

Shostakovich – Symphony No.15 (Sanderling) [2001]

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 01 January 2013 17:46 -

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1. I. Allegretto 2. II. Adagio – Largo – Adagio – Largo 3. III. Allegretto 4. IV. Adagio – Allegretto – Adagio – Allegretto Berliner Sinfonie-Orchester Kurt Sanderling – conductor

Shostakovich's Symphony No. 15 in A major, his final symphony, written when he was already very ill, is among his most enigmatic works. It lasts about 45 minutes, but it took him just over a month to write, so it was obviously composed in the heat of inspiration. It's notorious for its extensive and unabashed use of musical quotation, most notably from the William Tell Overture and from Wagner and the composer's own works. They raise questions -- do these quotations have a particular meaning the listeners should be able to make sense of? -- but the musical context offers few answers. Shostakovich reported to a friend, "I don't myself quite know why the quotations are there, but I could not, could not, not include them." In any case, listeners who can give themselves over to the composer's own willingness to accept the music without requiring logical explanation open themselves to experiencing one of Shostakovich's most intimate and moving orchestral statements, particularly in the emotionally wrenching second and fourth movements. --- Stephen Eddins, Rovi

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