

<http://www.chisto.me/news/world/item/98076-dvorak-symphony-no-8-in-g-janacek-sym-suite-from-jenufa-pittsburgh-sym-orch-manfred-honeck-fresh-reference-recordings>

DVORAK: Symphony No. 8 in G; JANACEK: Sym. Suite from Jenufa – Pittsburgh Sym. Orch./ Manfred Honeck – Fresh/ Reference Recordings

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DVORAK: Symphony No. 8 in G, Op. 88; JANACEK: Symphonic Suite from Jenufa – Pittsburgh Sym. Orch./ Manfred Honeck – Fresh/ Reference Recordings multichannel SACD FR-710SACD, 62:04 *****

This album is a sonic blockbuster! We reviewed [a previous release of Strauss works by these same forces and record company](#), also to good acclaim.

This album only confirms the fact that the Pittsburgh Symphony, always one of America's greatest and most underrated orchestras, now tops the list in both interpretative finesse and recorded sound. Only those addicted to the mythology of the "big five" orchestras can think otherwise. Fortunately for them in this instance, there is a bit of a shallow offering in the current releases of Dvorak's *Eighth Symphony*, at least as far as the performance/ sound ratio goes. I have always been partial to the Szell/ Cleveland issue as perhaps the greatest performance this work as ever known on record, with sympathies to Barbirolli/ Halle as wonderful performance/ so-so sound. Honeck comes very close to both of these legends as his intelligent and well-spoken readings suggest. Phrasing is perfect; he lingers some places where others may not, but never to excess, and always to enhance the dramatic curve of each movement and the symphony as a whole. There are numerous places in the orchestration, enhanced by the superb Super Audio sound, that reflect a lot of consideration to native Czech style and Honeck's own unique philosophy regarding how this music should be performed. Paavo Jarvi and the Cincinnati Symphony recorded a fine SACD of the Dvorak and the Martinu *Symphony No. 2* a few years back on Telarc, but it really can't compare to this one.

The Janacek *Jenufa* suite is one that Honeck created and was arranged by Czech composer Tomas Ille. It seeks (successfully) to present the main dramatic portions of the opera in sequence, reflecting the varied and often sad and stormy moments of the work, essentially creating a *tone poem* of highly descriptive provenance of utterly moving proportions. And again, the sound will simply blow you away. Never have I heard either of these works in such a stunningly brilliant aural perspective, and the effect—assuming you are listening on a good sound system—is thrilling.

Don't miss this one!

—Steven Ritter

Read more <http://audaud.com/2014/07/dvorak-symphony-no-8-in-g-janacek-sym-suite-from-jenufa-pittsburgh-sym-orch-manfred-honeck-fresh-reference-recordings/>