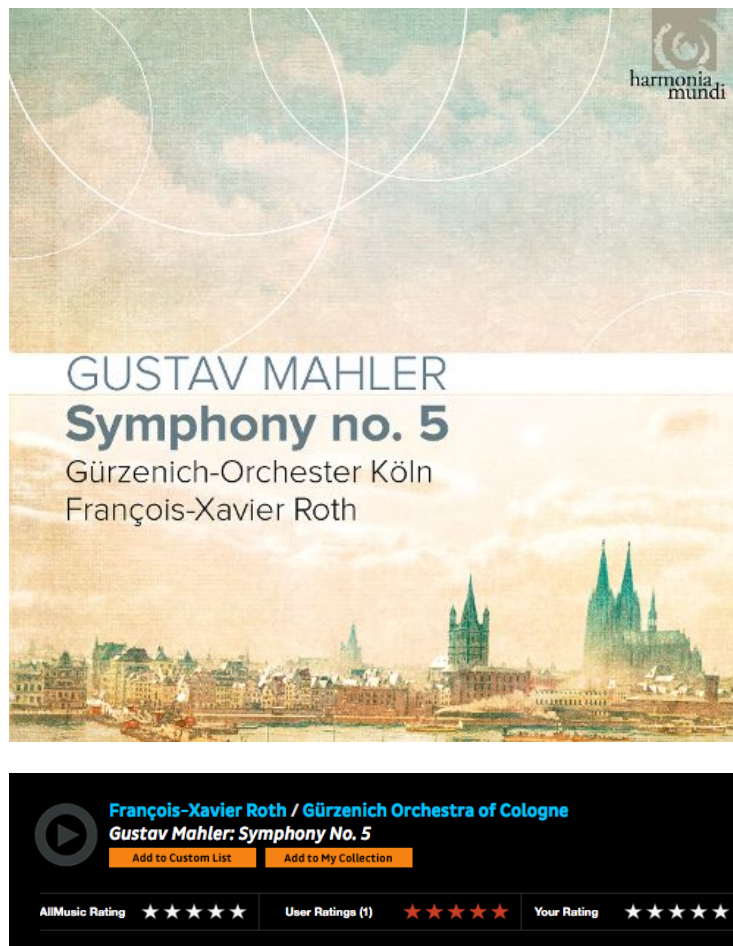


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AllMusic Review by Blair Sanderson

François-Xavier Roth is a leader in the field of historically informed performances, and his recordings with his period-instruments ensemble **Les Siècles** have demonstrated rigorous attention to details, especially in the use of rare authentic instruments. For this 2017 release on Harmonia Mundi, **Roth** delivers a powerful performance of **Gustav Mahler's** Symphony No. 5 in C sharp minor that commemorates the premiere performance on October 18, 1904, when **Mahler** conducted the **Gürzenich Orchestra of Cologne**. This orchestra now has **Roth** as its general music director, and under his care it plays passionately, as if it is channeling the spirit of its past membership, though the instrumentation sounds modern and lacks the qualities of late 19th and early 20th century instruments. For most listeners, this is probably a small matter, because **Roth** draws out clear sonorities and effects that are close enough to satisfy even the most demanding **Mahler** scholar. **Roth's** interpretation is convincing overall, though he takes the famous Adagietto a little slower than **Mahler** intended, as ascertained from recordings by his friend and contemporary **Willem Mengelberg**. Even so, this is an admirable modern performance that does justice to the symphony and the traditions of the **Gürzenich Orchestra**, and it promises great things to come under **Roth's** leadership.