



Dmitry
Shostakovich

Symphonies **No.3 & 15**

m
DG
GOLD

Czech Philharmonic Choir Brno

Beethoven Orchester Bonn · Roman Kofman

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)
Complete Symphonies Vol. 10
L'Intégrale des symphonies Vol. 10
Sämtliche Sinfonien Vol. 10

Symphony No. 15 op. 141 **45'56**

1	Allegretto	8'30
2	Adagio	17'10
3	Allegretto	4'35
4	Adagio – Allegretto	15'32

Symphony No. 3 op. 20 **29'13**

May Day / Le Premier Mai / Zum 1. Mai
for Chorus and Orchestra

5	Allegretto	4'13
6	17 – <i>Piu mosso</i>	5'47
7	44 – <i>Andante</i>	5'11
8	52 – <i>Allegro</i>	6'35
9	89 – <i>Largo</i>	2'51
10	98 – <i>Moderato</i>	4'34

Total Time: **75'21**

* The Third is a one-movement symphony. Therefore the tracks 6-10 only mark sections, not any movements. / Die 3. Sinfonie ist einsätzig. Die Tracks 6-10 markieren Abschnitte, aber nicht Sätze.

Czech Philharmonic Choir Brno
(Petr Fiala, chorus master)

Beethoven Orchester Bonn
Roman Kofman, conductor

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RECORDING

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The Spring of Humanity. The Autumn of the Patriarch The Third and Fifteenth Symphonies of Dmitry Shostakovich

The forty years separating the »May Day« symphony of the young Dmitry Shostakovich and the testamentary symphony of the great master encompassed the difficult, hazard-strewn life of the artist in a totalitarian era. They encompassed the way from the springtime hopes of youth to the autumn of the patriarch, a classic figure of 20th-century music.

»Spring of Humanity« is a typical example of Communist symbolism, born of the October Revolution of 1917. It was the title of the leading article of the Bolshevik newspaper *Pravda* (Truth) of May 1, 1919. It was in this manner that Mayakovsky immortalized the revolution in enthusiastic poetry, and in this manner that the young Shostakovich may have understood it at that period. It did not take much time to pass before the composer realized – very soon, from personal experience – how illusory were the hopes of a Communist »bright future«, how false the promises of Soviet power when it declared creative freedom while actually suffocating genuine art in an ideological vice.

But then, at the time he composed his **Third Symphony** (1929), Shostakovich was strongly influenced by the irresistible tide of events, the pathos of life's renewal,

was seized by a *universal* elation. We emphasize – *universal, collective*, alien to all that is *individual*, all that comprises the core, the heart of the work of Shostakovich the symphonist. As in his Second Symphony »To October«, so too in his Third »The first of May« he strikes an objective note of declaration; this can be heard both in the music itself and in the responses to it. It is not without reason that the authors of reviews and analyses emphasize the chief characteristic of the symphony – the precise and adequate expression of the *typical* (in antithesis to the personal) in the reality of Soviet life. Anatoly Lunacharsky, one of the most dedicated Bolshevik functionaries, expressly called for this: »We must listen for the essential rhythms born of our revolutionary city. The musician can and must appreciate the host of new elements floating in the air, so to speak, and representing the unshaped elemental music of our times«. Shostakovich in his Third Symphony *listened and appreciated* the social »commission«, more precisely, the behest of the time combined with the responsiveness and sincerity that were peculiar to his talent. The latter is very important, in comparison with the commissioned film music in which Shostakovich voluntarily identified himself with the authors of official posters. In comparison, even, with his Twelfth Symphony »1917«, dedicated to the memory of Lenin, where the composer quite openly (he who has ears, let him hear!), from the height

of mature years, expresses his relationship to the revolution and its leader (at times with unconcealed sarcasm, as in the finale, headed »Dawn of humanity«!).

The Third Symphony, even if it has the effect of a poster, is one only in the sense that in it, Shostakovich clearly and brusquely (as the genre demands) embodied the musical scene, the musical streets and squares – marches, galops, dances, popular songs; he used instrumental forces to portray the flow of oratory at a heated public meeting. »Spring of humanity« does not conceal the bright joyful season: alongside images of May Day rejoicing and processions, there is a ghostly rural lyricism, full of morning freshness and the intimations of awakening nature.

The pastoral clarinet duet that opens the symphony is positively saturated with such feelings. This comparatively short, but polyphonically »ramified« prelude establishes a bright springtime mood. And when the morning calm is broken by the approaching procession, and the trumpet tones strike through – they seem like the natural continuation of the peaceful landscape. Gradually »accelerating«, the quickly expanding episode is nothing other than a kaleidoscope of musical themes that replace one another with lightning speed. They are connected by their similarity of intonation, they rush by as if whipped up by some capricious but indivisible rhythmic pulse. In this one-movement symphony

(lightly articulated into four traditional sections) this episode fulfils the role of the initial Allegro.

The mosaic nature of the form of the symphony was assigned to it by the composer from the outset. According to the recollections of the composer Vissarion Shebalin, who was a friend of Shostakovich's, the young Shostakovich was attracted by the unusual assignment »to write a symphony in which not a single theme was repeated«. This explains the absence from the symphony of thematic recapitulation – possibly the most convincing approach in the construction of musical forms. The composer atones for this »inadequacy« with the recognizability of musical images recalling songs – typical Soviet songs from the late 20s, ones that were sung on the streets, in youth camps, at May Day rallies. The first section culminates in such a Pioneer march, which is »sung« to a drum-beat by horns and trumpets, followed by a »marching band« of woodwinds, supported by percussion; it sometimes »breaks step«, amusingly giving itself airs and skipping along.

Gradually departing, the sounds of the march fade away; the high strings begin the slow section of the symphony, Andante; the songful lyricism is offset by the exultation of the now prominent »street« voices, dance tunes. But what prevails is a sound that is closer in timbre to the pastoral introduction to the symphony, the melodic contrasts

of solo flutes and a lush and tender waltz played on isolated strings – the precursor of those lyrically rapturous waltzes which are encountered later in the new symphonies, and the piano concertos, and the quartets of Shostakovich.

The »motor drive« of the episode that follows, commencing with a quite free fugato, takes hold like a hurricane. Once again, in this second Allegro – the symphony's scherzo section – we discern the recognizable outlines of the many scherzos Shostakovich wrote for future symphonies, galops from music to cinema films and from the opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk district*. Toward us, as it were, there waft the odours of the composer's creative kitchen: in the Third Symphony, as in a distinctive melting pot, he prepares that enticing mixture of everyday timbre and exalted lyricism, that Shakespearean amalgam of high and lowly, which very soon, literally within a few years, would distinguish the output of Shostakovich's mature period. A whirlwind toccata, cloaked from time to time by sweeping cantabile arches, leads towards a general culmination of the whole symphony.

The final section opens with mighty unison strains from the orchestra, with a cannonade from the bass drum against a background of agitated tremolo. With a mastery astonishing in a 23-year-old composer, Shostakovich summons up the grandiose atmosphere of an open-air

rally – a surging sea of humanity, collective recitative-»addresses«, declaimed May Day slogans, individual cries ... The summons of the orator's speech (trumpet, trombones, joined by cellos and basses) prompts a response from the choir. We hear a May Day ode steeped in revolutionary phraseology to words by a contemporary of Shostakovich, the young Komsomol poet Semyon Kirsanov (it is not surprising that the closeness of this movement to the choral finale of Beethoven's Ninth has been widely and repeatedly noted). A triumphantly oratorical choir is surpassed purely instrumentally – in the measured steps of an exultant march.

The first performance of the Third Symphony was given in Leningrad on January 21, 1930, in one of the Workers' Houses of Culture. The Leningrad Philharmonic orchestra and the choir of the Academic Ensemble were conducted by Aleksandr Gauk. The following day, January 22, the symphony was repeated for the young people of Leningrad in the large auditorium of the Philharmonic Hall. After more than 30 years of obscurity (occasioned by repeated reproaches of »formalism«) the Third Symphony, along with Shostakovich's Second, was revived in the mid-60s by the conductor Igor Blazhkov.

* * *

In the year 1971 Shostakovich returned to the »pure«, non-programmatic symphony – for the first time after a break of

almost twenty years, after the programmatic Eleventh (»1905«) and Twelfth (»1917«) symphonies, after the Thirteenth and Fourteenth, set to poetic texts selected by the composer. Arbitrary extra-musical subjects – more still, direct speech – deprive the symphony of that mystery, that air of ambiguity, without which the symphonic work of Shostakovich does lose a part of that appeal, that enigmatic nature, that leaves the listener a wide field for co-creation.

The Tenth Symphony (1953) marked the release of the great symphonist from the »Lenten fast« that Shostakovich was obliged to observe after the monstrous storm of criticism and effective prohibition of his Eighth and Ninth. The Tenth contains more than a few enigmas – apart from those which, in the very nature of the genre, are always present in the symphony – in its »monogram« themes, in the extremely superficial interpretation of the scherzo as a musical portrait of Stalin, and in the eternal problem of its finale ... After the Tenth, Shostakovich returned, as can be seen, to posing his riddles in the **Fifteenth Symphony**. »I did a great deal of work on it,« said the composer in the first of his interviews as early as 1973, »and, strangely enough, I wrote it in hospital ... then at the dacha, you understand, but I could not completely tear myself away from this. This is one of several of my works which seemed clear to me from the first note to

the last, and only needed time for me to write it down».

Like the Tenth, like the fateful Fifth (1937) – or the symphony that emerged at the end of 1961 from a quarter-century of ostracism, the Fourth (1936) – the **Fifteenth Symphony** is an autobiographical work. Shostakovich began work with a »decoy«, upon which many of the qualified reviews pounced. »I want to write a happy little symphony,« Shostakovich confessed to his pupil and colleague Boris Tishchenko at the beginning of 1971. The first Allegretto – the author said before a four-handed run-through on the piano at the Union of Composers – was »a toy-shop«. But then, „toyiness« is a doll-like state, in a bad sense the life of a puppet, where some such figure as the Moor from Stravinsky's *Petrushka*, or Coppelius from *Coppelia* by Delibes, gets the upper hand over human warmth and affection. Echoes can be heard of early ballets by Shostakovich (»The Golden Age«, »Bolt«), the First Piano Concerto, and amid the composer's own themes, a motif from the overture to *William Tell*. Only, if Rossini has a lively, hot, many-stringed march-galop, Shostakovich's version is a mechanically regular brass parody (as if from a piece for a brass ensemble playing on a park bandstand). Even more cruel, more grotesque, is the development of the entirely laconic sonata-form Allegretto. This, of course, is not the same evil scherzo, but a not entirely

good-natured reminiscence of childhood.

The second movement, Adagio, is a personal epitaph, of the kind that are frequent in Shostakovich's last works, but this one is the most grandiose. In its gigantic culmination – a dazzling major *tutti* – the author unites his grief, his »self-pity« with the grief common to all the Russian people. We hear an exalted requiem, similar to a many-figured memorial in a public square. How many such memorials had Shostakovich already created – set »at the graveside«, on the field of battle – in the Seventh and Eighth symphonies, for example, or the funeral march in the Fourth! The Fourth, by the way, supplies the most direct associations, because it too is a »personal« symphony. The rhythmic figures in the basses and the Wagnerian brass in mourning clothes long before the appearance of the fate motif from the »Ring« recall the »Twilight of the Gods« – only here it is the decline and fall of the artist, the creator, who has striven with God himself. But another emotional extreme is summoned up by the »chords of numbness« in the woodwinds, seconded by the brass: they sound several times in the Adagio, before appearing in the finale (one of the commentators calls them »chords of death«).

From the silence or from the grief-stricken dumbness of the closing bars of the Adagio, we are suddenly plunged amid the buzzing drone-like basses of the

short Scherzo (Allegretto). The fragmentary twelve-note series – emerging and as swiftly dying away – is like an awkward and mournful Hebrew »Freylechs« from the pictures of Chagall; a penetrating solo from the violins recalls the violin tuned half a tone higher from the scherzo of Mahler's Fourth Symphony – dancing Death (Freund Hein spielt auf)! But the clash of small percussion, this Danse macabre, the rattle of skeletons, relates to the coda of the second movement of Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony – an arch from the unhappy year of 1936 to the start of the Seventies – that caps a *grotesque*, ominous and foreshadowing the finale.

In the finale (Adagio. Allegretto), opening with the Fate motif from Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelung*, there are many other enigmatic melodic allusions. We all have the opportunity to decipher them, depending on how well we hear them (above all, specifically linked to our inborn perception of sound, nurtured from childhood). Thus a Russian will be sure to hear, after the Fate motif at the beginning of the main theme, the first note of the song by Glinka »Ne iskushay (do not tempt) ...«; the German listener will inevitably recall the well-known Motif of Yearning from *Tristan*, or the final rondo from Beethoven's D minor sonata (Op. 31, no. 2). Together with the »monogram« themes BACH and DSCH, together with the short passacaglia calling to mind pages from the Seventh

and Eighth Symphonies, from the opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk district*, they will as it were perceive »the hero's life«, his spiritual extent. A startling discovery – glockenspiel and celesta, returning us to the beginning of the symphony, to the »toyshop«. But simultaneously with the ostinato rhythm of the passacaglia (pizzicato strings) the percussion strikes out, beats out that same Danse macabre, that »dance of death«, now transfigured, near to death. The last chime of bells is like the first: the circle is closed!

The first performance of the Fifteenth Symphony in Moscow on January 8, 1972, was entrusted by the composer to his son. Maksim Shostakovich conducted the Large Symphony Orchestra of USSR Radio and Television. On May 5, 1972, the symphony was played in Leningrad by the Academy orchestra of the Leningrad Philharmonic under the baton of Yevgeny Mravinsky.

Iosif Raikina

Translation: Michael Berridge
and Marina George

The **Czech Philharmonic Chorus of Brno** was founded in 1990 and in spite of its brief history rates as one of the best and most sought-after professional companies in Europe. The repertoire, mainly comprising oratorios and cantatas, has recently been expanded to include operas of all musical epochs as well. The ensemble gives some seventy concerts yearly at home and abroad, and now works with all the Czech orchestras and with some foreign ones. It has been directed by conductors like Petr Altrichter, Jirí Belohlávek, Leos Svárovský, Sir Charles Mackerras, Leopold Hager, Marcello Viotti, Sir Roger Norrington, Enoch zu Guttenberg, Mario Venzago, Hugh Wolff, Marc Soustrot, Jean-Claude Casadesus, Aldo Ceccato, Georg Schmöhe, Bertrand de Billy, Gerd Albrecht, Lawrence Foster, Zubin Mehta, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Kurt Masur, Isaac Karabtschewsky. The ensemble regularly gives guest performances at numerous international music festivals, including those in Vienna, Linz, Munich, Lucerne, Basel, Frankfurt, Wiesbaden-Eberbach, Lübeck, Passau, Milan, Rome, the Vatican City, Paris, Rennes, Nantes, Angers, Nürnberg, Dresden, Oviedo, Prague, Brno, Ostrava, Olomouc, Litomysl, České Budejovice and Český Krumlov, as well as at the BBC Proms. It has made a large number of CD recordings for major Czech and European recording companies.

The founder, director of music and conductor of the Czech Philharmonic

Chorus is Petr Fiala (born 1943), who graduated in theory of composition and conducting from the Brno Conservatory and the Janáček Academy of Music. He has been directing choirs and conducting for thirty years, holds a professorship at the Brno Conservatory and also composes himself. Petr Fiala's assistant is Jan Ocetek (born 1972). The activities of the Czech Philharmonic Chorus of Brno are supported financially by the city of Brno, the ministry of education and cultural affairs of the Czech Republic and the South-Moravian region.

The Beethoven Orchester Bonn

When in 2007 the Beethoven Orchester Bonn celebrates its 100th anniversary, it will actually be 110 years old, as its origins can be traced back to 1897. This year marked the founding of the Koblenz Philharmonic Orchestra, the body of musicians destined to become the Bonn City Orchestra in 1907.

Leading composers and conductors have led the orchestra from its early days to the present. Richard Strauss conducted performances of his own works in Bonn for the first time in 1907. Max Reger, Fritz Busch and Max Bruch all led the orchestra at the Central Rhine Music Festival in 1914. The guest list of conductors in subsequent years has included Paul Hindemith, Hans Pfitzner, Erich Kleiber, Joseph Keilbert, Karl Böhm, Rudolf Kempe, Sergiu Celibidache,

Günter Wand and Sir Malcolm Sargent. In the last 50 years Volker Wangerheim, Jan Krenz, Gustav Kuhn, Dennis Russel Davies as well as Marc Soustrot left their mark on the cultural life of the city of Bonn. With the beginning of the season 2003/2004 Roman Kofman has succeeded them in his capacity as Bonn's general music director and is artistically in charge of the orchestra.

Guest performances have taken the orchestra to Salzburg, the Vienna Festival Weeks, and Frankfurt Festival as well as to the Berliner Festwochen and in the Gewandhaus in Leipzig. The orchestra toured to North America, France, Yugoslavia, Rumania and Poland and also performed in Spain, England, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

The Beethoven Orchester Bonn has already produced several CDs with the innovative firm Musikproduktion Dabringhaus und Grimm. At the moment, under its new artistic director Roman Kofman, the orchestra is producing the complete symphonies by Dmitri Shostakovich with the DVD-Audio (2+2+2) system.

The Beethoven Orchester Bonn currently numbers among the top German orchestras. It fulfills important musical functions in the context of the Beethoven Festivals that have been held at regular intervals in Bonn since 1927, and its orchestral concerts in the Beethovenhalle and the Bonn Opera figure importantly in the musical life of the city.

Before **Roman Kofman** became general music director of the Beethoven Orchestra of Bonn in 2003, he had already held several important conducting posts - as principal conductor of the Donetsk Philharmonic Orchestra in the Ukraine, the Seoul Symphony Orchestra in South Korea and the Filharmonia Pomorska in Poland. He has been artistic director and principal conductor of the Kiev Chamber Orchestra since 1990. He has worked with numerous universally known soloists, including Gidon Kremer, Igor Oistrakh, Natalia Gutman, Eliso Virsaladze, Mischa Maisky and Vadim Repin. In the summer of 2003, Roman Kofman was named «People's Artist of Ukraine», the country's highest artistic distinction. One of Kofman's first projects as GMD of the Beethoven Orchestra of Bonn has been the Shostakovich cycle, which began in 2003. He has already undertaken three tours with the Beethoven Orchestra of Bonn - to Spain, through southern Germany and Austria, and to the Ukraine.

The First of May

On the very first May Day
a torch was thrown into the past,
a spark, growing into a fire,
and a flame enveloped the forest .

With the drooping fir trees' ears
the forest listened
to the voices and noises
of the new May Day parade.

Our May Day.
In the whistling of grief's bullets
grasping bayonet and gun,
the tsar's palace was taken.

The fallen tsar's palace -
this was the drawn of May,
marching ahead,
in the light of grief's banners.

Our May Day -
in the future there will be sails -
unfurled over the sea of corn,
and the resounding steps of the
corps.

New corps - the new ranks of May
their eyes like fires looking to the
future.
Factories and workers
march in the May Day parade.

We will reap the land,
our time has come.
Listen, workers, to the voice of our
factories:
in burning down the old, you must
kindle a new reality.

Banners rising like the sun,
march, let your steps resound .
Every May Day
is a step towards Socialism .

May Day is the march
of armed miners.
Into the squares, revolution,
march with a million feet!

Le Premier Mai

Au premier des premier mai,
une torche mit feu au passé,
étiçnelle, flamme,
incendie dans toute la forêt.

Sapins aux oreilles retombantes,
toute la forêt écoute
les voix, les sons
du premier mai en marche.

Notre premier mai.
Balles siflant tragiquement,
bayonnettes et fusils aux poings,
le palais du tsar tomba.

Le palais du tsar tombé.
L'aube de mai
se leva, déployant
ses étendards tragiques.

Notre premier mai.
A l'avenir il y aura des pavillons
déployés sur l'océan des blés
et la foule aux pas résonnants

et la foule neuve - le jeune mai en
ligne,
des yeux comme des flammes con-
templant l'avenir,
usines, travailleurs,
le premier mai en marche défilant.

Nous moissonnerons la terre,
notre jour est venu.
Ecoutez, travailleurs, la voix de nos
usines.
Vous avez brûlé hier, embrasez
demain.

Etendards se levant comme le soleil,
marchez, vous aux pas résonnants.
Chaque premier mai
est un pas vers le socialisme.

Le premier mai est la montée
des mineurs armés.
Et sur les places, la révolution.
Un million de pieds en marche.

Zum 1. Mai

Am allerersten 1. Mai warfen wir
die Fackel in die Vergangenheit;
ein Funke wuchs zum Feuer,
und eine Flamme verzehrte den Wald.

Mit den Ohren der gebeugten Tannen
lauschte der Wald
den Stimmen und dem Lärm
der Parade am 1. Mai.

Unser 1. Mai
unter dem Pfeifen zorniger Kugeln,
Bayonett und Gewehr in den Fäusten,
so nahmen wir den Zarenpalast.

Der Zarenpalast fiel
das war das Morgenrot des Mai,
als wir vorwärtsmarschierten
im Schein der zornigen Fahnen.

Unser 1. Mai
die Zukunft wird Segel bringen,
gehißt über dem Meer von Getreide
und die lauten Schritte von Brigaden.

Neue Brigaden
die neuen Heere des Mai,
mit feurigen Augen
in die Zukunft blickend;
Fabriken und ihre Arbeiter
marschieren in der Maiparade.

Wir werden die Ernte der Erde
einholen
unsere Zeit ist gekommen.
Hört, Proletarier,
die Stimme aus unseren Fabriken
Brennt das Alte nieder,
doch entzündet das Neue!

Fahnen steigen auf wie die Sonne;
marschiert, laßt eure Schritte tönen!
Jeder 1. Mai
ist ein Schritt zum Sozialismus.

Der 1. Mai -der Aufmarsch
der bewaffneten Bergarbeiter.
Auf die Straßen, Revolution,
marschiere mit Millionen Füßen!

Configuration for - stereo sound

The two loudspeakers are at ear level, symmetrically placed at an equal distance from the optimum listening point; ideally, the spacing between the speakers is equal to the distance between the speakers and your listening point.

- 5.1 surround sound

In addition to the basic stereo sound setup, there is a centre speaker at the front, exactly equidistant from the two stereo speakers, and two rear speakers (behind the listening point at each side), and a subwoofer which may be placed anywhere. Here too, symmetrical layout and equidistance is important; it may be desirable to turn the rear speakers slightly toward the side wall or the ceiling. After that, all speakers must be carefully balanced to the same volume level following the instructions for use of your 5.1 sound amplifier.

The subwoofer should on no account dominate the sound reproduction; it is only correctly balanced when it can no longer be picked out or located acoustically.

- 2+2+2 multichannel sound

The 2+2+2 multichannel process is a recording and reproduction system developed by MDG, compatible with stereo and surround sound.

Whereas stereo and surround sound can only provide two-dimensional sound reproduction, the 2+2+2 multichannel process not only allows three-dimensional sound reproduction, but provides »sweet spots« all over the listening area.

For 2+2+2 multichannel sound, please utilize your existing stereo speakers (in front right and

left) and rear speakers (behind to the right and left). Then mount an additional speaker pair directly above the two front stereo speakers. The distance between each of the elevated speakers and the stereo speaker below it should be half that between the two front stereo speakers. (It is a good idea to position the upper speakers against the side walls.)

For three-dimensional sound, feed the signal of the centre speaker to the upper left speaker and the subwoofer signal to the upper right channel.

For an optimal setup and a simple test facility of your multichannel equipment please use the DVD-Audio »Breakthrough into a new Dimension« MDG 906 1069-5 or the SACD »Hey Bulldog« MDG 906 1340-6.

(Further Information:

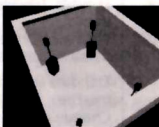
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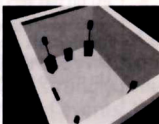
Speaker configuration Surround 5.1.
(with LFE Subwoofer on the left side)

Lautsprecheranordnung Surround 5.1, an der linken Wand der LFE (Subwoofer)



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Speaker configuration for both systems

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Dmitry Shostakovich (1906-1975)

MUSIKPRODUKTION
DABRINGHAUS UND GRIMM

Symphony No. 15 op. 141 45'56

- | | | |
|---|---------------------|-------|
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Symphony No. 3 op. 20 29'13

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Czech Philharmonic Choir Brno

(Petr Fiala, chorus master)

Beethoven Orchester Bonn

Roman Kofman, conductor



no picture / only music
kein Bild / nur Musik

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SACD - Player	+	+	+
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Shostakovich: Symphonies No. 3 & 15



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