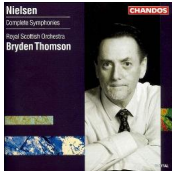


Carl Nielsen – Symphonies Nos. 1 & 2 (1991)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 22 August 2011 19:01 - Last Updated Sunday, 02 March 2014 17:10

Carl Nielsen – Symphonies Nos. 1 & 2 (1991)



Symphony No. 1 in G minor, Op 7/FS 16 1. *Allegro orgoglioso* 2. *Andante* 3. *Allegro comodo*
4. *Finale: Allegro con fuoco* Symphony No. 2 ("The
Four Temperaments"), Op. 16 (FS29)
5. *Allegro collerico* 6. *Allegro comodo e flemmatico*
[play](#)
7. *Andante malincolico* 8. *Allegro sanguineo - Marziale*
Royal Scottish National Orchestra Bryden Thomson – conductor

Bryden Thomson was a somewhat uneven conductor, but when he was on, he was ON. On this disk he is surely right up there with the best. I tend to have a somewhat opposite view of the two performances from the other reviewer: I like the 1st a bit more than the 2nd. But both are strong, potent performances. I agree about the quality of the difficult-to-obtain Garaguly 2nd (LP only), and I think Thomson's 2nd isn't quite there. But his 1st, well, it's as good as they get. A great value and a great introduction to Nielsen for those of you who haven't discovered this marvelous composer's music. --- Neil E. Schore, amazon.com

Nielsen is perhaps most closely associated with his six symphonies, which were written between 1892, when he was an aspiring young composer, and 1925, when he was already beginning to suffer from poor health. The works have much in common: they are all just over 30 minutes long, brass instruments are a key component of the orchestration, and they all exhibit unusual changes in tonality, which heightens the dramatic tension. From its opening bars, Symphony No. 1 in G minor (1890–92), while reflecting the influence of Grieg and Brahms, shows Nielsen's individuality. Surprisingly, it begins in C major and hints at what Robert Simpson calls evolving or progressive tonality or the practice of beginning a work in one key and ending in another. The

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composer, who was playing in the second violins at the work's premiere must have been gratified at the work's highly enthusiastic reception. From his manifestation of personal strength in the First Symphony, in the Second Nielsen embarks on the development of human character. Inspiration came from a painting in an inn depicting the four temperaments (choleric, phlegmatic, melancholic and sanguine). The first and the third movements are reminiscent of the doleful style of Mahler.

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