Franz Schubert - Symphonies Nos 8 & 9 (1993)

Symphony No. 8 in B minor, D 759 'Unfinished' *1. Allegro moderato* *2. Andante con moto*
Symphony No. 9 in C major, D 944 'The Great' *1. Andante - Allegro ma non troppo — Piu Moto* *2. Andante con moto* *3. Scherzo. Allegro vivace Trio* *4. Finale. Allegro vivace - Allegro vivace*
Staatskapelle Dresden Giuseppe Sinopoli, conductor

Sinopoli’s new recording of the Unfinished Symphony makes far more sense than his funereal 1983 version with the Philharmonia. It’s actually over four minutes quicker, and he still includes the first movement repeat. I’m not sure about the huge slowing up for the lyrical second subject, but otherwise this reading is alert and dramatic. Sinopoli finds just the right speed for the flowing Andante con moto, and makes the most of its passionate outbursts. --- Stephen Maddock, BBC Music Magazine

The first movement is a healthy and inspiriting journey's beginning (unusually, Sinopoli starts to accelerate half way through the introductory Andante to arrive at his tempo for the first movement's Allegro). I rather like the way, in the second movement, he drops the pace for the return of the first theme after the 'warning bell' 54 Gramophone October 1993 transition, and gives the marching a heavier burden. MI cares vanish in the Scherzo; leisurely but lively enough, with good shaping of its long paragraphs, and the orchestra's woodwind providing a feast of colour in the Trio. There are hints, in the finale, that DG's preference for a lot of the Dresden Lukaskirche's reverberation in the mix is not ideal for this movement's active textures, though the blurring of the ff ostinato that concludes the first subject (from bar 157, 1'34") is an odd lapse in Sinopoli's otherwise thorough engagement with the movement's rhythms.--

Gramophone, arkivmusic.com

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