## Schnittke – Symphony No.2 ‘St. Florian’ (Segerstam) [1995]

*1. I. Rezitando (Kyrie)*
*2. II. Maestoso (Gloria)* play
*3. III. Moderato (Vredo)*
*4. IV. Pesante (Crucifixus)*
*5. [IV.] Coda: Agitato (Et Resurrexit)-Maestoso* play
*6. Intro To V. Andante (Sanctus)*
*7. V. Andante*
*8. VI. Andante (Agnus Dei)*

Mikael Bellini (Countertenor),
Göran Eliasson (Tenor),
Malena Ernman (Alto),
Torkel Borelius (Bass)
Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra
Leif Segerstam – conductor

Russian composer Alfred Schnittke wrote his Symphony No. 2, subtitled "St. Florian" and "Invisible Mass" in 1979. It is a choral symphony, written for contralto, countertenor, tenor and bass, plus chorus and orchestra. The symphony was written in homage to Anton Bruckner.

In 1977, Schnittke visited the West as a harpsichordist with the Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra. During this trip, he visited St. Florian's Monastery near Linz, where Bruckner played the organ and is buried. Ivashkin writes, "Entering the cloister in the twilight [Schnittke] heard the sound of monks singing an evening 'invisible' mass. This made a vivid impression on him. Two years later when Gennady Rozhdestvensky commissioned a work from Schnittke for the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the composer was to write his Second Symphony or Invisible Mass."

Compared to the extroverted polystylism of the First Symphony, the Second displays a more "thoroughgoing absorption of [its] diverse musical sources." The symphony works on two levels almost simultaneously. While soloists and a choir perform the mass, set to chorales taken from the Gradual, the orchestra provides a running commentary that sometimes follows a particular chorale but more often is "rather free and extensive" in style. "Yet musically almost all these sections blend the choral tune and subsequent extensive orchestral 'commentary.' The work becomes what Schnittke called an "Invisible Mass," something Alexander Ivashkin termed "a symphony against a chorale backdrop." -- BIS - records

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