

The Andante sostenuto justifies Khachaturian's use of the word "requiem" more than any other movement. It's based on the distinctively Armenian folk song "Vorskan akhper," wherein a mother learns the story of her son's heroic death. The mourning reaches a peak of intensity, after which the Dies Irae from the medieval mass for the dead plays at half speed in the strings. The concluding movement, Andante mosso - Allegro sostenuto, looks ahead to victory, but a grim victory. Brassy, somewhat garish, and usually turbulent, the movement ends with the alarm bell providing a clanging reminder that the people must remain vigilant even in triumph.



Khachaturian

Symphony no.2 THE BELL

VIENNA PHILHARMONIC KHACHATURIAN

Safely ensconced in the Composers' Union retreat in Ivanovo with the likes of Prokofiev and Shostakovich, Khachaturian was nevertheless deeply affected by World War II while it raged to the west. In the summer of 1943, he translated the war and the feelings it inspired in him into a symphony, which he described as "a requiem of wrath, a requiem of protest against war and violence." It's a massive work, consuming about 50 minutes when performed uncut. Khachaturian tinkered with it over the years and eventually reversed the order of the inner movements, so the sequence varies with the vintage of the recording.

The opening *Andante maestoso* – *Allegro agitato* begins stridently, with a bit of clanging from the orchestral bells that give the work its subtitle, but

it immediately falls into the Technicolor, Armenian-flavored style familiar from Khachaturian's ballet *Spartacus*. A mournful section develops, carried mainly by the strings, and is repeatedly thrown into contrast with the alarming gesture from the movement's opening bars. Despite passages of high drama, the movement ends with a long, gradual fade-out.

The *Allegro risoluto* (sometimes heard third rather than second) is a scherzo arising from an agitated rhythmic figure, which serves as an ostinato moving through the various orchestral sections during the sinister dance of the movement's outer segments. The very brief middle section is more lyrical; Khachaturian said it symbolized "rest after hard labor."

Khachaturian Symphony No. 2 "The Bell"

Aram Khachaturian conducts the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

1 Andante Maestoso 16:10

2 Allegro Risoluto 9:00

3 Andante Sostenuto 14:20

4 Andante Mosso

Allegro Sostenuto, Maestoso 11:50

Total Time: 51:20

Recorded by Decca 8-11 Mar 1962 Sofiensaal, Vienna

Producer: Erik Smith Engineer: James Brown



For more info e-mail us:
admin@highdeftapetransfers.com
or visit our website:
www.highdeftapetransfers.com