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Gál Violin Concerto op 39, Violin Concertino op 52, Triptych op 100
Annette Barbara Vogel, violin
Northern Sinfonia/Kenneth Woods

Here's a real treat: a pair of long-list violin concertos from that most fecund decade for the medium, the 1930's. Hans Gál (1890-1987) was a Viennese-Jewish composer who managed to flee his homeland for the UK at the time of the Anschluss and spent the rest of his life as a musicologist in Edinburgh. The songful Violin Concerto was written in 1932 when he was at the height of his fame as a composer in Austro-Germany and musically falls very much within the central European tradition with hints of Bartok, Mahler and neo-Classical Strauss. The Concertino (with string orchestra) was written in London in 1939, but its lyrical ease belies the times and his precarious circumstances. German violinist, Annette-Barbara Vogel, who has already recorded Gál's chamber music for Avie gives committed performances of both pieces and revels in the honesty of this music. She brings a winning presence to her tone and delivery, and maintains a perceptively fluid relationship with the accompanying forces of the Northern Sinfonia.

The symphonic-scale Triptych for orchestra dates from 1970, but is written in a style that seems unchanged from the time of Mahler and Korngold, whose music the pieces resemble at times. The Sage Gateshead recording is warm and supportive.

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