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Energy and ebullience ... Gürzenich-Orchester Köln

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In October 1904 Mahler conducted the [Gürzenich Orchestra Köln](#) in the premiere of his own Symphony No 5. So, 113 years later, it's a loaded piece for the orchestra to record with its newish music director [François-Xavier Roth](#). The result is an exciting and fresh-sounding performance, played on modern instruments but with a raw energy that Roth has brought from his work with his own period-instrument group, [Les Siècles](#). Thanks to the transparency of sound they achieve we get to hear lots of usually hidden detail, and the players relish it; they especially seem to be enjoying the upward surges and precipitous falls of the turbulent second movement, and there are some glorious glissandi from the strings. Is there a sense that the ebullience is making up for a slight lack of gravitas in Roth's interpretation? Perhaps, but the joyous closing moments of the finale are enough to silence such thoughts.

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