("Heroes"), like his Symphony No. 1 ("Low"), was based on an album by David Bowie that had contributions from avant-garde producer and composer Brian Eno. Glass has written of the influence Bowie and Eno exerted on his musical thinking; the fact that his interaction with multi-million-selling rock royalty had resulted in one of his most successful albums might also have played a role in his decision to return to Bowie's music. In any event, for those who liked the Low Symphony, this music draws on a further experimental step forward by Bowie and Eno. In essence its language is similar to that of the earlier work, with Bowie's short, angular themes underlaid by Glass' arpeggiated string figures instead of Eno's electronics. The Glass version has the general texture, if not the harmonic language, of other classical arrangements of rock music, and it might actually be easier on the ears for listeners new to both Glass and Bowie than the original Bowie album. Bowie has stated his admiration for the work, especially for the dark "Neuköln" movement, which comes off especially well in Glass' hands. Conductor Dennis Russell Davies has recorded this work once before, with the American Composers Orchestra; this new reading on Glass' own Orange Mountain Music label is acoustically superior. ---James Manheim, AllMusic Review

Orange Mountain Music presents a new recording by the Basel Sinfonieorchester of Philip Glass Symphony No.4 "Heroes". This new recording conducted by Glass champion Dennis Russell Davies is a shimmering rendition of the work. Only the third recording of the Symphony,

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it has been 18 years since the last one, the previous recording was recorded in the studio sectionally whereas this new OMM recording was made live in Basel Switzerland and captures the vitality and beauty of the work as never heard before. Recorded less than a year after the Orange Mountain Music recording of the companion piece Symphony No.1 "Low", Glass states in discussing the work of Bowie and Eno: "The continuing influence of these works has secured their stature as part of the new "classics" of our time. Just as composers of the past have turned to music of their time to fashion new works, the work of Bowie and Eno became an inspiration and point of departure of symphonies of my own" ---prestomusic.com

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