



Paul Dessau: Lanzelot

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music

Paul Dessau (1891-1979) conducted in various German opera houses before, as a Jew, being forced to emigrate in 1933, first to France, then the US where he wrote film scores. Returning in 1948 to the Soviet Occupation Zone, he was loyal to the political principles of East Germany, writing incidental music for Brecht and setting three of his plays as operas.

Lanzelot (Berlin, 1969) presents an allegorical fairytale in which the eponymous hero challenges and eventually defeats the tyrannical monster. Its libretto, a heavy-handed attack on the GDR's capitalist bogeymen (at one point the Dragon is described as half dinosaur, half captain of industry!), has little dramatic nuance but some brilliance in the writing. The score employs substantial forces and parodies many styles. In this 2019 Weimar recording, the three main principals work hard at their vocally punishing roles: Máté Solyom-Nagy as Lanzelot, Oleksandr Pushniak as the Dragon and Emily Hindrichs as Elsa, the woman they fight over. Dominik Beykirch is the secure conductor. There's a German-language libretto, but no synopsis.

Dessau
Lanzelot
Emily Hindrichs, Máté Solyom-Nagy; Opera Chorus of Deutschen Nationaltheater; Staatskapelle Weimar / Dominik Beykirch
Audite 23.448 129:21 mins (2 discs)



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RECORDING ★★★

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