

BBC Music Magazine: No. 1 Orchestral Choice of the Month (July 2019, BBC Proms edition)

A refreshing new view of Mahler's final symphony ... Castelletti's arrangement achieves a remarkably full and convincing range of sonority... every player and section is superb

“Thrilling”

“Strikingly different”

Gramophone, Peter Quantrill

Cooke himself saw the Tenth as finally affirmative but Castelletti's telling use of tam-tam in the coda recalls the closing section of the Pathétique Symphony – another Mahlerian touchstone – and offers only the most fragile consolation. However you hear the Tenth, you'll hear it differently after experiencing this one.

Storgards whips up the intensity into a desperate frenzy of ecstasy and trepidation combined, with climatic points being underlined by tam-tam crashes that scythe through the orchestral textures leaving one breathless.

Dazzling!

Fanfare Magazine, Robert Markow

Mahler downsized with great success 5*****

For once, the results justify the rhetoric

it takes a strong constitution not to shed tears while listening to this performance

it is the percussion that gives this orchestration its most interesting and decisive character. Castelletti uses it extensively, and the listener familiar with any of the full-orchestra versions is going to be surprised often.

I won't give away the surprise except to say that what [Castelletti] has done [...] is absolutely terrifying [...] Just get the disc and prepare to be scared silly

It is amazing what Castelletti has achieved with so few instruments...

The full orchestral outburst near the end is as shattering as in any other performance [...] the trumpet's piercing cry is all the more effective

plentiful performance indications subsequently found in the score, and Storgårds emphasizes this contrast mightily

The finale brings the greatest surprises, both in number and emotional impact

If you love this symphony, you owe it to yourself to hear what Castelletti has done with it. You won't be disappointed

The Arts Desk

Castelletti's first Scherzo is an upbeat romp

The added clarity makes for ear-tickling results; the first movement's quirky second subject is pointed to perfection and the famous screaming discord has plenty of impact. The string slides disconcert but make emotional sense, Mahler's chromatic writing disarmingly vocal and painfully human.

Mahler's neuroses unfold on a smaller, less cluttered canvas; we're being whispered to rather than screamed at.

The strings' ecstatic upward slide in the final bars is capped by percussion here. At which point you'll either punch the air or turn off in disgust. I loved it, and defy anyone to remain dry-eyed as the final chord dies away. Sensational playing and impressive direction; this is a very special disc.

The Symphonist

An astonishing arrangement and a sensational performance make one of 2019's most extraordinary and moving recordings. Bravo

Magazin Klassik

Michelle Castelletti - Fassung... exzellenten Einblick...

John Storgårds Dirigent der mit einem untrüglichen Sinn gewissermaßen wie versunken den Geheimnissen dieser Musik auf der Spur ist...

Lapin kamariorkesteri - Lapland Chamber Orchestra ein exzellenter Klangkörper mit vorzüglichen Instrumentalisten

Jean-Yves Duperron

The final 5 minutes or so could melt the heart of a yeti.

Aparte Music & Evidence Classic, OlivierierLalane

Prodigieux. Une claque

Classical Sentinel

Maybe this Chamber Orchestral version will become the new standard.

The terror created by Castelletti at the beginning of the Finale is eye opening...

Amazon (Peter Bond, 9 May 2019)

So what of this new version by Michelle Castelletti, which creates an orchestration that would have been used by the members of the 2nd Viennese School and their brethren? It is a triumph!

That this is a chamber orchestra is surprising, because the range of colours is vast, the musical impact profound and the sheer weight combined with translucency of sonority is enthralling.

The WholeNote

This new chamber orchestra arrangement, by the Maltese conductor and musicologist Michelle Castelletti, is an exceptional accomplishment.

...brilliantly executed by the phenomenal John Storgårds and his Lapland Chamber Orchestra

one of the most exciting and accomplished performances I have heard in my lifetime

JETZ JOURNALE

Es ist ein faszinierendes, vielleicht paradox anmutendes Klangerlebnis geworden, das - weil Castelletti auf den großen Orchesterapparat verzichtet - Mahlers Torso vielleicht eher gerecht wird als Fassungen für großes Orchester, die einen vollendeten Mahler nur vorzutäuschen vermögen.

Classical Musical Sentinel

There are some beautiful dissonance passages. The orchestral balance is transparent, with lots of details to be heard, and I like the touches of the piano/triangle/harp very much. This is certainly not a bare-bone Mahler 10.

The real fun begins with Scherzo II where Castelletti's composition/orchestration becomes more apparent, which I find rich and colourful. The terror created by Castelletti at the beginning of the Finale is eye opening, while the accompanying orchestration for the solo flute takes some getting used to (have to keep reminding myself this is not bare-bone Mahler), and the "love theme" in the second half of the Finale is juxtaposed, revealingly and transparently, with dissonance heard earlier, and it finishes off (glissando again) with a most ecstatic "Almschi" outcry.

Maybe this Chamber Orchestral version will become the new standard. Excellent, life-like sonic detail. Enjoy!

Amazon, Deniz Urval (25 April, 2019)

La Laponie serait-elle cette terre des confins où on parvient au terme du dernier volet de cette trilogie de l'adieu que forment le Chant de la terre, les 9ème et 10ème symphonies ?

HBL

Mahler's musical confession in exquisite chamber orchestra version

Deeply Classical

First I was intrigued. After 5 minutes I was absorbed. By the end I was overwhelmed. By my 2nd listen I could barely imagine it any other way. Bravo to everyone involved. #RecordOfTheWeek

Amazon

It probably comes nearer to the spirit and intention of what Mahler sought to convey better than any other - seriously.

the atmosphere is both giddier and more frightening than in any other performance.

The final moments are not resigned and resolved – they are a cry of endless despair in this version.

magnificent and revelatory reworking

The recording is superb, conducting and playing beyond praise - as is the work of Ms Castelletti!

This version? Not to be missed. Five glorious stars!

★★★★★ Arguably the most telling realisation and performance of this work from a most unexpected source.

Favourite twitter comment so far (and, importantly, from a previously Mahler 10 "sceptic" (if I may call him that) and a person I don't know:

"Ok. @M_Castelletti, I owe you an apology for doubting you. Cooke disappointed me and Carpenter appalled me. But you have given me a Mahler for my times. Though I am flawed and occasionally foul, I owe you a debt of gratitude for a wonderful orchestration. Thank you."

A very touching e-mail which I am quite humbled by – it is from Néstor Castiglione who writes for several art magazines, including Gramophone.

"What I admire about your edition is its honesty and braveness. Far from distancing yourself from the notion of "completion", your work embraces it; you understand that the symphony requires nothing less. I hope that someday you consider working on a full orchestra version that equals the mastery of your present one."