

Nikolai Miaskovsky - Symphony No. 6 (Järvi) [2002]

Written by bluesever

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1. *Poco largamente - Allegro feroce* 22:27
2. *Presto tenebroso* 8:56 [play](#)
3. *Andante appassionato* 15:07
4. *Allegro vivace (quasi presto) - "O, quid vidimus" - Andante molto espressivo* 18:03

Göteborgs Symfoniker
Neeme Järvi, conductor

Nikolai Miaskovsky's Sixth is the most frequently performed of his 27 symphonies, although its familiarity among Western audiences remains relatively slight. A big, post-romantic work, it was considered out of step with the times when it appeared in 1923. With its re-occurring leitmotifs in all four movements, the symphony is steeped in Lisztian rhetoric lassoed to a dramatic thrust that suggests Rachmaninov (although Miaskovsky's range of influences includes Tchaikovsky, Mussorgsky, and even César Franck). In overall sound the piece most closely resembles the Scriabin of the Third Symphony.

The long first movement launches with six dramatic tutti chords. These are followed by an impetuously driven and densely chromatic allegro that alternates with more placid, diatonically melodic passages in a manner similar to Liszt's A Faust Symphony. After a tremendous climax, the movement ends in a mood of despairing resignation à la Tchaikovsky's Pathétique. Then after a rollicking scherzo (with a serene, pastoral trio reminiscent of Mahler's Sixth symphony), the beautiful Andante forms the symphony's emotional core as it emphatically brings together musical ideas previously introduced. The far-flung finale, which encompasses such diverse elements as a tarantella, French folk songs, and the Dies Irae, eventually winds up in an atmosphere of spiritual transcendence (again like the Faust symphony) as the chorus enters, solemnly intoning the sacred Russian chant "Of the Separation of the Soul from the Body".

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Neeme Järvi hurls himself full force into this brilliant, volatile music, conducting with passionate conviction and coaxing a stunning, virtuosic performance from the Gothenberg Symphony. DG's spacious recording delivers it with satisfying clarity and impact. If you've never heard any Miaskovsky, this rewarding release makes a great place to start.--Victor Carr Jr, ClassicsToday.com

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