

Dubois, Leon - 3 Oktets for 8 Horns

Leon Dubois
(1859 - 1935)

3 Octets for 8 Horns

- firstprint -

Léon Du Bois (Dubois), (*Brussels 9/1/1859, † Boitsfort [Bosvoorde] 19/11/1935) was a composer, organ player and conductor. He studied the organ with Alphonse Maily and composition with Joseph Dupont. The years after his graduation, he worked as a conductor and organist. In 1885 he obtained the grand prix de Rome with his cantata "Au Bois des Elphes". Seasonal contracts followed, as musical director of the opera houses in Nantes (1889), Brussels (1890, 1892-1897) and Liège (1891). In 1899 he was appointed director of the City Music School in Leuven (Louvain), a position he left in 1912 when he became director of the Brussels Conservatoire. As a composer, he wrote mainly stage works, works for the organ and some instrumental pieces. These three octets for eight horns are dedicated to "son ami Louis Merck". The hornist Louis-Henri Merck (1831 - 1900) worked as horn teacher in the Conservatoire in Brussels as of 1862. Also, the presence of 8 hornplayers in the Belgian Guides band at the time might have been a source of inspiration for the writing of this work. The discovery of the sound of 8 horns (or 4 horns and 4 Wagner tubas) by some German composers in the 1880s has certainly influenced Dubois. The three movements are not a coherent composition but were composed one after each other. The 1st movement was made presumably at 1885. The 2nd was completed on May 25th, 1888 and performed in the Conservatoire in Brussels on November 11th, 1888. The 3rd movement has got the remark "ends on June 5th, 1894".

Jeroen Billiet has a substantial share at this edition. His work, "200 Years of Belgian Horn School", Dissertation for the Approval of a Laureate Programme at the Orpheus Institute Ghent, Belgium 2008, is a milestone about the Belgian horn story. You go far in greater detail in this thesis also into the work of Dubois and the environment. Please, you go, to its web page www.corecole.be one also can there for sale purchase his work.

