

Dubois: Piano Concerto No 2; Dixtuor; Ouverture de Frithiof – review

Wagner/Les Siècles/Roth

(Musicales Actes Sud)

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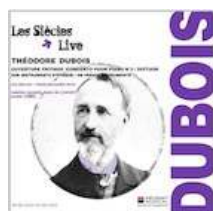


Andrew Clements

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Théodore Dubois
Théodore Dubois:
Piano Concerto,
Frithiof Overture
François-Xavier Roth
Actes Sud Musicales

2012

Théodore Dubois (1837-1924) is the latest composer to be explored by François-Xavier Roth and his period band. Dubois's composing career encompassed one of the most rapidly developing periods in music history (from the high noon of Romanticism to the arrival of modernism), but the three works here show little hint of either. He studied at the Paris Conservatoire with Ambroise Thomas, later becoming the director there, where his own pupils included Paul Dukas and Florent Schmitt, but even a work such as the Dixtuor of 1906 seems firmly rooted in the mid-19th century, with debts to Mendelssohn and Schumann, and hints of later composers such as César Franck and Brahms. None of it is great music, but it's pleasant enough. Roth conducts sympathetically and Vanessa Wagner is a suitably skittish soloist in Dubois's Second Piano Concerto, from 1897; the sleeve scrupulously documents the orchestra and the late 19th-century instruments they play.