

## **DANIEL DE LANGE**

Dr David C F Wright

Here is a composer who was dapper. He had a presence. Even towards the end of his life he was elegant, tall, gaunt with white hair with a long goatee and immaculately dressed. He was a very gifted teacher and well respected for his skill among Dutch musicians. With others in 1894 he founded the Amsterdam Conservatory and became the director a year later. He appointed Bernard Zweers as head of teaching and composition. Years earlier, in 1875, he founded the Leiden Music Choir enabling contemporary Dutch choral music to be performed. In 1888 the Concertgebouw called upon Lange and his choir to perform with the orchestra.

Daniel was born in Rotterdam on 11 July 1841 into a respected musical and influential family. His father, Samuel (1811-1884), was an organist, carillonneur and music teacher. Daniel's brother, Samuel junior (1840-1911), was to become a fine pianist and organist. They were both taught music at home by their father and even their bedroom walls were covered with musical notation. Daniel studied the cello with Servais and Ganz in Belgium. He studied composition with Verhulst. He travelled extensively in Europe from 1858 onwards. He taught at the music school at Lwow from 1860-1863. From 1864 to 1870 he worked in Paris where he was organist at the Protestant church at Montroque and he had cordial dealings with Berlioz, Bizet and Massenet to whom he dedicated his Symphony no. 1 in C minor, Opus 4, which dates from 1868. It was on his return to the Netherlands at the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war where he taught at the Amsterdam Music School later known as the Conservatory becoming its director from 1895 to 1913. He also pursued his interest in choirs.

He was a successful administrator. He entered the service of the Amsterdam daily paper, News of the Day, and became Holland's most respected critic; he was the first chairman of the Dutch Association of Music History in 1881 as well as being a founder of the Amsterdam Conservatory.

He resigned that post in 1913 and left for the United States of America. By now he was immersed in the teachings of the Theosophy Movement and taught at an Institution run by the Theosophic Movement at the Isis Conservatory of Music in Point Loma, California where he died on 31 January 1918.

If Lange was subject to any criticism it was that his music was Germanic and therefore contrary to the prevailing styles in Holland at the time.

Among his compositions are an opera Des val van Kuilenberg, incidental music for Victor Hugo's Hernani, a Mass, a Requiem, two symphonies and a Cello Concerto

---

Copyright David C F Wright 1971. This article or any part of it, however small, must not be copied, downloaded or stored in any mechanical or retrieval system without the prior written consent of the author. Failure to comply is illegal and in breach of International Copyright Law and will render any offender liable to action at law.