



## L. v. Beethoven: Symphony No. 2 & No. 6 ('Pastorale')

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Rafael Kubelik's Beethoven is known primarily through his 1970s Deutsche Grammophon cycle (only Nos. 4-9 are generally available on CD) which was unique for its employment of nine different orchestras. Also unique was Kubelik's emphasis on the music's more lyrical qualities--which is an attribute of these live Munich performances from 1967 and 1971 as well. But there's also plenty of bite to be found in these readings, as Kubelik employs relatively swift tempos and sharp-edged rhythms (though not the bracing type found in today's "authentic"-styled renditions) in Symphony No. 2's outer movements, and generates wonderfully angry energy in the Pastorale's "Storm" movement. The rest of No. 6 abounds in lush tonal beauty--the "Arrival in the Country" and "Scene by the Brook" are simply gorgeous (as they later would be in Kubelik's even finer Orchestre de Paris recording), while the finale achieves the sunny radiance Beethoven must have imagined, thanks in part to the Bavarian Radio Symphony's enthusiastic and committed playing. Both live recordings (No. 2 was taped in Munich, No. 6 in Paris) offer solid presence and natural balances if not the dynamic range and bloom of the DG sessions. In sum, a fine offering for Kubelik fans.