

Dmitri Shostakovich – Symphony no.15; Jewish Folk Poetry (1993)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Symphony 15 : I Allegretto*
2. *Symphony 15 : II Adagio - Largo*
3. *Symphony 15 : III Allegretto*
4. *Symphony 15 : IV Adagio - Allegretto*
5. *From Jewish Folk Poetry : I Lament for a dead infant*
6. *From Jewish Folk Poetry : II Fussy Mummy and Aunti*
7. *From Jewish Folk Poetry : III Lullaby*
8. *From Jewish Folk Poetry : IV Before a long separation*
9. *From Jewish Folk Poetry : V A warning*
10. *From Jewish Folk Poetry : VI The deserted father*
11. *From Jewish Folk Poetry : VII A song of poverty*
12. *From Jewish Folk Poetry : VIII Winter*
13. *From Jewish Folk Poetry : IX The good life*
14. *From Jewish Folk Poetry : X A girl's song*
15. *From Jewish Folk Poetry : XI Happiness*

Elisabeth Söderström (soprano)

Ortun Wenkel (contralto)

Ryszard Karczykowski (tenor)

London Philharmonic Orchestra - Concertgebouw Orchestra

Bernard Haitink – conductor

An early entry in Bernard Haitink's Shostakovich cycle, this winning performance of the Fifteenth Symphony promised much for what was eventually to become a series greatly varied in quality and inspiration. It may be asking too much for a Western conductor to perform all of these symphonies with the same intensity and passion as might be shown by any of several Soviet counterparts, who were, after all, living and working under the same system that had so

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oppressed and threatened the composer. As for Symphony No. 15, its lesser degree of brutality than most of its predecessors makes it a good match for Haitink's tidy conducting style. This is evident from the start in the fresh, ebullient, "toy shop" first movement, through the cartoonish scherzo, and into the serene "clock factory" coda of the finale. In the big climaxes of the second and fourth movements, Haitink does not project the tortured anguish revealed by Neeme Järvi or Kurt Sanderling, but nonetheless makes these passages sufficiently moving. He is aided by Decca's wonderfully realistic recording, one of the last great analog Kingsway Hall productions. The digital sound for the songs From Jewish Folk Poetry also is impressive, capturing the rich resonance of the Concertgebouw Orchestra in this dark and disturbing rendition of a truly magnificent score. Elisabeth Söderström, Ortun Wenkel, and Ryszard Karczykowski give searing performances of these defiant, ironic, and ultimately tragic songs. Even if you have Yuli Turovsky's lighter but still excellent account on Chandos, you must hear this. --- Victor Carr Jr, classicstoday.com

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