Antonin Dvorak - Slavonic Dances (2001)



Opus 46

No. 1 in C major (Furiant)

No. 2 in E minor (Dumka)

No. 3 in A-flat major (Polka)

No. 4 in F major (Sousedská)

No. 5 in A major (Skočná)

No. 6 in D major (Mazurka)

No. 7 in C minor (Skočná)

No. 8 in G minor (Furiant).

Opus 72

No. 1 (9) in B major (Odzemek)

No. 2 (10) in E minor (Starodávny)

No. 3 (11) in F major (Skočná)

No. 4 (12) in D-flat major (Dumka)

No. 5 (13) in B-flat minor (Špacírka)

No. 6 (14) in B-flat major (Starodávný ("Ancient"))

No. 7 (15) in C major (Kolo)

No. 8 (16) in A-flat major (Sousedská)

Cleveland Orchestra

George Szell – conductor

Szell's miraculously detailed and immaculately phrased recording of the complete Slavonic Dances has seldom been out of the catalog, though its sonics have never matched its artistic value. Even as currently remastered on Essential Classics, the recording still sports woodwinds that pop out of the mix front and center whenever they have the tune, against a somewhat dark and thick-textured accompaniment. Nothing can quite solve this basic problem, but as

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transferred here to SACD stereo, there truly is just a touch more clarity to the basic sound. And so Szell's characteristically careful way with the percussion can now be heard to better effect right from the very first dance, and subsidiary lines and rhythmic figures no longer congeal into such a dark mass of midrange tone. Nothing, of course, will make these performances technically marvelous, but this is the closest that Sony has come so far to doing their musical merits full sonic justic ---David Hurwitz, classicstoday.com

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