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'One of the best records of the century' - Beethoven and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, conductor Manfred Honeck: Music box, 25th and 31st of January

Monday, 25 January 2016 , ora 9.05



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I invite you to listen carefully to the record release that I am recommending to you, because I am sure it be one of the most award-winning records of 2016. I am incredibly excited by what I have listened to on this record, released November 13, 2015, by the American label Reference Recordings, an album which features two famous symphonies by Beethoven, conductor Manfred Honeck. Of course, it was to be expected, if we consider the fact that the musicians' previous record, featuring Bruckner's 4th Symphony, released in February 2015, is nominated for a Grammy award, the ceremony being held on the 15th of February, 2016.

This album also features recordings from live performances, three concerts which took place between the 5th and 7th of December, 2014, to be precise. Like the previous

Pittsburgh Sympony Orchestra records, conducted by Manfred Honeck, we find exceptional technical quality, a stunning sound clarity - the tech team involved in these recordings has over 80 Grammy nominations.

Despite knowing all this, I was not prepared enough for the exceptional experience brought on by listening to the two famous symphonies by Beethoven, which we would be tempted to say that we know everything about. Well, everything is fresh, new and unexpected in the performance brought to us by Manfred Honeck. It has the same notes and Beethovenian spirit, but the experience of the audience is absolutely fascinating due to the way in which Honeck manages to bring new aspects of the score to light, something he explains at length in the CD's very well-documented booklet.

International Echoes

The record has already been noticed by international reviewers: "This version manages to make the short list of best performances of Beethoven's Symphonies of this century. It is not often that one discovers new things, new angles in such well-known pieces of music, such as Beethoven's 5th Symphony. This is what makes it such a unique experience," a *Presto Classical* reviewer wrote.

And it is not often, I would add, that you get goosebumps and burst into tears when listening to the second part of Beethoven's 7th Symphony, or are surprised by the crescendo arches which lift you up to the sky and by the many details which create a magnificent picture.

One of the best records I have ever listened to

Yes, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and Manfred Honeck bring a 21st century performance of Beethoven's masterpieces, a vision born out of the dilligent study of the original scores, without becoming a dated interpretation. This achievement is all the more important, since, as I was surprised to notice, there have not been many recordings of Beethoven's Symphonies lately, let alone two on the same album. Perhaps this was the case for fear that everything had already been said of Beethoven's Symphonies.

Manfred Honeck seems to have assimilated the experience of previous great conductors who have performed Beethoven: as a violonist with Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, he performed these scores together with Karajan, Kleiber, Harnoncourt, Muti, Abbado, Bernstein. But it is only now, at 58 years of age, that he has managed to decant his own vision of Beethoven's masterpieces, which he turned into reality together with an impressive orchestra, highly flexible, strong yet sensitive, with top-notch blowers and an outstanding sense of music.

You can listen to the new Beethoven album by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Manfred Honeck, on Radio România Muzical, Monday, 25th of January, at 7 PM, on the website [Vote for the best classical album of 2016](#), where you are invited to rate the contesting records (the highest score is 5).

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