

DVOŘÁK

SYMPHONY NO. 8



JANÁČEK

SYMPHONIC SUITE FROM *JENŮFA*

fresh!

R
REFERENCE
RECORDINGS.



PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
MANFRED HONECK, MUSIC DIRECTOR



For me, the Dvořák Symphony No. 8 is a special jewel. Whereas the symphonies that precede and the Symphony No. 9 that comes after clearly express influences from German and American culture, the Symphony No. 8 can be seen as the most Czech of all of the Dvořák symphonies. It is purely Czech-romantic in style and concept. Here, Dvořák is liberated from the Germanic models and seems completely at home in his native Czech roots.

It is no doubt that Dvořák's move to the country house in Vysoka, where he sowed vegetables in his own garden and kept animals, greatly influenced him at this time. "I feel so happy here" (in Vysoka) Dvořák remarked and thus a very deep love of nature shines through in the symphony. It was not unusual, however, for composers during this time to reference elements of nature in their compositions. Both Anton Bruckner and Gustav Mahler use sounds and impressions of nature, for example, the cuckoo in Mahler's 1st Symphony, which was incidentally composed nearly at the same time as Dvořák Symphony No. 8. And just as Mahler thought of his 1st Symphony as a symphonic poem,

Dvořák likewise spoke about the conversion from a traditional symphony to a symphonic tone poem. His Symphony No. 8 effectively captures the fine atmosphere of nature in its wonderful presentation of musical pictures that can truly be seen as the strength of the symphony.

Throughout, the strings and winds have balanced roles. Among others, in many instances it is the flute that is featured. In the opening passage of the first movement, after the broad, melancholy sound of the introduction, the flute immediately emerges. When hearing the sound of the flute, who cannot think of birds that are singing? Therefore, for me, it is extremely important that this flute entrance is played quite flexibly. It should not be played simply as written or too square, but rather, how a bird might sing. The same holds true for the second movement, where the entrance of the woodwinds (flute and oboe) again imitates the alluring call of a bird. I like this passage to have rubato and freedom.

Czech history and tradition are important to consider throughout this symphony. In the opening of the second movement,

it is striking how Dvořák switches so quickly between the big, warm and full sound of the beginning passage to the mood of a funeral march. Could Dvořák possibly have had in mind the battle in the nearby town of Austerlitz against Napoleon to whom Beethoven had originally dedicated his Third Symphony which also depicts a funeral march? And here, two bars later, Dvořák asks for a triple pianissimo, which gives the feeling that this battle happened many years ago and is somehow far away. These quick and extreme contrasts in mood and atmosphere also point to the idea that the music is influenced by the world of Czech fairytales, blending the elements of bright and dark together seamlessly.

When looking at the score, there are many details that are marked quite clearly, but also other aspects that must be considered in the sense of the Czech tradition. The Slavic march in the middle of the first movement is notated with accents, leaving no doubt that it should be played in a very spirited and vivacious style. The third movement, on the other hand, is not necessarily a happy, joyful or cheerful waltz. Rather, it is composed in the style of a Dumka. Here, most of the staccato marks are also written

with a legato bow stroke above, indicating Dvořák's desire to have the staccato notes played a bit longer and more singing. Together, this gives the sense of a melancholy atmosphere along with the dancing character.

I also consider carefully the typical Czech manner of playing which, for me, is deeply embedded in the score. During the time that this symphony was composed, the Czech musicians were quite famous for their style of playing. They would not merely execute the notes, but would also have a little bit of fun in the music and sometimes even incorporate some extra elements. It was definitely expected that the musicians would use some tasteful portamenti (slides from one note to the next). Therefore, you will hear in the third movement (in the Dumka) a few portamenti which may have very well been played during Dvořák's time. Another example is the coda of the third movement which resembles very closely a Czech polka and here, I ask for a quick glissando in the first violin part to reflect the fresh and rustic sound of the countryside. The effect is very simple, but funny, and captures the boisterous and high-spirited manner that is so characteristic of the Czech style.

Similarly, it was important for me to bring back the culture of rubato playing, a culture that is somewhat forgotten today. Growing out of the Czech and Slavic dance tradition, a surprise may be the tempo change in the coda of the first movement. Here, I take freedom with the tempo to become quicker, as nearly every fast Slavic dance speeds up in the end in the style of a stretta. Dvořák achieves the same effect in the last movement. I ask that this fourth movement polka be played more in the style of a Slavic polka rather than an Austrian polka. In the section where the violas imitate the snare drum, I have the violas play *col legno* so as to achieve a percussive effect. Another important detail is the heavy horn trills of the fourth movement which I bring into the foreground of the balance. These trills are extremely colorful and I emphasize them to highlight the outlandish and almost wild sound, allowing their boisterous nature and the exotic Slavic idiom to shine. Together, these elements all combine to add a certain lively and original quality, demonstrating the need for incredible precision and virtuosity, but also an enormous feeling for colors.



I am pleased to pair the Dvořák Symphony No. 8 with my own original version of the Janáček Symphonic Suite from *Jenůfa* which was arranged by the Czech composer Tomáš Ille. For me, it was particularly important to present the most significant moments of the opera story in this suite. This includes the emotions of *Jenůfa*, the sadness of losing a child, drama and storminess (weather), and also the conciliatory ending. I also used three dances from the opera *Jenůfa* that are all very typical of the Czech style. Throughout, the xylophone plays a special role and serves as a connecting element between the various sections.

Both Dvořák and Janáček are composers who wrote not simply beautiful music, but music with an incredible story behind it that is very much influenced by Czech thinking and the way that Czech musicians played at the time. Although the music is lively and light in a certain manner of speaking, I hope that this interpretation inspires listeners to uncover the complete joy in the music that is so deeply connected with the Czech tradition.

—MANFRED HONECK



MANFRED HONECK has served as Music Director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra since the 2008-2009 season. After two extensions, his contract now runs until the end of the 2019-2020 season. To great acclaim, Manfred Honeck and his orchestra perform regularly for European audiences. Since 2010, annual tour performances have led them to numerous European music capitals and major music festivals, amongst them Rheingau Musik Festival, Schleswig–Holstein Musik Festival, Beethovenfest Bonn, Musikfest

Berlin, Grafenegg Festival, Lucerne Festival and the BBC Proms. The 2012 tour focused on a week-long residency at the Vienna Musikverein. In August and September 2013, concerts took place in Grafenegg, Berlin, Bucharest, Paris, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Lucerne and Bonn.

Several recordings, amongst them Mahler's Symphony No. 4, which won a 2012 International Classical Music Award, are available on Japanese label Exton. Manfred Honeck's successful work with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra is now captured by Reference Recordings. The first SACD—of Strauss tone poems—was released in fall 2013 and received rave reviews. Several additional recordings are completed and it is expected that two releases will be issued per year.

From 2007 to 2011, Manfred Honeck was Music Director of the Staatsoper Stuttgart where he conducted premieres including Berlioz's *Les Troyens*, Mozart's *Idomeneo*, Verdi's

Aida, Richard Strauss's *Rosenkavalier*, Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites* and Wagner's *Lohengrin* and *Parsifal*, as well as numerous symphonic concerts. His operatic guest appearances include Semperoper Dresden, Komische Oper Berlin, Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels, Royal Opera of Copenhagen, the White Nights Festival in St. Petersburg and the Salzburg Festival.

Born in Austria, Manfred Honeck received his musical training at the Academy of Music in Vienna. Many years of experience as a member of the Vienna Philharmonic and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra and at the helm of the Vienna Jeunesse Orchestra have given his conducting a distinctive stamp.

He began his career as assistant to Claudio Abbado in Vienna. Subsequently, he was engaged by the Zurich Opera House, where he was bestowed the prestigious European Conductor's Award in 1993. Other early stations of his career include Leipzig, where he was one of three main conductors of the MDR Symphony Orchestra and Oslo, where he assumed the post of Music Director at the Norwegian National Opera on short notice for a year and, following a highly successful tour of Europe, was engaged as Principal Guest Conductor of the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra for several years. From 2000 to 2006 he was Music Director of the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra in Stockholm and, from 2008 to 2011, Principal Guest Conductor of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, a position he has resumed for another three years at the beginning of the 2013/2014 season.

As a guest conductor Manfred Honeck has worked with leading international orchestras such as the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Staatskapelle Dresden, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris,

Accademia di Santa Cecilia Rome and the Vienna Philharmonic. Orchestras he conducted in the United States include New York Philharmonic, The Cleveland Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic and Boston Symphony Orchestra. He is also a regular guest at the Verbier Festival. In February 2013 he gave his successful debut with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, the direct result of which was a CD recording together with Anne-Sophie Mutter (works of Dvořák) for DG. His debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra followed in November 2013. Moreover, the current season sees him return to Bamberg, New York, Los Angeles, Boston and Rome, amongst others.

In 2010, Manfred Honeck received an honorary doctorate from St. Vincent College in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. Moreover, he has been Artistic Director of the “International Concerts Wolfegg” in Germany for more than fifteen years.



THE PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

For more than 116 years, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra has been an essential part of Pittsburgh's cultural landscape. The Pittsburgh Symphony, known for its artistic excellence, is credited with a rich history of the world's finest conductors and musicians, and a strong commitment to the Pittsburgh region and its citizens. This tradition was furthered in fall 2008, when Austrian conductor Manfred Honeck became music director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

With a long and distinguished history of touring both domestically and overseas since 1900, the Pittsburgh Symphony continues to be critically acclaimed as one of the world's greatest orchestras. It has completed more than 36 international tours, including 20 European tours, eight trips to the Far East, and two to South America. The Pittsburgh Symphony was the first American orchestra to perform at the Vatican in January 2004 for the late Pope John Paul II, as part of the Pontiff's Silver Jubilee celebration.

The Pittsburgh Symphony has a long and illustrious history in the areas of recording and radio concerts. As early as 1936, the Pittsburgh Symphony broadcast coast-to-coast, receiving increased national attention in 1982 through network radio broadcasts on Public Radio International. The PRI series is produced by Classical WQED-FM 89.3 in Pittsburgh and is made possible by the musicians of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

**THE PITTSBURGH
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Manfred Honeck

ENDOWED BY THE
VIRA I. HEINZ ENDOWMENT

**VICTOR DE SABATA
GUEST CONDUCTOR CHAIR**

Gianandrea Noseda

RESIDENT CONDUCTOR

Lawrence Loh

VIRGINIA KAUFMAN CHAIR

RESIDENT CONDUCTOR

Fawzi Haimor

FIRST VIOLIN

Noah Bendix-Balgley

RACHEL MELLON WALTON
CONCERTMASTER CHAIR

Mark Huggins

ASSOCIATE CONCERTMASTER
BEVERLYNN & STEVEN ELLIOTT CHAIR

Huei-Sheng Kao

ASSISTANT CONCERTMASTER

Hong-Guang Jia

ASSISTANT CONCERTMASTER

Jeremy Black
Ellen Chen-Livingston

Irene Cheng

Sarah Clendenning

Alison Peters Fujito

David Gillis

SELMA WIENER
BERKMAN MEMORIAL CHAIR

Jennifer Orchard

RON & DOROTHY CHUTZ CHAIR

Susanne Park

Christopher Wu

NANCY & JEFFERY LEININGER CHAIR

Shanshan Yao ★

THE ESTATE OF OLGA T. GAZALIE

Kristina Yoder

SECOND VIOLIN

Jennifer Ross ❁

G. CHRISTIAN LANTZSCH
& DUQUESNE LIGHT COMPANY CHAIR

Louis Lev ❁

THE MORRISON FAMILY CHAIR

Dennis O'Boyle ●

Laura Motchalov

WILLIAM & SARAH GALBRAITH CHAIR

Eva Burmeister

Carolyn Edwards

Andrew Fuller

Lorien Benet Hart

Claudia Mahave

Peter Snitkovsky
Albert Tan
Rui-Tong Wang

VIOLA

Randolph Kelly ❄️
CYNTHIA S. CALHOUN CHAIR

Tatjana Mead Chamis *

Joen Vasquez ●
Marylène Gingras-Roy
Penny Anderson Brill

Cynthia Busch
Erina Laraby-Goldwasser

Paul Silver
MR. & MRS.
WILLARD J. TILLOTSON JR. CHAIR

Stephanie Tretick
Meng Wang
Andrew Wickesberg

CELLO

Anne Martindale Williams ❄️
PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY
ASSOCIATION CHAIR

David Premo *
DONALD I. & JANET MORITZ AND
EQUITABLE RESOURCES, INC. CHAIR

Adam Liu ●
GEORGE & EILEEN DORMAN CHAIR

Mikhail Istomin
Gail Czajkowski
Michael De Bruyn
Irvin Kauffman ★
Michael Lipman

JANE & RAE BURTON CHAIR

Hampton Mallory
Lauren Scott Mallory
MR. & MRS. MARTIN G. MCGUINN CHAIR
Charlie Powers

BASS

Jeffrey Turner ❄️
TOM & DONA HOTOPP CHAIR

Donald H. Evans Jr. *

Betsy Heston ●
UNITED STATES STEEL
CORPORATION CHAIR

Jeffrey Grubbs
Peter Guild
Micah Howard
STEPHEN & KIMBERLY KEEN CHAIR

John Moore
Aaron White

HARP

Gretchen Van Hoesen ❄️
VIRGINIA CAMPBELL CHAIR

FLUTE

Lorna McGhee ❄️

JACKMAN PFOUTS FLUTE CHAIR

Damian Bursill-Hall ❄️

Jennifer Ann Steele

HILDA M. WILLIS FOUNDATION CHAIR

PICCOLO

Rhian Kenny ❄️

FRANK & LOTI GAFFNEY CHAIR

OBOE

Cynthia Koledo

DeAlmeida ❄️

DR. WILLIAM LARIMER

MELLON JR. CHAIR

Scott Bell

DR. & MRS. WILLIAM E.

RINEHART CHAIR

ENGLISH HORN

Harold Smoliar ❄️

JOHANNES & MONA L. COETZEE

MEMORIAL CHAIR

CLARINET

Michael Rusinek ❄️

MR. & MRS. AARON SILBERMAN CHAIR

Thomas Thompson ❄️

Ron Samuels

E-FLAT CLARINET

Thomas Thompson

BASSOON

Nancy Goeres ❄️

MR. & MRS. WILLIAM GENGE

AND MR. & MRS. JAMES E. LEE CHAIR

David Sogg ❄️

Philip A. Pandolfi

CONTRABASSOON

James Rodgers ❄️

HORN

William Caballero ❄️

ANONYMOUS DONOR CHAIR

Stephen Kostyniak ❄️

Zachary Smith ●

THOMAS H. & FRANCES M.

WITMER CHAIR

Robert Lauver

IRVING (BUDDY) WECHSLER CHAIR

Ronald Schneider

MICHAEL & CAROL BLEIER CHAIR

Joseph Rounds

REED SMITH CHAIR

HONORING TOM TODD

TRUMPET

George Vosburgh ❄️

MARTHA BROOKS ROBINSON CHAIR

Charles Lirette *

EDWARD D. LOUGHNEY CHAIR

Neal Berntsen

Chad Winkler

SUSAN S. GREER MEMORIAL CHAIR

TROMBONE

Peter Sullivan ❁

TOM & JAMEE TODD CHAIR

Rebecca Cherian *

James Nova

BASS TROMBONE

Murray Crewe ❁

TUBA

Craig Knox ❁

TIMPANI

Edward Stephan ❁

BARBARA WELDON

PRINCIPAL TIMPANI CHAIR

Christopher Allen *

PERCUSSION

Andrew Reamer ❁

ALBERT H. ECKERT CHAIR

Jeremy Branson *

Christopher Allen

FRETTED INSTRUMENTS

Irvin Kauffman ★

LIBRARIANS

Joann Ferrell Vosburgh ❁

JEAN & SIGO FALK CHAIR

Lisa Gedris

EQT O'TPAAM FELLOW

Adedeji Ogunfolu, Horn

STAGE TECHNICIANS

Ronald Esposito

John Karapandi

OPEN CHAIRS

THE HENRY AND ELSIE HILLMAN

PRINCIPAL POPS CONDUCTOR CHAIR

MR. & MRS. BENJAMIN F. JONES III

KEYBOARD CHAIR

ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL OBOE

PRINCIPAL BASS CLARINET

❁ PRINCIPAL

* CO-PRINCIPAL

* ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

● ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

▲ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL LAUREATE

★ ONE YEAR ABSENCE

sound/mirror

Technical Recording Notes

We at Soundmirror believe, that in a good and successful recording, the sound has to serve the music. While an important goal is to truthfully represent the acoustical event in the hall, another is to capture the composer's intention reflected in the score and its realization by the performer. To achieve these goals, extensive collaboration and communication between the artists and the recording team are of utmost importance.

Based on our long experience of recording the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in Heinz Hall, we chose five omnidirectional DPA 4006 microphones as our main microphone array. Supplementing those with "spot mics" to clarify the detail of the orchestration, we worked toward realizing above goals. Extensive listening sessions with Maestro Honeck and orchestra musicians were crucial in refining the final balance.

This recording was made and post produced in 64fs DSD on a Pyramix workstation to give you, the listener, the highest sound quality possible.

We hope, you will enjoy listening to this recording as much as we enjoy making it! —Mark Donahue, John Newton and Dirk Sobotka

For more than 40 years, Soundmirror has been the first choice recording and post-production company for orchestras, choral groups, opera companies, solo artists, and record labels. Soundmirror's recordings have received over 80 GRAMMY® nominations and awards as well as special commendations from prestigious publications.

For more information about Soundmirror: <http://www.soundmirror.com/>

Recorded: October 11 – 13, 2013
Heinz Hall for the Performing Arts, Pittsburgh, PA

Recording Producer: Dirk Sobotka (Soundmirror, Boston)

Balance Engineer: Mark Donahue (Soundmirror, Boston)

Recording Engineers: John Newton (Soundmirror, Boston),
Harold Chambers (Pittsburgh Symphony)

Editing: Dirk Sobotka (Soundmirror, Boston)

Mastering: Mark Donahue (Soundmirror, Boston)

Music Notes: Manfred Honeck

Technical Notes: Mark Donahue,
John Newton and Dirk Sobotka

Design: Bill Roarty

Front Cover Design: Brian Hughes

Back Cover Photo: Chris Chrisodoulou

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra recordings are made possible
by a generous grant from BNY Mellon.



PITTSBURGH LIVE!