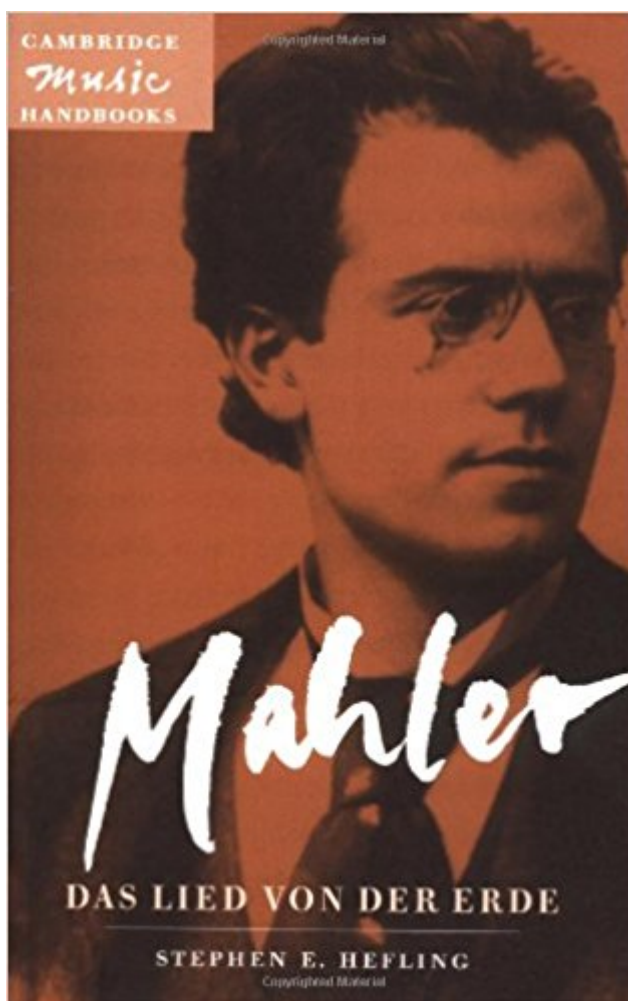


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Mahler: Das Lied Von Der Erde (The Song Of The Earth) (Cambridge Music Handbooks)



Synopsis

Since its premiere Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* (The Song of the Earth) has been widely regarded as his finest masterpiece. It was written in the wake of personal events that shook the foundations of his life in 1907 and, like all his earlier works, it is deeply influenced by the composer's individual and philosophical worldview. Stephen Hefling provides a background to this symphony for voice and orchestra, describes its genesis, summarizes reviews of the premiere, and gives a careful account of all six movements.

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Since its premiÃre Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* (The Song of the Earth) has been widely regarded as his finest masterpiece. It was written in the wake of three catastrophic events that shook the foundations of his life in 1907 and, like all his earlier works, it is deeply influenced by the composer's personal and philosophical worldview. Stephen Hefling provides a background to this symphony for voice and orchestra, describes its genesis, summarises reviews of the premiÃre, and gives a careful account of all six movements.

Judging by the fact that I am the first reader to review this book, I wonder how many people will read this! Anyway, this book is a must for real Mahler aficionados, as it explains Mahler's masterpiece in great detail. The book is divided into 4 sections: 1- Preface on Mahler's work before 1908, date of composition of *Das Lied*. 2- Genesis. 3- Reception. 4- Study of the Music Chapter 4 gives an in-depth

analysis of each of the six songs (or movements), with an emphasis on the first (Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde) and the last, the marvelous "Der Abschied". At the end of the book, the author gives, as an Appendix, his own English version of the poems, which I found better than all the other translations I have come across so far, as they fit the music very closely. All in all, a marvelous book, that will greatly help Mahler enthusiasts to better understand and enjoy the masterpiece that he considered to be his Ninth Symphony, but was afraid to publish as such.

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