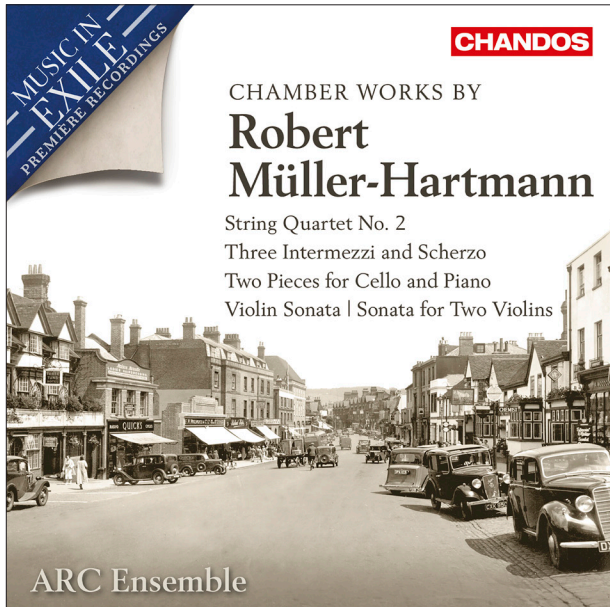


Music in Exile, Vol. 7 Chamber Works by Robert Müller-Hartmann



Robbed of time and opportunity, the German-Jewish composer Robert Müller-Hartmann (1884-1950) has been relegated to little more than a footnote in musical history, better known for his association with Ralph Vaughan Williams than for his own works. In the seventh of its highly praised “Music in Exile” series for Chandos Records, the ARC Ensemble (Artists of the Royal Conservatory) reintroduces the chamber works of a gifted composer who fled from Hamburg to England with the rise of Nazism. His career never recovered, and his music remained forgotten...until now.

“If you haven’t heard of the award-winning Music in Exile series by Toronto’s outstanding ARC Ensemble (Artists of the Royal Conservatory), get streaming immediately. The ensemble’s mission is to “recover and record music suppressed and marginalized under the 20th century’s repressive political regimes.” [...] If there’s any mention of Müller-Hartmann in music history today, it’s only as a footnote to Vaughan Williams’ career. That should change now that the ARC Ensemble has set out to revive his music and make sure his story gets told.”

- Paolo Pietropaolo, CBC Music

“Choose any figure at any historical moment and you can find other lesser known or forgotten figures who stood near, worked with, or were recognized in their time but whose presence has faded from history...the ARC Ensemble’s mission is to fill some of the gaps (or gaping holes) in the historical record in their amazing “Music in Exile” series...this release is a valuable historical document which justly recognizes an important voice and character whose work need not be absent any more.”

- Allan J. Cronin, New Music Buff

“No avant-garde adventurer, Müller-Hartmann looked back to Viennese late-Romanticism for inspiration. Graceful, sentimental gemütlichkeit imbues the CD’s earliest work, the Violin Sonata, Op.5, which premiered in 1923. Similarly, the very Brahmsian Two Pieces for cello and piano – Meditation and Elegy – are warmly, earnestly expressive. Three Intermezzi and Scherzo, Op.22 for piano are affable and appealing, Brahms again invoked in Intermezzo I. Particularly charming is Müller-Hartmann’s Sonata, Op.32 for two violins, four genial, sprightly dance-like movements. While more “serious,” the String Quartet No.2, Op.38 is no less entertaining, a soulful Adagio surrounded by three movements enlivened by repeated tempo-changes and animated rhythms.

Toronto’s ARC Ensemble, under artistic director Simon Wynberg, continues to honour composers suppressed or exiled by dictatorships and war. Wynberg and the ensemble’s core musicians – violinists Erika Raum (in Op.5) and Marie Bérard, violist Steven Dann, cellist Thomas Wiebe and pianist Kevin Ahfat – surely deserved to be honoured as well.”

- Michael Schulman, theWholeNote

“I am conscious of starting to sound like a broken record when it comes to Chandos’s tremendous advocacy for neglected composers, but we do in fact have another winner here... Prior to this disc, almost my only awareness of Robert Müller-Hartmann was his friendship and collaboration with English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams. I knew that the former was also a composer, and had interrupted his career to flee Hitler’s Reich along with other Jewish German refugees. But I never had the opportunity to hear any of his music until now. Vaughan Williams much respected his younger contemporary and even went to hear his music performed on multiple occasions. One wonders what he thought, because if the works offered on this splendid recording are any indication, Müller-Hartmann deserves to be remembered as more than the great Englishman’s trusted assistant.

Robert Müller-Hartmann was a composer with a real voice. A wonderful discovery awaits anyone willing to take a chance on this recording.”

- Ryan Ross, Classical Candor



The Royal Conservatory’s ARC Ensemble is among Canada’s most distinguished cultural ambassadors. Performing a wide range of music, its focus remains the research and recovery of music suppressed and marginalized under the 20th century’s repressive regimes. A growing number of hitherto unknown masterworks are rejoining the repertoire as a result of the Ensemble’s work.

◀ From left to right: Steven Dann (viola), Thomas Wiebe (cello), Kevin Ahfat (piano), Marie Bérard (violin), Joaquín Valdepeñas (clarinet), Erika Raum (violin). Not pictured: Simon Wynberg, Artistic Director