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Johannes Brahms.

Songs for Trombones transcribed for four trombones by David Mathie. Upper Nyack, NY: Alessi Publications, 2007. Score and parts. www.alessipublications.com

This collection of songs is quite similar in scope to the Alessi Publications/Mathie transcriptions of the Schubert *Songs for Trombones Vol.1*. It is a seven-song collection that contains transcriptions of works originally set for both female and male choruses. All these songs are set in the original keys. Just as in the transcription of the Schubert *Songs* there is a preface that clearly differentiates Dr. Mathie's edits from Brahms' original markings, citing authors of original vocal text, and supplying English translations for both song titles and German performance instructions, metronome markings, and so forth. As in the Schubert Songs Dr. Mathie marks the fourth part for "bass trombone" although a tenor-bass trombone will suffice for all technical needs and range considerations, the choice of bass trombone for tone color is appropriate. Unfortunately Dr. Mathie includes no alternate position markings in these parts as he did in the Schubert *Songs*. Overall range is modest, E-flat-b-flat¹.

Although playable, performers encounter some technical challenges. For example, the parts are quite active in *Freiwillige her!* and players might encounter some initial vertical alignment issues, easily overcome with rehearsal. Although Dr. Mathie scores this for quartet or choir, it seems to me that these songs will sound better with more forces. In fact, there is one song in the collection, *Ich schwing mein Horn ins Jammertal*, in which Dr. Mathie requests staggered breathing-the desired effect will undoubtedly work best with at least doubled parts. These are fine additions to the literature ; they put together easily and play well. Audiences enjoy them. They are, just like the Schubert *Songs*, appropriate for intermediate-level performers to professional ensembles. You will be glad these are in your library.

-Michael Davidson
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