

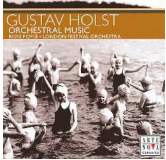
## Gustav Holst - Orchestral Music (1998)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 31 January 2011 19:54 - Last Updated Friday, 10 January 2014 21:39

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St Paul's Suite Op.29-2 H.118 (1913) 1. I. Jig (3:13) 2. II. Ostinato (1:42) 3. III. Intermezzo (3:59) 4. IV. Finale: The Dargason (3:22) 5. Lyric Movement for viola and small orchestra H.191 11:15  
Brook Green Suite, for strings, H.190 6:40  
6. 1. Prelude 7. 2. Air 8. 3. Dance  
A Fugal Concerto for flute and oboe, Op.40/2 H.152 7:35  
9. 1. Moderato 10. 2. Adagio 11. 3. Allegro 12. Seven Scottish Airs for piano and orchestra H.93 6:46  
Six Morris Dance Tunes, Appx III, 12 12:25  
13. Country Gardens 14. Constant Billy 15. Laudnum Bunches 16. Rigs O'Marlow 17. Trunkles 18. Shepherds Hey 19. In the Bleak Midwinter H.73 (arr. by Malcolm Messiter) 3:34  
Edward Beckett (flute) Malcolm Messiter (oboe) Rachel Bolt (viola) Michael Freyhan (piano)  
London Festival Orchestra Ross Pople (conductor)

For listeners expecting more material in the same style of "The Planets" - the work for which Holst is most popular - you won't find it here.

Here you will find rarer works which often have a "folk" influence and are scored for much smaller forces - usually string ensemble or string ensemble with a solo oboe, flute, viola, or piano. Many of the works were composed for student orchestras during Holst's tenure as instructor at St. Paul's Girls' School (hence the "St. Paul's Suite") and James Allen's Girls' School.

The music is delightful and melodic, almost pastoral, and lacking the drama that made up so much of "The Planets". The St. Paul's Suite, probably one of the most famous works for string ensemble is given a fine performance here. And those who are familiar with Percy Grainger's

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arrangements of "Country Gardens" and "Shepherd's Hey" from "The Mock Morris Dances" will enjoy the simpler and straight forward arrangements that Holst provides for all six Morris dances recorded here.

Ross Pople, who has made a series of recordings for Arte-Nova (a budget line of BMG Classics), gets wonderful performances out of the London Festival Orchestra which sound very much in its element. The four soloists also deliver making this a great recording of these less frequently recorded works by a composer who, sadly, is often considered a one-hit wonder ("The Planets") when many of his other works are deserving of attention. --- John O'Neill, amazon.com

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