



The Bruckner Journal

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Keeping True

The emotional, even spiritual, response we have to the music of our favourite composers often leads us to feel that, at some level, we have a similar understanding, something profound in common with them which their music has inspired and cultivated within us. Sometimes it becomes necessary to resist a temptation to extend this bond of assumed empathy, a temptation that would recreate the composers and their music in an image more closely related to our own preferences, and thereby moderate our reliance on the facts of biographical and manuscript sources.

But the intention to remain true to Bruckner, whilst a simple thought, is a matter of some complexity when the attempt is made to put it into practice, open to a variety of interpretation, and beset by literature littered with misinformation - hence, one might say, the need for *The Bruckner Journal*. In this issue, both John Phillips, in his discussion of criticism of Bruckner's finale to the Ninth symphony, and Ken Ward, in his refutation of Norman Lebrecht's statement about Bruckner's anti-Semitism, close their arguments with the suggestion that Bruckner be taken at his word - a 'word' not always easy to establish and authenticate, but it's the least one should do. In his review of Frederick Stocken's book about Simon Sechter and Bruckner, Julian Horton addresses with appealing clarity the benefits and limitations of a project that would analyse Bruckner's music according to the theories of Bruckner's teacher, rather than apply more recent analytic tools, and this too provides an opportunity to get closer to what Bruckner's own idea of his music might have been.

Just as intriguing is Alan George's article about playing the Bruckner Quintet, where he considers how music was played at the time of its composition, and of the replica 1870 Viennese strings he and his colleagues in the Fitzwilliam Quartet use for this music, that the strings themselves inform *how* it can be played. Again we are provided with an opportunity to come closer to what Bruckner himself might have had in mind, and the release of their recording - now scheduled for spring 2013 - is awaited with some impatience. *kw*

As part of our continuing occasional series, readers are invited to write on how they first discovered Bruckner.

ON FIRST HEARING A BRUCKNER SYMPHONY

by

Simon E. Spero

AS A passionate, almost lifelong admirer of the music of Anton Bruckner, I experienced a frisson of envy in reading the life changing experiences of Daniel Barenboim (*Sunday Times*, 15 April 2012) and Tom Service (*The Bruckner Journal* March 2012) during their first encounter with the composer. Tom Service's description of his reaction on listening to the opening movement of the 3rd Symphony was especially poignant. How I wish I could look back on so damascene a moment.

I was first introduced to Bruckner's music in the early 1960s. I was in my late teens, an avid record collector but not yet a regular concert-goer. Alongside the mainstream classics, I had developed a particular interest in Bartók, Janáček and especially Prokofiev. I had barely heard of Anton Bruckner and my first encounter with his music, the 4th Symphony, left me unprepared and completely bewildered.

Listening once more to the opening bars, I can remember thinking that they sounded as if they were responding to some completely absent earlier statement. It was as if I had stumbled into someone else's conversation, conducted in a language that I did not understand. As the movement developed, I felt increasingly adrift, baffled by the unfamiliar pauses, interruptions and the unexpected modulations. Where were the reassuring certainties, the sense of thematic progression that was so familiar from the symphonies of Brahms, Schumann and Dvořák? I had completely lost my bearings.

Amazingly, in retrospect, this sense of an alien terrain remained with me throughout the sublime Andante, with its seemingly tentative phrases, faltering motifs and puzzling ostinatos. Yet of course it was I who was stumbling along, unable to grasp the magical sense of spaciousness, the returning sections, each increasingly embroidered yet gloriously contrasted. And the unselfconscious sense of music that had somehow been given life rather than laboriously composed.

My subsequent conversion occurred a year or so later on a visit to the Festival Hall to hear the 7th Symphony. From that moment, there was no turning back. Initially, I was especially drawn to the 7th and 8th Symphonies, perhaps the most consummately successful of all Bruckner's symphonic works. Yet in recent years I have developed particular affections for the 6th Symphony and for the fascinating insights revealed by the differing versions of the 3rd Symphony. For all its shortcomings, especially in the Finale, this is a thrilling piece, and I can well imagine the effect on the young Tom Service of the noble unison theme in the First Movement, the wonderful succession of flowing themes in the slow movement and the trio passages framed in the composer's most relaxed and airy vein. Even the irresolute Finale, for all its vacillations, culminates in a majestic recapitulation of the opening theme, forthright, unequivocal and outwardly at intriguing odds with the composer's disposition.

Bruckner's symphonies are now a part of the fabric of my life. An unforgettable highlight was a performance at a Promenade Concert, 10th Sept. 1970, of the 8th Symphony conducted by Jascha Horenstein. In an incredibly moving gesture during the rapturous applause, the conductor held aloft Bruckner's score. It was a moment that few in that audience would ever forget.

For me, although it is fascinating to study Bruckner's symphonies, to try to understand their structure and what gives them their individual character, the music itself somehow rises above any sense of analysis. One can perhaps imagine the composer himself, envisaging each fresh theme as being orchestrated from the different manuals of an organ, almost in the manner of an improvisation. Hence the intoxicating modulations into unexpected keys, the sudden brass chorales and the pauses as each new idea makes way for its successor. Whether or not this was part of the composer's creative process, he reputedly presented motifs from the 8th Symphony to the public in an organ improvisation at St Florian, interweaving them with themes from *Götterdämmerung*.

By all accounts Bruckner was a man beset by insecurities. Might it not therefore be natural when composing his symphonic works, for him to have drawn confidence from the exercise of his acknowledged mastery of the organ? Certainly, instances abound in his symphonic output when the orchestra is treated in the manner of an organ: the magical hushed moments, the majestic fugues and chorale passages in the first movements of the 4th and 5th symphonies. All convey an orchestral texture which might have been envisaged on the organ. Indeed, it would be illuminating to hear a complete Bruckner symphony transcribed for the instrument.

The versions of Bruckner symphonies arranged for piano, four hands, although not for the purist, are instructive for their insights into the composer's symphonic structure, especially in the cases of nos. 1 and 2, although somewhat less so in no. 8. They would certainly have helped me as I listened to the opening bars of the 4th Symphony all those years ago, not yet able to comprehend that it was "... not a symphony which starts, but the very beginning of music itself".

Bruckner, Mahler and anti-Semitism

IN HIS recently published book, *Why Mahler?* Norman Lebrecht writes, on page 40: “Mahler calls Bruckner his “father-in-learning”, overlooking his repeated disparagements of Mahler’s Jewishness. It is the price he has to pay for having a mentor.”¹

Lebrecht gives no reference as to the source that leads him to make this unprecedented assertion about Bruckner’s behaviour towards Mahler, but the sentence does have one footnote, referring to Paul Stefan’s early Mahler biography, where you will read that it was Guido Adler’s² expression, not Mahler’s: “Adoptiv-Lehrvater” - (adoptive/adopted father-in-learning) - and ‘Adoptiv’ could suggest the action of adopting was Bruckner’s as much as Mahler’s.³ But in Stefan’s book you will find only descriptions of Bruckner’s respect, exaggerated respect even, towards Mahler: Stefan reports Theodor Rättig telling him Bruckner *always* spoke of Mahler with extreme respect or deference, [äußerst Achtung]. Indeed, you will find the same memoir recycled in Lebrecht’s own book, *Mahler Remembered*, p.27, footnote: “Bruckner’s publisher, Theodor Rättig, told Paul Stefan that ‘Bruckner always spoke of Mahler with the greatest respect ... whenever Mahler visited, he always insisted on accompanying the young man down the four flights of stairs, hat in hand.’⁴

Searching the biographical literature of both composers and a variety of memoirs, I can find no evidence whatever that Bruckner ever once said anything to Mahler disparaging his Jewishness, let alone repeatedly. The only suggestion that Bruckner might have had any reservations on that account comes in a letter written by Krzyzanowski’s sister-in-law, Marie Lorenz. Krzyzanowski was Mahler’s friend, and they were both amongst the small band of enthusiasts who applauded Bruckner at the end of the disastrous performance of the 3rd Symphony in December 1877, and they shared the task of making the 4-hand piano transcription of the symphony, this transcription being Mahler’s first published work. Lorenz had some spiteful comments to make about Mahler, whose confidence, ambition, success and friendship with Bruckner she obviously resented. One suspects she would have loved to have quoted disparaging comments by Bruckner of Mahler’s Jewishness, but this even she was unable to do. She writes of Mahler and of his relationship with Bruckner,

“I knew Mahler from his modest times (when he was a student at the conservatory) and even at that time he could not bear being put in the shade in any way. Step by step seeking the heights, limb by limb, good fortune easing his path. Tyrannical to the verge of heartlessness, stepping on all obstacles in his way, accessible only if one happened to find him in good humour and at a propitious moment, he could still act obsequiously at times. Did he have time to devote to Bruckner? If the question of playing a work was involved! Yes, but for how long? And what was left for Bruckner’s personal, marvellous, divinely-gifted nature? And even so, Bruckner, who had the pure naivety of a child, would be overjoyed to receive a letter from his one-time pupil!”⁵

As La Grange points out, Mahler did not conduct any Bruckner until many years later, so Lorenz’s comment that Mahler had time to devote to Bruckner only if there was a work of his to be performed is obviously untrue.

This appears in the 9 part biography of Bruckner by Göllerich-Auer, published between 1922 and 1937 *Anton Bruckner - Ein lebens- und Schaffens-Bild*. Göllerich quotes Lorenz again, this time where she makes explicit mention of Bruckner’s alleged dislike of Mahler’s Jewishness and of Bruckner’s anti-Semitism, but one wonders how much this might be an expression of her own, not to mention Göllerich’s, anti-Mahler, anti-Semitic, views rather than a true reflection of Bruckner’s feelings for Mahler:

¹ Norman Lebrecht, *Why Mahler? How one man and ten symphonies changed the world*. Faber & Faber 2010, p.40

² Guido Adler, 1855-1941, musicologist, friend and promoter of Mahler, attended Bruckner’s university courses.

³ Paul Stefan, *Gustav Mahler - Eine Studie über Persönlichkeit und Werk* München 1912, p.27

„Bruckner kam meist mit Mahler in den Hörsaal und verließ ihn von Mahler begleitet; wie denn der ehrwürdige Meister, nach Guido Adlers gutem Wort, Mahlers „Adoptiv-Lehrvater“ genannt werden kann.“ [Bruckner usually arrived at the lecture hall and left it accompanied by Mahler, so that indeed the venerable Master, in the apt words of Guido Adler, can be called Mahler’s “Adopted Father-in-learning”. Trans. KW]

⁴ Norman Lebrecht, *Mahler Remembered* Faber & Faber, London 1987

⁵ Henry-Louis de La Grange *Mahler* Gollanz London 1974 p.41, La Grange’s translation from Göllerich-Auer *Anton Bruckner - Ein lebens- und Schaffens-Bild* IV/1, p.450. (Trans. expanded and completed to include fuller quotation.)

Ich kenne Mahler noch aus seiner bescheidenen Zeit (noch als Konservatoriums-Schüler) und schon damals hat er nichts vertragen, was nur irgend gewagt hätte, ihn in den Schatten zu stellen! Von da ab Stufe zu Stufe in die Höhe jagend, Glied um Glied, Glück am Weg. Tyrannisch bis zur Herzlosigkeit und niedertretend, was ihm im Wege stand. Nur zugänglich in Augenblicken, wenn jemand die richtige Zeit und Stimmung ihn zu rühren das Glück hatte, dann war er auch imstande am Boden zu liegen. Hatte er Zeit für Bruckner? In Momentum, wo es zu Aufführungen kam ja, aber wie lange? Und was fiel ab für sein (Bruckners) persönliches fabelhaft gottbegnadetes Wesen? Und doch hat Bruckner, der das naiv Reine eines Kindes an sich hatte, ein Brief seines einstigen Schülers so sehr gefreut!

“He [Bruckner] took Krzyzanowski to his heart, as opposed to Mahler the Jew, who he valued as an extraordinary musician, but by whom, reports Krzyzanowski’s sister-in-law Frau Marie Lorenz, he was disturbed. ‘The Jews’, she further reports, ‘were to him altogether unlikeable and he was horrified by the word ‘Jew’ as though he had committed a great insult against them should the word accidentally slip out, and he corrected himself with a more delicate description, where he would say, ‘the Israelite gentlemen’.”⁶

Göllerich continues: “His dislike of the Jews differentiates itself nevertheless from the indiscriminate hate of anti-Semites, so that for reasons of his sincere and deep religiousness this feeling was transformed into deep compassion...” This uneasy distinction is then illustrated by the story from Kerschagl’s reminiscences of attending Bruckner’s lectures in the Vienna Conservatory, the occasion when Bruckner entered the classroom and noticed a small Jewish boy sitting in the front row, gazed a while at him, then put a hand upon his head and said to him, “almost compassionately, ‘Dear child, do you really believe that the Messiah has not yet come to earth?’”⁷ According to Kerschagl’s memoir as retold by Göllerich, the whole place burst into laughter, but Bruckner was altogether serious.

August Göllerich was a virulent anti-Semite, so much so that, even though he was Bruckner’s ‘official’ biographer, the University of Vienna asked him to withdraw from the celebration of Bruckner’s receipt of an honorary doctorate in December 1891 at which he had been due to speak.⁸ That such a man was Bruckner’s biographer, and an enormous proportion of the biographical information we have about Bruckner’s life comes from his work, renders it necessary to treat his anecdotes and reports with some circumspection, and it is perhaps surprising, and even reassuring, that he found nothing more blatantly anti-Semitic in Bruckner’s attitude and behaviour to report in that lengthy biography than the extracts I quote in this essay.

There is a further reference to Bruckner’s view of Mahler and Mahler’s Jewishness in Göllerich-Auer. Wilhelm Zinne (1858-1934), a friend and supporter of Mahler in Hamburg, who shared Mahler’s love of Bruckner and cycling, visited Bruckner in 1892 at the time of the Vienna Theatre and Music Exhibition. Göllerich-Auer quotes Zinne’s own report of his meeting with Bruckner. In the rather bare, modest room, with manuscript paper and scores lying on the piano and harmonium, he sat down with Bruckner who “soon asks after ‘his beloved Mahler’, who he appeared to regard very highly. Let him prepare his symphony - the Seventh above all, which to Bruckner himself was the dearest.”⁹ They drank a bottle of red wine, the conversation became more convivial. “He expressed great joy over the enthusiasm of the Viennese for his works. He was pleased too by the Berliners and the performance of the *Te Deum* under Siegfried Ochs, who was probably a Jew, but that doesn’t matter; Mahler is also a Jew but he rails terribly against the Jews. All this in jest, as he was on this day uncommonly cheerful and in the mood for joking.”¹⁰ It is hard to read into this reminiscence an anti-Semitism so unforgiving and mean-minded as would have expressed itself in repeated disparagement of ‘his beloved Mahler’s’ Jewishness.

Alma Mahler and Max von Oberleithner both write of Bruckner’s preference for the expression ‘the honourable Israelites’¹¹. Our consideration of what to make of this preference must include the likelihood that Bruckner was actually at pains not to be anti-Semitic. As Dermot Gault points out, ‘Bruckner was ... known for his tolerance and friendship with Jews.’¹² His long-term friendship with his student Friedrich Eckstein,¹³ not to mention his consideration of a proposal of marriage to his pupil Marie Pohoryles, a Polish Jewish young woman who seems to have taken lessons from Bruckner for almost ten years,¹⁴ are both witness to affections that were

⁶ Göllerich-Auer *Anton Bruckner - Ein lebens- und Schaffens-Bild* Vol. 4/1 p.532

Besonders Krzyzanowsky hatte der Meister ins Herz geschlossen, dagegen störte ihn bei Mahler, den er als Musiker außerordentlich schätzte, wie Frau Marie Lorenz, die Schwägerin Krzyzanowskys berichtet, der Jude. ‘Die Juden’, so berichtet sie weiter, ‘waren ihm überhaupt unsympathisch und er erschrak vor dem Ausdruck ‘Jude’ wie vor einer großen Beleidigung gegen diese wenn ihm derselbe zufällig entschlüpfte, und verbesserte sich in zarterer Umschreibung, indem er sagte ‘die Herren Israeliten’... Seine Abneigung gegen die Juden unterschied sich jedoch von dem wahllosen Haß der Antisemiten, so daß er auf Grund seiner wahren und tiefen Religiosität diese Gefühl in tiefes Mitleid wandelte...

⁷ Göllerich-Auer, op. cit

⁸ Margaret Notley, “Bruckner and Viennese Wagnerism” in *Bruckner Studies*, ed. Jackson & Hawkshaw, CUP 1997 p. 67

⁹ Ibid Vol.4/3 p.247 „Bald fragte er nach seinem ‘lieben Mahler’, den er sehr zu schätzen schien. Er möge doch mal seine Symphonie - die ‘Siebente’ vor allem, die ihm selbst die liebste sei.“

¹⁰ Ibid p. 250 „Er äußerte große Freude über den Enthusiasmus der Wiener an seinen Werken. Er freute sich auch über die Berliner und die Aufnahme des *Te Deums* unter der Leitung von Siegfried Ochs, der sei wohl ein Jude, aber das macht nichts; auch Mahler ist ein Jude, aber er schimpft schrecklich auf die Juden. Das alles scherzend, wie er gerade an dem Tage ungemein heiter und zu Scherzen aufgelegt war.“

¹¹ Stephen Johnson *Bruckner Remembered* Faber & Faber, London 1998, p.128

¹² Dermot Gault *The New Bruckner* Ashgate 2011, p.235

¹³ Frederick Eckstein, 1861 - 1939 industrialist, philosopher, musician, a student of Bruckner’s at the Conservatory 1880 and later privately from 1884. Provided Bruckner financial support, including for the publication of the *Te Deum*.

¹⁴ Göllerich-Auer, op. cit Vol 4/2 p.228 Entries in Franz Scheder, “Anton Bruckner Chronologie Datenbank” for Pohoryles from 1880 - 1890.

free of any of that restraint as would have arisen had Bruckner been anti-Semitic. And beyond that, he was prepared to rebuke those, like Lebrecht, who would label him in print as anti-Semitic:

Generally he was, as Marschner¹⁵ reports, not really in sympathy with the anti-Semitism of some of his most outstanding students, since he currently saw himself strongly promoted by several noble representatives of that race. One thinks only of what Eckstein and Levi had done for him!

That circle, which should have recognised and supported the prophets in their ranks, ... at that time did absolutely nothing positive for the Master - but he was, however, good enough to become set up by the newspapers as an anti-Semite, which could only damage him. One day at The Red Hedgehog, just when he had again been denounced in the newspaper as an anti-Semite, he met Dr Königstein, the critic of *Extrablatt*. "So, Mr. Doctor," he addressed him, "what it says in the newspapers is absolutely not true - I have absolutely nothing against the Israelite gentlemen!"¹⁶

He also fought against anti-Semitism on behalf of the requirements of his students. Bruckner arranged for the purchase of a fine 'Organ-harmonium' from the firm of Bernhard Kohn in Vienna for the students of the organ-playing course - the Conservatory had no instrument for the students of the course to play on! - but after its installation the Conservatory administration said they could not use it because the Conservatory would not take an organ from a Jewish firm. The students were outraged, and Bruckner took it upon himself to report this outrage to the administration: the following week the 'organ-harmonium' was back in service - and that instrument stayed with Bruckner until his final year.¹⁷

That the Conservatory should have sought to forbid the use of a fine instrument because it was obtained from a Jewish firm gives an idea of the extraordinary prevalence of anti-Semitism at that time. Tanya Tintner, who describes the anti-Semitism in Vienna in her book *Out of Time: The Vexed Life of Georg Tintner*,¹⁸ gives the background which helps to place Bruckner's reported relations with Mahler and Jews in context. In an email exchange she wrote:

In Bruckner's time anti-Semitism was endemic in Austria, and was even to be found in "mild-mannered" and intelligent and otherwise perfectly reasonable Austrians; it was so much part of the fabric of Austrian life that if you weren't on the receiving end of it you simply didn't notice it. Low-level anti-Semitism was not only regarded as perfectly acceptable, it wasn't even seen as any sort of negative prejudice at all. It was just the way you dealt with Jews, the way you saw them. Non-Jews had dealings with Jews in Vienna all the time, but that didn't mean that the former had anything other than contempt for the latter, entirely because of their Jewishness. Alma Mahler is a good example of this: she married two Jews but it didn't stop her writing and saying the most vile things about Jews in general (see Oliver Hilmes's book, *Witwe im Wahn*, Siedler Verlag, München, 2004). In Austria at the time, there was nothing contradictory about this. Nowadays Alma's behaviour would be utterly unacceptable; at the time it was just pretty normal. So it would be perfectly *possible* for Bruckner to admire Mahler, be grateful to Mahler, and despise Jews all at the same time.

The question is whether Bruckner was just your regular Austrian - an anti-Semite by current standards, not an anti-Semite by late 19th-century standards, background anti-Semitism as it were - or something rather worse. Most likely Bruckner was one of the more tolerant Austrians (and being non-Viennese makes it yet more likely - it was in Vienna, home to a quarter of a million Jews, where the hatred was so extensive), and anti-Semitism, *if any*, that might be attributed to him would be of the endemic, 'common-or-garden', background variety.

It is perhaps difficult to see Bruckner as at all anti-Semitic, but even if his attitude to Jews fell within the pale of this 'background' variety of anti-Semitism, the same cannot be said of some of those with whom he was associated. The primary agency by which Bruckner's works were promoted in Vienna in the 1880s and 1890s was the Vienna Academic Wagner Society (Wiener akademischer Wagner-Verein). Josef Schalk was active in this society on Bruckner's behalf and many of Bruckner's works received piano transcription performances under

¹⁵ Dr Franz Marschner, 1855-1932 - Pianist, organist and music theorist, Bruckner pupil in the Conservatory 1883-1885

¹⁶ Göllerich-Auer, op. cit Vol 4/2 p.228

Überhaupt war er, wie Marschner berichtet, mit dem Antisemitismus einiger seiner hervorragendsten Schüler nicht recht einverstanden, da er gerade von einigen edlen Vertretern dieser Rasse sich stark gefördert sah. Man denke nur, was Eckstein und Levi für ihn getan!

Jene Kreise, die den Propheten in ihren Reihen hätten erkennen und unterstützen sollen, ... taten damals für den Meister gar nichts Positives, wohl aber war er gut genug, in den Zeitungen als Antisemit hingestellt zu werden, was ihm nur schaden konnte. Beim 'Roten Igel' traf Bruckner eines Tages, als er eben in der Zeitung wieder als Antisemit verschrien worden war, Dr Königstein, den Kritiker des 'Extrablatt'. „Sö, Herr Doktor,“ redete er ihn an, „was in dö Zeitungen g'redit wird, is' gar nix wahr - i' hab' ja gar nix gegen dö Herrn Israeliten!“

¹⁷ Ibid Vol.4/1 pp 33-38

¹⁸ Tanya Buchdahl Tintner *Out of Time: The Vexed Life of Georg Tintner* University of Western Australia Press 2011

the auspices of this society.¹⁹ Margaret Notley writes, “Indeed, the Wiener akademischer Wagner-Verein ... included many Jews. This organization, which Helm likened in 1891 to “a miniature Bayreuth for Bruckner,” declined to support the anti-Semitic politics that began to pose a serious threat to Viennese Liberalism in the 1880s.”²⁰ But in 1890 the extreme Pan-German nationalist and anti-Semite, Georg von Schönerer, together with a splinter group of sympathisers, left the Wiener akademischer Wagner-Verein to form the New Richard Wagner Society (Neuer Richard-Wagner-Verein).

The society declared “As national artist Richard Wagner was an anti-Semite, so must every Wagner society be uncontaminated German, so that it does not become a caricature of an artistic association that bears the name of ‘Wagner’.”²¹

The event was reported in the anti-Semitic newspaper, *Deutsches Volksblatt*, 27 March 1890,

The first motion now put by the board, that Meister Anton Bruckner, the heir to Beethoven’s genius long silenced to death by the press, be appointed honorary member, and the spiritual creator of the New Richard Wagner Society, Mr August Göllerich be appointed honorary Chairman, was unanimously adopted and called forth a storm of true German enthusiasm.²²

Both Wagner societies promoted talks about and performances of Bruckner’s works, which didn’t happen elsewhere in the conservative music establishment, which leads Dr. Robert Hirschfeld to comment in *Die Presse*, 24 December 1890,

The conservative critics have always treated Anton Bruckner with ridicule and scorn. So he fell into the hands of political partisans who took pains to take in the ‘abandoned man’ in all spheres, in order in the end to discredit him altogether.²³

Although this group of anti-Semitic supporters was keen to claim Bruckner as a great German Meister, and described such a being as free from Jewish influence, nowhere is there a word or action of Bruckner’s that records him as ever being active in their cause. We have no evidence of any response from him to his appointment as honorary member, not even in Göllerich’s biography, nor any evidence of him taking an active role in the Neuer Richard-Wagner-Verein at all. Although their programme was anti-Semitic, and they chose Bruckner as their artistic mascot, they seem to have found him totally unusable to follow in Wagner’s footsteps in the vanguard of anti-Semitism. Bruckner continued his association with Jews, including Mahler, Friedrich Eckstein, Ferdinand Löwe and Herman Levi, and with the somewhat more liberal Wiener akademischer Wagner-Verein of which he had also been appointed honorary member in 1885.

Bruckner’s letters to Göllerich are fulsome in their statements of sympathy and friendship, but in the ones that have come down to us, and indeed in all the other letters in the collected letters, there are no anti-Semitic sentiments expressed. Not even when he complains about his fate and that of his music, does he choose to blame ‘the Jews’, or even ‘the honourable Israelites’. They don’t get a mention. Just as he skirted around the word ‘Jude’, referring ‘politely’, as Alma Mahler describes it, to ‘the honourable Israelites’, he seems to have deliberately avoided any involvement in the prevalent and increasing anti-Semitism of his times, possibly seeing it as repugnant and probably an irrelevance or even a hindrance to his own concerns, which were primarily to advance his success as a composer. There is, indeed, to my knowledge no record of him having been involved in the promotion of or opposition to *any* social or political cause, beyond personal representations with regard to his own career and reputation or his music’s reception. There is no record of him being remotely involved in the battle within the Wagner Verein that led to the defection of Göllerich et al, both societies presumably retaining him as an honorary member, but nor do we know how he responded to the example provided by Rudolf Weinwurm, his very close friend since 1856, who resigned from the Akademischer Gesangverein in 1887 because of its increasing anti-Semitism.²⁴ Surely it cannot be, as Thomas Leibnitz speculates, that “Bruckner was unaware

¹⁹ Andrea Harrandt “Preparation for the Public - Piano Transcriptions of Bruckner’s Music” in *The Bruckner Journal*, Vol. 14 / 1, March 2010

²⁰ Margaret Notley “Bruckner and Viennese Wagnerism” in *Bruckner Studies*, ed. Jackson & Hawkshaw, CUP 1997, p65

²¹ Herwig (Eduard Pichl) *Georg Schönerer und die Entwicklung des Alldeutschtumes in der Ostmark* Vienna 1923, p 587

Der Verein erklärte: “Wie Richard Wagner als nationaler Künstler selbst Antisemit war, so muß auch jeder Wagner-verein unverfälscht deutsch sein, so er nicht zur Karikatur einer künstlerischen Vereinigung werden, die den Namen „Wagner“ trägt”

²² Franz Scheder, “Anton Bruckner Chronologie Datenbank” *Deutsches Volksblatt*, 27 March 1890:

Der nun zunächst vom Vorstände gestellte Antrag, Meister Anton Bruckner, den von der Presse so lange todgeschwiegenen Erben des Beethoven’schen Genius, zum Ehren-Mitgliede und den geistigen Schöpfer des neuen Richard-Wagner-Vereines, Herrn August Göllerich, zum Ehren-Obmanne zu ernennen, fand einhellige Annahme und rief einen wahren Sturm echt deutscher Begeisterung hervor.

²³ Göllerich - Auer, op. cit. Vol 4 /3, p.98 Der konservativen Kritik hat Anton Bruckner stets zum Horn und Spott gedient. So geriet er in die Hände politische Parteigänger, welche auf allen Gebieten sich des ‚verlassenen Mannes‘ anzunehmen pflegten, um ihn schließlich gänzlich zu diskreditieren.

²⁴ Crawford Howie *Anton Bruckner - A Documentary Biography*, Edwin Mellen, 2002, Vol. II, p. 583

Wiener Sonn- und Montags-Zeitung - Monday 7th November 1887, p.4 Weinwurm resigned over the refusal of the committee to accept an exceptional young tenor into the choir because he was a Galician Jew.

of the polemical and aggressive aspects of nationalistic German rhetoric”,²⁵ but he does seem to have acted on the whole as if none of it was anything to do with him nor anything that he had to be explicitly involved with - and I think we can take him at his word: he had absolutely nothing against the Israelite gentlemen.

Most of these events post-date the days in the second half of the 1870s when Mahler was a student in Vienna and Bruckner became his ‘adopted father-in-learning’ but none of the reports, certainly none from Mahler himself, nor even any from avowedly anti-Semitic sources, justifies Lebrecht’s distasteful invention that Mahler had to put up with repeated disparagements of his Jewishness from his friend Anton Bruckner.

[I gratefully acknowledge assistance received in putting this essay together from Dr. Dermot Gault, Dr. Benjamin Korstvedt, Dr Margaret Notley, Tanya Buchdahl Tintner, Dr. Crawford Howie.]

KenWard

On the track of Bruckner’s ‘railway obsession’

EVERY SO often a Bruckner enthusiast, or an item submitted for publication in *The Bruckner Journal*, will make reference to Bruckner’s obsession with railways. Knowing nothing of this at all, I had put it by as something one day I must research, though I had never myself come across anything about this interesting side to the composer’s personality. But just recently, at Terry Barfoot’s Arts in Residence weekend in Rye devoted to Bruckner, I met a Brucknerian who went into such detail about Bruckner’s great friendship with the famous Austrian railway engineer, Karl Gölsdorf, about how Bruckner would go each morning to the Vienna station, *Westbahnhof*, to stare at locomotives and collect his Upper Austrian *Geselchtes* (salted and smoked pork, enjoyed, according to anecdote, by both Bruckner and Brahms), how the Scherzo of the Eighth obviously imitates the sound of a mighty steam engine, how the horn call that opens the Fourth is that of the horns on Austrian locomotives - that I felt the time had come to research this more thoroughly.

Fortunately it didn’t take too long to find the *Journal of the Railway and Canal Historical Society*, Volume 34, Part 5, No.185, from July 2003, and a letter the précis of which was available on-line.¹ The letter was written by John Marshall, (1922-2008), an English Railway historian. He refers back to an article in Part 4 of that journal, no.184, March 2003 on ‘Music and Railways’ written by Philip Scowcroft who had included Bruckner alongside Dvořák as having a ‘passionate interest in railways’.

The précis continues:

Marshall first became interested in Bruckner about 1941, but it was not until he heard a recording of his 7th symphony, while out in India in 1945, that he became a Bruckner enthusiast. During the next 41 years he came upon no mention of any association between Bruckner and railways until, on 26 May 1986, the BBC broadcast a talk by David Elliot, son of Sir John Elliot of the Southern Railway, with the title ‘*A Composer on the Footplate, some revealing new evidence on the sources of Bruckner’s inspiration*’. He recorded the talk, which he found very interesting, but when he listened to it again he became suspicious, so he checked a few dates, and the suspicions multiplied.

The talk had alleged that it was in fact Bruckner’s counterpoint and harmony teacher, Simon Sechter, who introduced the composer to his friends, Louis and Karl Gölsdorf, the great Austrian locomotive engineers, and that the engineers were keen musicians. There had been a competition for a locomotive capable of coping with the severe gradients of first trans-Alpine railway, which had been won by a locomotive named *Bavaria*, and the BBC broadcast said that Bruckner and Karl Gölsdorf had been invited onto the footplate in 1851. Marshall’s researches revealed that Karl had been merely 6 years old when Sechter died, so the friendship between the two men was unlikely, and that Karl had not even been born when he and Bruckner were supposed to have stood on the footplate of the *Bavaria*. Marshall wrote to Dr. Schuh, archivist of the Austrian State Railways Administration, who replied he could find no record of friendship between Louis Gölsdorf and Bruckner, nor any evidence of musical interest on the part of Karl Gölsdorf.

The précis continues:

Marshall had begun to draft a letter to Mr Elliot when he received the *Stephenson Locomotive Society Journal* for March/April 1987. There, on p61, he saw that he had been forestalled by a letter to the BBC from Mr David Cole which brought forth a reply from Mr Elliot revealing that the programme had been intended to go out on 1 April 1986 as a clever April fool’s hoax.

²⁵ Thomas Leibniz, “Anton Bruckner and ‘German Music’: Josef Schalk and the Establishment of Bruckner as National Composer,” *Perspectives on Anton Bruckner*, ed Hawkshaw, Howie and Jackson, Ashgate 2001, p.333

Marshall's closing sentence displays that those of us who have been misled are in august company, but also how ineradicable these Brucknerian myths are: "The trouble with this is that people will believe it if they are not also railway historians. Even the great Bruckner scholar Robert Simpson believed it until informed otherwise. So it gets into the 'system' and nothing will eradicate it, and 'secondary-source historians' will go on repeating it for ever."

The truth of this is attested by the following entry on a web page by Phil Pacey, updated March 2012, entitled *Music and Railways*:

1874 Bruckner Symphony no. 4 ('Romantic')

I've heard two versions of this story. According to one, the young Bruckner had a friend whose father was the chief engineer of Austrian Railways and who let the boys ride on the footplate. The chief engineer bought some American heavy freight locomotives with chime whistles. Bruckner lived within earshot of an incline where one of these locomotives was attached at the rear to bank trains hauled by locomotives of the same type. The locomotives used to whistle to each other to synchronize their efforts, and the horn calls at the beginning of the 4th Symphony recall this dialogue. In another version of this story, Bruckner was friendly with the locomotive engineer on the Sudbahn at Wiener Neustadt and occasionally accompanied him on test runs of new locomotives on the Semmering line. The horns echo the whistles of trains on the Semmering line.²

Perhaps the story of Bruckner having a passion for the railways is relatively harmless, even if totally untrue; the same, unfortunately, cannot be said for Norman Lebrecht's fiction about Bruckner's anti-Semitism, which is equally untrue but by no means harmless, and unless assiduously opposed I fear will acquire a similar persistence, 'secondary source historians will go on repeating it forever'.
Ken Ward

1. <http://www.steamindex.com/rlycanhist/j34.htm#330-jm> accessed 27 May 2012

2. <http://www.philpacey.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/musrail.html> accessed 27 May 2012 Since being contacted, Phil Pacey has revised this entry on his web page with commendable alacrity.

The Gerd Schaller / William Carragan collaboration continues in a new Profil CD set and a 2012 performance of the Symphony No. 8

Profil continues its unique Bruckner cycle conducted by Gerd Schaller. The new CD box set was recorded in the Abbey in Ebrach in July of 2011 as part of the ongoing Ebrach Bruckner Festival. It contains Bruckner's early versions of Symphonies No. 1, 2 and 3, and will be released in July 2012. All three symphonies are edited by Prof. William Carragan: The First in the 1866 "First Performance" Linz version, the Second as the first version of 1872 and the Third as a world premiere recording of the symphony as it existed in manuscript in 1874.

William Carragan has contributed the following notes regarding these three performances:

About the First: This is the true "Linz" version, the version prepared in 1866 which Bruckner himself conducted at the premiere in 1868. Listeners will note the more abrupt beginning of the first movement, which Bruckner lengthened in 1877 for metrical reasons. But the earlier idea is more striking, and so also are the many passages in the finale where the extravagant, individualistic gestures are just a bit wilder, a bit more challenging. Particularly noteworthy is the place near the end where the three trombones, entering strongly in C major, define the beginning of a four-phrase chorale, an idea to which Bruckner would triumphantly return in the grand coda of the Fifth.

About the Second: Again in this first concept of 1872 the finale is most different from the later version, but there are important distinctions in the other movements too, including the three-measure rest just before the recapitulation in the first movement, and the two-measure rests defining the repeat structures in the scherzo. This is the only version of the symphony which truly owns the lovely horn ending for the slow movement, and also places the movements in such an order that the last note of each movement is the first accented note of the next. In this version the finale has by far the finest balance among the various structural elements, and in the development, the fantasy on the first theme contains music which in its severe dissonance looks forward fifty years to Poulenc and Antheil.

About the Third: This version depends entirely on one manuscript, the twin to the 1873 dedication score given to Wagner, which Bruckner kept and into which in 1874 he caused to be entered substantial additions to the textures, mainly in the first movement. Canonic entries are enriched, rhythmic details are made more complex, and the whole sound is warmer and more sophisticated. These changes, parallel to ones made in the Fourth at the same time, show Bruckner's scholarly and technical skills put to the task of effortlessly creating beautiful and opulent sounds. In his day, he was one of the two most educated composers in Europe (the other being Dvořák) and in these three symphonies, particularly in these versions, his impressive professional and scientific abilities are at the service of a brilliant and inspired art.

In the summer of 2012, the Bruckner cycle in Ebrach will continue with the Symphony No. 8 being performed in the state it was in at about the end of 1888. For this event Prof. Carragan has established versions of the first, second, and fourth movements contemporary with the "Intermediate Adagio" edited by Dermot Gault and Tabanobu Kawasaki, who have given their consent to their work being presented in that way.

This announcement is from www.abruckner.com

In February 2012 Sir Simon Rattle and the Berlin Philharmonic performed and recorded Bruckner's Ninth Symphony with Finale in the completed performing version of Samale | Phillips | Cohrs | Mazzuca, conclusive revised edition, 2012. Dr John Phillips has kindly provided the following essay on Bruckner's work on the finale, here followed by a concert review and CD review of this important performance.

An Unfinished, and Very Imperfect Dialogue:

A few points to consider when talking about the Samale-Phillips-Cohrs-Mazzuca Completion of Bruckner's Ninth Symphony

THE MORE things change, the more things stay the same. Discussion of the 'SPCM' Finale completion of Bruckner's Ninth, as recently confirmed by many of the critiques of Simon Rattle's performances of the four-movement Ninth with the Berlin Philharmonic, reveals the paucity of factual knowledge that, despite the author's and other's many articles, CD liner notes, programme notes and other publications on the subject, continue to drag discourse down to a level at which no questions or issues exist other than determining what sounds 'credible' or 'satisfying' or 'logical' or 'Brucknerian' based on unexamined subjective presupposition. Aesthetics, in the absence of knowledge, awareness, or perhaps even willingness to be more informed, seems to be the only language commentators can muster. As Bruckner scholars and lovers of his music alike, we can and should be prepared to do a lot better than that. What did Bruckner actually intend for the symphony and for this movement? - not what this or that aficionado, wise after the fact one hundred years later, thinks he should have - What did he achieve? (in the course of eighteen months and 440 pages of highly exacting compositional effort) - How are his interests best served today? Questions such as these seem to figure very lightly in the minds of those who today, faced with a number of competing 'versions' of the Finale movement, are at a loss to hear with any other ears than their own expectations or aesthetic predilections, or choose to dismiss the whole enterprise as pointless - after all, everyone knows how beautifully, how perfectly the symphony ends when it concludes with the Adagio. Oddly enough, that wasn't the case for its composer, for whom the Adagio was so invalid as a conclusion he would have preferred to see the Ninth end with his *Te Deum* in order that, a. it end the way he intended the instrumental Finale to end, namely, with a 'song of praise to the dear Lord', and b. that the quadratic structure so fundamental to his conception of the symphony be preserved. While, since 1903, the Adagio ending may have formed the model for similar such conclusions by other composers, notably Mahler, it certainly formed no part of Bruckner's own intentions for the work.

This article is preliminary to a far more detailed examination of these questions in a later issue of the *Bruckner Journal*, and, coincident with the release of the Berlin Philharmonic's recording of the Ninth, intended to provide a brief, but much-needed overview of what are the facts in the case, a reminder about just how much scholarly work has been done, not deciding what notes sound best where, but what the sources actually tell us. If such issues can be considered germane to a critique of performances including the Finale movement, let the reader read on; if not, let one waste no further time.

In fact, a huge amount of scholarly effort has, since the late 1980s, been brought to bear on the surviving sources of the Ninth Symphony and its Finale, a mass of material that today can be found scattered into many separate tranches in libraries and private collections, testimony to the insidious work of souvenir hunters and the unintended 'official' scattering of Bruckner's compositional estate after his death by well meaning executors. A number of pages, for instance, only re-emerged decades later, some only quite recently; others, the existence of which we can surmise, are truly lost, or may remain inaccessible in private hands.

This material is also very significant for our knowledge of how Bruckner composed, since in July of 1895, with the assistance of his amanuensis Anton Meissner, Bruckner destroyed all the working sketches and drafts for all his earlier works and their revisions, with the main exception of those for the Eighth and the then still incomplete Ninth.

Bruckner began work on the Ninth within three days of completion of the Eighth, dating his first sketch for the new work August 12, 1887. And according to tradition, he was still at work on the Ninth's Finale on the day of his death, October 11, 1896. The Finale was for him, of course, no afterthought as it is for us today; the earliest exploratory sketches for the Ninth reveal the characteristic 'zigzag' motive of the Finale and there are statements also that show Bruckner improvised passages from all four movements.

During the nine years over which the Ninth was intermittently worked on, years which, of course, saw many interruptions - among many lesser tasks the extensive revisions of the Eighth, Third and Fourth Symphonies and the composition of Psalm 150 and *Helgoland* - Bruckner amassed a huge amount of compositional material - initial exploratory sketches, more extensive short score drafts and score pages, both incomplete and complete, rejected and valid (those that went to make up the final score). Some 1100 pages

of this material survive and are currently known of - more has been lost through the depredations of souvenir hunters and of time. All of it, however, testifies not to any uncertainty, decline or vacillation on the composer's part but to the most exacting compositional process, one which, side-by-side with the inspirational, creative act, sought to achieve a rational theoretical 'validity' for the structure of the music. It might justly be said that no composer of the nineteenth century worked with greater awareness of and concern for the theoretical underpinnings of his own music. Studies such as Wolfgang Grandjeans' *Form und Metrik bei Bruckner* (2001) revealed how carefully Bruckner related harmonic progressions to metrical structure; Graham Phipps (2001), Frederick Stocken (2009) and I (2002) demonstrated Bruckner's extraordinary attention to the fundamental bass theory of his teacher Simon Sechter within the compositional process, and my own studies, building on the work of Werner F. Korte (1963) and Matthias Hansen (1987) have shown the great care with which Bruckner established a web of constant motivic change, the so-called 'mutation technique', which evolved and gradually perfected itself throughout the course of Bruckner's mature compositional works, and reaches its apex in the Ninth Symphony, and most especially its Finale, which was written with a staggering amount of care and attention to detail in precisely this respect. No one can study these documents without being in awe of Bruckner's capacity for detail - one cannot but be reminded of the dictum that genius is the infinite capacity to take pains.

Quite apart from the authoritative publications in the Bruckner Complete Edition, the sources for the Ninth Symphony have been the subject of three doctoral dissertations (i.e., almost by definition representing 'cutting-edge' scholarship), two authored by members of the 'SPCM' team. In 1980, drawing on a major source of material for the Ninth that had again become accessible, sketches and drafts sold to the Berlin State Library, but held in Cracow since the Second World War, Mariana Sonntag submitted her thesis on the sources for the first movement of the Ninth. In 2002 I submitted my own 400,000-word doctoral thesis, entitled *Bruckner's Ninth Revisited: Towards the re-evaluation of a four-movement symphony*, and in 2008 Benjamin-Gunnar Cohrs submitted his German-language thesis covering essentially the same field of research. One needs to bear in mind that since 1934 the only publication of the sources for the unfinished Finale was the not entirely fault-free transcription of the sources for all four movements of the Ninth made by Leopold Nowak's teacher Alfred Orel, the *Entwürfe und Skizzen zur IX. Symphonie* which, together with the original score of the first three movements constituted the flagship volume of the newly inaugurated *Anton Bruckner Gesamtausgabe* - the authoritative Bruckner Complete Edition. Leopold Nowak, I later discovered, had spent a lifetime fascinated by the Finale - he had in 1935 corrected Orel's publication (a sea of red ink!), but never found time to extend his preoccupation with it as far as issuing a revised publication. My colleagues Nicola Samale and Giuseppe Mazzuca, who had become interested in the idea of completing the Finale in the mid 1980s, first attempted to re-examine the MSS themselves in the Austrian National Library, but at that time not all the many signatures were made available to them. Begun in 1989, my own research work, assisted by my new colleague and friend, Benjamin-Gunnar Cohrs, attracted the interest of not only my other 'partners in crime' Nicola and Giuseppe, but that of Leopold Nowak as well. In May 1991, two days before the death of this doyen of Bruckner scholarship, the elderly *Hofrat* welcomed the decision by Herbert Vogg, his successor as chief editor of the Complete Edition, to re-publish the sources for the Finale under my editorship. So scholarship and completion ran hand in hand, and from the beginning the 'SPCM' Finale drew on this cutting-edge, officially sanctioned research work on the hundreds of pages of original MSS - not second-hand publications. The first performance of the 'SPCM' Finale, the first performing score of the Finale to incorporate our extensive research, took place in Linz, Austria, in December 1991; the first instalment of the whole publishing project on the Ninth within the Bruckner Complete Edition in 1994, was the publication of the transcription of the surviving sources for what I referred to, very justifiably, as the *Autograph Score of the Finale* - justifiably, because what research had unequivocally established, is that Bruckner, despite the depredations of souvenir hunters after his death, *had left a definitive orchestral score of the movement, not merely sketches*.

The 1994 publication of the reconstructed autograph was followed in 1996 by a 330-page facsimile edition of all the relevant sources for the Ninth, and in 1999 by a performing score, the 'Documentation', which presents the surviving fragments with no significant editorial intervention; it was first performed by the VSO under Nikolaus Harnoncourt in Vienna in December 1999 - the first time the movement had ever been played in the city in which it had been composed, 103 years after the death of its composer. The SPCM Finale, always seen as a work in progress, has continued to be optimized over more than two decades by its editorial team; its final revision is expected to be released later this year.

For anyone who understands anything about composition, the realization, welcomed by senior Bruckner scholars, that Bruckner wrote a clearly structured movement, finished to a high degree, not simply a pile of sketches, represented a major game changer in the question of whether it was even justifiable to 'make

something' out of the surviving materials. Not only had Bruckner proceeded as far as composing the orchestral score, he had extensively refined and reworked it at this advanced level just as he had with the other movements of the Ninth. Approximately a third of the movement, the exposition, extending into the development section, was obviously completely finished in score: indeed, some of the double-leaves or bifolios were even noted by Bruckner in the margin as 'fertig' or finished. The remaining bifolios were laid out in a minimum of string scoring, with references to the involvement of the winds. The structure of the movement - an extended three-subject sonata form - is patently clear, and the gaps evident today in this sequence of orchestral bifolios are in no way 'compositional gaps' - they invariably occur midway through phases - but are simply due to the fact that after Bruckner's death pages were stolen from his apartment before proper inventory could be made. In many cases the gaps can be bridged by reference to Bruckner's foregoing short-score sketches; compositional augmentation is exceedingly minimal. Sketches dating from May 1896 were also discovered which reveal Bruckner conceptualizing the final sections of the coda; a marginal reference to a bifolio 36 reveals their collocation in the emerging orchestral score, the surviving bifolios of which extend as far as a number 32. This makes it apparent that Bruckner had in fact arrived at the last stretch of the movement six months before his death, and quite possibly, since the first reference to further serious ill health is not for a month and a half after this, he may well have had time to carry the score forward from this point to the end in its first compositional stadium (completion of the strings in ink; significant wind entries in pencil). There is little evidence here of Bruckner being somehow 'unable' or 'unwilling' to complete the movement. If anything, we see a man working against impending death to perfectly and with absolute clarity set down on paper a movement planned many years before its actual working out, and that must have been intended to represent the crowning achievement of his symphonic technique.

This radically changes the ethics of what we can or should be doing with the Finale materials, but also should make us stop and reflect on our duties as listeners and commentators. If Bruckner succeeded in going as far as composing a definitive score, of which fragments have been lost, surely our main priority must be first and foremost to reconstruct that score as accurately and faithfully as possible, and to listen very hard to what he has to say, not to 'do our own thing' with the surviving fragments or to weigh in with arguments as to why this Finale is not what it could have been, as if our opinions are more valuable than the experience of what Bruckner himself intended. Whatever ill health Bruckner suffered in the later months of his life, what is abundantly clear from the surviving materials is that his originality, his extraordinary sonic imagination, his clarity of conception, his contrapuntal skill and the profound theoretical rumination all remain undiminished. We may all have some idea in our minds as to how Bruckner 'should have' completed the symphony. His genius lies precisely in the fact that none of us has been able to second-guess him. Can we finally begin, please, to take this composer, after so many years of being 'spoken for', at his word?

*Dr John A Phillips
Rutherford, New Jersey*

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...THE CONCERT REVIEW

BERLIN

PHILHARMONIE

9 FEBRUARY 2012

Bruckner - Symphony No.9 (with completed performance version of Finale, by Samale, Phillips, Cohrs and Mazzuca, 2012)

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra / Sir Simon Rattle

THE ADAGIO of Bruckner's Ninth Symphony differs in several ways from its predecessors, one being that it builds its climax on its most grief-stricken and agonised theme. The rising D major trumpet motive from the first theme, that might have delivered a glorious vision at the summit, seems forgotten, and instead the wrenching leap of a ninth that opens the movement is piled up into a massive dissonance. In these performances by the Berlin Philharmonic it goes without saying that the orchestral sound was totally overwhelming. Rattle's way with the seething and urgent *Steigerungen* (build-ups) to the various peaks in the movement had immense power and it was an extraordinary experience to hear this orchestra in full cry, and see the whole violin section from front desks through to the very back desks playing with such energetic determination. After the stunned silence that follows the climax the movement returns almost to its beginning, the oboe repeating the theme in a plaintive, numbed sort of way, Wagner tubas and horns comment balefully, and finally the brass rise to a long-held pianissimo E major chord, and the movement ends. At this performance it was perhaps a little perfunctory: it was clear this was not to be an end to the symphony.

It was not the end of the symphony for Bruckner. He finished his work on the Adagio in November 1894, fell sick with pleurisy, but recovered quickly, and in May 1895 set to work on the Finale and was reportedly still working on it on the day he died. Although the symphony remained unfinished, at least two thirds of the movement was done, possibly more. The editorial team, Samale, Phillips, Cohrs and Mazzuca (all of whom appeared on stage - the first time they had all met up together! - at Tuesday's performance) have made it their generous ambition to let us hear what Bruckner wrote in the context of a completed movement. It has taken over 20 years for it to achieve its present form, which now has convinced Sir Simon Rattle and the Berlin Philharmonic that its quality merits performance with the preceding three movements. The repute of conductor and orchestra cannot do other than give added legitimacy to a project that many have claimed to be not only impossible, but also unnecessary.

Such criticism was swept aside tonight. The finale was performed with total conviction, its three themes characterised strongly. The second theme is a pale, enervated variation on the jagged lightning bolts of the first theme, and Rattle communicated its melancholy progress very movingly. A blazing brass chorale above frenetic triplet-infested string accompaniment constitutes the third theme, and this is the sort of powerful, visionary music at which the Berlin Philharmonic excels. The double-dotted rhythm of the first two themes dominates much of the movement. Rattle ensured the rhythmic attack remained taut and nowhere more so than in the wild fugue that constitutes the first theme recapitulation, whereupon Bruckner introduces a new assertive and heroic theme on horns, with a triplet at its core: once again, the Berlin Philharmonic horns showing the sort of stuff they are made of. This theme returns after the second and third theme recapitulation - and shortly after, but for a few sketches, we reach the end of the manuscripts that have survived.

Discussion of the coda, how long it needs to be, what exactly should be its constituents, could - and probably will - go on endlessly. Whatever it was to be probably went to the grave with Bruckner; what is provided here has the limited but nevertheless ambitious function of providing an effective performing version. In this it now succeeds wonderfully: the first movement's cataclysmic falling octave theme, anticipated in the heroic horn theme and stamping triplets that are almost the last of Bruckner's notes, returns; the finale main theme inversion begins the crescendo into the coda (as sketched by Bruckner), there follows a dissonant grinding combination of all main themes of the movements, and then a breakthrough into D major with the glorious rising trumpet theme from the Adagio finally coming into its own, reiterated thrice on three trumpets, and the movement ends in a blaze of fanfares. Rattle stood motionless, his arms aloft, the orchestra suddenly frozen. It seemed forever, but slowly he let his arms fall and the hall broke into stormy applause.

Rattle's interpretation of the opening movement has become far more integrated and coherent since I heard him conduct the LSO in the Barbican in March 2011, the underlying pulse of the movement now never undermined. There were many very beautifully handled details. I liked the slight element of call-and-reply given to the opening horn theme by varying the dynamic and so creating a sense of the vast landscape upon which the forthcoming drama would be played out; and the exploration of the layering of the voices in the contrapuntally complex second theme, each paragraph seeming to highlight a different voice, was a delight to experience. The third theme as Rattle conceives it still seems a bit stolid, but the enormous tutti climaxes that arrive with increasing frequency in the second half of the movement were absolutely shattering in their sheer power and orchestral colour. The stamping Scherzo featured a wonderfully timed general pause before its brutally dramatic theme made its last appearance; the Trio was unusually light and playful.

Sometimes the playing seemed just too beautiful, too wedded to a *sostenuto* style - something a little more rough and rugged might have enabled a more potent communication of the work's profound confrontation of death and faith. But goodness me, what a glorious sound they make! With Rattle and the Berlin Philharmonic Bruckner's Ninth as the four movement work he always conceived it be, looks to have stormed into the mainstream concert repertoire.

Ken Ward

A version of this review appeared on www.bachtrack.com

...THE CD REVIEW

Bruckner - Symphony No.9 -

with completed performing version of the Finale by
Samale/Phillips/Cohrs/Mazzuca

Berliner Philharmoniker / Sir Simon Rattle

Timings: 23.56 10.45 24.29 22.4

Recorded in concert 7-9 Feb. 2012 in the Philharmonie Berlin

EMI CD 50999 9 52969 2



There are two very positive things to be said about this CD. One is that the sound, both of the orchestra and of the recording itself, is tremendous. It's hard not to be overcome by the sheer glory of the playing, those wonderful horns, the extraordinary sonority and virtuosity of the full orchestra. The other is that if you are interested in the on-going saga of the completion of the Ninth symphony, then it is necessary to hear the most recent (and final) revision of the SPCM "completed performing version" of the Finale with significant changes to the coda since the recent recordings from Wildner, Bosch and Layer - there is no question but that you should acquire this CD. Both the orchestral sound and the performance bring this Finale to follow the rest of the symphony thoroughly convincingly: it sounds like the Bruckner one hears in the previous three movements, and it gives the symphony the enormous dimension and full dramatic sweep that its composer intended.

But I do have some reservations about the performance. The way the Berlin Philharmonic play, a sort of heavy *sostenuto* style of performing, great strength and control but little sense of human vulnerability, together with the sheer presence of the recording, left me feeling like a spectator at an event of overwhelming virtuosity, magnificent yes, but somehow alienating: I never felt really involved. (I realise this is a very personal response, and many listeners will find themselves totally spellbound.) And there are some moments where Rattle's interpretation is difficult to warm to. The first movement third theme seems to lack mystery in its first appearance, and has little persuasive motion in its continuation. Then the recapitulation of the lyrical second theme, after 8 bars it's marked 'innig', (heartfelt, inwardly), is really rather brutally played, and storms indomitably on to the third theme which is equally unforgiving. There are some really fine moments, the opening and close of the movement especially, but its cumulative power is not as strong as it might have been. The Scherzo is surprisingly straight, powerful but not demonic, and the Trio is light and Mendelssohnian rather than unsettling; at the end of the *da capo*, i.e. the end of the movement, the closing couple of bars strangely lose full power and finality. The same failure of sustained conviction afflicts the Adagio climax that once again appears to fall away slightly as it approaches its final great dissonance. This maybe part of Rattle's view of how to prepare for a fourth movement we're not used to hearing, and certainly the closing pages of the Adagio are taken quite quickly, no valedictory lingering here. The performance of the Finale is impressive for the sheer conviction it displays: it is as though the Berlin Philharmonic are putting their seal of approval on it, as if to say, 'If we're playing it, then that proves its validity,' and this final version of the SPCM coda comes across particularly well. The Berliner's advocacy of the four-movement Ninth is obviously a significant milestone in its gaining of a place in the standard orchestral repertoire. Andrew Clements in *The Guardian*, 23 May 2012, sums up his four star review with the sentence: "It's massively affirmative and totally convincing." And the CD has gone straight to the top of the Specialist Classical Chart for the week May 26th, announced on BBC Radio 3 and in *Gramophone* magazine.

The performance is crammed on to one CD, which at 82.10 is about as much as you can get on one CD - so this is certainly value for money. The performance that is available in video on-line on the Berlin Philharmonic's Digital Concert Hall, taken from the third performance, is a little longer and would not have fitted. I believe this CD mainly uses material from the first and second concerts where the Scherzo especially is somewhat faster.

Ken Ward

BRUCKNER JOURNAL CD REVIEWS

CD reviews are invited from any readers who would wish to share their views on recordings, new or old.

BRUCKNER'S STRING QUARTET AND QUINTET: CONTEXT, PERFORMANCE, RECORDING

Alan George - Fitzwilliam String Quartet

ANTON BRUCKNER is surely one of the most perplexing figures in nineteenth century music. Liszt the Romantic Virtuoso, Chopin the Melancholy Consumptive, Wagner the Mammoth Ego, were all products of an era when the “personality” was assuming increasingly larger than life proportions. Bruckner lived at this time as well, of course, but blessed with exactly the wrong character credentials to lend credibility to his aspirations as a nineteenth century Artist. Yet in our present-day age of even more outsized personalities (although the spotlight seems now to have shifted unaccountably away from the composers) the impresarios can patronisingly capitalise on the supposedly defective aspects of Bruckner's make-up: his country origins, his clumsiness, obsession with numbers, his unquestioning faith. This quaint, but contentious, image may well have contributed at one time to his standing as one of the most popular of all composers (according to a survey of London concert programmes some years ago) but it takes no account of his fantastic intellect, originality, and vision.

Although it is generally considered that Bruckner was a late developer as a composer, this part-misconception may have arisen from the knowledge that in 1855 he chose to undertake a strict course of study in composition with the renowned teacher of harmony and counterpoint, Simon Sechter (with whom Schubert had also started lessons, right at the end of his life). For fourteen years prior to this he had held a number of teaching positions of variable distinction, the first of them (at Windhaag, Upper Austria) involving pastoral and menial duties such as spreading dung on the school fields! Nevertheless, those years saw the composition of a considerable volume of church music, including the stark and magnificent Requiem (1849) and the grand, festive Missa Solemnis (1854). But one of Sechter's strictures was that his pupils were required to cease all creative composition, and so for the next six years Bruckner composed nothing! Even then, in 1861, he chose to further his studies by taking lessons in form and orchestration with the Linz cellist and conductor Otto Kitzler, for whom he produced a four-movement string quartet in 1862/3 – one of a number of study pieces he copied into a special exercise book (characteristically, in strict chronological order). Preparation for this would almost certainly have required a thorough examination of the quartets of his great predecessors, so it is not surprising that parts of the work even *sound* as if they might have been by Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, rather than Bruckner himself. Nevertheless, this beautiful but virtually unknown piece proves to be a real gem, and as deserving of a place in the repertoire as many a less accomplished example of quartet writing from those times. Intensely dramatic, effortlessly lyrical, and searingly passionate in turn, offset by a jolly rustic scherzo in G major with a delicious Schubertian Ländler-like trio, the whole is held together through an impressively tight control of harmony and structure – as befits an “exercise”, even if its deep expressiveness belies the composer's apparently flippant dismissal of it. However, on perusing the score one is quickly reminded of its original purpose (literally to practise sonata structures and instrumental scoring), since there are hardly any dynamics, or markings as to phrasing and articulation. So it has been necessary to make a “performing edition” for ourselves – as indeed had already been done by the Koeckert Quartet (of Munich) in 1950/51. Some of their decisions now necessarily need to be (respectfully) superseded, with the greater information since made available with regard to performance practice in the 1860s. Nevertheless, we remain in their debt, and it was they who gave its first ever public performance, on 15 February 1951, for RIAS Berlin.

Derivative the quartet may seem, yet what might be considered the first significant example of the true Bruckner sound – the Mass No.1 in D minor (1864) – was less than two years away; and by 1868 (with the completion of the F minor Mass, No.3) he was recognised as a fully established and mature writer of choral music. His energies were now directed towards the problems of the symphony, and with the “mighty cyclopean fifth” (to quote Robert Simpson) of 1876/8 he achieved an awesome mastery in that field as well, such that for the next nine years his self confidence was at its zenith. It was at this point that he finally turned his attention to a seventeen year old request from Joseph Hellmesberger for a piece for his famous quartet to play, and the result was the Quintet in F major (significantly, all the symphonies of this period are also in major keys, as opposed to the otherwise exclusive concentration on minor tonalities – usually C or D). Bruckner sensibly insisted on the extra viola, with the result that the glowing sonorities he conjures so winningly from the symphony orchestra are miraculously captured here in miniature – and with an economy of scoring hardly typical of his contemporaries, let alone of one whose only other practical experience of chamber music was the 1862 string quartet, already discussed. Initially Hellmesberger was somewhat

dismayed by the supposed difficulties of the quintet's scherzo, so Bruckner attempted to appease him by replacing it with something less demanding, completing a new version some five months later. In the end the original movement was retained, and the composer preserved the discarded piece as a separate entity by calling it "Intermezzo" – although this was not actually published until 1913. It retains the original key of D minor, but a shadowy mysteriousness has given way to something rather more *gemütlich* - Mahlerian almost.

TBJ readers will be well aware of Bruckner's dogged adherence to certain individually evolved formal conventions in his symphonies; most of these are also present in the quintet, albeit within the rather less gigantic time scale demanded by a chamber ensemble. That is not to say that the actual duration of the piece could by any stretch of the imagination be described as compressed! The characteristically deliberate pace of the music, as dictated by the size of its themes and the slower harmonic movement, results in a composition whose proportions must necessarily exceed those of more familiar chamber works. Not, of course, including the late masterpieces of Beethoven and Schubert. If the history books place Bruckner in direct line of descent from Bach through Beethoven it should be remembered that in fact it was Schubert who (together with Wagner) wielded the greatest single influence on his fellow Austrian: of course the *Eroica* Symphony and first *Rasumovsky* Quartet did set a precedent for building large scale sonata movements through the spreading apart of tonal poles and the consequent slowing down of harmony, yet the evidence of Bruckner's actual music would demonstrate that the blending of an expanded structure with an overriding lyrical flow suggests an even greater debt to Schubert (whose guiding spirit can already be sensed in the early C minor quartet).

The first movement of the quintet is unique (for Bruckner) through being cast in triple time, and the steady pulse of the scherzo finds company in only the sixth and eighth symphonies. But the Adagio belongs in every way to that great succession of slow movements, ranging from ethereal solemnity in the Fifth to the agonising beauty of the Ninth, embracing here a sublime tenderness and passion which guarantees for this quintet an exalted place in the hierarchy of chamber masterworks. If the finale seems in any way problematic this can only be attributed to a failed attempt at making it fit into a conventional sonata form which, like so many other Bruckner finales, it only superficially resembles: leading in from the G flat major of the Adagio (Bruckner purposefully switched the order of the two central movements from his normal pattern, bringing about this effective harmonic link) the movement progresses through two highly expectant pedal points before serving up an earthy tune, in clearly punctuated four bar *Gesangsperiode*, which seems to come straight from the outdoor life of the composer's native Upper Austria (it's extraordinary how many of Bruckner's finales contain melodies at this point which involve the highly expressive interval of a sixth). At the centre of this arch-like construction is a powerful *fugato*, which eventually unfolds into that tune again – cleverly demonstrating its thematic relationship through inversion and the stretching of its sixth to an octave. Finally the opening pedal point returns, this time on the dominant of F, ultimately dropping to the tonic in a massive perfect cadence totally justified by the scale of the rest of the work. This is the point towards which the whole movement has been directed, as only now is the home key fully established. Here, together with the corresponding section of the first movement, is to be found the only instance where Bruckner betrays his feeling for the orchestral brass section. His next major composition was the sixth symphony, which parallels the quintet in many striking ways, not least in its warmly intimate and genial temperament. Neither work is one of the composer's most familiar, yet their combined emotional significance is hardly outweighed by the tremendous edifices surrounding them.

So where, specifically, have we turned for guidance in the quintet? First of all, an earlier study of performing practice pertaining to late Brahms – aided by thorough perusal of Robert Pascall's writings on the topic – inevitably led to a re-appraisal of our approach to Bruckner. Whilst the two composers' attitude to symphonic writing may well have taken markedly different directions, it would be splitting hairs not to acknowledge that certain common performing conventions must apply to music written at the same time and in the same city. And so we find Prof Pascall reminding us that "bow strokes were much as now, although the art of *portato* bowing has been largely lost, and the use of off-string bowing was not as favoured then as it is today. The normal way of playing...until the present [20th] century was without *vibrato*...used primarily as an ornament, for accented notes, and for sustained notes in impassioned and lyrical melodies. And secondly, players of [Brahms's] time would all have used *portamento*, the gliding ornament so tellingly described by Carl Flesch as 'the emotional connexion of two notes'". Also that "..... tempo modification was a recognised and established part of performance practice of the age, and that, provided always it is applied with discretion, it remains fully appropriate to the interpretation of [Brahms's] music".¹ Indeed, it had been

¹ Robert Pascall: *Playing Brahms - a Study in 19th-century Performance Practice* (Papers in Musicology No.1, Dept of Music, University of Nottingham, 1991)

so for some time previously, to judge by similar remarks made on the subject by Beethoven, Liszt, and Wagner, all of which lend weight to the argument.

So what about that “monumental” approach to Bruckner’s supposedly granite-like structures? Leaving aside those works to which this might conceivably apply (eg Nos.5, 8, 9), and remembering that the quintet can be seen to have initiated a triptych of masterpieces (with Symphonies 6 and 7) where the aforementioned monumentality achieved in the Fifth has given way to a more ardent lyricism, it proved a massive learning experience, a few years ago, to hear two performances of the Seventh by Kurt Masur. The great octogenarian maestro seemed to provide a living testament to all these directives yet, needless to say, revealing not a trace of any supposedly dry academic study, so naturally did the whole work evolve and unfold. And so, from a barely audible tremolo, the glorious E major arpeggio at the opening emerged at a tempo so daringly slow that one would have feared for it had we not reached (almost unawares) something substantially more flowing after 50 bars, with the new oboe/clarinet theme. The opening section of the quintet lends itself equally naturally to this approach, and it is to be hoped that we have come somewhere near Masur’s inspiring example. We were also grateful to William Carragan here, for his advice on the relative pacing of each of the main themes (which I hope he will find to his liking...); and again in the finale, where his elucidation of Bruckner’s arch forms proved invaluable.

We then studied recorded performances by ensembles from an earlier era: notably the Amadeus and Vienna Philharmonia (led by Willi Boskovsky), but not forgetting the Koeckert (their credentials enhanced by their devoted pioneering work on the C minor Quartet) – all these supplied by TBJ’s own “The Pink Cat”. But by far the most revelatory rendition was by the Strub Quartet, dating from the 1940s. Max Strub himself would have gained priceless experience under such great Bruckner conductors as Otto Klemperer, from his time as leader of the Berlin Staatskapelle; and so we can hear that, as with Masur, so many of Prof Pascall’s observations are also enshrined in his quartet’s recording, notably with regard to tempo modification, bow strokes, and vibrato (or relative lack of it). Interestingly, it would appear that they were playing from the earliest version of the work: a number of textual differences can be heard, but it is striking that the two middle movements are played in their original order – i.e. the scherzo third (which had been Bruckner’s exclusive practice, except for an early conception of the second symphony, up until the eighth symphony) – and also that they are faithful to the Adagio’s original designation of *Andante quasi Allegretto*, with the time signature *alla breve* (two beats to the bar). We have tried to take this on board ourselves, and also – to a degree – their daringly measured tempo for the main part of the finale.

It is also more than likely that the Strub would have been playing on gut strings at that time (maybe even a gut E on the violins, although that is less obviously discernable). For the past three years or so we have generally chosen to use gut strings for Bruckner as well, having managed to obtain a special set from Dan Larsen in Minnesota. His strings are hand wound copies of those that would have been in use in Vienna during the 1870s, and are much tougher and thicker than the ones we play on for Baroque and Classical music. This means that, to a significant degree, they dictate to the player what can and cannot be done with the bow: the sound has to be “coaxed” from them, rather than forced. Also, the sheer size of the lower strings means that notes can feel as if they are not quite in their familiar places on the fingerboard, making pure intonation in Bruckner’s most tortuous chromatic passages that much more challenging. They are also capable of a huge sound, with unexpected warmth and depth – even at a lower pitch (A = 441) than might have been intended: we know (for example, from contemporary documentation about the Court Opera Orchestra’s trombones) that Viennese pitch at the time would have been much higher than that of today. So we attempted gradually to play higher and higher, eventually winding the strings up to A = 450 – but ultimately having to admit defeat when intonation up there became too parlous for comfort! At least the accepted level in Vienna did drop again soon afterwards, following a conference in 1886 which decreed a return to the French standard A = 435 – first introduced in 1862 (around the time of the C minor quartet, in fact). Nevertheless, it is our hope that we have managed to get somewhere near a sound world that Bruckner himself might have recognised. Readers are invited to find out for themselves, once the recording has been released by Linn in Spring 2013, and to respond with any comments and observations.

Dr. Alan George, © 2012

Alan George is a founder member of the Fitzwilliam String Quartet. Their recording of the Bruckner quintet (with James Boyd) was made in East Woodhay church (near Newbury), in November 2010/April 2011; the Quartet in C minor was recorded there in November 2011. The complete CD is due for release by Linn Records in Spring 2013. Plans are afoot for the Fitzwilliam to perform on the Sunday morning at the next TBJ conference, April 2013.

There is a previous article by Alan George in *The Bruckner Journal* in Vol.1 No.3, November 1997, p.14, available in The Bruckner Journal archive on www.abruckner.com

String Quintet in F major, WAB 112 (1879)

A survey of recordings by Hans Roelofs

from his Anton Bruckner Discography of Vocal and Instrumental music

www.brucknerdiskografie.nl

BRUCKNER wrote the String Quintet in 1878/79. The first performances of the complete work took place in May 1884, which prompted the publisher Gutmann to publish it. As originally written it followed the classical order of the string quintet: the Adagio stood in second place. The Gutmann Edition published in 1884, possibly with Bruckner's agreement, gives the order usually followed today, whereby the places of Adagio and Scherzo are changed; the later editions would adopt this (so far as is known there is no score that gives the Adagio in second place). The differences resulting from the various revisions to the work are not especially big, so that it would hardly make sense here to speak of different versions. There are some slightly differing editions.

* The Gutmann Edition (first printed edition, 1884 = FPE), which publishes more or less the original autograph with amendments made to the engraver's copy, and with the order of the inner movements already changed to Scherzo-Adagio, and metronome markings; Eulenburg reprints this edition, Peters (ed. Carl Hermann) is closely based on it.

* Wöb's edition (1927, Philharmonia No. 213), takes account of revisions Bruckner made to the autograph manuscript after the first print, which include a revision of the Finale coda, but Wöb also prints the first printed edition coda as an alternative option. It includes metronome markings from the first edition, and optional cuts in the first movement bars 245-264, in the Scherzo bars 63-82, from the autograph.

* Nowak's edition (1963, 2007 rev. Gruber) prioritises the autograph manuscript of 1879, with alterations that Bruckner made at a later date to the autograph and the alterations made to the engravers copy for the 1884 print that were not transferred to the autograph. This edition includes both the later revised Finale coda, and that from the FPE of 1884 as an alternative option. In the edition of Nowak presented by Gruber in 2007, optional cuts in the first movement and Scherzo from Bruckner's autograph are shown; and revisions to the finale second subject added by Bruckner to the engraver's proofs for the 1884 print are given as footnotes - typically these are plain descending semi-quavers in the 1st violin revised to something a little more florid.

The differences that are clearly audible are concentrated in two places: in the Scherzo, 3 bars before the double-bar (after bar 33, before C) in the first printed edition, and in Eulenburg and Peters, there are 8 crotchets for Cello; in Wöb and Nowak there is one bar's rest for all parts (Peters has here a footnote that the crotchets were deleted in a later revision); in the Finale, first printed edition (FPE) has 197 bars, the later version 195 - the original coda is longer. In the coda in the FPE, Eulenberg and Peters, at bar 181 is a sudden, unprepared marking *fff*, but in the revised coda from the autograph given by Nowak and Wöb *fff* arrives 6 bars later after a long crescendo from *ppp* at bar 181 to two high tremolo bars on F for 1st violin leading to the *fff*.

Tempo markings vary a little between editions: FPE and Wöb add Latin tempo marking after the German in the first movement, *Gemäßigt. Moderato*. In the Scherzo all have *Schnell*, except Wöb who has *Vivace*. In the 3rd movement; FPE and Nowak 1963 have 'Adagio', but Wöb and Gruber's new critical edition have "Andante (Adagio)" which refers back to Bruckner's manuscript.

It proved impossible to determine which scores each recording used, partly because the Gutmann score was not available, but also because the editions overlap and ensembles sometimes combine different editions. In the discography below, therefore some aspects of particular recordings are described without the edition being specified, except when it's given in the accompanying CD booklet.

The Recordings in historical Overview

The oldest recording of the String Quintet, that of the *Prisca Quartet* (1937), is now only of historical interest because it is very much bound to its time, far more, for example, than the Strub Quartet's, which came into being only a few years later. In the playing style, conspicuous, for

Details of Recordings (more complete information given on Hans Roelofs' site: www.brucknerdiskografie.nl)

Prisca Quartett, S. Meincke
29./30.12.1937

Several cuts in Scherzo and Trio reduce it by one third. Various deviations from the score. Finale coda as in FPE
45'20 (12'56, 04'50, 16'53, 10'41)
78: Polydor/Grammophon 15165/70,
Decca X220/5

example, are the many pronounced *portamenti* and dragging tempos, and the Scherzo is severely cut: 20 bars in the Scherzo and the repeat in the Trio fall victim to the scissors, whilst the *da capo* consists of only 33 bars plus a 5 bar coda, so the Scherzo is cut by a third. The dynamic range is very restricted, the difference between *ppp-pp-p* and between *fff-ff-f* is slight. The 1st and 4th movements come across as fragmented, only the Adagio manages in places to be convincing, although the music is very long drawn-out (at 16:36 it belongs amongst the slowest), the movement seeming like an elegy. Also with the *Strub Quartet* (1940?) the dynamics are confined, although especially in the slow movement (which in this recording is played second!) the dynamic markings are exactly observed. The playing is tender and, where stipulated in the score, warm, and here there are also *portamenti*. The Scherzo is rather fast and light and comes across as ghostly, but against this the Adagio is not really slow but rather an Andante (is it perhaps the ‘Andante. Quasi Allegretto’ that Bruckner had at first written over the movement?) The recording is an historical document of an at that time renowned quartet, unlike the recording of the *Philharmonic String Quintet Vienna* (1949?), which is an entirely unknown ensemble, possibly only set up for this recording; it offers an easy-going interpretation with its own individual charm, quite true to the score, but obviously still with reminiscences of the romantic approach: there are occasional (discreet) *portamenti* and emphatic *ritardandi*, not given in the score. The Adagio (17:14) is the slowest of all recordings, but in spite of this the musical flow is not lost. Conspicuous is a mistake in the playing in bar 7 of the Trio (before the double bar line), which doesn’t occur in the repeat. The sound is harsh, but it is probably not as might sometimes be supposed from an older shellac recording.

The recording by the *Koeckert Quartet* (1952) is committed to a distinctly newer style of playing. It is an idiomatic, almost ‘objective’ recording, in which, for example, *portamenti*, when allowed at all, are very restrained. In spite of the mono recording, the sound is transparent. The interpretation has a classical character: no fervent passion, no wild excesses, but rather an inner peace - which does not mean the same as slow tempi. All pent-up emotion is discharged in the Adagio, but here also it is always controlled, no overdone pathos or sentimentality, but just a moderately slow tempo. Nevertheless, the interpretation comes across as lively and natural. By contrast, the recording of the *Wiener Konzerthaus Quartet* (1956) sounds old-fashioned and dusty, and also the 1st violin sounds ugly. Bruckner’s Quintet is bravely but somewhat clumsily played. The Adagio borders upon the maudlin, Bruckner’s accent marks become push-buttons, the melody tempo is dragging, *portamenti* are to emphasise the sentiments, the dynamics remain unnuanced and so lose their effect.

Just as renowned as the recording of the *Koeckert Quartet* is that of the *Amadeus Quartet* (1964); both appeared on the same label and there lies just twelve years between them, both are benchmark recordings, and yet they are very different. Against the transparent sound of the *Koeckert Quartet* the *Amadeus Quartet* brings a romantic, full, darkly-coloured almost symphonic sound. In the Scherzo there is a big contrast in tempo: “schnell” [fast] is really fast, but “langsamer” [slower] becomes too slow. The Adagio, however, exudes a noble grandeur which now and then an emotional build-up makes effective, but otherwise seems somewhat easy-going. The Finale coda, with its eruptive, violent *fff* brings the Quintet to a very striking conclusion.

The recording of the *Keller Quartet* (1962) is also on a very high level. It’s true that, compared with the *Koeckert* and the *Amadeus*,

Details of Recordings (more complete information given on Hans Roelofs’ site: www.brucknerdiskografie.nl)

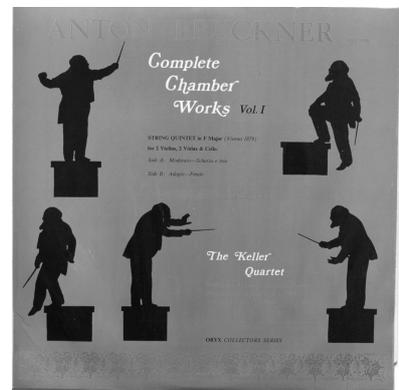
Strub Quartett, Hans Münch-Holland
1940? - Adagio played 2nd, Finale coda revised version.
40’24 (12’06, 12’07, 06’46, 09’25)
78: Electrola DB 5541/5; CD: Pristine Audio Direct PACM006

Wiener Philharmonisches Quintett / Philharmonic String Quintet, Vienna
ca. 1949? Scherzo and Finale coda as in FPE, but coda starts with crescendo
46’01 (12’38, 07’10, 17’14, 08’41)
LP: Vox PL 6330

Koeckert Quartett, Georg Schmid
9./12.6.1952 -
Finale coda revised version
43’38 (12’59, 07’47, 14’27, 08’35)
LP: DG LPM 18042, Decca (USA) DL 9796; CD: Forgotten Records (France) fr 225; and various Japanese editions (Forgotten Records available from forgottenrecords.com)

Wiener Konzerthaus Quartett, Ferdinand Stangler - 1956 - Scherzo and Finale coda as in FPE, but with long crescendo. Includes Intermezzo in 3rd place.
48’36 (11’50, 07’19, [04’26], 15’45, 09’16)
LP: Amadeo AVRS 6030, Vanguard VRS-480;
CD: forgotten records fr 436

Amadeus Quartett, Cecil Aronowitz
2./4.11.1964 - Finale coda as in FPE
44’05 (13’03, 07’41, 13’42, 09’39)
LP: DG LPM 18963, DG SLPM 138 963, DG 2733 010; CD: DG (Japan), DG 477 573 9 (2 CD)



Keller Quartett, Georg Schmid
1962 - Finale coda revised version
41’49 (11’42, 07’23, 14’04, 08’40)
LP: Da Camera magna SM 92707/8 (2 LP), Oryx ORX 1807/8 (2 LP), Musical Heritage Society MHS 1363/4 (2 LP)

some transparency is missing and there is relatively little difference between particular steps from *ppp-p* and *f-fff* (which are clearly indicated in Bruckner's score, and even graded between different voices), but the quartet offers a beautiful equality between the voices, playing together as a whole rather than a group of individual voices. The tempi, roughly compared with those of the Amadeus, are rather quick, a continuous musical flow is created, but the expressiveness is rather flat. The Adagio is warm and heartfelt [innig], but never over-emotional. Because the dynamic possibilities are not fully exploited, the finale seems in places to be somewhat mushy.

The *Kammermusiker Zurich* (1972) play with great musical accomplishment - but their recording has little in common with Bruckner. Their playing is passionate, some times even forceful, with a full sound and euphony, quick, but it's all at the cost of the *pp* and *ppp* places which are played too loud. The Adagio works with *bel canto* melody, but unfortunately without exploring the depth of the music. Much the same goes for the *Heutling Quartet* (1972?), whose recording comes in light-footed, elegant, and somewhat distanced - it is an interpretation for fine weather, that desires no confrontation but just enjoyment. The Scherzo is dance-like, not eerie or quirky, and also the Adagio remains distanced. Because of this in the end the music becomes a bit flat.

That is not the case for the recording by the *Wiener Philharmonia Quintett* (1974) (not to be confused with the Philharmonic String Quintet, Vienna - see above!). Their musicianship is coupled with a feel for Bruckner's music. The quintet produces a beautiful, rich tone, in which all the voices mix one with another. Especially the 3rd movement is played with sincere depth [innig], gently and lyrically, while dramatic accents are not shied away from. It is an eloquent, very satisfying reading.

One can be very brief about the recording of the *Solistes de l'Orchestre de Paris* (1982) as both the recording technique and the performance have little to recommend them. The sound is bare, with an unpleasant echo. The playing is shrill and not very subtle or cultivated. In this interpretation dynamics play a minor role, and thereby the ensemble wastes the greater part of the possible effect. As a result, for example, in the Adagio the climax falls as if from the air and fizzles out; and this movement at 16:45 belongs with the slowest performances. Exactly as slow is the *Kocian Quartet* (1983) - but what a difference! This recording, at 48:11, is by far the slowest recording of the quintet - the Philharmonic String Quintet, Vienna, takes 46:01, more than two minutes less! If one gets into these slow tempi, one hears a long-breathed performance, in which the main and counter voices are beautifully distributed; the music acquires a pastoral, even sweet character, only occasionally a dark shadow flits past, the whole being predominantly an aesthetic experience. Expression marks such as 'warm' or 'breit' are observed, but with the dynamic marks they are less exact, and that is a reason why the Adagio cannot unfold its full effect and becomes somewhat flat - which was a thing could have been avoided at this deliberate pace!

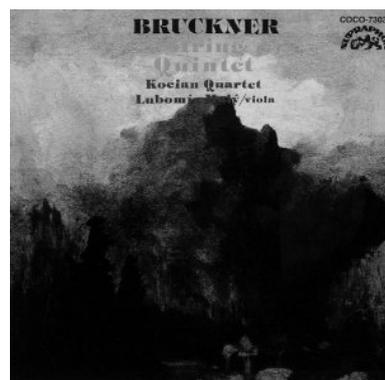
An ambivalent impression is left by the *Alberni Quartet* (1988). The recording has a sharp, nasal sound, and moreover is reverberant, whereby one sometimes has the impression as though a whole string orchestra were playing. Nevertheless the sound is clear and transparent: the playing is strong, but the sound doesn't become muddy. Atmospherically the music makes a rather light, cheerful impression; at 11:55 the 1st movement is played relatively quickly, and has that effect too. At 13:56 the Adagio is not really fast, and in spite of that there is here also an

Kammermusiker Zürich
1972 - Finale coda as in FPE
41'54 (11'56, 07'08, 13'56, 08'54)
LP: Pelca PSR 40 562;
CD: Ensemble's own edition

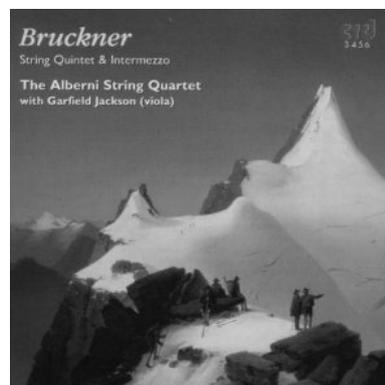
Heutling Quartett, Heinz Otto Graf
1972? Finale coda revised version
39'51 (11'05, 07'31, 12'24, 08'51)
LP: EMI Electrola 1C 063-29 100

Quintett der Wiener
Philharmoniker/Wiener Philharmonia
Quintett/Vienna Philharmonia Quintet
5./7.4.1974 Finale coda as in FPE, but
with slow crescendo.
42'36 (12'06, 06'30, 15'29, 08'31)
LP: Decca STS 15400, Decca Ace of
Diamonds SDD 490, Decca 6.42160 AP;
CD: Decca 430 296-2, London POCL-
4257, Decca Eloquence 476 2455

Solistes de l'Orchestre de Paris
3/1982 - Finale coda as in FPE
46'39 (13'25, 06'54, 16'45, 09'35)
LP: Ades 14.037, Cass. Ades C-12.018



Kocian-Quartett, Lubomír Mály
12/1983 Finale coda revised version
48'11 (13'38, 08'17, 16'45, 09'31)
LP: Supraphon 3360 1744; CD:
Supraphon 637116,
Supraphon 32 CO-1744



Alberni-String-Quartet, Garfield Jackson
21./23.6.1988
Scherzo & Finale coda as in FPE
42'14 (11'55, 07'32, 13'56, 08'51)
CD: CRD 3456; Kass.: CRD CRDC 4156

impression that the music proceeds quickly, whereby the Adagio-character is lost; there is no time for the sounds to fade away, they must always advance. Accordingly, the dynamic markings are not always observed, above all *ppp* is ignored. Emotions arise from violently played passages, but then they slide by. That the Adagio lasting exactly the same time can have a different effect, is proved by the *Sextuor à cordes de l'Orchestre National de France* (1988): here deep emotions are conveyed that pervade the whole movement. In the other movements the emotions are rather more subtly present; they are nowhere violent, but rather soft and lyrical. It is a classical interpretation, that eschews extremes, but because of this the difference between *ppp* and *fff* is weakened, and the Scherzo, for example, becomes too uniform and tame. The 1st and 4th movements are rather quiet and deliberate and particularly clearly played.

In the first half of the 1990s no less than six recordings came onto the market. That of the *Sonare Quartet* (1990) is not very convincing: the music sounds measured out, almost 'Prussian' and certainly not 'Viennese', coming across as cumbersome, it doesn't 'swing' and remains earthbound; the music doesn't breathe and conveys little excitement. Moreover the recording has something of a severe and heavy sound.

The *Melos Quartet* is the only ensemble to have recorded the string quintet twice; the first originates possibly in 1968, the second in 1992. Interestingly, the second recording used a different score. In terms of sound and playing the second recording is distinctly superior. In the early recording the sound is thin and weak, and hardly expands, the 1st violin sounds sharp. At 12:06, the 1st movement is relatively fast and appears somewhat rushed. Altogether the performance is less nuanced than the score requires, dynamic markings are often imprecisely observed. Certainly it is not a bad recorded performance - but the second is simply better, although also here the shading through *p-pp-ppp* is not attended to. The opening of the 1st movement is atmospherically dreamy, almost romantic and rather slow - but then becomes more vigorous, so that generally the performance seems imposing and the quintet appears to be understood as 'symphonic'. In spite of that, the sound remains transparent. The Adagio is very moving.

The recording of the *Raphael Quartet* (1992) distinguishes itself through eloquent, strong playing of great transparency. The tempi, with the exception of the Adagio, are fast and some details in the 1st movement - always very melodious - are skimmed over. After the quick virtuosity and simultaneous atmospheric density of the Scherzo, the Adagio comes as an oasis of peace in which emotional eruptions achieve their full effect; it is the high point of the altogether persuasive performance. It is important to distinguish between this recording and that of the *Raphael Ensemble* (1993), whose players play with virtuosity but offer an unattractive ensemble sound; their interpretation leaves much to be desired. The 1st movement, although at 11:28 not markedly fast, sounds rushed and not very subtle, but loud; forcefully played places alternate with gently played ones, and hardly any atmosphere is created. The overall sound isn't very transparent, so that, for instance in the Scherzo, there's just a confused mess. The Adagio appears to have a very full orchestral sound, in which dynamic markings are only partially taken account of, but it is rarely moving. Many tempo changes appear (for instance in the Finale) quite arbitrary.

The *Wiener Streichquintett* (1994) version comes up with a full but nevertheless transparent sound. The 1st movement is serene but nevertheless alive, the dynamic markings and tempo instructions are exactly observed. The Scherzo comes in cheerfully, though one would appreciate more mysteriousness - but precisely in this context the Adagio



Sextuor à cordes de l'Orchestre National de France

1/1988 - Finale coda as in FPE
44'40 (13'15, 07'59, 13'59, 09'09)
Quantum QM 6895 (12 15.88), CD Stu 501 588

Sonare Quartett, Vladimir Mendelssohn

1/1990 - Finale coda revised version
40'40 (12'41, 06'58, 12'46, 08'15)
Claves CD 50-9006

Melos Quartett, Enrique Santiago

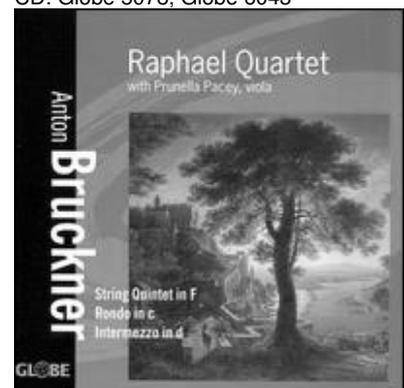
1.2.1969 - Finale coda as in FPE
43'15 (12'06, 08'06, 13'00, 10'03)
LP: Vox Candide CE 31014, Turnabout 37005, Intercord INT 160806, Intercord 180.854; CD: Intercord INT 820 744, Intercord 563 050-2

Melos Quartett, Enrique Santiago

5/1992 - Finale coda revised version
43'28 (12'35, 08'07, 13'05, 09'41)
CD: Harmonia Mundi HMC 901421, Harmonia Mundi 1951421

Raphael Quartett, Prunella Pacey

2/1992 - Finale coda revised version
41'29 (11'07, 07'00, 15'07, 08'15)
CD: Globe 5078, Globe 6043



Raphael Ensemble

10/1993 - Scherzo and Finale as in FPE
42'06 (11'28, 07'29, 14'31, 08'38)
CD: Hyperion CDA 66704, Hyperion CDH 55372

Wiener Streichquintett

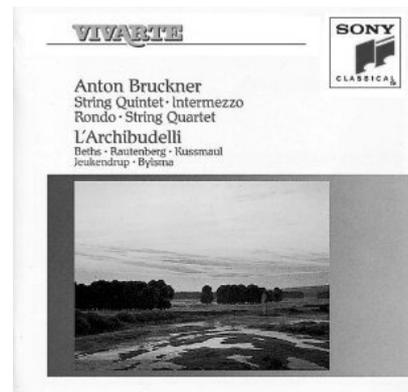
23./25.9.1994 - Finale coda as in FPE
44'11 (12'40, 07'11, 15'28, 08'52)
CD: Camerata 30CM-399, Camerata 33CM299

can unfold, slow, not celestially ethereal, but full of earthly gravity, in which the emotions can find full expression. The Finale begins with Viennese swing and charm, but then becomes increasingly lowering and dark. After the more classically oriented first two movements, the interpretation gains increasing weight, until the furiously played coda rounds the whole thing off.

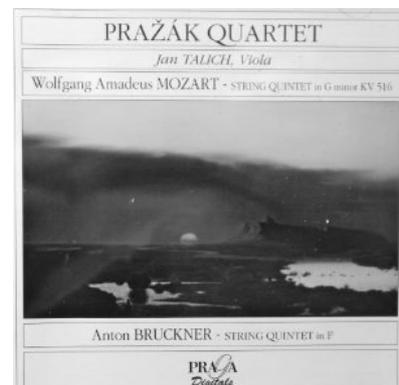
Similar high standards suffice for the recording by *L'Archibudelli* - the only recording of Bruckner's string quintet on gut strings. A marvel is the 1st movement - at 13:46, together with the recording of the Fine Arts Quartet, it is the slowest recording of this movement, the players giving themselves time, but nevertheless the music always flows, while at the same time the individual voices of the texture of the movement are made audible. The other movements place themselves, in terms of duration, in the middle region. In this recording the Adagio is also the climax of the work - seldom does one hear it so fragile, so tender, and the great dynamic breadth of the playing contributes to this impression. It is one of the best recordings of the quintet; anyone 'allergic' to gut strings can go back to the Wiener Streichquintett.

After such a high point in Bruckner interpretation, one might ask oneself what possessed the *Prazak Quartet* (1996) to issue their recording. At 35:21 they deliver by some considerable distance the fastest recording of the work (the Heutling Quartet, after all, need 39:51!), which one can rate as a sporting achievement. All movements are played too fast, the Trio of the Scherzo is not 'langsamer' ['slower'], as the score calls for, and the coda of the Finale loses its effect through its fast tempo. Moreover, bars are cut from the 1st and 2nd movements, so that the Prazak Quartet, as far as the 2nd movement's concerned, find themselves in the company of the Prisca Quartet - admittedly Bruckner himself indicated *vi-de* at this point, so the cut is *permissible*, but even with this goodwill the performance cannot be saved, the Brucknerian spirit is missing. By contrast the recording of the *Brandis Quartet* (also 1996) is convincingly presented. The tempos lie in the midfield, only the Scherzo being rather quickly played. The other features of this recording also operate in the middle range: it is a rather unassuming, reliable performance, without extremes, with a beautifully woven sound of individual voices, and the difference in speed between the Scherzo and the Trio is not great. Nevertheless, this is no superficial recording; precisely in such a context can the Adagio become the climax, it is poignant and played without affectation. Only when they are applied are heavy accents used, namely in the coda of the 1st and 4th movements, which have symphonic pretensions. The recording by the *Anton Bruckner Quartet* (1997) is disappointing; certainly there is good music-making here, but the inspiration of a truly great recording is missing. The dynamic relationships between the individual voices are rather flat, the individual movements lack the long line, that working towards a distinct climax. As a result there is no electricity, no spark.

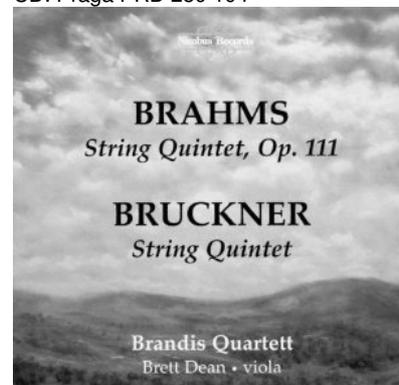
The *Ensemble Bregenz* seems to have been an ad hoc ensemble that recorded Bruckner's string quintet in 1997. The tempi are rather average, only the last movement tending towards the slow side. The recording sounds good, but perhaps somewhat distanced, and the sound of the 1st violin is sometimes overwhelmed in the overall interplay of voices, but therefore the sound is bright and light. The ensemble's music-making is technically convincing, in the higher regions sounding somewhat sharp. Interpretatively the recording remains rather superficial, not seeking unfamiliar sides of Bruckner's music nor venturing into its depths. So a recording has been made that, on the one hand, is quite satisfactory, but on the other leaves opportunities



L'Archibudelli
5/1994 Nowak - revised Finale coda
(subtle cresc., discrete tremolo)
44'04 (13'46, 07'29, 14'13, 08'36)
Sony Classical Vivarte SK 66 251



Prazak Quartett, Jan Talich
5/1996 - 20 bars (*vi-de*) cut in Scherzo;
Finale coda as in FPE
35'21 (09'29, 05'56, 12'26, 07'30)
CD: Praga PRD 250 104



Brandis Quartett, Brett Dean
23./26.2.1996 Finale coda as in FPE
43'57 (12'46, 07'01, 15'09, 09'01)
Nimbus Records NI 5488

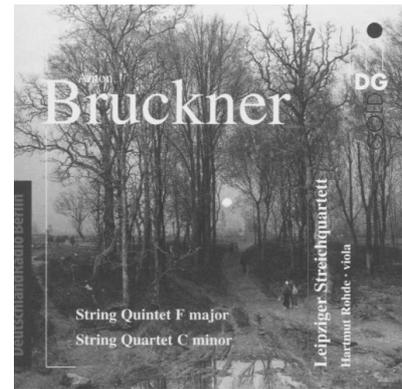
Anton Bruckner Quartett, Wolfgang Klos
29./30.6+1.7.1997
Finale coda as in FPE
44'25 (13'15, 07'37, 14'12, 09'21)
CD: Anton Bruckner Quartett 07 97 D

Ensemble Bregenz
6/1997 (Kulturscheune Rottendorf b.
Würzburg)
Nowak - revised Finale coda
43'38 (12'12, 07'54, 13'51, 09'41)
CD: Ausgabe der Kammermusikalischen
Akademie, Ansbach; Video: YouTube
The Ensemble's instruments built by
Gottfried Raabs.

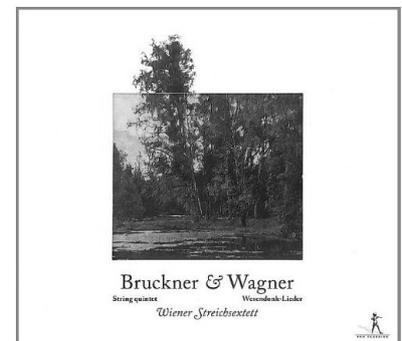
unexplored. The same goes for the slow movement that sounds here quietly restrained, more classical than romantic, but ultimately suggests that the ensemble members are five excellent musicians on the one hand, but on the other do not form a real ensemble. The final movement is only moderately lively, the 'langsamer' (slower) before the coda is played rather slowly, whereupon the following 'a tempo' is taken fast, so the effect is of a distinct contrast, but the relationship is obscured. The tremolos, which the Nowak edition calls for from the 1st violin are not audible. Conclusion: decently played, but somewhat without engagement.

The recordings by the *Leipzig String Quartet* (2004) and the *Wiener String Sextet* (2004) demonstrate how different approaches to Bruckner's string quintet can be. The interpretation of the Leipzigers is rigorous and even-tempered and relies on understatement, whereas that of the Viennese is quite violent and emphasises emotions - and both of them do justice to the work. The Leipzig String Quartet starts out from a rather traditional view, aims at clarity, the tempi are measured. The 1st movement captivates at once through its contemplative, peaceful tempo, without becoming slow. This flowing momentum pervades the whole performance, but is especially conspicuous in the Adagio that is able to express both serene peace and deep emotion: it is the climax of this recording. The voices weave themselves beautifully together and are seldom 'soloistic'; as a result a fuller sound is developed. The recording displays no major slowing-downs or accelerations, contrast is created above all by following the dynamic prescriptions, which is especially effective in the Adagio. The finale then appears relaxed, like, for example, in the Seventh Symphony. The Vienna String Sextet approaches the work quite differently. Their grasp is vigorous. Accordingly, the 1st, 2nd and 4th movements are played rather fast. The passion in their playing in louder passages sometimes allows transparency to recede, the recorded sound then tends towards the orchestral. At 6:26, the Scherzo is close to that of the Wiener Philharmonia Quintet (only the Prazak Quartet is quicker here - and, indeed, much quicker!) - after which the Adagio, that at 14:48 tends to be rather on the slow side, the contrast comes out very effectively; nevertheless no sublime peace comes to pass, but rather agitation predominates. Even so, the Adagio does not become, as with many other recordings, a big bundle of emotions, the emotions being much more sparingly deployed, arising through the contrast with their musical context. Unlike with the Leipzig String Quartet the finale is then no exercise in relaxation: vigorous, emphatic playing leads on to the coda, which consistently with their interpretation comes in triple forte and discharges the intensity. It is a somewhat different approach that is nevertheless consistent and true to the work.

The *Fine Arts Quartet* (2007) does not quite rise to these heights. The 1st movement may, with its energetic playing which at the same time pays attention to nuances, carry conviction; the tempo is steady but charged with expressive power. In the Scherzo, however, the 1st violin sounds shrill and the dynamics are restricted. The Adagio at 13:10 is accomplished rather quickly and due to the placing of the accents makes an restless impression. Especially here the *portamenti*, notably of the 1st violin, come across as old-fashioned; they are an expressive device that nowadays is rather rarely deployed, if at all. In the finale 'langsamer' (slower) becomes actually slow, and also the coda is not played 'a tempo', but is likewise rather slow. Nevertheless, as a means of getting to know the work this is an inexpensive and good recording.



Leipziger Streichquartett, Hartmut Rohde
27./30.1.2004
Finale coda revised version
44'39 (12'53, 07'51, 13'49, 10'06)
CD: MDG 307 1297-2 (zus. mit Streichquartett)



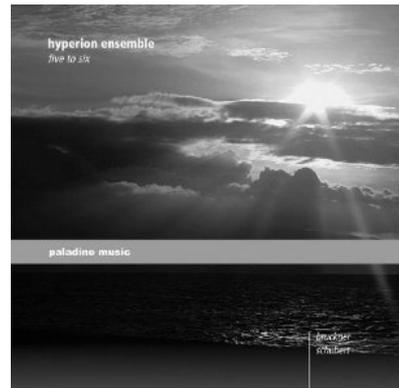
Wiener Streichsextett
18./19.2.2004 - Finale coda as in FPE
41'59 (11'31, 06'26, 14'48, 09'14)
CD: PAN Classics 10178

BRUCKNER
String Quintet in F major
String Quartet in C minor
Fine Arts Quartet
Gil Sharon, Viola



Fine Arts Quartet, Gil Sharon, Viola
22./24.9.2007 - Finale coda revised version
44'25 (13'46, 07'27, 13'10, 10'02)
Naxos 8.570788

The performance by the *Hyperion Ensemble* (2008) belongs, at 39:50, to the quickest, only the Prazak Quartet is faster - (much); the Hyperion Ensemble are comparable with the Heutling Quartet in terms of tempo, albeit that the performance time for individual movements differs. Nevertheless this recording by the Hyperion Ensemble doesn't give the impression of being rushed, rather to the contrary. Right from the beginning the dark sound of the ensemble is apparent, having the effect of a brooding or musing interpretation. The 1st violin performs not as 'primus', all five voices appear to be equally weighted, engendering a dense, complex sound but, because the recording succeeds in being very transparent, the multifacetedness of the work is audible without a muddle emerging. The top priority for this recording would not seem to be beautiful sound, but rather expressiveness. Sometimes the sound turns intentionally pallid, through which the music acquires a modern veneer - Bruckner as precursor of the 20th century! Absolute fidelity to the score stands perhaps at a lower premium. It appears that the dynamic requirements are subordinated to expressivity, the parameters appearing less expansive than, for example, in the recording of L'Archibudelli. The 1st movement coda seems to push ahead, all the energy that has up till this moment been accumulated is here dissipated. The Scherzo comes in dancing and whimsical, with strange leaps, and has a ghostly effect. The Adagio is played tenderly and, as always, sounds melancholy, but is handled without pathos - it is a subtle and fragile song of individual voices. The finale is played at a furious tempo, virtuosic, apparently effortlessly and has a similar effect to the finale of the Seventh Symphony that was composed during the same period. The 'Langsamer' (slower) towards the end is also like that and somehow draws the coda within its spell, and it comes not as a bombshell (which could certainly be justified), but is served somewhat deliberately so imparting to the work a majestic complexion.



Hyperion Ensemble
18./19.10.2008
Nowak, revised Finale coda
39'50 (11'35, 06'59, 13'22, 07'54)
CD title 'Five to Six' -
Paladino Music pnr 0021

[Translation by Ken Ward]

A NEW RECORDING OF BRUCKNER'S QUINTET, INTERMEZZO & QUARTET
BY THE FITZWILLIAM QUARTET
IS ANNOUNCED BY LINN RECORDS, FOR RELEASE IN SPRING 2013

Bruckner Society of America Kilenyi Medal of Honor Awards

February 8th of 2012 at Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco, Bruckner Society board member Neil Schore presented **Herbert Blomstedt** with the Julio Kilenyi Medal of Honor. Maestro Blomstedt was in San Francisco to conduct a series of concerts with the San Francisco Symphony including a performance of the Bruckner Symphony No. 5. **Stefan Sanderling**, Music Director of the Toledo Symphony Orchestra was presented with the Kilenyi Medal of Honor immediately following his April 15th performance of the Symphony No. 3 in Toledo's beautiful Rosary Cathedral. Less than a week later, a presentation of the Kilenyi Medal of Honor to conductor, **Stanislaw Skrowaczewski** took place on April 20th in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The 89 year old Laureate Conductor of the Minnesota Orchestra performed the Bruckner Symphony No. 8.

Bruckner Society of America news, complete discography, web-store for CDs and various items of interest to Bruckner fans, articles, free downloads - and much else, all available at

www.abruckner.com

Timed Structure Tables for Bruckner Symphonies (and quintet)

Professor William Carragan

SEVENTH IN THE SERIES OF GUIDES BEING PUBLISHED IN THE BRUCKNER JOURNAL THE STRING QUINTET

On the occasion of the first East Coast Brucknerathon at Simsbury, Connecticut, USA, September 5th, 2009, William Carragan provided charts of the formal events in various movements of symphonies I, II and III, and of his completion of the finale of symphony IX. These specified the exact time into the recording that each event took place and, used together with a large elapsed-time display on a laptop, they enabled those interested to follow the structural progress of the music. This was a great assistance to those of us not so adept at reading scores, analyzing music, recognizing keys or placing significant moments.

It seemed to me a good idea that such a facility be shared with readers of *The Bruckner Journal*, and Prof. Carragan has very kindly offered to provide such charts for all the symphonies, using timings taken from well known recordings. On the following pages we publish the seventh of these analytic charts. To use them you need only the specified recording, and either the display of elapsed time on your CD player or some other method of marking the time in minutes and seconds. Of course, other recordings can be used, the timings will be approximate but the structural events should not be too difficult to locate.

KW

Bruckner - String Quintet

Wiener Streichquintett (Vienna String Quintet) - String Quintet & Intermezzo

Camera CD Camerata 33CM299

L'Archibudelli - String Quintet, Intermezzo, String Quartet, Rondo for String Quartet

Sony Classical Vivarte SK 66 251

[Both recordings have become a little difficult to obtain, but are usually available at www.arkivmusic.com]

THE TERM “five-part song form” is a lyrical slow-movement paradigm in which two theme groups alternate, with the first group, fully-developed, having the last say before the coda. This concept can be shown schematically as ABABA + coda. Despite its simple name, it is not widely used. Indeed a composer as late as Beethoven might have been its inventor, in the adagios of the Ninth Symphony and of the A-minor string quartet, Op. 132. The slow movement of the great B-flat piano sonata, the “Hammerklavier”, is not in this form, because, after the second B, the A theme occurs as a coda rather than an extended statement. In 1872 Bruckner adopted the five-part song form in the Second Symphony, indeed as an afterthought, but then uses it in all the other symphonies except the Sixth, and also here in the Quintet. As Bruckner uses this form, he, like Beethoven in both cases, raises the A theme to a high climax in Part 5. Beethoven also, in both cases, has the B theme in a different time-signature than the A theme. Bruckner does that in the Third and the Seventh, but not elsewhere although he certainly has it in mind in the 1874 Fourth.

For the listener, the five parts are defined by very clear statements of the themes, in which the beginning of part 3 sounds very much like the beginning of part 1, and the beginning of part 4 sounds very much like the beginning of part 2. As for the beginning of part 5, it too sounds like the beginning of part 1, with substantial decoration which serves as the basis for the ensuing climax. With the parts defined in that way, we can see that here and there in his work Bruckner claims the privilege of developing one theme in a part which belongs to the other theme. For example, in the 1878 revision of the slow movement of the Fourth, he introduces the A theme at measure 101, after the statement of the B theme, as a countermelody to lyrical music first presented in the 1874 version without the A theme. But we do not count this as the beginning of part 3; the later entrance of the A theme at measure 129 must be considered the true beginning of part 3 because it sounds so much like the beginning of the movement.

Likewise in the Quintet, Bruckner uses material from the B theme toward the end of Part 3 which belongs to the A theme. This is the fourth phrase of the lyrical B theme (which is itself based on an inversion of the A theme), which I have called Bk in the table. It is a very prominent descending triadic theme which in its first occurrence in part 2, at measure 45, is given to the first viola, marked “lang gezogen” (fully bowed) with a ritardando to give it emphasis. It occurs once again in part 2, in the violoncello, again with a ritardando. Imagine our amazement, then, when in part 3 we hear an ornate development of the B theme at measure 90, followed by an elaborate fantasy on the Bk motive at measure 97 starting in the second viola. Though Bruckner has moved to the B theme, we are still in part 3, because after the fantasy reaches a forte-fortissimo climax, the B theme re-enters at measure 115 in a texture very close to the beginning of part 2, thus defining the beginning of part 4. The Bk motive is in due course heard at measure 123 in the viola, and then, most strikingly, in simultaneous contrary motion in all five instruments at measure 135. With all this drama, we can understand why in part 5 Bruckner moves immediately to the climax, and then takes time for a long coda like those in the Second and Third Symphonies.

There is a passage in Part 1, which I have called A2, consisting of sighing phrases in the first violin with similarly sighing dotted rhythms in the second viola deriving from earlier material for the first violin. This is parallel to a structure in part 1 of the slow movement of the Fourth, at measure 25, which Bruckner called

“Gebet” (prayer), and which itself calls strongly to mind the great seven-part “Ave Maria” of Linz. In the Fourth, the “Gebet” music is never heard again, but in the Quintet there is a hint of the sighing, dotted rhythms at the beginning of the coda at measure 157. When Bruckner wrote this music, he had not yet heard his own Ninth Symphony. But we, who have, understand that in the “Farewell to Life” passage in the adagio of the Ninth, in precisely the same position, Bruckner does the same thing with the Wagner tuben. Listeners can here expect to sense the deepest revelation of Bruckner’s emotions, and his resigned, ecstatic relation to the sublime.

These two performances present different endings for the finale: the Vienna Quintet, the first published version, and the Archibudelli, the manuscript. Both endings are published in the Nowak edition of 1963, and both are very lovely.

Kopfsatz	Gemäßigt	<i>(sonata form)</i>	Elapsed time				
			Bar No.	Vienna String Quintet	L'Archibudelli		
PART 1							
Exposition	A1	F major	1	0:00	0:03		
	A2 (trills)	F major	17	0:47	0:54		
	B	C major	29	1:19	1:26		
	Bk (slower)	C major	49	2:15	2:25		
	C	C major	57	2:40	2:52		
	K (codetta)	F sharp major	75	3:31	3:47		
	end	C major	98	4:35	5:00		
PART 2							
Development	(A1), (C)	C major	99	4:38	5:03		
	(A1), (C)	B flat major	111	5:13	5:38		
	(C, A2)	E flat major	127	5:54	6:23		
	(A1)	dom. of B flat	139	6:23	6:55		
	retransition	F minor	151	6:56	7:29		
Recapitulation	A1	F major	171	7:50	8:26		
	A2	F major	193	8:49	9:33		
	B	F major	201	9:09	9:55		
	Bk	G flat major	209	9:30	10:18		
	C	F major	217	10:01	10:48		
	K	B major	231	10:44	11:34		
Coda	(K)	F major	241	11:16	12:06		
	end	F major	273	12:39	13:44		
Scherzo							
	Schnell	<i>(binary form)</i>					
PART 1							
	A	D minor	1	0:00	4:33	0:00	4:33
	K (codetta)	D flat major	21	0:22	4:55	0:27	5:00
	end	A major	33	0:36	5:08	0:42	5:15
PART 2							
	development	B flat major	35	0:39	5:11	0:45	5:18
	retransition (slower)	D flat major	63	1:23	5:55	1:29	6:02
	A	D minor	83	1:57	6:29	2:07	6:38
	K	D flat major	103	2:19	6:52	2:34	7:04
	end	D major	118	2:37	7:11	2:56	7:27
Trio							
	Langsamer	<i>(binary form)</i>					
PART 1							
	A	E flat major	1	2:41	2:58		
	end	C flat major	8	2:57	3:12		
PART 1 (repeat)							
	A	E flat major	1	2:59	3:14		
	end	C flat major	8	3:16	3:27		
PART 2							
	development (A)	G flat major	9	3:18	3:29		
	(A inverted)	D major	17	3:36	3:44		
	A	E flat major	33	4:13	4:16		
	end	dom. of Dminor	40	4:32	4:31		

Intermezzo		Moderato	(sonata form)	Vienna String Quintet L'Archibudelli		
PART 1	A1	D minor	1	0:00	6:58	0:01
	A2	A major	9	0:16	7:14	0:15
	B	B flat major	17	0:33	7:31	0:30
	K	G major	29	0:58	7:55	0:52
	end	A major	42	1:21	8:20	1:12
PART 2	development	F major	43	1:25	8:25	1:16
	(A2)	E major	67	2:13	9:14	1:58
	retransition	G flat major	79	2:39	9:40	2:20
	A1	D minor	91	3:04	10:06	2:41
	A2	A major	99	3:20	10:23	2:55
	B	B flat major	107	3:38	10:41	3:11
	Kn (new, trumpets)	G flat major	127	4:16	11:22	3:46
end	D major	142	4:47	11:51	4:11	
Trio		Langsamer	(binary form)			
PART 1	A	E flat major	1	4:52		
	end	B flat major	8	5:10		
PART 1 (repeat)	A	E flat major	1	5:12		
	end	B flat major	8	5:31		
PART 2	development (A)	G flat major	9	5:33		
	(A inverted)	D major	17	5:54		
	A	E flat major	33	6:35		
	end	dom. of D minor	40	6:55		

Adagio		Adagio	(five-part song form)	Bar No.	Vienna String Quintet	L'Archibudelli
PART 1	A1	G flat major	1	0:00	0:02	
	A1	G flat major	13	1:20	1:02	
	A2	C flat major	23	2:22	1:52	
PART 2	b	notes are F	35	3:10	2:42	
	B (A1 inverted)	B flat major/minor	37	3:19	2:50	
	Bk	G flat major	45	3:57	3:28	
	B in bass	B flat major/minor	47	4:08	3:38	
	Bk	G flat major	55	4:46	4:17	
	B inverted	B flat major/minor	57	4:58	4:27	
PART 3	A1	G flat major	67	5:51	5:15	
	A1 in bass	G flat major	77	6:56	6:09	
	A1 inverted	C flat major	83	7:24	6:37	
	(B)	F sharp minor	91	8:04	7:14	
	fantasy on Bk	G major	97	8:36	7:43	
PART 4	B	D major/minor	116	10:12	9:10	
	Bk	B flat major	123	10:57	9:50	
	B in bass	D minor/D flat major	125	11:09	10:00	
	Bk in contrary motion	C flat major	135	12:03	10:50	
PART 5	A1	G flat major	139	12:30	11:16	
Coda	(A2)	G flat major	157	14:11	12:35	
	end	G flat major	173	15:27	14:12	

Finale	Lebhaft bewegt	(arch or reverse sonata form)			
PART 1					
Exposition	A1	G flat major	1	0:00	0:00
	A2	F minor	17	0:26	0:24
	B	E major	33	0:57	0:51
	C (double fugue)	C "major"	71	2:54	2:45
PART 2					
Development	(C, B)	C flat major	87	3:44	3:32
	(C)	E flat major	97	4:17	4:03
	(B)	E major	109	4:56	4:38
	C	C "major"	115	5:17	4:57
	retransition (A)	dominant of F	123	5:48	5:25
Recapitulation	B	D flat major	131	6:19	5:54
	A1	F major	159	7:45	7:20
	An		173	8:06	7:43
Coda	(An)	F major	181	8:21	8:00
	end (manuscript)		195	—	8:35
	end (first publication)		197	8:50	—

Book Reviews

Torsten Blaich

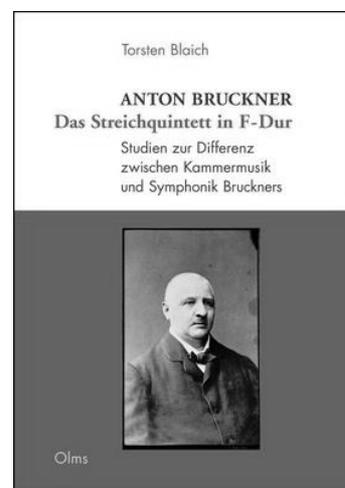
Anton Bruckner: Das Streichquintett in F-Dur. Studien zur Differenz zwischen Kammermusik und Symphonik Bruckners

(Anton Bruckner: The String Quintet in F major. Studies on the difference between Bruckner's chamber and symphonic music.)
(Hildesheim/Zurich/New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 2009) 324pp. ISBN: 978-3-487-13998-2

THIS BOOK is based on Dr Blaich's PhD thesis "Anton Bruckner: Das Streichquintett in F-Dur. Das kammermusikalische Hauptwerk Bruckners im Spiegel seiner Symphonik", completed at the Otto-Friedrich University in Bamberg in 2007 and slightly revised to take account of some recent bibliographical additions and, in particular, the new critical edition of the Quintet edited by Gerold W. Gruber for the Bruckner Gesamtausgabe (vol.13/2, 2007).

In his introductory first chapter, Blaich provides a historical background for the Quintet, and makes the valid point that, although Bruckner's chamber music output was by no means extensive, he considered this work important enough to have it published in 1884 with a dedication to Duke Max Emanuel of Bavaria (only the fourth of his works to be published) and to be mentioned in his will in November 1893 as one of the original manuscripts to be donated to the Court Library. Blaich also addresses the question of the "symphonic" nature of the work and lays the foundation for further exploration of this particular issue in subsequent chapters, but mentions at this stage that not only the source material but also internal stylistic features provide sufficient evidence to enable a strong case to be made for the Quintet's intrinsically "chamber" character.

The first part of Chapter 2 is devoted to an appraisal of the treatment of Bruckner's String Quintet in the literature – "life and work" monographs, individual studies and articles, general studies on the 19th-century string quintet and concert and chamber music guides. Blaich begins by comparing the more conservative views of the work held by both Rudolf Louis (*Anton Bruckner*, 1918) and Ernst Decsey (*Bruckner. Versuch eines Lebens*, 1922), viz. that it is essentially a symphony arranged for five string instruments, with the more enlightened views held, for example, by Max Auer (*Bruckner*, 1923), Ernst Kurth (*Bruckner* vol.2, 1925), Robert Haas (*Anton Bruckner*, 1934), Armand Machabey (*La vie et l'oeuvre d'Anton Bruckner*, 1945) and Werner Wolff (*Anton Bruckner. Genie und Einfalt*, 1948), viz. that structural, voice-leading and textural features mark it out as essentially a chamber-music work. On the other hand, Manfred Wagner (*Bruckner*, 1983) and Mathias Hansen (*Anton Bruckner*, 1987) adopt different approaches, the former suggesting that the Quintet was a secondary work in Bruckner's output and that he was not so meticulous as usual in his



attention to detail, the latter pointing out both symphonic and chamber-music-like characteristics while reminding us that the work was written specifically to “curry the favour of an influential interpreter”, namely Josef Hellmesberger. Several individual studies and articles are mentioned and discussed and these demonstrate the same variety of views, ranging from (a) the “symphony for five string instruments” assertion of Anna Amelie Abert (“Die Behandlung der Instrumente in Bruckners Streichquintett”, 1940/41) and Rainer Cadembach’s somewhat sceptical observation (“Versuch einer Wahrnehmung von Bruckners Streichquintett als ‘symphonische Kammermusik’.... 1999) that Bruckner’s work does not display the characteristics of a true string quintet to (b) the claim, with one or two reservations, that there is no strong stylistic evidence against the Quintet’s credentials as a chamber-music work. This claim is put forward, with varying degrees of conviction, by scholars such as Hans Ferdinand Redlich (“Bruckner and Brahms Quintets in F”, 1955), Hans Jancik (“Anton Bruckner in seiner Kammermusik”, 1964), Wilhelm Seidel (“Das Streichquintett in F-Dur im Oeuvre von Anton Bruckner und Johannes Brahms”, 1985), Leopold Nowak (“Form und Rhythmus im ersten Satz des Streichquintetts von Bruckner”, 1985), Mathias Hansen (“Orchester- und Kammermusik – eine Alternative?”, 1992) and Gerold Gruber (“Anton Bruckner, Streichquintett in F-Dur, WAB 112”, 1997), Redlich, for instance, makes the interesting suggestion that the sonority of the work would have been improved if Bruckner had used two cellos (like Schubert) rather than two violas (like Mozart). In their studies of the 19th-century String Quintet, both Katrin Bartels (1996) and Ludwig Finscher (“Streichquintett” in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* vol.8, 1998) argue that Bruckner’s work stands outside the tradition. Although Finscher agrees that it has some chamber-music qualities, he suggests that its sheer length (taking between 40 and 43 minutes in performance as compared with less than 30 minutes for Brahms’s opp.88 and 111 quintets) is one of several factors that lend it symphonic dimensions. In their respective chamber music guides both Hans Mersmann (*Die Kammermusik* vol.3, 1930) and Otto Schumann (*Schumanns Kammermusikbuch*, 1951) also portray the work as occupying a kind of half-way position between chamber music and symphony.

In the second part of Chapter 2, Blaich turns his attention to the historical context of the string quintet genre and “the string quintet in theoretical and compositional practice”. What is most striking is that although composers generally preferred to write string quartets, there was a relatively short period from the last 20 years or so of the 18th century to the middle of the 19th century when the string quintet flourished – this was a period that saw the composition of Mozart’s four quintets KV 515, KV516, KV593 and KV614, Beethoven’s C-major Quintet op.29, Schubert’s great C-major quintet D956, Mendelssohn’s two quintets and several works by Spohr and Onslow. Although both Bruckner and Brahms made fine contributions to the genre in the second half of the 19th century, the string quintet became much less popular towards the end of the century and was usually regarded as no more than an extension of the string quartet. More recent scholarship, however, has tended to regard it as an autonomous genre, and commentators such as Katrin Bartels and Christoph Wolff have argued that the variety of tonal and textural possibilities arising from the different combinations of instruments and the ability to utilise the chamber-music textures of the string trio or the string quartet on the one hand and more orchestral textures on the other hand have placed many more options at the composer’s disposal.

The third and final part of Chapter 2 is devoted to a discussion of the background and genesis of Bruckner’s String Quintet in 1878/79, the long period between its completion and its first major performance in January 1885, including the composition of the *Intermezzo*, a replacement for the *Scherzo*, towards the end of 1879, the private performance of the work (without the *Finale*) organised by Josef Schalk in November 1881, the preparation for publication by Gutmann in 1884, and its reception history. It is significant that the performance of the work by the Hellmesberger Quartet in 1885 was at the beginning of the year that marked the beginning of Bruckner’s more general acceptance and increasing reputation as a composer.

There is a detailed critical overview of the sources of the Quintet in Chapter 3, namely Bruckner’s autograph of the Quintet (Mus.Hs.19.482), his autograph of the *Intermezzo* (Mus.Hs. 6080), the engraver’s copy for the first edition (Mus.Hs.37.289) which probably dates from 1883, the first edition of the Quintet, the parts used by the Hellmesberger Quartet and Josef Schalk’s arrangements of the work for piano (4-hands, 1884; 2 hands, Adagio movement only, 1885). Blaich notes several discrepancies between the autograph, the engraver’s copy and the first edition score, mentions that not all of the corrections made by Bruckner in the printer’s copy were observed in the parts, and looks in even greater detail at two passages from the work – the second subject of the opening movement and the end of the *Finale* – to trace, in both instances, the connections between three related but different versions.

In Chapter 4, by far the longest chapter in the book, Blaich undertakes a thorough analysis of the Quintet. First, he deals with the architecture of Bruckner’s themes and the various thematic types in the work, commenting on the noticeable differences between the thematic structure in the Quintet and in the

symphonies and on Bruckner's attempts to create a higher level of thematic unity in his chamber work. Second, he compares the string writing in the Quintet with that in the symphonies, and remarks on Bruckner's much more frequent use of crossing of parts in the former, as well as his employment of a string texture that is "more dispersed, airier and at times almost mosaic-like". Third, he discusses the basic metrical principles in Bruckner's works, in particular the metrical "design" in the symphonies and in the Quintet, which contains a greater number of 4-bar groups and none larger than 10 bars. Finally, he examines Bruckner's "formal and cyclical strategies" in the Quintet, including his overarching designs or "golden arches" and wide-ranging "harmonic odysseys" that are also a striking feature of his symphonies. He also addresses the question of the change in order of the middle movements. The Adagio was originally placed second, but its re-positioning as the third movement between the Scherzo and the Finale also has a considerable bearing on the macrocosmic structural organisation of the Quintet.

Chapter 5 contains a summary of the previous chapters, a discussion of important issues arising from Blaich's study, including some research questions left open or unresolved, an appraisal of some transcriptions of the Quintet for string orchestra, including those by Rudolf Baumgartner and Meirion Bowen, and a review of some CD recordings of the work (Raphael Quartet, 1992/1998; Albeni String Quartet, 1990; Melos Quartet, 1993/2003; Leipzig String Quartet, 2005; L'Archibudelli, 1994). An appendix with 12 pages from the composer's autograph and one page from the engraver's copy and a comprehensive bibliography / discography conclude Blaich's book – a monumental study of the Quintet which will undoubtedly be the major monograph on the work for many years to come.

Crawford Howie, September 2011

Frederick Stocken

Simon Sechter's Fundamental-Bass Theory and Its Influence on the Music of Anton Bruckner

ISBN10: 0-7734-3879-3 ISBN13: 978-0-7734-3879-8 300 pages (Edwin Mellen Press, Lampeter, 2009)

I

How should we analyse Bruckner's harmony? This question has proved perennially troubling for scholars. In tandem with recognisably classical progressions, for which long-established models exist, Bruckner's music contains passages that are notoriously resistant to orthodox explanation. These problems become more pressing as Bruckner's style develops: such harmonic eccentricities as are evident in the D minor Mass or the First Symphony seem bland in comparison with the tortuous chromaticism of the Ninth Symphony. When Derrick Puffett observed, in his posthumously published study of the Adagio of this work, that Bruckner's late music seems wilfully to flout the principles of smooth part-writing, he put his finger on an apparent disregard for convention that has evaded consensus explanation.¹

Numerous approaches have, in recent years, been adopted in the secondary literature. Bruckner's music has belatedly attracted the attention of analysts employing the theories of Heinrich Schenker, notably Timothy L. Jackson and Edward Laufer;² but it has also provoked responses from commentators convinced of Bruckner's distance from Schenkerian orthodoxy – Puffett's essay is perhaps the most trenchant example. Since the turn of the millennium, the growing body of theoretical work devoted to late-nineteenth-century harmony, motivated especially by fresh interest in the ideas of turn-of-the-century German theorist Hugo Riemann, has occasionally encompassed Bruckner. Provisional attempts to explain the music in these terms can be found both in my own work and in that of Kevin Swinden; a more substantial instance is Miguel J. Ramirez's doctoral thesis, which applies neo-Riemannian methods extensively to Bruckner's mature harmony.³

¹ See Derrick Puffett, 'Bruckner's Way: The Adagio of the Ninth Symphony', in Kathryn Bailey Puffett, ed., *Derrick Puffett on Music* (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 687–789, and especially 689–91.

² See for example: Timothy L. Jackson, 'The Finale of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony and the Tragic Reversed Sonata Form', in Jackson and Paul Hawkshaw, eds, *Bruckner Studies* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 140–208; Edward Laufer, 'Some Aspects of Prolongation Procedures in the Ninth Symphony (Scherzo and Adagio)', in *ibid.*, pp. 209–55 and 'Continuity in the Fourth Symphony (First Movement)', in Crawford Howie, Jackson and Hawkshaw, eds, *Perspectives on Anton Bruckner* (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 114–44.

³ See Julian Horton, *Bruckner's Symphonies: Analysis, Reception and Cultural Politics* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 96–115, Kevin Swinden, 'Bruckner and Harmony', in John Williamson, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Bruckner* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 205–28 and Miguel J. Ramirez, 'Analytical Approaches to the Music of Anton Bruckner: Chromatic Third Relations in Selected Late Compositions' (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2009).

It is the principal objective of Frederick Stocken's new book to offer a fresh perspective on these matters. Stocken's attitude might broadly be described as historicist: its main claim is that if we want to understand Bruckner's harmony, we are best advised to look at the sources for his understanding of harmony, and above all the theory he learned from Simon Sechter. This study is timely for at least two reasons. First, as Crawford Howie explains in the book's foreword, a monograph proceeding in these terms fills a yawning gap in the literature,⁴ which can be traced to the perception, which the composer himself allegedly fostered and which especially angered Heinrich Schenker, that Sechter's principles did not carry over into free composition.⁵ This argument was given initial scholarly substance by Ernst Decsey in 1906, and it has persisted up to the present day.⁶ Second, Stocken's historicism is also very much in step with modern music theory; the idea that the way we think about the music of the past should be governed by the way the past thought about itself has been a guiding principle in much recent scholarship (Robert Gjerdingen's study of the *galant* style is perhaps the most substantial instance).⁷

Sechter's ideas, and their relevance for Bruckner's music, are however hard to clarify for a lay audience; and Stocken's assessment, derived as it is from his doctoral thesis, is comparably challenging. The pedagogical connection between Bruckner and Sechter at least anchors theoretical debates biographically: Bruckner, as is well-known, studied strict composition with Sechter between 1855, when the composer was still working as organist at St Florian, and 1861, by which time he had secured the post of cathedral organist in Linz, which he held until 1868. Bruckner's studies with Sechter began with a complete reconstruction of his conception of harmony according to Sechterian principles, and concluded with a thorough grounding in counterpoint, advancing through invertible counterpoint to canon and fugue. The course was rounded off with an examination at the Vienna Conservatory and the famous recital in Vienna's Piaristenkirche.

On this basis alone, it is easy to see the good sense of arguing that Bruckner's teacher should have had a fundamental impact on the way the composer thought about harmony. The precise nature of this relationship and the context of ideas in which it sits however need some explanation, if we are to gain access to Stocken's argument. Broadly speaking, Simon Sechter's theories, embodied above all in *Die Grundsätze der musikalischen Komposition*, published in 1853–4, stand as perhaps the most well-known nineteenth-century Viennese contribution to a body of thought, the lineage of which is one prominent offshoot of the theories developed by Jean-Philippe Rameau in the first half of the Eighteenth Century, and which finds its culmination in Schenker's work.

Basic to this way of thinking is the concept of the *fundamental bass*: the notion that any chord can be explained in terms of a governing root pitch (its controlling fundamental bass). So for example, in a C major triad, the root pitch C is the fundamental bass note defining its identity. If the C is in the bass voice, then the fundamental bass and the actual bass conveyed in the music are one and the same. Sometimes, however, chords are presented in inversion, which means that the root pitch is not in the bass, but has migrated up through the texture. In such a situation, we still say that the fundamental bass is C, because this pitch still functions as the root of the chord; but the actual bass (that is, the lowest pitch in the chord), will carry another pitch of the triad, either its third or fifth. The fundamental bass, in short, can either be present or implied; if it is implied, then we make the assumption that the explanation for a given chord resides in a bass that is theoretically necessary but absent from the music.

Sechter's theory argues further that similar principles govern chord progressions (the motion between chords) as well as the nature of chords themselves. In this respect, Sechter contended that all progressions can be explained in terms of the motion of the bass through two primary intervals: the fifth and the third. Progressions by fourth and sixth can be regarded as inversions of these primary intervals. Thus movement downwards by a fourth is equivalent to movement upwards by a fifth: if I move from C major up a perfect fifth, I reach G; if I move from C major down a perfect fourth, I also reach G. The same applies to progressions by third and sixth: if I move upwards from C major through a major third, I arrive at E minor; if I move downwards through a minor sixth, I also reach E minor. The upshot of this is that there is, in practice, only one kind of progression that cannot be explained using this model, which is motion through the interval of a second. In order to account for this, Sechter marshalled the controversial notion of the *intermediate fundamental*: the idea that any progression through a second can be explained by the presence of an intervening step of a third or a fifth, which has been omitted in practice. So for example, in the key of C

⁴ *Simon Sechter's Fundamental-Bass Theory and Its Influence on the Music of Anton Bruckner* (Lampeter, 2009), p. i.

⁵ Bruckner's remarks on this matter were famously reported in Heinrich Schenker, *Harmonielehre* (Stuttgart, 1906), p. 228, n. 2.

⁶ See Ernst Decsey, 'Bruckner als Lehrer der Sechterschen Theorie: Erinnerungen und Beiträge', *Die Musik* 6/22 (1906–7), pp. 191–204, and more recently Ernst Tittel, 'Bruckners musikalischer Ausbildung', in Franz Grasberger, ed., *Bruckner-Studien. Leopold Nowak zum 60. Geburtstag* (Vienna, 1964), pp. 105–11.

⁷ Robert Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style* (New York and Oxford, 2007).

major, the progression F major–G major occurs frequently (in terms of functional harmony, we would say that this is a progression from IV to V). In terms of the interval traversed here, the bass has moved through a major second (F to G). In Sechter's terms, there needs to be an additional step imagined in the bass, which is not actually present in the music, in order to render the progression explicable: the actual bass moves from F to G, but the fundamental bass requires the additional step F–D–G. The progression is now in accord with Sechter's theory: it seems to move by a second, but the fundamental bass proceeds consistently by third (F–D) and fourth (D–G), which as we know is an inverted fifth. The D is defined as an intermediate fundamental. All of this is clarified in Example 1.

Example 1

The diagram illustrates the harmonic progression C major–F major–G major–C major. The top staff shows the chords in treble clef. The bottom staff shows the fundamental bass line with intervals: 5th (C to F), 3rd (F to D), 4th (D to G), and 5th (G to C). The D is labeled as the 'Intermediate fundamental'.

A further concept bearing directly on Stocken's analysis of Bruckner's music is the way that Sechter conceived relationships between keys. The relatedness of keys in this context is essentially a consequence of the sharing of pitches: G major is, for example, related to C major because all the pitches of the former (G, B, D) are discovered in the C major scale. In this sense, the ease with which one modulates (that is to say, moves between keys) is a product of the ease with which pitches held in common between the starting point and goal of a progression can be discovered. If I want to modulate, I therefore need to establish pivot chords, or chords related to both keys, and pivotal pitches, or pitches having a presence in two tonal contexts. For instance, motion between C major and G major is straightforward not only because both chords derive from the C major scale, but also because the two triads share a common pitch (G), and because the C major triad is also present in the G major scale, which means that it has a role in that key (as subdominant chord) as well as in C (where it is the tonic). Proximity defined in these terms allows us to group keys into 'families' (as Stocken describes them); the fewer such connections can be established, the harder it is to modulate.

The limitations of Sechter's theory have long been acknowledged; Stocken is under no illusion in this regard. The most persistent criticisms concern issues of harmonic function and the concept of the intermediate fundamental. Conceiving of harmony in terms of the step-by-step motion of an often implied rather than present bass, and of modulation in terms of a series of localised pivots, risks a kind of harmonic myopia, which obscures the long-range influence of triads across a piece and the hierarchy within which they sit (in this respect, we write of a triad's *function*, an idea that is at best weakly explained in Sechter's theory). And we might legitimately ask why the notion of the intermediate fundamental is necessary at all, given that many triads a second apart can be explained sufficiently by their common membership of an underlying scale. Stocken's challenge, therefore, is not only to narrate the impact of Sechterian ideas on Bruckner, but also to defend the legitimacy of Sechter's system itself.

II

IN FACT, Stocken's study rises thoroughly and elegantly to this challenge. The book effectively splits into four parts. Chapter 1 introduces Sechter in relation to Bruckner. Chapters 2 and 3 deal with Sechter's theories in more detail: Chapter 2 situates his ideas in the history of music theory; Chapter 3 elaborates the theory as a basis for considering Bruckner's music. Chapters 4 and 5 turn towards analysis: Chapter 4 appraises existing attempts to apply Sechter's theory analytically; Chapter 5 deals specifically with Brucknerian application. Finally, Chapter 6 ties the book's findings together in a concise but thoughtful conclusion.

Chapter 3's consideration of Sechter's theory is by itself sufficient to mark the book out as a significant contribution to the literature. In the English language, its major recent precursor is Robert Wason's *Viennese Harmonic Theory from Albrechtsberger to Schenker and Schoenberg*, a study that takes in both Sechter and

Bruckner in its historical survey.⁸ Stocken is particularly concerned to combat the negative assessment of Sechter as a reactionary contributor to the widening separation of theory and practice in nineteenth-century music, which percolates through the literature and is broadly upheld by Wason. Instead, Stocken follows John A. Phillips in arguing that Sechter's theory is compatible with Bruckner's mature style, and therefore congenial to the kinds of post-Wagnerian harmony that are usually regarded as anathema to Sechter's conservative stance.⁹

The account of Sechter's theory given here advances beyond Wason's in several respects. In the first place, it is more alert to the role of counterpoint in Sechter's thinking, paying close attention to Sechter's prodigious output of fugues, scrutinising one, the 'Fuga a 4 voci' from the *Vier Fugen Op. 5*, in some detail, and addressing the question of the relationship between theory and practice by examining Sechter's little-known reworking of Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 110.¹⁰ Second, the exposition of fundamental-bass theory is also a concerted defence of its range and flexibility. Stocken adopts the novel strategy of using Bruckner's surviving exercises for Sechter, held in the Austrian National Library, to exemplify the theory itself, proceeding on this basis through concepts of sequence and key relationships to modulation and the theory of chromaticism. Chapter 4 then bridges the gap between establishing this theory and applying it analytically by surveying precedents in the work of Karl Mayrberger, Joseph Schalk, Cyrill Hynais, Ernst Decsey, Graham Phipps, Elmar Seidel and John Phillips.¹¹

The analytical crux of Stocken's thesis is found in Chapter 5, which applies Sechterian principles to the Adagio of the Ninth Symphony. This, admittedly, is not a novel manoeuvre; indeed, Stocken takes this as his starting point in part as a response to Phillips' attempt to understand the opening of the Adagio from a similar perspective. Stocken's analysis is, however, a good deal more developed than Phillips', encompassing the principal subject, the ascending sequential material in bars 9–15 and 207–13, the subordinate theme, the climaxes respectively in bars 17, 121 and 206 and their preceding progressions, and the so-called 'Farewell to Life', bars 29–36.

Space does not permit a thorough engagement with Stocken's analysis. More realistically, his and Phillips' readings of the Adagio's first phrase might be compared, with the aim of clarifying *in nuce* some of the issues surrounding the application of Sechterian thinking. The passage is given in reduced score in Example 2.

Example 2

Langsam, feierlich

f markig, breit

cresc.

ff marc.

⁸ Robert Wason, *Viennese Harmonic Theory from Albrechtsberger to Schenker and Schoenberg* (Ann Arbor, 1984).

⁹ John A. Phillips, 'Viennese Fundamental Bass Tradition in the Late Nineteenth Century', in Michael Ewans, Rosalind Halton and John A. Phillips, eds, *Music Research: New Directions for a New Century* (Amersham, 2004), pp. 396–406.

¹⁰ *Simon Sechter's Fundamental-Bass Theory*, pp. 62–86.

¹¹ Karl Mayrberger, 'Die Harmonik Richard Wagners an den Leitmotiven aus Tristan und Isolde erläutert', *Bayreuther Blätter* 4 (1881), pp. 169–80; Joseph Schalk, 'Das Gesetz der Tonalität', *Bayreuther Blätter* 11 (1888), pp. 169–80 and 381–7, 12 (1889), pp. 191–8 and 13 (1890), pp. 65–70; Cyrill Hynais, 'Die Harmonik R. Wagners in Bezug auf die Fundamentaltheorie Sechter's', *Die neue musikalische Presse* 10 (1901), pp. 50–2, 67–9, 81–2 and 97–100; Ernst Decsey, *Bruckner, Versuch eines Lebens* (Berlin, 1920) and 'Bruckner als Lehrer der Sechterschen Theorie'; Graham H. Phipps, 'Bruckner's Free Application of Strict Sechterian Theory with Stimulation from Wagnerian Sources: An Assessment of the First Movement of the Seventh Symphony', in Howie et al, *Perspectives on Anton Bruckner*, pp. 228–58; Elmar Seidel, 'Simon Sechters Lehre von der richtigen Folge der Grundharmonien und Bruckners Harmonik – Erwägungen zur Analyse Brucknerscher Musik', in Friedrich Wilhelm Riedel, ed., *Anton Bruckner – Tradition und Fortschritt in der Kirchenmusik des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Sinzing, 2001), pp. 307–38; and Phillips, 'Viennese Fundamental Bass Tradition in the Late Nineteenth Century'.

Although Stocken is broadly in sympathy with Phillips, their analyses diverge in numerous ways. Phillips interprets the unharmonised B in bar 1 as underpinned by a B fundamental – that is, the triad implied by this pitch is B major – and this leads him to explain the C natural that follows as an embellishing ninth (C natural being a minor ninth above the B fundamental). The A sharp at the start of bar 2 is then regarded as the raised third of chord V in B, so that the opening unaccompanied melody is altogether explained via an implied fundamental bass moving up a fifth from B to F sharp. From this initial analysis, Phillips moves to a clear demonstration that the entire progression can be justified via a fundamental bass that moves by fifth or third in conformity with Sechter’s system, albeit through judicious use of implied or intermediate fundamentals. Thus: bars 2–3² suggest a V–vi bass in F; bars 3³–4² switch to an implied VI–(II) –V in C sharp; bars 4³–5² comprise a IV–I progression in D major; and bars 63–7 finally alight on E major, prefaced by V and II. A fundamental bass can be posited beneath all of this, which only ever moves by the core intervals of a fifth or a third.

Drawing on his more detailed engagement with Sechter’s theory, Stocken is able to devote more attention to the multiple tonal implications of the passage, and especially the way Bruckner makes use of pivot chords. A basic difficulty for the analyst is what theorists often call the functional promiscuity of this music: its tendency to imply numerous keys simultaneously without confirming any of them. For example, in the absence of a clear underpinning chord progression, the opening violin line can be interpreted in a variety of ways. As Stocken shows, in addition to the B major context posited by Phillips, we can also imagine this melody in E, G or (at a stretch) even F, and this plurality needs to be accessible to the theory applied. As a result of this perception, Stocken is also much more alert than Phillips to the way Bruckner moves between implied keys. He also picks up on a vital feature of this progression, which is its reliance on the augmented-sixth chord: the chord built on the lowered sixth degree of the scale, which is distinctive for the interval of an augmented sixth between the root and the soprano, and which normally resolves onto the dominant. Three of the chords in Example 2 can be interpreted as augmented sixths, in E, C and B respectively: the chord in bar 2; and the two chords in bar 4. Stocken argues that these chords are employed as pivots: the first is reinterpreted as the dominant of F; the second resolves to the dominant of C, but this is then itself reframed as an augmented sixth; and the third chord morphs into the subdominant of D with the entry of D major at the start of bar 5. In this way, although both Phillips and Stocken supply consistent Sechterian readings, Stocken’s analysis has the considerable advantage of capturing the music’s radically evasive quality.

Details of both analyses can nevertheless be challenged. For instance, both Stocken and Phillips view the end of the passage in E major; but everything about bars 5–7 pleads for an interpretation of the chord at the start of bar 7 as the dominant of A, rather than as the tonic in E. This impression is reinforced by the bass F naturals in the second half of the bar; and in fact bars 5–7 can altogether be read as a straightforward modulation from D to V of A. This perception opens up an issue, which the Sechterian analysis does not detect, but which is critical to the entire movement: like many of Bruckner’s thematic statements, the purpose of this theme is not to state a key, but to problematise one. We enter it with the sense of E major or minor as a possible tonic, but this perception is undermined by the first chord of bar 3, which forces a reinterpretation of the harmony of bar 2. When we emerge into a recognisably diatonic progression at the end of the theme, the chord of E returns, but it has exchanged its tonic function for a dominant one. This, in fact, is an entirely standard Brucknerian procedure – the identity of a tonic is hinted at but then obscured in the first theme, and it is left to a later point in the movement or work to supply clarification (in this case, the resolution to E major occurs in the coda at bar 231). Similar strategies can also be found in the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth symphonies.¹² And like these precedents, the way the form of the Adagio proceeds has much to do with the harmonic instability of the main theme, which becomes more pronounced as the movement progresses, culminating in the shocking climactic dissonance in bar 206, which Stocken recognises as ‘a breaking point between theory and practice’.¹³

The most pressing question here, then, is not whether a Sechterian analysis of the theme is possible – both Phillips and Stocken demonstrate conclusively that it is – but rather whether such an analysis carries sufficient explanatory force to justify privileging it over other possible approaches; and here I remain unconvinced. Above all, it is questionable whether the Sechterian system can grasp the *structural* implications of the harmony in bars 1–7 – that is, the impact it has on the movement’s formal organisation. At best, Sechterian analysis would have to be deployed in conjunction with a theory of how the fundamental

¹² I have addressed this issue in *Bruckner’s Symphonies*, pp. 115–43, and see also Benjamin M. Korstvedt, “Harmonic Daring” and Symphonic Design in the Sixth Symphony: An Essay in Historical Musical Analysis’, in Howie et al, *Perspectives on Anton Bruckner*, pp. 185–205.

¹³ *Simon Sechter’s Fundamental-Bass Theory*, p. 231.

bass conditions form. This is unlikely to emerge anytime soon, since a way of thinking that struggles to encompass tonal function (the job a triad does within a key) is hardly fit to the task of explaining formal function (the job a theme does within a form). In short, the limitations of Sechterian theory in this instance have to do not so much with its inability to deal with the music's chord-to-chord progress, but with its blindness to the kinds of contextual question to which the music most urgently demands answers, chiefly what it means to say that late-nineteenth-century music expresses a governing tonality, and how its ambiguous harmonic idiom can support the forms of a persisting classical genre. These are questions, I suspect, that Bruckner himself would have struggled to answer in terms of his teacher's theory.

To be sure, Stocken is careful to distance himself from the inevitably overblown claim that Sechter holds the exclusive key to Bruckner's complex harmonic idiom. Instead, he very sensibly locates it as one part of a broader conception of Brucknerian harmony; as Stocken explains: 'Although the theory could never claim to represent a common-practice tonality for the late nineteenth century, there is certainly a good case to be made that it is an important element, if not the most important factor, in understanding Bruckner's own "common practice"'.¹⁴ The point is well-taken: it is undeniably rash to discount what evidence we have of Bruckner's harmonic thinking as at least partly explanatory of his compositional practice, especially when the former finds its way so frequently and tangibly into the manuscript sources for the latter. Yet my own reservations arise less from a biographical discomfort with this line of reasoning, and more from a suspicion of historicism in general. The fundamental difficulty that analysts surely face is that a complete explanation for the music of a given period is never entirely available from within that music's historical context, because composers' practice always runs ahead of theory's ability to account for it. Viewed in these terms, Bruckner's devotion to Sechter's principles exposes a problem that persists regardless of whether we think they figured in the composer's mature compositional mentality or not.

Such reservations aside, however, this remains a most valuable contribution to the literature. Stocken's study is diligent in its encounter with Sechter's theories and their sources, constructively critical in its engagement with the secondary literature, and perspicacious in its analysis of Bruckner's music. It makes a vital contribution to both Bruckner and Sechter studies, and as such should become an important text for scholars in both fields.

Julian Horton

Frederick Stocken's paper to the Bruckner Journal Readers Conference, 2011, *Is Sechter echter?* will be published in the next issue of *The Bruckner Journal*, Vol. 16 no.2, November 2012



Anna Khomenia:

Феномен Брукнера Вариации на тему: загадки и парадоксы гения

(The Bruckner Phenomenon: variations on a theme: the enigmas and paradoxes of a genius), ISBN-13: 978-3-8465-1934-9 LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, 2011 208pp €79

Anna Khomenia's is the first Russian book on Bruckner that I have come across, though it emerges from a growing background of articles and theses, as her bibliography shows. It is an intriguing but inconclusive work: she raises many issues for discussion, without quite pinning them down.

She devotes many pages to the 'Bruckner problem': the apparent incongruity of personality and music and the uncertainty over the numerous variants of most of his symphonies. She states that the problem is 'open', but does not indicate what the possible solutions might be, or suggest her own hypothesis. She talks about 'multi-variantism' as Bruckner's challenge to the 'completeness' which 19th century audiences expected. Yet, because the variant manuscripts have not been available to her in Russia, she largely ignores the symphonies (above all the 3rd and 8th) in which multi-variantism is most conspicuous. She implies that Bruckner's symphonies are equally valid in all their variants, or at least that each is valuable and unrepeatable. Yet at the same time she shows, rightly I think, that Bruckner was not content with 'multi-variantism'. The variants exist because he was striving to attain an ideal of perfection; he believed that he had a duty to make the best use of the talents which God had bestowed on him. The argument, potentially interesting, is not fully developed.

Khomenia considers that Bruckner aimed in his symphonies to embody the Christian idea of the transformation of the world and the triumph of good over evil. His symphonies are 'metaphysical dramas', and to that extent reflect the socio-cultural drama of his time, when urbanisation and nationalism unleashed powerful forces for both good and evil. In his later symphonies the path to triumph became longer and more complex, the sense of evil more highly charged,

¹⁴ *Simon Sechter's Fundamental-Bass Theory*, p. 250.

and the clash of opposing principles more dramatic, even apocalyptic. Bruckner tried to deal with the threatening forces of the new era by invoking tradition, yet at the same time reworked and even challenged that tradition. Khomenia has a long section on the influence of Wagner, suggesting that the mythopoeic drama of Wagner's musical conceptions was transformed into metaphysical drama in Bruckner's work.

Khomenia's musical analyses are sensitive and technically judicious. She demonstrates, for example, how the opening subject of the first movement of the 7th symphony begins from confident affirmation and moves into doubt before almost achieving resolution, launching a quest which arrives at its close only when the coda 'answers' the doubts. She is also interesting and persuasive on the first movement of the 9th symphony.

To the Western reader one of the most interesting aspects of Khomenia's book is her account of the reception of Bruckner in Russia. The first performance of his music there seems to have been of the 7th symphony under S. Panchenko in St Petersburg in 1901; Tanev was in the audience. Opinions on the music were sharply divided, then as now, but most consigned Bruckner to the shadow of Wagner, Brahms and/or Mahler. Mahler was better known, because he visited Russia twice, in 1902 and 1907, and conducted his work there. Bruckner's music was revived in the 1920s, when both Walter and Klemperer conducted him in Russia, but few Russian conductors followed their example. The major exception was Ivan Sollertinskii, who was devoted to both Bruckner and Mahler. He organised a Bruckner-Mahler Society, which met twice a month to listen to two-piano arrangements of all the symphonies of both composers. Sollertinskii also published the first serious pamphlet on Bruckner, comparing him - of all people - with Scriabin! He asserted that both were using new harmonic principles in the ecstatic search for God, and directly compared Scriabin's Poem of Ecstasy with Bruckner's 7th symphony.

In his youth Shostakovich disliked Bruckner, but under the influence of Sollertinskii, who was a close friend, came later to appreciate his music, especially after Shostakovich turned away in his 5th symphony from the playful irony of his earlier works and sought inspiration in the Austro-German symphonic tradition. Khomenia examines the similarities between Bruckner and some of Shostakovich's later symphonies: a relatively slow first movement, the continuous development of themes, and the use of a large orchestra in instrumental blocks. I would add monumental sound and a powerful sense of evil.

Sviatoslav Rikhter learnt Bruckner's music in two-piano transcriptions, which he played with Gilels. He found him difficult to get to know, but very rewarding. At one point he even refers in his diary to Bruckner's 8th as his favourite of all symphonies.

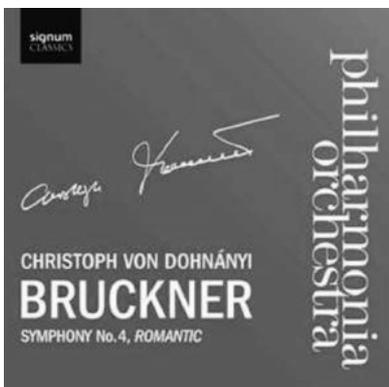
Khomenia concludes that there is still no tradition of Bruckner performance in Russia, so that subsequent conductors and musicians have little experience to draw on when they search for their own interpretations. On the other hand, her references to articles and theses published in Russia show that a considerable scholarship is developing. Apparently L. Rappoport published a book on Bruckner in 1963, and I. Beletskii in Leningrad in 1979, and certain authors crop up repeatedly in the footnotes: V. Nilova, B. Mukosei, A. Mikhailov, V. Konnov, all of whom have written theses and/or articles on him. Her own book reads to me like a first draft of what might become an extremely interesting and perceptive work on Bruckner's personality, his music and his place in European culture.

Geoffrey Hosking

[Anna Khomenia gave an organ recital of works by composers from the 16th to 20th century in Vitebsk, in the Philharmonie, on May 18th 2012]

CD Review

READERS ARE INVITED TO SUBMIT CD REVIEWS TO THE BRUCKNER JOURNAL



Bruckner - Symphony No.4 (1878/80)
Philharmonia Orchestra / Christoph von Dohnányi

Signum Classics SIGCD256

THIS, for me at least, is a long-awaited release. Part of a concert I attended on 30 October 2008 at the Festival Hall, I came away with the feeling that I had heard something very special indeed. The first half of the programme was the Sinfonia Concertante K364 of Mozart with Benjamin Schmid (violin) and Rachel Roberts (viola). Regrettably, even the inclusion of this wonderful evergreen didn't encourage a full attendance - perhaps people had other things on their minds, like queuing to get their money out of the bank as the world's financial system teetered on the brink of collapse - but in this concert

those who turned up could forget all about that and were treated to a magical Fourth that transported you on a journey of delights. Indeed in *The Bruckner Journal* concert review (Vol. 13, no. 2, July 2009, p.6) it was remarked that this performance shone like gold, gripping you from the start and never letting go.

I was in the choir behind the horns. Frankly for 64 minutes I sat mesmerized, the Philharmonia at its utmost peak, Christoph von Dohnanyi, newly appointed Honorary Conductor for Life, raising his game to a new and unexpected high. This was no fluke however, later in December 2009 he conducted the same programme with the New York Philharmonic and that was wonderful too. What however really marks out this performance was the playing of the horns, in my view unparalleled in its exquisite beauty, playing of astonishing quality, delicate and precise in the quieter passages but thrillingly raucous when demanded.

So the issue here is, have the sound engineers captured this in the recording? Yes - is the answer, in my collection this disc now sits proudly next to Bruno Walter's 1960 Columbia miracle. However I do have a couple of niggles. At times an element of reverberation can be detected, surprising because I've never noticed it so pronounced in the Festival Hall. In the finale there is a wonderful moment - by the way, played beautifully here - the recapitulation of the 2nd theme group where the theme is embellished by the flute - in the recording the preceding climax has a remarkably slow dying echo, in fact if anything it enhances the eeriness which Bruckner undoubtedly intended, but I am not sure it truly reflects the Festival Hall acoustic....

In the finale, the last nine bars first and second horns play crotchet triplets up and down the Eb major chord and are marked "*schmetternd*", it means 'blaring' - they compete with and complement the rest of the brass and orchestra in a one of those exciting Bruckner counterpoint moments. In this recording they are a touch muted, though not completely overwhelmed as in many performances - they were certainly *schmetternd* on the night! I know that the horns gave their all but I fear the post-production balance engineers have slightly understated their contribution. But these are perhaps issues peculiar to me: overall this is an immensely rich and pastoral performance, never ever stodgy or ruined by unnecessary and artificial gravitas, the virtuosity of an orchestra and conductor in total control. The finale coda, especially the build up on violins, is fabulous; we are whipped up to fever pitch and then the release - glorious, morale boosted to the heavens! It's no wonder the audience went wild and I'm delighted that Signum have retained this ovation - as deserved as any you will hear.

Stephen Pearsall

(This review was also published on www.amazon.co.uk)

Two very fine and thoroughly recommendable CDs of choral music have recently been issued. In the notes to the GENUIN CD - *Serenade - Songs of Night and Love* - Andreas Frese writes:

"If Bruckner enjoyed a high degree of respect as a composer of his secular vocal works, in the 20th century a prejudice emerged suggesting that the composer who worked for the most part in large-scale symphonic genre failed to do justice to the lyric poetry chosen for his works by not giving sufficient attention to the relationship between the textual content and the music. The works presented in this recording very impressively refute these prejudices. The relationship of the words to the music is located in Bruckner not in the melodic writing but instead in the exceptional harmonic writing which closely traces and sublimates the most subtle feelings expressed in the text."



Anton Bruckner - Lieder | Magnificat

Brucknerhaus LIVA 046
Thomas Kerbl and others.
Choralvereinigung Bruckner 2011, soloists
and chamber orchestra of the Anton
Bruckner Private University, Linz

Dir Herr, dir will ich mich ergeben
O du liebes Jesu Kind
Herz-Jesu-Lied
In Jener letzten der Nächte
In Jener letzten der Nächte (choral version)
Ave Maria (WAB 7)
Totenlied 1
Totenlied 2
Frühlingslied
Wie bist du, Frühling, gut und treu
Im April
Kantate für Dechant Jodok Stülz
Herbstkummer
Mein Herz und deine Stimme
Magnificat

Serenade - Songs of Night and Love Romantic Part Songs for male choir

GENUIN CD GEN 12224
Camerata Musica Limburg

8 songs by Schubert
3 by Vaughan Williams
1 by Sjöberg
2 by Alfvén
4 by Bruckner:
Um Mitternacht
Der Abendhimmel (2nd version)
Mitternacht
Abendzauber

The Camerata Musica Limburg recording of *Abendzauber* - Evening Magic - for tenor, male voice choir, four horns and three distant voices - is particularly beautiful. The Brucknerhaus recording contains several previously unrecorded items.

kw

NEW & REISSUED RECORDINGS March to June 2012

Compiled by Howard Jones

Highlights of this listing include further instalments of Blomstedt's Leipzig GO and Janowski's OSR cycles and Venzago's for cpo, Barenboim's 6/2010 Berlin SK Symphony No.7 from DG and Rattle's Berlin PO 4-movement No.9 from EMI Classics. There's a further interesting Brucknerhaus Linz issue containing 13 Lieder (etc) and a Genuin release featuring vocal items including the rarely recorded Abendzauber. A bumper crop of DVD/Blurays includes a Symphony No. 4 under Sinopoli, No. 5s from Abbado and Celibidache, No. 7s from Celibidache (Berlin PO) and Tennstedt, and a No. 8 from William Steinberg.

CDs and Downloads

* = first issue

SYMPHONIES

- Nos.1 to 9 Wand/Cologne RSO (Cologne, 1974 to 1981) SONY 29CD set 8869 191155 2
(see TBJ March 2011 issue p.14 for durations). With works by 12 other composers.
- No.1 (Linz v.) *Janowski/Orc. Suisse Romande (Geneva, 6/2011) PENTATONE CLASSICS SACD PTC 5186 (47:08)
- No.1 (Linz v.) *Sawallisch/Vienna SO (12/06/85) CLASSICAL & R RECORDINGS RR-1070 (46:43)
- No.2 (1877v ed. Carragan)
*Venzago/Northern Sinfonia Orch. (Gateshead, 24/11/2011) cpo 777691-2 (56:54)
- No.3 (1890 v.) Frühbeck de Burgos/Dresden PO (Dresden, 4-7/10/2006)
ZWEITAUSENDEINS KLASSIC CD (57:54)
- No.3 (1890 v.) *Schneidt/Berlin PO (02/02/86) CLASSICAL & R RECORDINGS RR-1083 (58:00)
- No.4 *Blomstedt/Leipzig Gewandhaus Orch. (10/2010) QUERSTAND VKJK 1018 (67:30)
- Nos.4 & 5 Böhm/Saxon State Orch. (Dresden 01/36 & 1937) PROFIL 2CD set PH 09025
(62:53 & 67:34)
- No.4 *Dohnanyi/Philharmonia Orch. (London, 30/10/2008) SIGNUM CLASSICS SIGCD 256 (63:31)
- No.4(ed. Löwe) *von Maticic/ Orch. Sinfonica di Milano della RAI (Milan, 23/02/62) ARCHIPEL
ARPCD 0481 (61:03)
- No.4 K Sanderling/Bavarian RSO (Munich 11/94) KING CD KICC 976 (71:02)
- Nos.4,5,7,8,9 Wand/Berlin PO (Berlin, 01/96 to 01/2001) RCA 6CD set 8869 192295 2
(68:40, 77:14, 65:55, 87:15 & 61:59)
- Nos. 6 & 8 *Wand/Deutsche SO(1995 & 1994) PROFIL 8CD set PH 10046 (&)
with works by 6 other composers.
- No.7(ed. Haas) *Arming/New Japan PO (9 & 10/11/2011) FONTEC CD FOCD 6013 (66:30)
- No.7 *Barenboim/Berlin SK (06/2010) DG CD 0289-4790320-8 (67:15)
- No.7 van Beinum/ Concertgebouw Orch. (Amsterdam, 10/09/47) AUDIOPHILE APL 101565
(59:49). With Brahms St Anthony Variations.
- No.7 Furtwängler/Berlin PO (Cairo, 23/04/51) ARCHIPEL ARPCD 0479 (62:37).
With Wagner's Good Friday Music from Parsifal.
- No.7 *Masur/Israel PO (03/95) HELICON CLASSICS 02-2654 (63:14)
with Schoenberg's 'A Survivor from Warsaw'.
- Nos.8(ed. Haas) & 9 Schuricht/Vienna PO (12/63 & 11/61) EMI CLASSICS 2SACD set 9559842 (71:16 & 56:22)
- No.9 (ed Cohrs) *Rattle/Berlin PO (Berlin, 09/02/2012) EMI CLASSICS 9 52969-2 (82:10)
(with revised SPCM Finale)
- No.9 (ed. Nowak) Wand/SWR SO (Ottobeuren, 24/06/79) KING CD KICC 967 (58:08)

VOCAL & INSTRUMENTAL

- Abendzauber etc. *Camerata Musica Limburg/Schumacher (2011) GENUIN CD GEN 12224.
With part-songs by Alfven, Schubert & Vaughan Williams.
- 13 Lieder etc. *Kerbl/Chorvereinigung Bruckner 2011 (Linz, 21/09/2011)
BRUCKNERHAUS LINZ CD LIVA 046 (includes several first recordings).
- Sym. Nos. 0 & 2 Scherzi & Adagio of String Quintet arr. organ, with works by Liszt & R. Strauss.
Bönig/Hohen Dom Cologne (08/2004) MOTETTE CD 13251 (07:54, 08:46 & 14:56).

DVDs & BLURAY

- Sym. No.4 *Sinopoli/ Philharmonia Orch. (16/09/88) NHK DVD NSDS 12957 (66:45)
- Sym. No.5 *Abbado/Lucerne Fest. Orch. (Lucerne, 19 & 20/08/2011) ACCENTUS MUSIC DVD
ACC 20243 and BLURAY ACC 10243 (74:34)
- Sym. No.5 Celibidache/Munich PO (10/11/85) ARTHAUS MUSIK DVD 101639 (84:05)
- Sym. No.7 Celibidache/Berlin PO (Berlin, 3 & 4/92) EUROARTS DVD 2011408; BLURAY 2011404 (86:15)
- Sym. No.7 *Tennstedt/Boston SO (05/11/77) ICA CLASSICS DVD ICAD 5066 (65:26)
- Sym. No.8 W Steinberg/ Boston SO (Harvard, 0701/62) ICA CLASSICS DVD ICAD 5071 (62:30)

Lucerne Easter Festival 2012

24 March - 1 April

THE MUSIC at this year's Easter Festival in Lucerne ranged from Tomás de Victoria and Palestrina via Bach and Handel to Viennese works of the Classical period. After Janacek's fulminating Glagolitic Mass, the concerts ended with Bruckner's "Romantic" Symphony. In the forthcoming summer festival in Lucerne, which takes Faith as its theme, Mahler will once more be the most-played symphonist with performances of five of his symphonies. But Bruckner is represented equally well with his First, Third, Fourth and Ninth, in addition to the Te Deum and a lecture on "Bruckner and the dear Lord".

In the closing event of the Easter festival (1 April), Bruckner's Fourth Symphony under Bernard Haitink was preceded by Mozart's Piano Concerto in D minor, KV 466. The Portuguese soloist Maria João Pires gave an unpretentious and thoroughly musicianly account of it.

Like most of today's maestros, Haitink based his interpretation of Bruckner's Fourth on the Leopold Nowak edition, 1878/80 WAB 104. The splendid players of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra followed the intentions of a conductor giving his all with the greatest devotion and concentration. From the most delicate pianissimo to powerful tuttis, Haitink succeeded in balancing this monumental work and fitting together the heterogeneous elements with supreme conviction.

Was it precisely the quality of the interpretation which highlighted a few rather problematic passages and cracks in the score? Certainly the latter must be seen from the vantage-point not of Beethoven but of the subsequent Romantic movement, where Classical construction gave way to a stringing together of inspired musical ideas. That this particular symphony contains plenty of these was, of course, equally evident.

Albert Bolliger (translation: Peter Palmer)

Concert Reviews

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, USA SCHERMERHORN SYMPHONY CENTER 27, 28 JANUARY 2012

Chopin - Piano Concerto No. 1 (Garrick Ohlsson)

Bruckner - Symphony No. 2

Nashville Symphony Orchestra / Stanislaw Skrowaczewski

Nothing would have excited me more that day, when I learned that the Nashville Symphony would perform an early Bruckner symphony under the direction of Skrowaczewski. A live experience of the Second Symphony with the maestro is already a rare gem, but the inclusion of a Chopin concerto played by a former first prize winner of the Chopin International Competition in the program made this an even more attractive event that just could not be missed.

In addition to his award-winning Bruckner cycle with the Saarbrücken Radio Symphony, Skrowaczewski is known in the classical music world through his tenure with the Minnesota Orchestra (formerly the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra) and the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra, his success as a composer (including the shortlisted Pulitzer Prize candidate *Concerto for Orchestra*, whose second movement is subtitled "Anton Bruckner's Himmelfahrt"), and his advancement of new music. Recently, at a concert featuring Bruckner's Eighth with the Minnesota Orchestra on April 20, he was honoured with the Kilenyi Medal from the Bruckner Society of America;¹ early recipients of this award have included Herbert Blomstedt, Franz Welser-Möst, Paul Hawshaw, and our own Ken Ward. Although I missed Skrowaczewski's collaboration with the Minnesota Orchestra on the monumental Eighth, my experience of his Second left me in awe of the high level of artistic and technical perfection that this octogenarian was able to achieve through his first-time collaboration with the Nashville Symphony. In fact, the mastermind behind this programming was none other than Giancarlo Guerrero—Music Director of the Nashville orchestra—who had had many opportunities working with the Polish-American conductor while serving as Associate Conductor of the Minnesota Orchestra in the early 2000's.² To Guerrero, Skrowaczewski "is a mentor, an inspiration," and one of his purposes to bring the maestro to Nashville was to "take the orchestra to the next level."³

In the pre-concert talk on Friday, Associate Conductor Kelly Corcoran introduced to the audience the life and work of Bruckner the composer and Skrowaczewski the conductor. One of the topics that always finds its way into Bruckner discussions, as one would expect, concerns the various versions of his symphonies. In regard to the

¹<http://www.abruckner.com/editorsnote/thebrucknersociety/brucknersocietynew/skrowaczewski/areportonthepresen/>, accessed April 25, 2012.

² Skrowaczewski has been Conductor Laureate of the Minnesota Orchestra since 1979.

³ See Frederick Edward Harris Jr., *Seeking the Infinite: The Musical Life of Stanislaw Skrowaczewski* (Lexington, KY: n.p., 2011), 453 and "Nashville Symphony welcomes Stanislaw Skrowaczewski," <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4bu3isZWDsM>, accessed February 1, 2012. Giancarlo's love for Bruckner's music is shown in his performances of the Third Symphony (Nashville Symphony, April 2011) and the Seventh Symphony (Utah Symphony, March 2010). For the latter, see my review in *The Bruckner Journal* 14/2 (July 2010): 7-8.

Second, the most up-to-date scores of the 1872 and 1877 versions are those edited by William Carragan (2005, 2007). However, Ms. Corcoran underscored that Skrowaczewski would play his own version based on the Haas and the Nowak. Indeed, what I heard in the concerts was a mix of the two editions, with passages from both the 1872 and the 1877 scores cast within the 1877 order of movements (slow movement preceding the Scherzo). One passage that strongly suggests Haas is the ending of the second movement, where the horn (instead of the clarinet) solo was featured. As we know it, this instrumentation originated from the 1872 version that Haas incorporated into his 1938 edition. Skrowaczewski's reliance on *both* Haas and Nowak, however, was not as clear until the third movement. At the end of the first round of the Scherzo, the penultimate measure was played once without repeat, suggesting an influence of the Haas score (m. 123).⁴ However, in the *da capo* repeat of the Scherzo after the Trio, the ending preceding the Coda follows the Nowak edition with a repeat of that measure followed by a silent bar.⁵ Another influence of the Nowak score relates to sectional repeats. Whereas Haas included repeat signs in both the Scherzo and the Trio, none of them appears in the Nowak; it is the latter that Skrowaczewski adopted in his version.⁶ In the Finale, like both Haas and Nowak, Skrowaczewski included the second Kyrie quote (Rehearsal U) as well as the passage that revisits the opening movement's first theme and the Finale's second theme (Rehearsal Y) from the 1872 version. Although Skrowaczewski's version does not create anything new about the work nor shed scholarly light on it—and some might even detest another performance version of this work based on an amalgam of the 1872 and 1877 versions—I must say that I was not offended by it. After all, it is the performance that counts, and Skrowaczewski for sure had delivered a convincing interpretation of the music.⁷

Of the two performances that I attended, the first thing that caught my attention was the focus of the players and their dedication to the music. That this was the orchestra's maiden voyage of the Second Symphony notwithstanding, the musical expedition was mounted with full confidence. Every member knew his/her music well, and there was no moment of hesitation or doubt—I was particularly impressed by the cello and horn sections. Skrowaczewski therefore had no difficulty communicating his intentions to his players. Commanding the orchestra from memory, his hand gestures, bodily movements, and facial expressions translated into meaningful musical narratives. Textures were clean and transparent, and in sections that are polyphonic, one could hear a hierarchical distinction among the different ideas that unfold simultaneously. These observations seem to echo what Anthony Ross, principal cellist of the Minnesota Orchestra, says about the maestro:

I think he totally understands the balances, the lines, and the form of Bruckner better than any other conductor I've played with. Balance and architecture are everything to Stan, and that's what Bruckner's about: hearing the correct lines, understanding the architecture of the piece and creating the depth of sound, which Stan has a knack for.⁸

In fact, one of Skrowaczewski's strengths lies in his loyalty to the score. This is especially true for dynamics, such as the first page of the slow movement, where the accents in the first violins and the *crescendodiminuendo* were carefully observed within a balanced instrumental texture. Other passages, such as those with multiple intensities occurring at the same time (e.g., *pp* and *mf* in Rehearsal K, *ppp* and *p* in Rehearsal M of the slow movement), also revealed his conducting prowess. Through this faithful reading, Skrowaczewski was able to bring out the emotional quality of the music, but at the same time create subtleties that are otherwise not present in other performances.

As for tempo, Skrowaczewski's treatment was rather unconventional. I refer especially to the last two movements, which were both quite fast in comparison with other recordings I have heard of this symphony.⁹ Combining the fast tempi with the dynamic polarities indicated in the score, the maestro presented a highly dramatic soundscape that rivaled the *Sturm und Drang* passages of the First Symphony. However, I was slightly put off by the third movement—exciting though it was, Skrowaczewski's decision not to include sectional repeats after Nowak as mentioned above (especially in this fast tempo) left me unfulfilled and wanting for more. On the contrary, the Finale, with its “aggressive drive of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony” and the “architectural panorama spanning many contrasting textures,”¹⁰ unleashed consistent musical and structural logic under Skrowaczewski's well-paced tempo changes. In the slow movement, Skrowaczewski's tempo variations were also quite frequent,

⁴ In the Nowak edition, this measure is played twice (mm. 123-24).

⁵ In the Haas edition, the measure containing the resolution to the tonic harmony (m. 124) is retained in the *da capo* repeat. Skrowaczewski's Coda actually differs slightly from the Nowak edition through the deletion of one of the two silent measures at its beginning (mm. 125-26).

⁶ Similar to the Nowak score, the third movement of the 1877 version edited by William Carragan does not contain repeat signs.

⁷ This version played by the Nashville Symphony is identical to that in the Saarbrücken recording (Oehms Classics, OC 207, 2003).

⁸ Harris, *Seeking the Infinite*, 472.

⁹ The Saarbrücken recording, however, has similarly fast tempi as the performances reviewed here. Writing about a Hallé Orchestra's performance of the Eighth Symphony, Sir Michael Kennedy observes that Skrowaczewski's “tempos for Bruckner are faster than those heard from, say, Jochum, yet there is no impression of undue haste. The grandeur is there because, like Günter Wand, he has an almost infallible instinct for the work's architecture” (quoted in Harris, *Seeking the Infinite*, 422).

¹⁰ *In Concert* (Nashville Symphony program), January 2012, 46.

but they mostly followed Bruckner's indications. When deviations from the score did occur, they were musically justified by harmonic motion, melodic direction, or formal enhancement. Another aspect of tempo that I found intriguing concerns the duplet-triplet Brucknerian rhythm first played by the horns in m. 38 of the opening movement. This rhythm, especially in the guise of a repeated-note figure on the trumpets two measures later, appears in three of the four movements. In the third movement, we first hear it in an altered form in mm. 37-45; in the Finale, it resurfaces in the woodwinds and brass beginning at m. 190. Although I cannot confirm this without actually measuring the tempi, based on what I heard, the two passages that have this figure in the opening movement and the Scherzo seem to share the same tempo.¹¹ (The tempo in the Finale, however, was faster.) Trying to prove that I was at least correct through secondary evidence, I measured the tempi of these passages from the Saarbrücken recording the minute I got home. And it came out pretty close—first movement 69 vs. Scherzo 72! Scholars and conductors have explored this idea of unified tempo in Bruckner's symphonies, and I believe that proportional tempo relationships within and between movements of a composition do generate unity and coherence that are audible in a performance.¹²

Although the two performances that I attended were both excellent, each was unique in its own right. On Friday, the playing was refined—there were no wrong notes—everything was splendidly done. However, it was Saturday night's performance that really had a hit on me. Though equally attentive to the conductor as in the previous evening, the orchestra was much more spontaneous, yet daring in their playing—there were times in the slow movement when I was drawn into a world of self-reflection and contemplation. In the fast movements, climactic passages that I knew were forthcoming still caught me off guard. This was music-making of the highest caliber, one that provokes and liberates you at the same time. You can only experience excitement of this sort when artists and audience are in "contact" with one another in a live performance.¹³ The experience reminds me of a remark once made of the great Hungarian pianist Annie Fischer (1914-95), who was:

...active when a richer culture of concert-giving provided many more live performances and people relied less on records for their listening. It was also a culture of "the moment of performance," one which had not yet turned artists into automatons who practiced every hour to play everything perfectly. Perfection then was the expressive moment in the context of an artistic event, not the ability to play faultlessly at the expense of, say, feeling, or a sense of architecture.¹⁴

I, for one, would love to submerge myself in this kind of culture.

Eric Lai

LIVERPOOL

PHILHARMONIC HALL

28 JANUARY 2012

Schubert - Symphony No.8

Bruckner - Symphony No.9

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic / Tomáš Netopil

Liverpool's art deco concert hall stands equidistant between the two cathedrals that occupy either end of Hope Street. The Anglican Church resplendent in floodlit magnificence, I was greeted by pealing bells announcing that the spirit of Anton Bruckner was in town..... Perhaps, I felt relief however that the Ninth would be performed in the cosy warm acoustic of the Philharmonic Hall rather than struggle against the terrible echo that had destroyed Mahler's Eighth the previous October.

The concert publicity celebrated the incomplete. It suggested that many would never want it any other way. May be for the Schubert.....But this was a lovely concert, beautifully played - but the earth didn't shake. Tomáš Netopil had memorized the score allowing maximum interaction with the players, evident in the quieter moments of the scherzo where temporarily you were transported to another world. One of the many wonderful moments in this symphony is towards the end of the first movement, just before the woodwinds commence the transition to the coda, a huge climax ends with exposed horns - this was played magnificently, but unfortunately a couple of cello players chose to turn the page before the sound of the horn had died away. Mildly distracting, I was

¹¹ This is measured by the half note of the first movement against the dotted half note of the Scherzo.

¹² See, for example, Williamson's remark on Jochum's use of metric modulation in the Fifth Symphony (John Williamson, "Conductors and Bruckner," in *The Cambridge Companion to Bruckner*, ed. John Williamson [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004], 235) and Benjamin Gunnar Cohrs's Foreword to Anton Bruckner, *IX. Symphonie D-Moll* (Vienna: Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag der Internationalen Bruckner-Gesellschaft, 2002/2005), xix. See also my review of a performance of the Ninth Symphony by the Dallas Symphony in *The Bruckner Journal* 14/1 (March 2010): 7.

¹³ Even the Chopin concerto that preceded the symphony had the same effect—Mr. Ohlsson's playing was far more adventurous than in the previous night, resulting in many moments of beautiful surprises.

¹⁴ Chris de Souza, "Remarkable Insights and a Sense of Wonder," 5, program notes to *Fischer*, BBC Legends, BBCL 4166-2, 2005, compact disc.

surprised - though I would add that throughout, the gorgeous Liverpool string tone never waned and the Adagio vision of heaven, my eyes closed this time, was delivered with much beauty and equanimity - a Bruckner moment to savour.
Stephen Pearsall

HOUSTON, TEXAS, USA CO-CATHEDRAL OF THE SACRED HEART 2 FEBRUARY 2012

Bruckner - Symphony No. 9

Houston Symphony / Hans Graf

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MUSIC DIRECTOR Hans Graf and the Houston Symphony conducted a free performance of Anton Bruckner's magnificent Ninth Symphony at the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in downtown Houston last week on Thursday. Here is what you missed:

The music of Bruckner's 9th Symphony was, in a word, sublime - not just with the connotation of being impeccable but also with a sense of euphoria. To me, the music was like life - with moments of darkness/doubt, moments of triumph, and all the other moments in-between, all dovetailing, eliding, and revolving around subtle nuances and shadings of life, itself; culminating in the finale in the third movement—a cacophony of gloriousness and oneness, expanding to new heights, levels of dissonance, and on to greatness! Bruckner's music reminded me of the inevitable humanness that accompanies life, but also included the notion that people can accomplish great things, and can triumph over their failings, given moments of struggle. Passages of music, in augmentation of duration of the notes, enhanced the feel of struggle. At the very end of the Symphony, two horns ebbed and flowed, one with the other - a nice touch, with two notes rotating around each other, as the moon longs for the Earth or as two souls breathe in new life, showing unity, respect, and admiration—triumph, at last!



The final symphony written by Bruckner dedicated "To God the Beloved." Bruckner did not live to see the completion of his work which makes the dramatic third movement titled "A Farewell to Life" even more poignant.

The acoustics in the Co-Cathedral were spectacular. There was about a 2.5 second, reverb "wash" trailing after the releases of the full orchestra. The hall seemed very excellent for "amplification" of horns, and a couple of times, the sound from the horns overpowered that of the rest of the orchestra. I believe the acoustics of the Co-Cathedral were designed more for natural and unamplified voices and not really intended for a full, modern orchestra. The expanse of the Co-Cathedral, itself, absorbed the energy from the orchestra; the columns and side arcades did not have much bearing on how the sound traveled or behaved, even though those features are, generally, obstructions or could create situations where delays may be heard. However, in the Co-Cathedral, the sound was unified, with no stray delays - just the fabulous reverb wash at the end of orchestral rests in the music.

The tuning of the orchestra was perfect! Hans Graf, the conductor, was excellent. He brought out fabulous details of phrasing for the music—moments of elegance that you won't hear at just any orchestral performance of Bruckner's 9th Symphony, and he paced the music with an artist's brush and touch. Hans Graf will be with the Houston Symphony for only one more year, so go see him conduct the Houston Symphony, sometime, in the upcoming year should you get the chance.

Kevin Rue

Kevin Rue holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music from University of Houston, he is a musician and audio-recording engineer, based in Houston, TX.

In Flackley Ash Hotel, Rye, 23-25 March 2012, Terry Barfoot organised a Bruckner weekend, an **Arts in Residence** cultural break, devoted primarily to the study of Symphonies 7 & 8 and the Te Deum. The event was sold out and attended by over 60 people, which must make it one of the largest gatherings of people interested in learning about Bruckner to have taken place, outside a concert hall, in the English speaking world! It was a great success.

For details of future courses: www.artsinresidence.co.uk or phone: 02392 383356

LONDON

ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL

4 FEBRUARY 2012

Bruckner - *Christus factus est*
Symphony No.9
Te Deum

Christine Brewer, Mihoko Fujimara, Toby Spence, Franz-Josef Selig
London Philharmonic Orchestra / Yannick Nézet-Séguin

BEFORE the concert began, Yannick Nézet-Séguin gave a short introductory speech that, in effect, would have the Royal Festival Hall consecrated for the evening as a place of worship. He spoke of Bruckner's deep Catholic faith, and how the programme was constructed to reflect that, with a symphony dedicated 'to dear God', and observing Bruckner's last wish for the symphony: that his *Te Deum* be used as the finale in the event that he failed to complete it. The concert was to commence with the gradual, *Christus factus est*, composed about the same time as the *Te Deum*. We were to listen to the whole sequence in silence - and indeed, we did.

The London Philharmonic Choir sang the unaccompanied motet from memory. The words tell of Christ's suffering on our behalf for which God bestowed upon him 'the name above all names'. It begins in D minor and in its short duration moves through a dramatic series of harmonic and dynamic changes, to end very slow and very quiet in a peaceful D major...at which point the London Philharmonic strings raised their bows to their instruments to create the shimmering pianissimo tremolo that opens the symphony, and then the horns began their misty exploration of the D minor triad. It was a moment of breathtaking magic and it ushered in a beautifully moulded opening paragraph rising to the thundering statement of the implacable main theme, with its massive falling octaves and slithering chromatic triplet.

The other extraordinary transition created by the conjunction of three normally independent works came at the end of the three completed movements of the symphony. The dissonant enormity that constitutes the shattering climax of the Adagio was followed by deathly silence, after which the movement wound down through falling world-weary tones on Wagner tubas, ultimately to the final held E major chord - horns, Wagner tubas, trombones - four bars that seemed to last for ever and ever, as though the LPO brass had infinite lung capacity. Then there was quiet, a silence that Nézet-Séguin described after the concert as being like purgatory: after Bruckner's 'farewell to life' and the desolate negation asserted by that dissonant climax, the conductor was called upon to have faith enough to give 'the biggest upbeat of his life' to bring in the blazing C major fortissimo tutti affirmation of the *Te Deum*. It was quite brutal and effectively swept away all the doubt and disturbance that had gone before - and was the total antithesis of the opening of the Finale that Bruckner was working on till the day he died, that creeps in quietly with a pianissimo tremolo on timpani before exploring further frightening, unsettled and obsessive motives, the planned affirmative close either lost or unwritten.

As a programme this was an extraordinary event, and very powerful indeed, bringing a standing ovation from much of the audience who had sat mostly silently for nearly two hours without a break. It is often claimed that using the *Te Deum* as a finale to the symphony cannot work because it is in the wrong key, it is differently orchestrated, it's composed in a different style, that it's a desperate and unworkable solution born of the extremity of Bruckner's final illness. What this concert showed was that it does work - but not really as an integrated symphonic finale to the work, but rather as a reflection on the symphony, indeed on all the symphonies, a celebration of the faith and musical life of the composer who died in the course of its composition.

The whole project, and Nézet-Séguin's obvious conviction and commitment, swept one along. The LPO's playing was first class, the choir tremendous, the four soloists superb. But there was much in the interpretation that took risks to their limit, and possibly beyond. At times, as the Adagio got slower and slower, Bruckner very reluctantly made his farewell to life, it was only the thought that the *Te Deum* would eventually arrive that kept me committed to the performance. Similarly, the first movement second theme group was milked like an Adagio all of its own, dripping with sentiment, but ravishingly played and full of expressive rubato. The Scherzo was wonderfully fast, the pizzicato motive on violins with a neat crescendo to the top of the phrase, the great thumping main theme storming indomitably and at speed across the landscape, the trombones occasionally sounding through the texture with demonic growling and snarling. At this tempo the solos of oboe and clarinet sounded like the chirruping of devils. The trio was equally breakneck and nightmarish - any faster and the virtuosity of flute and clarinet would have been taxed beyond human capability in their mad little semiquaver accompaniment. It was a performance of extremes and in no way confined by any straitjacket of monumental gravitas or mature reflection.

If the *Te Deum* took up anything from the symphony, then perhaps it was the sheer rhythmic energy of the Scherzo, a nightmare there transformed now into a joyful song of praise. As the opening burst upon us, the repetitive string motive - falling 4th and 5th - which Bruckner was to use again in the finale he never completed, was perhaps not as strongly and clearly articulated by the strings as it can be but on the whole this was a fabulous and colourful performance. Christine Brewer led the soloists in 'Tibi omnes angeli' with bell-like clarity, and Toby Spence's 'Te ergo quaesumus' and 'Salvum fac populum' accomplished a stirring crescendo from the quiet

devotional opening rising to heartfelt forte call for help from God. If there was any lingering darkness from the dissonant D minor symphony, then the long crescendo, 'Non confundar in aeternum', to triple forte with trumpet fanfares and high Cs from the sopranos, must have transformed it all into blazing light!

It was a courageous and thoroughly admirable venture on the part of the LPO and Nézet-Séguin, a concert devoted entirely to Bruckner, a long concert without an interval - but it paid off handsomely, and whatever doubts one might have about aspects of interpretation when considered in the cold light of day, on the night this was a mighty and unforgettable performance that carried all before it. *Ken Ward*

A version of this review appeared first on www.bachtrack.com

MANNHEIM, GERMANY

ROSENGARTEN

5 FEBRUARY 2012

Schumann - Cello Concerto
Bruckner - Symphony No.7

London Philharmonic Orchestra / Kurt Masur

OVERALL, this was a convincing reading of the E major symphony (Haas edition) that would satisfy most critics. The *tempi* in all movements were well within the "expected" ranges (given the lack of metronome markings) and the audience will have been granted the full palette of orchestral colour in a relatively accommodating acoustic. Intonation was impeccable in all sections, as was generally the ensemble playing, though with one or two slightly weaker moments in the woodwinds.

The first movement (20 minutes) had clearly marked paragraphs and cadential "signposts" that perhaps could have benefited from a more flexible approach to the tempo, but they were entirely in keeping with a no-nonsense approach to the written score. (Simpson posits that "the kind of structure we find in the seventh benefits greatly from steadily maintained tempi, so that the evolution of the tonalities may unfold itself naturally and clearly, without distraction.") The brass was kept well in check, and gave in this writer's view the exact balance to the orchestral *tuttis* in this movement, which were brought off convincingly. On the other hand, in some of the quieter sequential passages so favoured by Bruckner, the woodwind was not so effective as an ensemble, and the sequences were played somewhat "robotically" and hence lacked shaping.

The *Adagio* (25 minutes) was quite beautifully played, passion alternating with almost "Ländler" like moments. There was a glorious "glowing" effect at key climaxes and the pace did not drag at all. Indeed, in the big climax (without cymbal crash, luckily, as this writer feels it to be slightly vulgar as a gesture) the brass shining through the texture struck one as almost mimetic of organ reverb!

The Scherzo (10 minutes) was as brisk and lively as it should have been, picking up the pace after the Adagio, and well contrasted with a good flowing Trio, and even though in structural terms this movement is more lightweight, it fulfilled its balancing function to the letter. This is also due in part to the somewhat "refreshing" and more simply treated tonality of A minor, plus the fact that the Scherzo is perceived more for its rhythmic drive than wide-ranging harmonic explorations.

The Finale (12 minutes) was tight, controlled and muscular, with all the expected "pomp" at the right moments without ever being "pompous", and with superb, well-delineated contrapuntal playing between the strings, especially the 1st and 2nd violins (which would have been enhanced had they been placed respectively to the left and right of the conductor).

Masur received a standing ovation (from a full house) lasting several minutes at the end of this symphony, which he had conducted without a score.

If this writer may allow himself two non-musical points, it would be to say that (a) the social demographic was extremely well-heeled and nearly 100% over 50s, and (b) the tickets were rather expensive, the cheapest being 90€ which is over eighty quid!!

Philip Clarke
Strasbourg, France



A recommended web-site for locating
Bruckner (and all other) concerts:
www.bachtrack.com

BIRMINGHAM, UK

SYMPHONY HALL

19 FEBRUARY 2012

Bartók - Dance Suite Berg - Seven Early Songs
 Bruckner - Symphony No. 4 (1878/80)

City of Birmingham SO Youth Orchestra / Edward Gardner

The CBSO Youth Orchestra succeeded the Midland Youth Orchestra in 2004 and meets twice a year for an intensive course that leads to a full orchestral concert in Symphony Hall, Birmingham. Ages range normally from 14 to 21, admission is by audition and successful applicants pay £50 for the course, in this case an 8 day course offering the opportunity to experience high level professionally-supported playing from section leaders of the CBSO, led on this occasion by conductor Edward Gardner.

Like the pastoral symphony of Beethoven, Bruckner's Fourth is one of the evergreens of the symphonic repertoire, accessible but still thought provoking, sensuous as well as exciting - combine this with a young orchestra, fresh, keen and committed, the result: a performance of astonishing quality and vitality.

It was certainly a demanding programme and not just for the orchestra, with Bartók and Berg in the first half, Sarah-Jane Brandon delightful in the Seven Early Songs.

Edward Gardner can only be congratulated, he was clearly confident of his players. The opening tempo was quite fast, excitingly so, the opening horn call therefore played courageously, introducing a gripping tension that was never really released until the very end of the symphony, that fabulous coda. The horn section was indeed magnificent throughout, unafraid to articulate the music as Bruckner wrote it. The first movement conclusion, I have scarcely heard it better; the same could be said about the scherzo. In the finale there was a wonderful moment, after the first big climax is followed by a relentless building of tension, the brass enter in a chorale-like re-statement of the first movement opening horn theme, but the accompanying trumpets entered a touch early, obviously impatient to hear that magnificent tune again! But recovery was instantaneous - a slight wavering in an otherwise exhilarating continuity. No question here of embarking on a Journey to Nowhere: this had a delightful refreshing pastoral quality, blazingly logical and extremely satisfying.

Stephen Pearsall

OXFORD, UK

UNIVERSITY CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN

3 MARCH 2012

Bruckner - Symphony No. 8 (ed.Haas)

Hertford Bruckner Orchestra / Paul Coones

THE HERTFORD Bruckner Orchestra is really quite an extraordinary phenomenon. It is an ensemble of mainly amateur musicians, centred round Hertford College, Oxford, but involving players from the University, the city and elsewhere in the UK, founded principally to perform the symphonies of Anton Bruckner. These symphonies are rarely played beyond the professional circuit, so the HBO welcomes anyone who wishes to take part in the uncommon opportunity to perform a Bruckner symphony. There are no formal auditions, the orchestra being keen to welcome "musically respectable new players" - as the note in the programme announces. As a consequence, attending their performances can be a little risky as the standard of playing can be very variable, but the experience is always wonderfully uplifting, and last year's performances of Bruckner's 9th and this year's performance of the 8th displayed a standard of execution that at times was very fine indeed.

Behind this project, and in front of the orchestra, stands Dr Paul Coones, a Fellow of Hertford College, and from him the humble generosity and sincere dedication displayed by these concerts flow. Given that he is no professional conductor and that the orchestra no professional orchestra, his conducting necessarily restricts itself to essential information, clearly setting the tempo at each key point, giving cues, and signifying rehearsal letters in the score by a large vertical scything gesture so that at least at those points everyone knows where they are. Published in the programme are his extensive notes to the orchestra, a mixture of analysis and interpretative admonition, as short extract of which is printed following this review. From this one gets an unusual insight into how the performance was constructed.

It would be futile to pretend that there were no mishaps and difficult moments, but Dr Coones's clear beat brought everything together and the symphony came over extremely powerfully. Certain aspects were very well done, in a way that is often not apparent in performances by more celebrated ensembles. One thing that particularly impressed me was the handling of tempi in the Finale, where the storming first theme was slow, and the following gentle second theme much quicker than usual, the third theme returning to the main tempo set at the beginning. Dr. Coones had taken advice here from Prof. William Carragan, and it helped make the Finale structure particularly strong - even though the tiredness of the players took its toll towards the end in what was, together with rehearsal, the second time they had played the enormous work in a day. Other interpretative gems

were the close of the first movement - Bruckner's 'ticking clock' keeping good time - and the end of the whole symphony where the final semiquavers and crotchet descended with the finality of a guillotine, bringing the triumphant overlay of themes of all four movements to a shattering close. In the first climax of the first movement development, where the jagged main theme is played against the duplet-triplets of the second theme, the orchestra rose to the occasion superbly, as it did in the Scherzo repeat, and the strings' descending chorale-like sequences in the Adagio and Finale were heavenly.

Once it was over one couldn't be other than amazed at the orchestra's courage and the level of its achievement, and grateful to have heard this mighty symphony played with such obvious commitment and enthusiasm.

Ken Ward

Extract from Performance Notes provided for the orchestra (and in the programme booklet) by Paul Coones - on the 8th Symphony finale coda:

Bruckner builds his tutti ... with the third group (from letter I) at **Pp**; but, at **Ss**, what should tear into it, but the theme from the *first* movement, *ff* in the brass (b.652). This is a *huge* moment in the symphony: respond accordingly! The route to C is through an underpinning of this passage on the dominant, G.

The coda begins at **Uu**, and is dark, mysterious, and slower. (There is a GP bar immediately before Uu, in which to set the tempo, still in 2, but a very slow one.) Violins, make the quavers slow and even, and for heaven's sake, do not be tempted to rush! Second tenor WT from b.689 must be prominent; timp, precise.

Slow cresc. Full weight at **Ww**. Keep it steady and precise, especially trumpets from **Xx**, and trumpets and timps from **Yy**. There must be no accel!

We rock in stately fashion over the final set of points, exhausted but triumphant, and complete this extraordinary journey, **Zz** to the end, with a magnificent contrapuntal exhibition: all the main themes played simultaneously and in C major at last, as follows:

the opening theme (bassoons, fourth horn, trombones, KBTuba, cellos, basses);

the theme of the Scherzo (now in 4) (flutes, clarinets, first trumpet);

the theme of the Adagio (first and second horns);

the rising sixth of the Finale's main theme (second and third trumpets);

a binding roll of C in the timps and a chord of C (Wagner Tubas, violas);

plus a climbing tremolo arpeggio (violins), helping to knit the whole stupendous achievement together.

The penultimate bar hangs for a moment on a ritenuto, which I will apply to the dotted crotchet; the two final semiquavers – the motto figure of the opening theme of the symphony – will be in time, to achieve 'tremendous finality' (Simpson). They are played by everyone, and must be together. Final bar: accented crotchet, and off.

I will beat the final THREE bars in 4, with no attempt to beat out the two semiquavers at the end of the penultimate bar: this would be more of a hindrance than a help. In 4, you will be able to 'place' them.

The success of this consummate ending depends on three things, in addition to purely musical considerations:

1. A visionary, spiritual quality in the whole performance of this symphony.
2. A clear impression throughout, that there is something – a great deal – 'at stake'.

Convincing the audience that the peroration is not just some comforting and reassuring vision of the sun breaking through the clouds, which would be almost prosaic by comparison, to send us home happy and perhaps rather smug (as is the case with the finale of Brahms's first symphony): nor is it even a Beethovenian classic 'hard-won victory'.

Rather, it is (as Derek Scott puts it, admirably), a revelation, a 'musical form of apocalyptic vision'. The tonic major is neither wrested nor won (and certainly not by any human endeavour), but in all its polyphonic glory, it simply appears, naturally, as if it had been there all the time if only we could have seen it. Nor, again, does it spring from the human spirit. It is a gifted unveiling: of God (as Bruckner believed), of nature, or of the cosmos, as you will – and most probably all three.

ROMSEY, HAMPSHIRE, UK

ROMSEY ABBEY

9 MARCH 2012

Liszt- Prometheus

Hindemith- Symphonic Metamorphosis on Themes by Carl Maria von Weber

Bruckner-Symphony No. 4

Southampton University Symphony Orchestra / Robin Browning, Alex Fryer

THE SOUTHAMPTON University Symphony Orchestra (SUSO) gave a wonderful concert in Romsey Abbey, a beautiful Norman church about 8 miles north of Southampton. There was a very interesting programme: Liszt's tone poem "Prometheus", Hindemith's "Symphonic Metamorphosis on Themes of Carl Maria von Weber" and Bruckner's 4th Symphony. The Liszt, one of his lesser known tone poems is a stirring work with a fine fugue that was clearly conducted by the orchestra's assistant conductor, Alex Fryer, who is a second year student in the Music department of the University.

The other works were conducted by the principal conductor, Robin Browning. The Hindemith, a lively four-movement work with much spine-tingling music was given a fine performance which I really enjoyed. The Bruckner was in the second half of the concert. I heard Robin Browning give a good performance of Bruckner 8 in St. Mary's Church, Southampton, some years ago so I was looking forward to this performance and I was not disappointed. The symphony started at a steady pace and built to a strong climax. The brass chorale in the middle of the movement was beautifully played, fading away to the distant Austrian countryside. The recapitulation where the horn theme is accompanied by the woodwind was particularly beautiful. In fact throughout this concert the woodwind were excellent. There was a long pause between the first and second movements because some of the string instruments needed repair. The second movement was well-done. It danced when it needed to and built to an impressive climax at the end. The scherzo was full of bright brass and then we came to the finale. This is perhaps the most original movement that Bruckner had written at this time but it has caused controversy. Robert Simpson laid into it, especially the second theme which he calls a crackjaw platitude. Simpson here is being puffed. It might not be one of Bruckner's greatest ideas, but it makes a welcome contrast after the rather severe first theme. When this theme returns later in the movement first, for brass and then a string chorale, it makes for one of the great moments of the symphony, (but not according to Simpson who just says "sabotage again"!)

Perhaps the greatest moments in this symphony are in the coda, even Simpson calls this one of Bruckner's greatest culminative passages. This was played splendidly by the orchestra and at the end I immediately began to applaud loudly. This was slightly embarrassing as I found myself to be the only one clapping!

When I told the editor that I was planning to write this review he wrote to me "writing reviews of amateur performances can be quite difficult because you don't want to sound discouraging, even though the strings' intonation might be excruciating!" He should not have worried. Most of the players were members of the university's excellent music department and even though there were a few fluffs, most of the playing was of high quality and Robin Browning's conducting was first class. An excellent concert in beautiful surroundings.

David Singerman

LONDON

BARBICAN HALL

12 APRIL 2012

Schumann - Piano Concerto (Nicholas Angelich)
Bruckner - Symphony No. 6

London Symphony Orchestra / Daniel Harding

THE 6TH Symphony has always had a particular place in this reviewer's heart and given the rarity of its performances, to hear it done by the LSO with Harding was an even greater personal pull than the Barenboim triptych which was to follow the week after.

The first half of the concert was the Schumann piano concerto, performed by Nicholas Angelich. This should have been a good introduction to the proper fare to follow - which it was, but only in part. The first movement seemed to be troubled by the pianist's rather abrupt style, which tended to spoil the lyrical impact of the music, and this was not helped by the orchestral accompaniment. In particular the balance was strangely wrong, with the piano sounding too loud and plangent. However, the beautiful second movement and the finale were much better, both being more lyrical and better balanced, although by the end anticipation of the Bruckner made the interval seem quite welcome.

The second half was certainly something else again! It was clear from the start that both conductor and orchestra had worked hard on this piece and played it with focused attention and style. The orchestral sound of the LSO is always bright, and indeed this brightness really suited such a splendid A major symphony. There is something positive and life affirming about a good A major work and from the very start it felt special. Harding's interpretation of the first movement was extremely integrated and he made it very clear and easy to listen to. So different from the fifth Symphony; the themes seem to move to from one to the other with sensible transitions. It may help that one knows every note, but with a good pace, sensitive phrasing, and a clear sense of momentum, the whole thing became progressively more enjoyable and thrilling. It is true that the trumpets in particular produced a very bright and strong sound, but this never seemed, at least at this stage, to be too abrupt but only set up greater anticipation for the next exciting outburst. The coda, which this reviewer believes is as fine a thing as Bruckner ever wrote, was quite superb and the correct cut-off at the end after the splendid 'edge' of the transient sounds of the brass was quite awesome. The whole audience was stunned into silence for several seconds before daring to cough.

The sheer joy only continued in the second movement. Here the colour and the sensitivity and the superlative technique of the orchestra were allowed to sing. This movement just sounded so straightforward, so simple, natural and beautiful. Stephen Johnson commented in the programme notes that the scoring throughout and in

particular in the coda seems to anticipate Mahler to a great extent and indeed it felt like it. At the end one felt that many composers would have still have been happy to write such music 20 or 30 years later. The horn and the oboe players' wonderful tone and phrasing only added to the beauty of the whole.

In the Scherzo we were back to the stunning sound of the orchestra. BJ reader Guy Richardson commented afterwards that Harding took a rather dramatic interpretation of this movement, emphasising the contrasts, which seemed to prevent some of the engaging whimsicality that others generate to come out - this was my own feeling too. As a result this was possibly less successful than the first two movements, but still the playing was superb and exciting.

The finale is the most enigmatic movement in the symphony. It is not a 'simple' grand summation and resolution of what has gone before. Daniel Harding took a very different view here from his approach in the first two movements and allowed the music to be dramatic and abrupt in its contrasts. The first trumpet outburst soon after the start of the movement clearly out-surprised Haydn and quite a number of the audience! Listening to it on the night it seemed that in some ways it reflects the more personal emotional states of Bruckner himself - unpredictable changes of mood, a sense of striving for something unfulfilled, something incomplete, and in this sense possibly rather Mahlerian, a surprise after the sheer thrill of the first movement and the glowing and beautiful sadness of the second. The coda brings back the first movement theme, but in the context more as a memory of the joy of the first movement than as a summation. Maybe Harding was not quite so persuasive here as in the first two movements, but he is clearly a committed and sensitive Brucknerian.

How different this Symphony is from the fifth! And how much more it should be performed! Three BJ reader's present from the north (Runcorn), south (Brighton) and west (Wales) felt it was well worth a long journey.

Malcolm Hatfield

TOLEDO, OHIO, USA

ROSARY CATHEDRAL

15 APRIL 2012

Bruckner - Symphony No.3 (1889)

Toledo Symphony Orchestra / Stefan Sanderling

Bret McConachie wrote:

THE CONCERT was last night. My expectations were not high but little did I know what an experience it would turn out to be. The cathedral was the most beautiful I've seen and provided the perfect setting to a wonderful performance of the 3rd, certainly as good as any I have on CD (at least 10). The sound was incredible. I was concerned we would be blown away by the brass (like many of my CDs) since we were only about 10 pews back but that was never the case. The sound was rich and beautiful and I had a sense of being enveloped by it rather than just listening.

It was the 1889 version of the 3rd which is fine. Total time was somewhere around 65 mins. The pacing felt good throughout and the quality of the orchestra was a huge surprise. Conductor took the trio of the scherzo as slow as I've heard it but it worked well. The only disappointment was when a loud siren (police car I'm assuming) went by right at the end of the Adagio. But if you saw the neighbourhood the cathedral was in you wouldn't have been the least bit surprised (think of Toledo as a mini Detroit). It added to the surrealism of the evening.

After the performance, John Berky presented the conductor with the Joseph Kilenyi Medal of Honor. Conductor said a few words including the line "With Bruckner you don't just play the music, you live it". My wife Angie rolled her eyes at me when I nudged her at that point, well aware of my slight obsession with the composer. The award ceremony was a fitting end to a most enjoyable evening and gave the audience more time to show their appreciation.

GLASGOW

CITY HALLS

7 MAY 2012

Golijov - Mariel

Bruckner - Symphony No.7 (ed. Haas)

BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra / Donald Runnicles

This was the final concert of the *Runnicles Weekend*, Donald Runnicles playing chamber music with members of the orchestra, acting as piano accompanist and of course conducting a performance of the Seventh that demonstrated that the rapport nurtured before and during these events was genuine and sincere. Runnicles specializes in the Seventh and Eighth symphonies, his thrilling Eighth in Leeds in January 2010 lives with me to this day, but the BBC Scottish have recently performed the Fifth and Ninth with Ilan Volkov, principal guest conductor and Runnicles' predecessor.

The concert began with a world premiere: *Mariel* a short piece for cello and orchestra by Osvaldo Golijov composed in memory of a close friend, and tries to capture “that short instant before grief, in which one learns of the death of a friend who was full of life.” The playing of principal cello Martin Storey was indeed moving and certainly an appropriate pairing for Bruckner’s dirge on the death of Wagner.

You would have to go back to 1975 for the last performance of the Seventh by this orchestra: a wait that was obviously just too much for many central belt Scots and left many seats in City Halls vacant. But those who braved the pouring rain were rewarded with a treat.

Many conductors conduct from memory, Georg Tintner did with astonishing results, but Donald Runnicles conducted from the score. To memorize the music is indeed an amazing feat but that does not necessarily mean you get under the skin of the music, which by the way I think Tintner certainly did, and Runnicles did too. From the very opening of this performance you were transported into Bruckner’s sound world, you could well believe this was just what Bruckner meant all along. Almost certainly the result of a lifetime’s study on Runnicles part, there were no exaggerated tempo variations and absolutely no added sentimentality. The opening theme can be milked - not here: it was quite brisk, the strings singing it out, that first climax (to nothing) that closes the second subject was relieved without an imposed diminuendo by the restless third theme. Later in the coda we had a proper fanfare on trumpets and as the coda echo died down the hard-working ladies of the front desk of first violins smiled at each other knowingly.

First and second violins were split left and right - the horns were rear far left as usual but detached from the Wagner tubas who sat on the right behind the violas and good heavens did this work, the adagio dirge in glorious antiphonal stereo, the sound perfectly balanced, the tubas not overwhelmed by the horns, a cry of unutterable sadness. A joyful scherzo followed. In the finale there was no attempt to impose gravitas, the triple forte climax of the third theme recapitulation was followed by perfectly judged pause, no excessive dramatic exaggeration before the pianissimo return of the second theme, consequently the music flowed and flowed until the inevitable triumph.

This performance was broadcast 28 May 2012: I hope many readers were able to tune in, because it just doesn’t get much better than this.

Stephen Pearsall

EALING, LONDON

ST BARNABAS CHURCH

12 MAY 2012

Smetana - Overture, Bartered Bride

Mozart - Piano Concerto No. 23, K488 (Yuki Negishi, pno)

Bruckner - Symphony No. 9 (UK première of finale completion by Nors Josephson)

Ealing Symphony Orchestra / John Gibbons

THERE is a recording of the Nors Josephson completion of Bruckner’s Ninth Symphony finale available for download on John Berky’s abruckner.com web-site, a performance (recorded Autumn 2007) by the Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland Pfalz conducted by Ari Rasilainen. It is very fast, a finale lasting a mere 13 minutes. Any completion must provide a tempo marking: SPCM, and Letocart after them, choose ‘Misterioso. Nicht schnell’ [Mysterious. Not fast], William Carragan’s completed finale is ‘Allegro moderato’, but Josephson’s is marked ‘Allegro’, so maybe there was some justification for Rasilainen’s break-neck speed. Tonight’s performance was considerably slower and lasted more than 20 minutes, and little of it had much ‘allegro’ about it.

The programme note, although full of good detailed stuff about the music being played, was curiously reticent about the Josephson finale. So I am reliant on the summary given by Dr. Benjamin-Gunnar Cohrs in his essay giving an overview of the performing versions of the finale fragments in the Musik-Konzepte 120-122, *Bruckners Neunte im Fegefeuer der Rezeption* (Bruckner’s Ninth in the Purgatory of its Reception) Munich, 2003. Dr Cohrs is very critical, which is perhaps what you would expect from part of the SPCM team who have produced their own completion, but I think he raises some significant issues. He asserts that Josephson has frequently misinterpreted or ignored important elements in the sources. Here is a short extract of Cohrs’ commentary as an example of the nature of his critique:

A mistake is the stylistically, harmonically and contrapuntally unsatisfactory bridging of the missing manuscript bifolio no.20 in the fugue: Josephson, recognises indeed that 16 bars are missing, but Bruckner’s sketches for the first three bars of the climax in C sharp minor he transforms harmonically arbitrarily to D flat major. To bridge the missing bifolio no. 28 Josephson initially used the short score sketch probably planned for this place, but he bridged a gap consisting of probably 24 bars of the lost bifolio 28 with no less than 44 bars of his own composition.*

There is plenty more in this vein, and Cohrs is also scathing about the 107 bars of coda that Josephson has composed, ‘which - contrary to what Josephson suggests in his forward - makes no use at all of the surviving sketches.’

But the ‘proof of the pudding’ is ultimately in what it sounds like, how well it functions as a finale, how effectively it presents the music Bruckner had worked so desperately to compose in his last years. The experience of listening to various completions over the past year or two has had the strange effect that the music seems to waft in and out of focus as you travel from what is indisputably Bruckner, which all completions share, into those more tentative areas where completers have felt the need to embellish or the necessity to bridge gaps. A few months previously I had heard the Berlin Philharmonic perform the SPCM finale, and not so long before that the Munich-based musicians of the Philharmonie Festiva perform the Carragan completion. Obviously the Ealing Symphony Orchestra would not be expected to match these orchestras - though their horns and Wagner tubas, their woodwind and lower strings were excellent - but I don’t think it was merely the standard of playing that made this less of an exciting finale than those others. Partly I felt it was Gibbons’ rather plain interpretative conception, a lack of urgency and direction, but also, although there are moments in which Josephson’s version suddenly sounds very Brucknerian (mostly in the exposition), at many times it seemed to fall short of its ambitions. The coda felt strangely confused, with what seemed like a succession of climaxes, the most effective of which was the return of the first movement coda - a moment that had been thrillingly played by the orchestra over an hour previously, and then when the end came, it was loud but somehow not conclusive.

The preceding three movements had received cogent and moving performances, and it was an amazing achievement for a non-professional orchestra to have taken on such a challenge and risen to it so well - especially as they had already spent 3 hours rehearsing on that same day. Nors Josephson was in the audience and came forward to acknowledge the applause at the finish. His completion has received only a few performances world-wide, so it was a privilege to have been given this opportunity to hear it and judge for oneself the degree to which it supplied what Bruckner had not been given time enough to complete. *Ken Ward*

* Page 65: Ein Mißgriff ist die stilistisch, harmonisch und kontrapunktisch nicht befriedigende Überbrückung des fehlendes Bogens 20 in der Fuge: Josephson erkannte zwar, daß 16 Takte fehlen, aber Bruckners Skizze für die ersten drei Takte des Höhepunktes in cis-moll formte er harmonisch eigenmächtig zu Des-Dur um. Für die Überbrückung des Fehlenden 28 Bogens zog Josephson zwar zunächst die für diese Stelle wohl vorgesehene Particellskizze heran, aber insgesamt überbrückte er die wohl 24 Takten umfassende Lücke des verlorenen Bogens 28 mit nicht weniger als 44 Takten Eigenkomposition. (Translation to English - KW)

HEIDELBERG, GERMANY

STADTHALLE

23 MAY 2012

Bruckner – Symphony No. 8 (1890 version, ed. Nowak)

Philharmonisches Orchester Heidelberg / Cornelius Meister

AFTER having heard Bruckner’s 7th in Mannheim last February played by the Philharmonia Orchestra under Kurt Masur, I wondered what the Heidelberg Philharmonic Orchestra was going to make of the seriously forbidding 8th under the baton of the far younger Cornelius Meister (born in 1980). In terms of performance history, the 8th had so far only been played in Heidelberg a total of three times: 1956 (Karl Rucht), 1980 (Christian Süss) and 1988 (Mario Venzago). And so 24 years later, on a warm, beautiful May day (with a couple of thunderstorms thrown in for good measure - an omen, perhaps?) in this historic town on the river Neckar, Bruckner’s 8th was once again to be unleashed...

The Stadthalle (filled to 90% or so capacity for this concert) is a not a large concert hall, but with very good acoustics. The orchestra was arrayed in my preferred 19th century layout, which is to say first violins on the left, ‘cellos and violas in front of the conductor, and second violins on the right.

For those who might be interested, the timings were as follows:

1st movement: 16 mins / 2nd movement: 14 mins / 3rd movement: 25 mins / 4th movement: 21 mins.

Meister (conducting without score, as seems to be de rigueur for Bruckner concerts these days) opened the movement with poise, and gave good shape to the exposition as a whole, perhaps letting the second theme drag ever so slightly, though this only served to highlight the superb string section’s playing, though at times the characteristic Bruckner “2+3” rhythms were not as tight as they could have been. The impeccably played horn solo at bars 140-145 over the upper strings’ tremolo segued magically to the poignant oboe solo that opens the development section floating over the backdrop of the Wagner tubas: a key juncture of the symphony’s first movement, the oboe melody a lengthened variation of the movement’s opening statement in the violas, cellos and basses, and here given perfect care and attention. The huge climactic build up of the coda (figure T onwards in the Nowak edition, bars 341-390) was as much brooding as menacing, arriving at that most astonishing of Bruckner’s closures to a first movement, with its “tick tock” of Death’s clock that was beautifully brought off, with just the slightest of rallentando in the last two bars. Considering the movement as a whole, the dynamic contrasts were never exaggerated, the brass kept under control in the large tuttis, and in such a good acoustic - at times I would

have wished for a touch more reverb than was on offer - the rich orchestral and harmonic writing was highlighted to near pure sonic perfection.

The following Scherzo had exactly the right pace, with good phrase shaping, but there were a couple of moments of unsure wind ensemble playing, though these were quickly forgotten in the sheer exuberance of the movement. In the contrasting Trio, Meister let the players bring out the full palette of orchestral colours, and the three harps really did “shimmer” most beautifully. The choice of tempi of both Scherzo and Trio were exactly right.

There was a rather too long pause after the close of the preceding movement, but perhaps Meister wanted to calm us all down in order to prepare ourselves for the coming journey through this marvellously meditative Adagio. The opening was difficult, I felt, and took a moment for the orchestra to slip into the “slow-paced groove”, so to speak, but the ‘cellos seemed to impose a sense of control over their colleagues and all unfolded magnificently thereafter for this movement that can almost be taken as “a symphony within a symphony.”

The Finale, lacking perhaps a bit of “oomph” (compared to recordings I have heard of Boulez and Tintner) at the outset, did slightly dissipate the excitement I was looking for, but was entirely in keeping with Meister’s controlled approach. Perhaps, as mentioned above, a more reverberant acoustic would have helped at this point. Nevertheless, the committed playing of the orchestra made a fitting end to the symphonic discourse, and the players were clearly enjoying themselves as they laboured through the music, finally letting loose the full arsenal at their disposal in the coda that culminated in an emphatic ending with a perfectly timed - and prescribed - ritardando.

Hats off to the musicians of the Heidelberg Philharmonic - a first-rate orchestra – and Cornelius Meister, for this convincing and assured reading of Bruckner’s last fully completed symphony. For me, Meister will be a name worth looking out for, as far as Bruckner’s oeuvre is concerned, and I certainly won’t hesitate to attend any concert by the Heidelberg Philharmonic in the future.

Philip Clarke

Because of shortage of space, concert reviews of Barenboim and the Staatskapelle Berlin’s ‘Bruckner Project’ and of Hatink and the Concertgebouw’s Bruckner Symphony No.5 performances in London will be published in the next issue. Reviews by Ken Ward of these concerts can be found on www.bachtrack.com, review section.

Sunday 12 Aug 8 pm Marble Hall - Opening Concert

Wiener Streichersolisten (Members of the strings of the Vienna Philharmonic)
Kirill Kobantschenko, Violin
Participation by the street children of Bolivia, (Project ALALAY)
Works from the monastery archive by
F. J. Aumann, G. Rossini/Shiedermayr
Haydn Symphonies arr. string orchestra and othe works.

**Anton Bruckner’s
Musical Roots**

Monday 13 August, Sala Terrena 8 pm - Chamber Concert

Aug. Fr. Kropfreiter - Piano trio
Bruckner - Ländler
Mendelssohn - Piano Trio No. 2
Valentin Trio

Tuesday 14 August - St Florian Abbey - Symphony & Choral Concert

Bruckner - Afferentur regi and Os Justi
Mendelssohn - Symphony No.2
Chor der Florianer Chorakademie
Altomonte-Orchester St. Florian / Matthias Giesen

Wednesday 15 August - St Florian Abbey 8pm Organ Concert

“Isolations”

Bruckner’s organ repertoire: works by
Bach, Mendelssohn, Bruckner and others
Isolationen for Clarinet and Organ
(BrucknerTage 2012 commission)
Tobias Frank - Organ; Günther Gradischnig, Clarinet

BrucknerTage 2012

Thursday 16 August 8 pm Jazz Concert

Jo Barnikel plays Bruckner
with the Spring String Quartet

Friday 17 August St Florian Abbey, 8pm - Symphony Concert

“Die Nullte”

Bruckner - Symphony in D minor, ‘Die Nullte’
Berio - Renderings
French Youth Orchestra / Dennis Russell Davies

Saturday 18 Augst - Conversation Concert - Sala Terrana 8 pm

“...may I hope for your favour...”

“From eternal student to immortal master”
Stephanie Pick-Eisenburger and Klaus Laczika read from
Bruckner’s letters, A musical approach towards Bruckner, the man.
Klaus Laczika on piano.

St Florian Aug 12-18 2012
www.brucknertage.at

BrucknerTage in co-operation with The Brucknerhaus Linz LIVA

Bruckner Concerts Worldwide

A selected listing from 1 March - 3 July 2012

Considerable effort is made to ensure this information is correct, but total accuracy cannot be guaranteed: advice is to check with the venue for confirmation.

Argentina

6 Sept. 8.30pm Buenos Aires, Teatro Colon +5411 4378 7100
Sibelius - Violin Concerto **Bruckner** - Symphony No. 4
 Orquesta Filarmonica de Buenos Aires / Enrique Arturo Diemecke

Australia

11 Aug 8pm Brisbane, QPAC Concert Hall +61 73840 7478
Wagner - Wesendonck Lieder **Bruckner** - Symphony No. 8
 Queensland Symphony Orchestra / Johannes Fritzsich

Austria

5 July 7pm Erl, Passionspielhaus +43(0)5373 8106841
Schulze - Konzertstück for Alphonse, Organ and Orchestra
Bruckner - Symphony No.5
 Tyrol Festival Orchestra /

23 July Bregenzer Festspiele +43 5574 407 6
Schubert (arr. Glanert) - Die Einsame. D 620
Bruckner - Symphony No.5
 Wiener Symphoniker / Markus Stenz

26 July 8.30 pm, Salzburg, Großes Festspielhaus, +43 662 840310
Bruckner - Symphony No. 7 **Bruckner** - Te Deum
 Israel Philharmonic / Zubin Mehta

12 August 11am Bregenzer Festspiele +43 5574 407 6
Glanert - Theatrum bestiarum **Bruckner** - Symphony No.4
 Voralberg Symphony Orchestra / Gérard Korsten

12-18 Aug. Saint Florian **BrucknerTage 2012**
 see notice on page 50

15 Aug. 8pm Villach, Congress Centre +43 (0)42432510
Francaix - Overture Anacreontique
Saint-Saens - Violin Concerto No.1; Introduction & Rondo Capriccioso
Bruckner - Symphony in D minor, "Die Nullte"
 L'Orchestre Francais des Jeunes / Dennis Russell Davies

25 Aug. 11 am, 27 Aug 8 pm. Salzburg, Großes Festspielhaus, +43 662 840310
Beethoven - Piano Concerto No. 4 **Bruckner** - Symphony No. 9
 Wiener Philharmoniker / Bernard Haitink

26 Aug 4.30 pm Grafenegg Riding School, +43 (0)2735 5500
Bruckner - Symphony No. 7 arr. chamber orchestra
 Ensemble Capriccio Wien

26 Aug, 7.15 Grafenegg, Wolkenurm +43 (0)2735 5500
Bruckner - Te Deum **Bruckner** - Symphony No.9
 Orchestre des Champs-Élysées / Philippe Herreweghe

2 Sept. 7.15 Grafenegg, Wolkenurm +43 (0)2735 5500
Smetana - Ma Vlast: *From Bohemia's wood & fields; Vltava*
Bruckner - Symphony No.4
 Cleveland Orchestra / Franz Welser-Möst

8 Sept 7pm Grafenegg, Wolkenurm +43 (0)2735 5500
Wagner - Prelude and Liebestod **Bruckner** - Symphony No.7
 Staatskapelle Dresden / Christian Thielemann

15 Sept 7.30pm St Florian, tickets: Brucknerhaus +43 (0)732 775230
Bruckner - Symphony No.5
 Bruckner Orchestra Linz / Dennis Russell Davies

26 Sept 7.30 Linz, Brucknerhaus +43 (0)732 775230
Bruckner 4 Jazz
 Mühlbachers USW

29 Sept. 7.30 pm Linz, Brucknerhaus +43 (0)732 775230
Bruckner - Symphony No. 8 (ed. Haas)
 Orchestre de Paris / Herbert Blomstedt

With gratitude to Mr. Tatsuro Ouchi whose web-site
www.bekkoame.ne.jp/~hippo/musik/konzertvorschau/bruckner.html
 is the source for much of the concert listing information

3 Oct. 7.30 Linz, Brucknerhaus +43 (0)732 775230
Haydn - Symphony No. 103 **Bruckner** - Symphony No. 4
 Hamburg Philharmonic / Simone Young

18, 19 Oct. Vienna: Konzerthaus +43 1242 002
Schumann - Piano Concerto **Bruckner** - Symphony No 4
 Vienna Symphony Orchestra / David Zinman

Denmark

18, 19 Oct 7.30 pm Copenhagen, Koncerthuset, +45 3520 6262
Mozart - Violin Concerto No.5 **Bruckner** - Symphony No.9
 Danish National Symphony Orchestra / Cornelius Meister

France

27 Sept 8 pm, Paris: Salle Pleyel +33 (0)14256 1313
Bruckner - Symphony No.8
 Orchestre de Paris / Herbert Blomstedt

Germany

1 July 11 am, 2 July 8 pm, Wuppertal, Historische Stadthalle
 +49 (0)2 02569 4444
Mozart - Piano Concerto No. 9 **Bruckner** - Symphony No. 9
 Wuppertal Symphony Orchestra / Toshiyuki Kamioka

2 July 7.30 Regensburg, St Peters Cathedral +49 (0)941 5072424
Mozart - Mass No. 16 'Krönungsmesse' **Bruckner** - Symphony No. 4
 Regensburg Philharmonic Orchestra / Tetsuro Ban

4 July 8 pm München Philharmonie im Gasteig, +49 (0)8954 818181
 Concert for the 100th birthday of Sergui Celibidache
Bruckner - Symphony No.8
 Munich Philharmonic / Zubin Mehta

5 July 7.30 Passau, St Stephan's Cathedral +49 (0) 851 490831-0
Bruckner - Symphony No.7
 Bruckner Orchestra Linz / Dennis Russell Davies

9 July 8 pm Coburg, Moritzkirche +49 (0)9561 898989
Schubert - Overture 'Die Zauberharfe' **Bruckner** - Symphony No. 2
 Landestheater Coburg Philharmonic Orchestra / Roland Kluttig

22 July 3 pm Chorin, Klosterkirche +49 (0) 3334 818472
Wagner - Lohengrin Prelude Act 1 **Mozart** - Piano Concerto No. 21
Bruckner - Symphony No. 5
 Junge Philharmonie Wien / Michael Lessky

29 July 5 pm Ebrach, Musiksommer +49 (0)9552 297
Bruckner - Symphony No.8 (1888 ed. Carragan)
 Philharmonie Festiva / Gerd Schaller

18 Aug. 8 pm Lübeck Music & Congress Centre +49 (0)451 7904 400
 19 Aug. 7 pm Kiel, Schloss +49(0)431 901901
Mozart - Violin Concerto No.5 **Bruckner** - Symphony No.7
 Schleswig-Holstein Festival Orchestra / Manfred Honeck

24 Aug 8pm Wiesbaden, Kurhaus +49 (0) 611 1729290
Sibelius - Violin Concerto **Bruckner** - Symphony No.4
 Helsinki Philharmonic / John Storgårds

26 Aug 4pm Stolpe, Haferscheune des Gutshauses +49 (0)385 591 8585
Rautavaara - Adagio celeste for strings **Sibelius** - Violin Concerto
Bruckner - Symphony No.4
 Helsinki Philharmonic / John Storgårds

5 Sept. 8 pm, Frankfurt am Main, Alter Oper +49 (0) 6913 40400
 9 Sept. 8 pm, München Philharmonie im Gasteig, +49 (0)8954 818181
Wagner - Prelude & Liebestod **Bruckner** - Symphony No.7
 Staatskapelle Dresden / Christian Thielemann

15 Sep 8pm Bonn, Beethovenhalle, + 49 (0) 228 5020 1313
Schubert - Unfinished Symphony **Bruckner** - Symphony No.9
 Bayerischer Staatsorchester / Kent Nagano

16 Sep 11 am, Berlin, Konzerthaus +49 (0)30 203092101
 18 Sep 8 pm, Berlin, Philharmonie +49 (0)30254 88999
Bruch - Kol Nidrei **Carter** - Cello Concerto
Bruckner - Symphony No. 9
 Staatskapelle Berlin / Daniel Barenboim

23 Sept. 3 pm Ottobeuren, Basilika +49 (0)8332 921950
Enescu - Romanian Rhapsody No. 2 **Bruckner** - Symphony No. 6
 George Enescu Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra / Horia Andreescu

6 Oct. 7 pm, Ulm, Münster +49 (0)731 161 4444
Bruckner - Symphony No. 7
 Philharmonisches Orchester der Stadt Ulm / Timo Handschuh

20 Oct 8pm Dresden, Frauenkirche +49 (0)351 65606701
Bach - Cantata *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen*
Bruckner - Symphony No.4
 Bamberg Symphony Orchestra / Herbert Blomstedt

23, 24 Oct. 8pm Dortmund, Konzerthaus +49 231 22696 200
Bruckner - Symphony No.8 (1st version, 1887)
 Dortmund Philharmonic Orchestra / Jac van Steen

27 Oct. 7 pm Stuttgart Liederhalle +49 (0)711 2027710
Paganini - Violin Concerto No.1 **Bruckner** - Symphony No.3
 Stuttgart Philharmonic / Walter Weller

Israel

8 July, 8.30pm, 9 July 7 pm, Tel Aviv University +972 3 6211777
 10 July Haifa, Auditorium +972 4 8353506
Bruckner - Symphony No.7 **Bruckner** - Te Deum
 Israel Philharmonic / Zubin Mehta

Japan

20 July 7 pm, Takasaki, Gunma Music Centre +81 (0) 27322 4527
 21 July 2 pm Oota, Nitta Bunka Kaikan Airys +81 (0)276 57 2222
Weber - Overture to Oberon **Wagner** - Wesendonck Lieder
Bruckner - Symphony No.3
 Gunma Symphony Orchestra / Johannes Fritzschn

26 July 7 pm, Osaka, Symphony Hall +81 (0)6 64536000
Rachmaninov - Piano Concerto No.3 **Bruckner** - Symphony No.1
 Japan Century Orchestra / Kazuhiro Koizumi

2 Nov. 7pm Tokyo Metropolitan Art Space +81 3 59851707
Yoshimatsu - Cyber Bird concerto for Saxophone
Bruckner - Symphony No.7 (ed. Takanobu Kawasaki)
 Tokyo New City Orchestra / Akira Naito

Netherlands

24 Aug. 8.15 pm Amsterdam, Concertgebouw +31 (0)20 6718345
Beethoven - Piano Concerto No.4 **Bruckner** - Symphony No.4
 Netherlands Radio Philharmonic / Eliahu Inbal

22, 24, 25 Sep 8.15 pm Amsterdam, Concertgebouw +31 (0)20 6718345
Diepenbrock - Die Nacht **Bruckner** - Symphony No.4
 Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra / Marc Albrecht

19 Oct 8.15 pm, 21 Oct 2.15 pm Den Haag, Dr Anton Philipszaal
 +31 (0)70 8800333
Schumann - Piano Concerto **Bruckner** - Symphony No. 9
 The Hague Resident Orchestra / Hans Graf

Sweden

25 Oct 6pm, 27 Oct 3 pm, Stockholm, Konserthus +46 (0)850 667788
Lindholm - Greetings from an Old World
Vivaldi - Piccolo Concerto **Bruckner** - Symphony No. 4
 Royal Stockholm Philharmonic / Patrik Ringborg

Switzerland

5 Aug. 11.30 am, Gstaad Festival Tent +41 33 748 8182
Bruckner - Symphony No.4
 Gstaad Festival Amateur Orchestra / Alf Ardal

17 Aug 7.30 pm, 18 Aug. 6.30 pm Luzern, Kultur- & Kongresszentrum
 +41 41226 7777
Beethoven - Piano Concerto No.3 **Bruckner** - Symphony No. 1
 Lucerne Festival Orchestra / Claudio Abbado

23 Aug 7.30 pm Luzern, Kultur- & Kongresszentrum +41 41226 7777
Brahms - Schicksalslied; 2 Motets Op.74; Gesang der Parzen
Bruckner - Te Deum
 Orchestre des Champs-Élysées / Philippe Herreweghe

25 Aug. 6.30 pm, Luzern, Kultur- & Kongresszentrum +41 41226 7777
Pintscher - "Chute d'Étoiles" for two Trumpets and Orchestra
Bruckner - Symphony No.4 (1888 ed. Korstvedt)
 Cleveland Orchestra / Franz Welser-Möst

8 Sep. 6.30pm Luzern, Kultur- & Kongresszentrum +41 41226 7777
Wagner - Tannhäuser: Overture and Venusberg Music
Wagner - Prelude and Liebestod. **Bruckner** - Symphony No.3
 Munich Philharmonic / Lorin Maazel.

15 Sept. 5 pm, Luzern, Kultur- & Kongresszentrum +41 41226 7777
Beethoven - Piano Concerto No.4 **Bruckner** - Symphony No.9
 Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra / Bernard Haitink

17 Oct. 8 pm, Geneva, Victoria Hall +41(0)22 418 3500
Bruckner - Symphony No.2 (1877 ed. Nowak)
Berg - Violin Concerto
 Orchestre de la Suisse Romande / Marek Janowski

UK

3 Aug. 7.45 pm, London Royal Albert Hall 0845 401 5034
Wagner - Siegfried Idyll **Bruckner** - Symphony No.8 (1890, Nowak)
 BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra / Donald Runnicles

7 Aug, 7.30 pm, London Royal Albert Hall 0845 401 5034
Wagner - Prelude & Liebestod **MacMillan** - Credo
Bruckner - Symphony No.6
 BBC Philharmonic Orchestra / Juanjo Mena

20 Aug. 8 pm, Edinburgh, Usher Hall +44 (0)131 228 1155
Brahms - Gesang der Parzen
Bruckner - Te Deum **Bruckner** - Symphony No.9
 Orchestre des Champs-Élysées / Philippe Herreweghe

30 Aug. 8 pm Edinburgh, Usher Hall +44 (0)131 228 1155
Chin - Violin Concerto **Bruckner** - Symphony No.4
 Philharmonia Orchestra / Esa Pekka Salonen

6 Sep. 7 pm London Royal Albert Hall 0845 401 5034
Beethoven - Piano Concerto No.4 **Bruckner** - Symphony No.9
 Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra / Bernard Haitink

18 Oct. 7.30 London Royal Festival Hall 0871 663 2500
Mozart - Piano Concerto No.27 **Bruckner** - Symphony No.8
 Philharmonia Orchestra / Christoph von Dohnányi

18 Oct 7.30 Manchester, The Bridgewater Hall +44 (0)161 907 9000
Wagner - Prelude & Liebestod **Bruckner** - Symphony No.4
 The Hallé / Markus Stenz

24 Oct. 7.30pm London Royal Festival Hall 0871 663 2500
Mozart - Violin Concerto No.5 **Bruckner** - Symphony No.7
 London Philharmonic Orchestra / Stanislaw Skrowaczewski

26 Oct. 7.30 pm London Royal Festival Hall 0871 663 2500
Brahms - Piano Concerto No.1
Bruckner (arr. Skrowaczewski) - Adagio from String Quintet
Shostakovich - Symphony No.1
 London Philharmonic Orchestra / Stanislaw Skrowaczewski

USA

1 July, 6 pm Vail CO, Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater, +1 877.812.5700
Bach - Keyboard Concerto No.5 **Bruckner** - Symphony No.8
 Dallas Symphony Orchestra / Jaap van Zweden