



Ludwig van Beethoven: Symphony No. 4 & No. 5

aud 95.493



[American Record Guide](#) 6/2003 (Haldeman - 2003.11.01)



Around the time this Symphony 4 was recorded in October 1979, I saw this same ensemble strict unison bowing and all, deliver a very robust Dvorak 8. I was struck by the discipline and intensity of the musicians, but I don't recall the unrelenting sobriety that is so dominant here. I share my affection for Szell's Cleveland recording of Beethoven 4 with my colleague Steven Richter, and if that should supply a touchstone, it also offers an antidote in the Cleveland's joyousness, rhythmic freedom, and unfailing beauty. By comparison, Kubelik and his Bavarians are more like portly gentlemen shipping wine and thinking too hard. This is not the Fourth I want.

If you would like to know how this conductor and orchestra played Symphony 5 on November 20, 1969, the sound of the remastering is good. The performance is straightforward, nicely played, somewhat wearisome and hence outclassed. Along with Reiner's terrific RCA, Carlos Kleiber on DG makes a first choice for whiplash energy, while I'd direct those preferring an emphasis on weight and grandeur to the recent Barenboim on Teldec.

CD Compact n°183 (enero 2005) (Jesús Dini - 2005.01.01)

Beethoven

Beethoven

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Classica juin 2003 (Stéphane Friédérich - 2003.06.01)



Ces Symphonies sont extraites de deux concerts datant respectivement de 1979 et...

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Crescendo 03/2003 (Tom Reinhold - 2003.03.01)



Das Label Audite hat die verdienstvolle Aufgabe übernommen, den großen...

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Diapason juin 2003 (J.-Ch. H. - 2003.06.01)



Kubelik et Beethoven se sont au moins rencontrés pour une «Missa solemnis» inoubliable (Orfeo) et pour des symphonies chez DG, gravées avec des orchestres différents le Philharmonique d'Israël pour la 4e et le Symphonique de Boston pour la 5e. En comparaison, ces concerts munichois déçoivent. L'Adagio qui ouvre la 4e sonne plus attentiste que mystérieux, le finale jamais ébroué compte les battements du métronome. Un orchestre atone, dont Kubelik ne laisse émerger aucun détail des bois ou des cuivres qui puisse pimenter le discours, ennuie; il lasse encore plus dans une 5e de bois, où à force de vouloir éviter toute grandiloquence, l'oeuvre se délite jusque dans un Allegro conclusif asséné à la prussienne, tenu, métrique, sans projection, avec ça et là quelques concessions au changement de tempo qui rendent le tout plus incohérent encore.

Gramophone October 2003 (Rob Cowan - 2003.10.01)



Kubelik takes the Stage

Some years ago I was involved in a discussion concerning Wilhelm Furtwängler's potential artistic heir. Who might he be? There was no lack of candidates. My suggestion, for the following reasons, was Rafael Kubelik. Both were composers; both preferred an old-fashioned orchestral layout (violins divided, etc) and achieved weight of sonority by allowing a chord to fall naturally rather than slamming it shut. Both favoured flexibility within the bar, an often orgiastic excitability and, most important in this particular context, an overall preference for live performance over recording.

For example, compare Kubelik's 1975 DG studio recording of Beethoven's Fourth Symphony with the Israel Philharmonic with the live Bavarian RSO Audite version of four years later. The IPO account is taut and incisive, with an explosive fortissimo just before the coda (at 5'52", i.e. bar 312) that sounds as if it has

been aided from the control desk. Turn then to the BRSO version, the lead-up at around 4'25" to that same passage (here sounding wholly natural), so much more gripping, where second fiddles, violas and cellos thrust their responses to tremolando first fiddles. The energy level is still laudably high but the sense of intense engagement is almost palpable. Again, with the Boston recording of the Fifth, handsome and well played as it undoubtedly is (and with the finale's repeat intact, which isn't the case on Audite), there is little comparison with the freer, airier and more responsive live relay. I'm thinking especially the slow movement, so humble and expressive, almost hymn-like in places – for example, the Bachian string counterpoint from 4'27". Also, the Boston recording places first and second violins on the left: the Audite option has them divided, as per Kubelik's preferred norm.

Audite's Tchaikovsky coupling is an out-and-out winner. Kubelik made two studio recordings of the Fourth Symphony (with the Chicago SO and Vienna PO), both set around a lyrical axis, but this live version has a unique emotive impetuosity, especially in the development section of the first movement. The Andantino relates a burning nostalgia without exaggeration, whereas the scherzo – taken at a real lick – becomes a quiet choir of balalaikas. The April 1969 performance of the Violin Concerto was also Pinchas Zukerman's German début and aside from Kubelik's facilitating responsiveness, there's the warmth and immediacy of the youthful Zukerman's tone and the precision of his bowing. Both performances confirm Kubelik as among the most sympathetic of Tchaikovsky conductors, a genuine listener who relates what he hears, not what he wants to confess through the music.

Much the same might be said of Kubelik's Mahler, whether for DG or the various live alternatives currently appearing on Audite. In the case of 'Das Lied von der Erde' there is no DG predecessor, but even if there was, I doubt that it would surpass the live relay of February 1970 with Waldemar Kmentt and Dame Janet Baker, so dashing, pliant and deeply felt, whether in the subtly traced clarinet counterpoint near the start of 'Von der Jugend' or the way Baker re-emerges after the funereal processional in 'Der Abschied', as if altered forever by a profound visitation.

klassik.com 05.09.2003 (Andrea Hampe - 2003.09.05)
source: <http://magazin.klassik.com/reviews/revie...>

Erlebnismusik als laues Schicksalslüftchen



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[Musica](#) N° 147 - ottobre 2003 (Alessandro Zignani - 2003.10.01)



Ecco: dire che questo rilievo estetico, con Kubelik, diventa una chiave di lettura sull'intera crisi della Sinfonia classica, equivale a definire la sua Quinta monacense uno dei vertici dell'intera discografia beethoveniana.

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Pizzicato 5.2003 (Steff - 2003.05.01)



Blutarmer Beethoven mit Kubelik

Diese beiden Beethoven-Symphonien weisen Rafael Kubelik als Traditionalisten aus, der es zwar versteht, die Werke makellos abspulen zu lassen, dabei aber auch vergisst, sie zum Leben zu erwecken. An guten bis hervorragenden Beethoven-Einspielungen herrscht derzeit wirklich kein Mangel und man braucht nicht auf Furtwängler, Toscanini oder Karajan zurückzugreifen, um diese Sinfonien als routinierte Konzertmitschnitte ohne jeglichen Repertoirewert zu entlarven.

Scherzo N° 183, Enero 2005 (Jesús Dini - 2005.01.01)



Sendas grabaciones en vivo, históricas, datadas en Bonn (Beethovensaal 1979)...

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WDR 3 06.03.2003 (Thomas Jakobi - 2003.03.06)



Eine neue CD mit Beethoven-Sinfonien – da stellt sich natürlich gleich die...

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www.ClassicsToday.com 01.09.2003 (David Hurwitz - 2003.09.01)



You always can count on Rafael Kubelik to deliver performances that are...

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