Homecoming Event
Finally! Following excursions into the late and very latest years of musical romanticism, highly decorated opera recordings, and a journey to Russia, the Beethoven Orchestra of Bonn returns to his roots. The Bonn musicians have selected two of the war-horses of the concert repertoire in the form of their patron's first and fifth symphonies, and Stefan Blunier's finely nuanced conducting endows them with surprisingly vital freshness and powerful imagination.

Striving Process
From its very first measures the opening of the first symphony heralds something new. Beethoven's contemporaries were shocked: instead of establishing the tonic key, the slow introduction begins with dissonant seventh chords. Moreover, they are essentially presented by the wind instruments – a completely surprising move and one entirely untypical of those times – and then are resolved merely with light dabbing, with a hint of the mysterious. A striving process ensues, anticipating the romantic era, in which the reaching of a goal is merely of secondary importance, and Blunier and his musicians trace its path with fine intuition and breathless suspense.

Captivating Development
Beethoven's Fifth is certainly the most famous symphony of all, but here too, as the spirited Bonn musicians impressively demonstrate, new discoveries lie in store. The famous opening motif, with very precise rhythmic markings on the composer's part, is bursting with vigor and charged with energy. A captivating development extends through to the finale with its C major orgy that could go on forever and is very suspenseful in its stringency.

Living Presence
The dazzling interpretation of these masterpieces in MDG's 2+2+2 sound makes the listening experience all the more gripping. It is simply fantastic – the orchestra's seemingly real presence in the living room, and the listener sitting in its midst, rendered breathless by the thrill of it all. Beethoven in 3-D – finally and at last!

Eugen d'Albert
Der Golem
Soloists, Chor des Theater Bonn,
Beethoven Orchester Bonn,
Stefan Blunier, cond.
MDG 937 1637-6 (2 SACDs)

Franz Schreker
Irrelohe
Soloists, Chor des Theater Bonn,
Beethoven Orchester Bonn, Stefan Blunier, cond.
MDG 937 1687-6 (3 SACDs)

Russian Orchestral Works of the 20th Century
Werke von Glazunov, Scriabin, Lysenko etc.
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