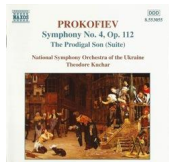


Prokofiev – Symphony No. 4, The Prodigal Son (1995)

Written by bluesever

Sunday, 25 October 2009 15:29 - Last Updated Sunday, 23 March 2014 00:04

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L'enfant prodigue, op.46 (The Prodigal Son) 01 *The Departure* 05:36 02 *Meeting Friends* 04:32 03 *The Seductress* 04:11 04 *The Dancers* 02:59 05 *The Prodigal Son And The Seductress - Scene 2* 03:20 06 *Drunkness* 02:34 07 *The Despoiling* 02:28 08 *Awakening And Remorse* 03:20 09 *Interlude: Sharing The Spoils - Scene 3* 02:43 10 *The Return* 06:55
Symphony No.4, op.112 11 1. *Andante - Allegro Erioico - Allegretto* 12:28 12 2. *Andante Tranquillo* 09:10 13 3. *Moderator Quasi Allegretto* 06:00 14 4. *Allegro Risoluto* 09:51
National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine Theodore Kuchar – conductor

Symphony No. 4 in C major, Op. 112 (second version). Sergey Prokofiev undertook more than an ordinary revision when, in 1947, he decided to put his Symphony No. 4 in C major of 1929 - 1930 into new and better shape: what we have here is very close to a wholesale recomposition. The two versions in fact have completely different opus numbers (46 for the 1929 - 1930 version, 112 for the 1947 version). The Symphony No. 4, which was commissioned by the Boston Symphony Orchestra for performance during its 50th anniversary season (1930), grew from material rejected from other work. The original version is a charming, beautifully unpretentious work, and yet the fact that Prokofiev chose to reshape it shows that, to his mind at least, there was always something wrong with it (and also that it was a special work to him -- there were other instances in which he grew dissatisfied with earlier pieces but made no effort to redraft them). To line the two versions up side-by-side is to provide oneself with a unique study of the changes not only to Prokofiev's musical decision-making between 1929 and 1947 but also of his attitudes and even his character. The opportunity is not to be missed by fans of the composer.

The four movements retain their original relationships to one another in the 1947 symphony, and, for the most part, their tempo indications as well. But the work is now a much longer one. The most sweeping changes are made in the opening *Andante-Allegro energico* movement (originally *Andante assai-Allegro energico*), which has actually doubled in length and is more

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densely scored. By comparison, the inner movements are little touched. The opening of the new version of the Allegro risoluto finale is particularly fascinating: what was a boisterous passage in string octaves is now a plodding, marchlike passage whose absolutely secco gestures (pizzicato now) are underlined by sharp strokes from the timpani and piano. And the symphony's conclusion is now massive rather than snappy -- a true epic peroration in what has surprisingly (given the poise and modesty of the original version) turned out to be quite an epic symphony. ---Brian Johnstone, Rovi

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