Karol Szymanowski - Symphonies 2 & 3 (Dorati) [1990]

Symphony no.3 *1-Moderato assai 2-Vivace scherzando 3-Largo* Symphony no.2 *4-Allegro moderato grzioso 5-Tema-Variazione-Fuga*
Bartok: two pictures
6- In full flower 7- Village dance
Ryszard Karczykowski - tenor Detroit Symphony Orchestra Antal Dorati – conductor

Antal Doráti (1906 - 1988) was a Hungarian-born conductor and composer who became a naturalized American citizen in 1947. For many years his recordings were considered definitive, especially his performances and recordings of the works of Béla Bartók who was the composer's piano teacher. Returning to this recording made with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra reminds us of just how fine an interpreter of the lesser known works of the repertoire he was. In this very glorious recording of the Szymanowski Symphony No. 3 'The Song of the Night' he conducts not only the orchestra but also the Kenneth Jewell Chorale and the very distinguished (but almost unknown) tenor Ryszard Karczykowski whose rich and dramatic voice lends a sense of rapture to the symphony. This recording is superb and despite the fact that it dates back to 1980 the sound is elegant (it was recorded in the orchestra's United Artist's Auditorium in Detroit). Dorati lingers over the fluid passages of this work, bringing out the rich sonorities. There is touch of the choral writing heard in Schoenberg's 'Gurrelieder' and the Kenneth Jewell Chorale enunciates the Polish text well.

The same is true for the performance of the Symphony No. 2, a work that is so lush and lovely that it is difficult to understand why it is not a part of the repertoire of all symphony orchestras. It is only two movements and is under 30 minutes long, but what the composer did with the themes and variations is very secure and mature writing.

Dorati's identification with Bartók's music is honored here by a performance of 'Two Pictures'

recorded in 1978. The first of these 'Pictures' is related to the glorious music of Bartók's opera, 'Bluebeard's Castle' - 'in full flower' evoking the composer's evocation of the miracles of nature and the second 'Picture' is Bartók at his finest with folk rhythms and dance music. Dorati leads very beautifully paced performances of these and his orchestra responds with a sound that is as lush as any orchestra's sound of that period! This is a recording to treasure. ---Grady Harp, amazon.com

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