



Horenstein

conducts Dvořák & Janáček



During the early part of his career there were three works that Jascha Horenstein used as his musical calling card - Mahler's First Symphony, Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* and Dvořák's Ninth Symphony - and all three remained staples of his regular repertoire. The 'New World' Symphony presented here dates from 1952 and was the first of his many recordings for Vox Records, the label that so defined a good part of his career, some would say unfortunately. It was also Horenstein's first post-war engagement with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, his professional debut orchestra that he had last conducted in 1928, an era away. The sessions took place at the orchestra's own Symphonia Studio and were immediately followed by his celebrated recordings of Mahler's Ninth and Shostakovich's Fifth, the whole project completed in less than two weeks during which, in keeping with the Vox's method of work, there was no time for retakes or corrections. Not a brilliantly colored or flashy performance, Horenstein's affectionately moulded 'New World' was praised for its artful and subtle control of line and expression, "shaped with a tenderness that rekindles interest in familiar phrases", as Andrew Porter put it in a oft-repeated observation about much of Horenstein's work. For Berthold Goldschmidt the "springy rhythms and flexible rubato turns" in the Trio of the *scherzo* movement were particularly felicitous touches and examples of Horenstein's exacting demands on the skills of his players. One of its early admirers was a young musician in South Africa named Ernest Fleischmann, later the influential manager of the London Symphony Orchestra, who attributed his first interest in Horenstein to this recording.

An early and long time advocate for the music of Leoš Janáček, whom he admired for his independent thinking and freedom from contemporary influences, Horenstein described his 1927 meeting with the composer evocatively and amusingly in a number of interviews. Following that meeting he attended the German premiere of the '*Sinfonietta*' conducted by Klemperer in Berlin, gave the Viennese premiere of the same work in February 1928 and conducted seven performances of '*House of the Dead*' in Düsseldorf during the 1931/32 season. After the war Horenstein did much to champion Janáček's music on radio, on records and in concerts, including the Argentine premiere of the '*Sinfonietta*' in Buenos Aires in July 1951, the French premiere of '*House of the Dead*' in Paris in May 1953 and the American premiere of '*The Makropulos Case*' in San Francisco in November 1966, and probably would have done more had life dealt him a different set of cards. The present recording of '*Taras Bulba*' derives from a radio broadcast of the first of two concerts he gave with the Berlin Philharmonic at the 1961 Edinburgh International Festival, last minute engagements after Rafael Kubelik canceled following the death of his first wife. The second concert a day later featured Horenstein's incandescent performance of Mahler's Fifth Symphony, first published on this label in 2014 (PASC 416). Recordings of both concerts, broadcast live during a particularly delicate period of the Cold War, document an orchestra in top form and in complete harmony with the conductor. Then nearing the peak of his powers and with over a decade still to live, it remains a mystery why, having rescued the orchestra from a difficult situation for an important international event, Horenstein was never invited to conduct the Berlin Philharmonic again.

Misha Horenstein

PASC 603

horenstein

conducts dvořák & janáček

dvořák
symphony no. 9
'from the new world'
vienna symphony orchestra

janáček
taras bulba
berlin philharmonic orchestra



studio & live recordings · 1952 & 1961

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DVOŘÁK SYMPHONY NO. 9 "FROM THE NEW WORLD" - JANÁČEK TARAS BULBA
HORENSTEIN, VIENNA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, BERLIN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

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DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95, 'From the New World'

1. 1st mvt. - Adagio - Allegro molto (9:52)
2. 2nd mvt. - Largo (14:25)
3. 3rd mvt. - Molto vivace (8:38)
4. 4th mvt. - Allegro con fuoco (11:44)

Vienna Symphony Orchestra

5. RADIO Taras Bulba Introduction (0:41)

JANÁČEK Taras Bulba, Rhapsody for large orchestra

6. 1. The Death of Andrei (8:25)
7. 2. The Death of Ostap (5:56)
8. 3. The Prophecy and Death of Taras Bulba (9:00)

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra

conducted by Jascha Horenstein

XR Remastered by **Andrew Rose**

Source recordings and artwork from the archives of Misha Horenstein

Dvořák recorded at Symphonia Studio, Vienna, 4-6 April 1952

Janáček live broadcast performance, Usher Hall, Edinburgh, 30 August 1961

Cover artwork based on a photograph of **Jascha Horenstein**

Total duration: **68:41**

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