



Bruckner The Journal

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In This Issue

	page
Concerts	2
Compact Discs	8
Wyn Morris	15
The Royale Third by Mark Kluge	17
Reflections on "Die Nullte" by Raymond Cox	20
Late Letters by Andrea Harrandt	21
Notes on a Symphony Cycle	28
Feedback	33
Calendar	36

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Translations (pp. 3-5, p. 12) by Peter Palmer.

Silhouettes of Anton Bruckner and Hans Richter: Otto Böhler.

MEDIA WATCH

In our first editorial we complained at the treatment meted out to Bruckner in a publication from the British radio station, Classic FM. It is pleasant to note that Bruckner fares slightly better in the Classic FM Good Music Guide (1999). Although Jeremy Nicholas, its author, does not always get his facts right, he does at least give the impression of being on the composer's side.

Clearly, the symbols used by Nicholas to convey the basic character of a work are not meant to be taken too seriously. The three Bruckner symphonies included are all described as "Romantic/Nostalgic"; the Seventh is also deemed to be "Weepy"! Only the Te Deum, in Nicholas' view, is "Spiritual/Inspirational" - and how could he miss the "Joyful/Celebratory" strains in Bruckner?

We can, perhaps, be grateful for Bruckner's omission from the lists of works for particular occasions, such as **Music to Bathe to** or **Music to Romance to** (an incorrect use of this verb). **Music to Karaoke Conduct to?** Now some Bruckner lovers might plead guilty to that.

Less acceptable is a book published to accompany Howard Goodall's recent television series on milestones in Western music ("Big Bangs"). Goodall justifiably links Bruckner's music to late-19th century Vienna, which he dislikes. Then, however, he goes on to equate the two, thereby displaying a naivety that would be alarming in an intelligent fifth-former.

Thank goodness for the composer Robin Holloway! In the BBC Music Magazine he confessed that the piece from the last millennium he would most like to have written himself is Bruckner's Ninth. He has also named the Bruckner of the Eighth and Ninth Symphonies among his top ten composers before the 20th century. Let us wish him well for the premiere of his own first symphony at the Proms (July 29).

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA/Marc Albrecht
Symphony Hall, Birmingham

AT THE AGE of 36 Marc Albrecht is one of the youngest musical directors in Germany. Since 1995 he has headed the Darmstadt Opera and has quickly gained an enthusiastic following. This matinée performance of Bruckner's **Fourth** on February 22 (repeated on the evening of February 23) was most beautifully shaped and gorgeously played by the CBSO. Speeds were on the slow side, and the performance lasted at least 70 minutes. While not containing the last ounce of splendour, it came over as smooth and well-balanced. Where did the idea come from that British and American orchestras cannot adequately realise the 'Bruckner sound'?

Before the interval the CBSO played Wagner's Tannhäuser Overture and 'Venusberg' music.

RAYMOND COX

Second Opinion

We were expecting the original version of No. 4 (an interesting if surprising choice for a mid-week matinée) to be conducted by Thomas Adès, but ill-health forced his replacement by Marc Albrecht, who gave us the familiar version. The CBSO have a fine reputation and Albrecht gave a mature interpretation of this formidable work. I found the performance both competent and enthusiastic but lacking the essential magic which can make the long journey from initial horn call to ecstatic final climax so exciting and so fulfilling. Perhaps it was something I had eaten!

MICHAEL PIPER

HERTFORD COLLEGE MUSIC SOCIETY/Paul Coones
The University Church of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford

Hertford College Music Society does not consist in the main of music students, but their dedication was evident in a performance of the original (1873) version of the **Third Symphony**. Moreover, they really seemed to enjoy playing it. The decision to take on this work by these young people was a brave one. It wasn't quite the 1873 version as recorded, because Dr Coones had adopted Robert Simpson's suggestion that the section from letter K in the Adagio to the end of the movement be replaced by the equivalent section from the 1877 version, where the build-up is magnificent and the Wagner 'quotations' are removed. Efforts had also been made to amend mistakes in the parts which seem to have gone uncorrected in recordings of the 1873 score.

Paul Coones chose slow but consistent speeds and the musical architecture was right; so (despite the relatively small forces) was the orchestral balance. Only in the Finale did ragged moments obtrude. These, however, were overcome by the overall feeling of warmth, which was enhanced by the church acoustic. --The concert (February 26) opened with the Hertford College Chapel Choir singing the motets Tota pulchra es, Afferentur regi and Locus iste, punctuated by Bruckner's Aequales for three trombones.

R.C.

BRUCKNER'S NINTH WITH FINAL MOVEMENT - I

Vienna Symphony Orchestra/Nikolaus Harnoncourt

Musikvereinssaal, Vienna, 12 and 13 November 1999

ALTHOUGH known for many years as an early-music specialist, Nikolaus Harnoncourt has also had an influence on the performance of Romantic music. His intensive engagement with the music of Bruckner is documented by his CDs of the Third (1877 version), Fourth and Seventh Symphonies. Recently Harnoncourt turned to the Ninth Symphony and in particular the surviving torso of Bruckner's projected fourth movement. This finale fragment was performed in the Great Hall of the Musikverein by the excellent Vienna Symphony Orchestra as part of its centenary cycle. The performance was vivid, convincing and ultimately a revelation with regard to our understanding of the symphony as a whole.

First, however, let us recap on the international effort that has been put into obtaining this final movement. It all began in Linz. John A. Phillips, an Australian scholar who was educated partly in Vienna, has been working on the finale for a number of years. Phillips has done everything that was humanly possible to produce a viable reconstruction of this movement from the available material, building on the work of the Italian researchers Nicola Samale and Giuseppe Mazzuca in collaboration with Gunnar Cohrs. The first performance was given in Linz in December 1991 by the Bruckner Orchestra under Manfred Mayrhofer. In 1993 the conductor Kurt Eichhorn made a CD recording with the same orchestra. This reconstruction was subsequently performed several more times, e.g. in Braunschweig (1994), Minneapolis (1996), Amsterdam, Arnhem and Nijmegen (1999). It was also committed to disc in April 1998 by Johannes Wildner with the Neue Philharmonie Westfalen.*

All these efforts were motivated by a curiosity as to what the music of this much-debated movement is really like and what it involves. Bruckner established the ground-plan, and it is a matter of rendering it audible and playable. Phillips addressed himself to the task in several publications:

- 1) as part of the Bruckner Complete Edition he produced a "Reconstruction of the Autograph Score according to the Surviving Sources" with many annotations (1994);
- 2) in the interests of scholarly rigour a "Facsimile Edition containing all the Autograph Music Folios" was published (1996), with copious explanatory comments;
- 3) under the title "Documentation of the Fragment" there is now a performing version to be used for concerts. This contains all the surviving sections that Bruckner himself set down in score form. Those portions which are either unfinished or lost are covered in a table of contents;
- 4) a Textband giving a verbal commentary has yet to be published.

reviewed by Mark Audus on pp. 11-12 of this issue

Now let us turn to Harnoncourt's performance of the fourth movement. In order to underline its workshop character it took up the first part of the concert and was followed after an interval by the usual three movements. The conductor expressed his aims in comments made before and between the four readily playable sections of the finale. Personal observations were mixed with general indications of the formal structure, and Harnoncourt made the following points:

- what's missing is missing, and one has to accept that.
- this was not a conventional concert performance; "Bruckner wouldn't have agreed to our doing this"; the object was to provide a glimpse of Bruckner's working methods and some idea of what was in his mind.
- it had become apparent in rehearsals that there was something frightening about the way the composition pursues a single, unswerving line.
- this finale is "great" music, wild (in the fugal fragment) and without a trace of senility. Everything is meaningful.
- the coda was meant to conclude with five or six themes superimposed upon one another, but this coda was never written.

The fact that some pages are missing is evident from Bruckner's own meticulous numbering of the pages of the score. Harnoncourt added that souvenir hunters must have appropriated them at the time of Bruckner's death. Hence his appeal to the amused audience to go home and check if the music wasn't lying in a Biedermeier chest somewhere.

Harnoncourt directed the performance of the fragment with his customary intensity and fidelity. He brought out the basic conception of the movement, but also its sprawling and idiosyncratic features. In the ensuing performance of the preceding movements, Harnoncourt captured the immediacy of the musical utterance, with its hard-edged, angular moments and its undulating passages of growing intensity, allowing it space to breathe and to fade away. The articulation of individual sections was clear-cut, the whole exciting and full of detail--here was the very image of Bruckner.

The symphony dedicated to "the dear Lord" is a monolith that resists classification. As Harnoncourt said, there is a path leading from it straight into the twentieth century.

FRANZ ZAMAZAL

Some Press Comments

Wiener Zeitung:

It has been recognised in recent years that a great deal of the fragment of Bruckner's last finale--the finale of his "Ninth"--has actually survived. In a workshop presentation Nikolaus Harnoncourt expounded and directed the orchestra in a total of about a quarter of an hour's music. This was the first performance of the documentary score in the Bruckner Complete Edition: informative and yet confusing, since it hardly provided "finished" sections.

After the interval the three completed movements received an astonishingly cool performance which was not, however, very exact; indeed at times it was insensitive and lacking in tension. Hence the difficulty in obtaining any consistent impression. A pity. (Herbert Müller)

Salzburger Nachrichten:

Harnoncourt's presentation with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra was conceived not as a concert but as a workshop report. He argued eloquently and convincingly that this mighty finale would have brought Bruckner's symphonic oeuvre to a daring and crowning conclusion, had he been granted a few more months to accomplish it. There is evidence that Bruckner had a fully unified vision of the main themes, the course of the movement, and the layout of an enormous coda.

Subsequently Harnoncourt showed a sure grasp of the architecture of the first three movements. He and his willing players realised their magnificent ground-plan in a performance that was less "misterioso" than life-affirming, vital and often dance-like (the second theme of the Adagio!), without failing to gouge out the bold harmonic frictions. The Scherzo theme was powerfully arresting (its like does not occur again until Stravinsky and Shostakovich), of great loveliness, evocative not so much of doubts as of a Catholic solemnity and splendour transcending the village church; then the "farewell to life" in the Adagio. (Heinz Rögl)

Österreichische Musikzeitschrift:

Nikolaus Harnoncourt described the first part of the concert as a workshop. Quite correctly, he made it absolutely clear that he was about to play those sections of the finale that have been available to date. By and large the venture gave a clear picture of what Bruckner wrote without affecting the small number of additions made by the editor, John A. Phillips.

After the interval the orchestra played the Ninth Symphony in D minor [....] He [Harnoncourt] brought out the characteristic features of the instruments, especially the horns when "stopped", and the crucial role of the timpani (which I have never heard so clearly profiled in this symphony) in producing the mighty climaxes [....]

In conclusion I only hope that the fragments played in the first half were taken for what they are. They will never be likely to represent the symphony's ending--that much I predict. (Manfred Wagner)

Die Presse, Vienna:

Nikolaus Harnoncourt and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra gave an unusual lesson in the Vienna Musikverein [....] There was no guarantee of a concert at which one could sit back and relax, and the surviving torso of Bruckner's last symphony did not simply end with the Adagio but started with what has been preserved of the final movement.

Although there exists a reconstruction--speculative, of course--of this finale, Harnoncourt opted for the fragment of the fragment [....] What we heard, therefore, was pure Bruckner without additives. Harnoncourt offered comments and explanatory remarks, presenting several possibilities where the autograph score is not completely legible at one point. The three completed movements followed after the interval. Devoid of incense, without any false pathos, transparent, concentrated, exciting, taken at thoroughly lively tempi. A gratifyingly different concert, of a type that one would like to hear more often between all these de luxe guest appearances. ("mus")

Wiener Kurier:

The conductor began by warning that the finale of Anton Bruckner's Ninth Symphony was an --unfinished--workshop and the passages being premiered would demand the listener's creativity [....] A musical introduction to educate the ear, to bring home an often splendid fragment, and which also impressively underlined the abilities of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra.

The first three movements after the interval were a veritable event. It was phenomenal the way Harnoncourt picked up every nuance [....] Far removed from all gloss, Harnoncourt's Bruckner is a monumental, and celestial, declaration, bold, drastic, and conciliatory. (P.J.)

BRUCKNER'S NINTH WITH FINAL MOVEMENT - II

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra/Robert Bachmann
Barbican Hall, London, 17 May 2000

THIS was the U.K. concert premiere of the Ninth Symphony in its four-movement form, the Finale being played in the second performing version by Samale, Phillips, Cohrs and Mazzuca. In a pre-performance talk Benjamin Gunnar Cohrs said that the team's work should not be thought a definitive statement of what Bruckner might have done. All Brucknerians will be very grateful to this team for working Bruckner's last music into a whole movement. Nonetheless, when played immediately after Bruckner's three completed movements, this Finale displays a marked falling-off of creativity.

Robert Bachmann's way with the symphony was predictable: if it's loud, play it as loudly as possible! The string players were swamped in tutti passages by bludgeoning trombones and coarse trumpets. Bachmann conducted a stodgy first movement, the strangeness of the music undermined by a dogged pulse. Little colour or phrasal variety was to be heard. Bachmann's speeding-up for the stormy development emphasised his sectional approach which rendered some passages inconsequential. The scherzo was made to appear gratuitous and unimaginative. The trombones' subito fortes closing the scherzo both times round were a new feature (one of the emendations made by Cohrs to Bruckner's text?), and the biscuit-barrel timbre of the timpani solos was effective.

How to treat the slow movement when it is not the last? Bachmann took a flowing view of it, the opening less intense than usual, magisterial passages a little subdued, and the 'farewell to life' theme played with little sentiment. But the movement wasn't helped by passages of slack ensemble and poor tuning. The anguished tread to the climax was not as grinding as it needs to be, the dissonant chord it arrives on too trumpet-dominated.--It was a pity that some of the audience applauded here, but how would Bruckner have topped the greatness of the first three movements? This committee Finale seems to belong to a different world--Bruckner raiding his bottom drawer for unused ideas for Symphonies Nos 4, 5 and 7. There are too many sub-Wagner references (I thought Fasolt and Fafner were knocking on the door at one point!), and there's too much repetition of some uninspired material. This excepts the striking chorale. While it's fascinating to hear Bruckner's final musical thoughts, his Ninth Symphony is an unfinished masterpiece.

COLIN ANDERSON

Robert Bachmann in conversation:

"Bruckner was working on his score on the very day he died. Of that last movement 152 bars had already been fully orchestrated by him... We are dealing here with far more than simply a torso... I am more than content with what we have in the shape of this magnificent performing version."

(Duncan Hadfield, **What's On in London**)

Second Opinion

ANTHONY CUTBUSH, an English acquaintance of the conductor and Bruckner biographer Hans-Hubert Schönzeler, wrote to the editor of TBJ to question the reliability of all the Bruckner editions hitherto published. In the ensuing correspondence, Mr Cutbush mentioned that he had just heard Robert Bachmann conduct the 1887 version of Bruckner's **Eighth**, played by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Barbican Centre, London, on March 16:

I found this a revelation as everything fell into place. All the moods of the work were captured and the overall symphonic structure understood and conveyed. The tempi seemed correct and indications observed, with the orchestra on top form.

Subsequently we invited Anthony Cutbush to give his opinion of the RPO's performance of the **Ninth Symphony** under Robert Bachmann at the Barbican in May. He writes:

Once again we were given a performance in which Bruckner the symphonist was completely understood both formally and emotionally. It revealed the forward-looking harmonies, form and tonal usage through which Bruckner, like Liszt, foresaw the way in which the twentieth century developed musically. We heard what he set out to do in his paean of praise and thanks to God for the gifts bestowed upon the composer.

In the first movement the rhythmic and chromatic details and changes of mood were all there. The second subject was both lyrical and pastoral. The scherzo was sardonic, spectral and rhythmic; and this listener found humour, too, especially in the Trio. The slow movement, the heart of the work, showed Bruckner's uncertainty, questioning, and realising in the end of acceptance and resignation. The orchestra conveyed intensity and yearning.

In bringing together all the strands of the symphony with its many quotations, the completion of the unfinished Finale suggested hope, thanksgiving and praise in a good, logical realisation of what remains of the score.

I did hear several people say that it was too long, but that is to be expected.

* * *

In the printed programme for its concert of 17 May, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra was able to publish only part of Benjamin Gunnar Cohrs' notes for the evening. The complete text will appear in our next issue.

* * *

Daniele Gatti, music director of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, has conducted students of the Royal College of Music, London, in a rehearsal of the first movement of Bruckner's Ninth, in which RPO principals took part.

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Bruckner: Symphony No. 4

Leondinger Symphonie-Orchester/Uwe Christian Harrer
 CD SW 010053-2 [from Uwe Christian Harrer, Rebhahnweg 6, A-4060 Leonding]

LEONDING is a small town west of Linz which today has about 20,000 inhabitants. "Bruckner was here," as emerges from the concise but informative CD booklet (which is in German only). It was to a Leonding inn that Bruckner invited the Linz kapellmeister Otto Kitzler and his wife for a meal in the summer of 1863, to celebrate the completion of his studies with Kitzler. A contemporary engraving of this establishment adorns the title-page of the booklet.

In his 'live' recording of 1996, Harrer conducts the familiar 1878/80 version of the Fourth Symphony, but with the 'Volksfest' finale of 1878--an Austrian first performance. It is not, as the booklet claims, the first recording of this movement, because Gennady Rozhdestvensky recorded it with the USSR Ministry of Culture Symphony Orchestra in 1987 [see the last issue of TBJ, page 8].

The Leonding Symphony Orchestra proves to be a generally reliable ensemble with a beautiful sound, although there are insecure moments in the finale. The recording is spacious but without a distracting echo; the brass are the dominant section. Harrer's tempi are relatively brisk, and this is to the benefit of the finale in particular: here, Harrer's interpretation seems all of a piece, whereas Rozhdestvensky's fondness for detail causes cracks to appear. This is reflected in the playing times--Rozhdestvensky takes nearly four minutes longer!

Hans Roelofs

Bruckner: Symphony No. 9 (arr. Takeo Noguchi)

"Bruckner meets Electone"

Mukei Label MT 99017 [from Takeo Noguchi, 2-18-201 Chigusadai, Inage-Ku, Chiba 263-0013, Japan. E-mail: otakesan@kt.rim.or.jp]

AS A follow-up to conducting the Schalk edition of Bruckner's Fifth in Japan, Takeo Noguchi has now arranged Bruckner's Ninth for four Yamaha electronic organs and percussion. As Robert Wardell recounts in "Feedback", I tried out the close of the Adagio on some readers and temporarily persuaded at least one or two that they were actually listening to an orchestra. The second movement, however, does not lend itself well to such treatment (prancing organs always sound faintly ridiculous), and quite why this transcription was made when Japan boasts several accomplished Bruckner orchestras escapes me.

That said, no praise can be too high for keyboard players Yoshiko Nishiyama, Koichi Tachibana, Sachi Miyahara, and Saori Morita, together with the percussionist Yuichi Oki, who performed the three completed movements 'live' under Noguchi's direction last September. And I do enjoy the James MacMillan-like tinkling of bells at the end.

The CD costs 3,000 yen (plus 330 yen for postage to the U.K.).

Peter Palmer

Bruckner: Symphonies Nos 7, 8 & 9; rehearsal extracts from Nos 7 & 8
Schubert: Symphony No. 5

Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra / Sergiu Celibidache
 DG 445 471-2: 4 CDs + rehearsal CD [from Universal]

EVEN Celibidache's detractors acknowledge his greatness in Bruckner. Unlike their counterparts in EMI's recent box, these live performances (without applause) from the 1970s have conventional timings, but there's nothing ordinary about them. The greatest performance here is of the Eighth Symphony in 1976. This is in a league by itself, preferable by far to the "beached whale" from EMI, fascinating though that is. Celibidache's painstaking preparation reveals Bruckner's breathing expression, the conductor's fastidious handling of colour creating an extraordinary cathedral of sound.

No other conductor quite matches Celibidache's musical illumination at its greatest (and not only in Bruckner). He understands and balances Bruckner's fervour and meditation while viewing Bruckner's vast design and vision as an entity; everything achieved in the Eighth has a musical foundation. Quite how Celi suggests, in the violins, glints of light shining through stained-glass windows I don't know--but I do know how he gets such a committed response from his musicians. He puts the responsibility for their playing back in their hands, not by telling them what to do, but by guiding them to listen to their colleagues and correlate their parts, thereby making them better musicians. (This is what orchestral players he conducted have told me.) Listen to the slow movement between 12'24" and 14'41", where the woodwind playing is so emotional. From 12'55" the clarinet player, then the oboist invest their solos with so much understanding of what they are playing; then the strings find an almost unbearably expressive dimension. This is sublime music-making combining the intimacy of chamber music and an infinite world of declaration.

If you listen as I do, it isn't just the final performance you'll hear, it's the sum total of many hours' preparation. Being aware of the science of acoustics isn't mandatory, but Celibidache's Eighth is a miracle of sound and harmony. For all his notoriety as a slow-tempo conductor, Celi's movement timings of 16, 14, 27 (using Nowak's edition of the 1890 version) and 26 minutes can be matched by others. It's the all-encompassing involvement of the performers and Celibidache's care over balance and the details of Bruckner's score which are so compelling.

It's also the humanity with which this conductor shapes episodes, without indulging them. Nothing is allowed to spoil the whole, yet everything is comprehensively stated in sound. Take the perfect balance between horn and violins from 1'49" in the Finale. The flute and clarinet arabesques from 4'14" are no mere decoration but an integral, vital part of the whole. Or take the flute 'heartbeats' that seem so significant at 22'56". Although Celi ends the first movement with a slight *ritenuto* (how much more telling the 'death-clock' is when it stops in tempo!), he compensates with a monumental Finale coda; here, at 25'13", the violins are wonderfully clear against tumultuous brass. This is one of the

greatest performances of Bruckner's Eighth, coupled with an equally wonderful Schubert No. 5 from 1979.

I am not so sure about the performances of Bruckner's Seventh and Ninth Symphonies. An "Artists Live Recordings" CD, FED 011, offers a Seventh under Celi that allegedly dates from 26 October 1971. This is the same performance as that heard on DG, who state 8 June 1971: the date of Celi's debut concert with the Stuttgart RSO. DG are probably correct, but was there another performance in October that has been used here? Both CDs lack the Finale's opening tremolo on second violins.

My reservations about this No. 7 concern neither the requisite lightness of sound nor the clarity of the lines but Celibidache's ambiguous approach to the scale of the Symphony. While he adds considerably to his overall timing in Munich, now on EMI, it is two interpretative points shared by the Munich performance that stand out. One is his opting for Haas's quieter dynamics while including Nowak's cymbal clash at the Adagio's climax; the second is his creation of a transparent sound that doesn't always complement his spacious, sometimes majestic traversing of the whole. That said, the very opening doesn't start so much as make us conscious of its existence. We are drawn in by the subtlest of crescendos, from virtually inaudible to slightly less inaudible, and an equally subtle intensification of tone. There are many other wonderful moments.

If I wouldn't be without the Stuttgart No. 7, neither would I be without the Ninth. I haven't made any direct comparisons with the Munich performance--each Celibidache performance creates its own cosmos--but my memory of Celi's 77-minute rendition (on DG he takes 58 minutes) is that it didn't seem a second too long. His 1974 Stuttgart reading has a wondrous balance but it is a little circumspect about revealing Bruckner's inner angst. Celibidache tells us so much about Bruckner's orchestration and his harmonic perception of the impending twentieth century--and also how a conductor can unfold the first movement's lengthy exposition without getting lost. But something personal to Bruckner is missing, although Celi often moves this music forward to thrilling effect. The scherzo is not the blaze of ill-digested noise that it can be allowed to become, but I would have liked more devilish hobgoblins in the Trio, where Celi presents a slightly twitchy Mendelssohn. The concluding Adagio is both anticipatory of the next life and serene in its leave-taking. Although Celi builds the most painful of final climaxes, the dissonant breaking-point is a little too soft, and slightly lost by the recording.

Generally the recorded sound is excellent: clean-textured and dynamically wide-ranging. Just occasionally it's a little fierce. Dedicated Brucknerians and Celibidachians shouldn't hesitate to acquire this set.

COLIN ANDERSON

Musica Divina. Bruckner's motet Os justi has been included on "Musica Divina", a DG yellow label recording of the DRESDNER KREUZCHOR (CD 453 484-2). The thirteen tracks range from Schütz and Bach to pieces by contemporary composers Kurt Hessenberg and Jörg Duda.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 9 (completed by Samale, Phillips, Mazzuca & Cohrs)
 Neue Philharmonie Westfalen / Johannes Wildner
 SonArte SP 13 [2 CDs, from SonArte Musikproduktion GbR, Diekhoff 8,
 D-48301 Nottuln. Telephone (49+) 02509 8224, fax (49+) 02509 8207]

THE ART of musical completion and reconstruction is big business these days. The various versions of Verdi's Don Carlos, the authentic versions of Musorgsky's Boris Godunov, and completions of Mahler's Tenth Symphony and Elgar's Third: all these have enjoyed popular as well as critical success. With Bruckner, however, attitudes are rather different, most often marked by an excessive reverence and piety which seem to derive both from the spiritual qualities of the music and from widely caricatured facets of Bruckner's personality. It's true that Mahler's Tenth was slow to find acceptance (strongly resisted, indeed, by old-school Mahlerians), but in the case of Bruckner's unfinished Ninth attitudes are even more entrenched. At recent performances of the Finale torso fragments in Vienna, even the usually iconoclastic Nikolaus Harnoncourt refused to play a note not written by Bruckner himself.

Bruckner expended his last mental and physical energy on completing the Finale. Realising that this might not be possible, he had the alternative plan of appending his Te Deum as the final movement. Yet the conventional wisdom is that the three-movement torso stands on its own--like Schubert's 'Unfinished'--as an aesthetically complete work. On the face of it, this view has some points in its favour. The Te Deum is in C major, the 'wrong' key satisfactorily to conclude a D minor symphony. Playing the Ninth as a three-movement work also evokes an elegiac quality which fits in with its biographical place as Bruckner's 'farewell to life'. And then there has always been that school of thought, even among committed Brucknerians, that the composer didn't know how to end his symphonies. For them, the Ninth is perfect as it stands. A contrary position might point out that far greater exposure is given to incomplete (and completed or restored) torsos in the graphic arts. It might also note the double standard at work in regarding the three-movement Symphony torso as aesthetically and ethically acceptable, but that of the Finale as unworthy of wider attention. Many respected critics still glibly dismiss any attempt to give to the Finale a performable context in which it can be heard and judged by more than just a privileged band of specialists.

In his extensive notes (translated into English by John A. Phillips) to this new recording, Gunnar Cohrs argues forcefully that to regard the three-movement torso as self-sufficient--a view promoted by the overwhelming majority of performances--is the worst possible option. Better, he argues, either to append the Te Deum or to complete Bruckner's symphony for him. That task has been tackled before, notably by William Carragan and by the Italian team of Nicola Samale and Giuseppe Mazzuca, and the present recording takes the Samale-Mazzuca completion a stage further. With the help of new research by John Phillips, a more precise picture of the Finale as Bruckner left it has emerged. In his preface to the study score of this performing version, Phillips describes the score as neither sketches nor even a draft but an 'emergent autograph'. The music was substantially in place in continuous score, probably up to the final page, with the strings virtually complete and only the scoring of certain passages and the 'nuancing' (performance indications such as tempo

markings, phrasing and dynamics) to be completed. Unfortunately, the activities of souvenir hunters dispersed the manuscript pages so that many are still lost, at least in their final form.

For anyone doubtful of the merits of composition by committee, it can be emphasised that this completion is anything but camel-like. Compared with the earlier Samale-Mazzuca version, the many refinements reveal a sparer, often austere sound-world, which surely reflects not so much a paucity of material as a well-attuned view of the Ninth as a whole. In their 'live' recording from Gelsenkirchen, the New Philharmonia of Westphalia and Johannes Wildner do the four-movement Ninth an impressive service. The first movement is straightforward yet flexible and expressive, with a good sense of momentum--the beginning of an epic journey. Antiphonally divided violins help to clarify the intricacies of Bruckner's part-writing. The Scherzo is less convincing, with little sense of the demonic or fantastic. The timpani are too close in the Scherzo itself but migrate to a more acceptable distance in the Trio. The great Adagio starts with a creak, and the strings are not the equal of their Vienna or Berlin colleagues. Some phrase endings are handled rather abruptly.

Paradoxically, shortcomings in the middle movements create a level playing field for the Finale. Interpretation can never take place in a vacuum: it takes time to emerge as a performing tradition is established, and in these terms the Finale of Bruckner's Ninth is very much the younger sibling of the first three movements. Orchestra and conductor rise magnificently to the task. Aided by a well-focused but ambient recording, with resplendent brass, the performance moves on to another level here. What we get is one of the most convincing recorded accounts of the Finale so far.

Two crucial passages are particularly successful: the first section of the development, dominated by the Te Deum motif and a compelling undercurrent of triplet figuration; and the mighty fugue which brings in the recapitulation, whose powerful climax looks beyond late Mahler. The coda is far more conjectural, and this is where the most striking differences from earlier completions are evident. The first-movement theme makes a sudden reappearance before the themes of all four movements are brought together, in rather different fashion from the Finale of Bruckner's Eighth. This is superseded by the return of the 'chorale' motif and an 'Alleluia' motif which dominates the closing pages. The final peroration is more fractured but also less reliant on the equivalent pages in the Eighth than Samale-Mazzuca or Carragan. There will always be those who object that the coda is largely hypothetical. But there are clues as to how it might have been shaped, and to dismiss the whole Finale for that reason is to throw the baby out with the bath water.

Judged by the standards of a Karajan, Walter or Wand, this new recording may not be among the greatest of the Ninth, but it is one of the most important. My one gripe is that, given the necessity of spreading the symphony over two discs, the Finale has been placed on its own. Not only is this rather short measure (perhaps the space could have been used for a play-through of the surviving fragments, as on the Chandos recording of Carragan's version). It also means that it is difficult to appreciate fully the effectiveness of the Finale as it emerges from the embers of the Adagio.

MARK AUDUS

BUDGET DISCS - RECENT RECORDINGS

GEORG Tintner's penultimate Bruckner CD (there is just the First Symphony to come) is among the finest in a notable series. His success with "No. 00", the **F minor Study Symphony**, is due to his appreciation of its scale. Tintner presents a Schubert-inspired Bruckner who modelled his symphonic debut on Schubert's early symphonies. He appreciates that Bruckner's individuality is already in the music, understands the influence, and recognises that early Bruckner needs to be kept moving. This he does with conspicuous success. Also, we have the 'Festival of the People' movement, the second of Bruckner's three versions of the Fourth Symphony's finale. This is a halfway house between the original version, which has some rather embarrassing ideas, and the third-time-lucky one. 'Volksfest' affords a fascinating insight into a composer on his way to making a definitive statement. With lucid, well-balanced sound, and fine playing from the ROYAL SCOTTISH NATIONAL ORCHESTRA, this CD should delight all Brucknerians (Naxos 8.554432, from Select).



ARTE Nova's estimable Bruckner cycle has reached the **Fourth Symphony**, given here in its ultimate version. Once again Stanislaw Skrowaczewski conducts the SAARBRÜCKEN RADIO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA. His is a spacious view of all four movements. He has time to conjure a mysterious landscape and give full expression to the lyrical material, yet goals are kept firmly in sight and delivered with power. Skrowaczewski previously recorded the "Romantic" with the Hallé Orchestra. His second recording is equally splendid, bristling with detail and atmosphere; like Jochum and Karajan, he includes an unrequested but effective cymbal clash early in the last movement (here at 2'39"). Fine sound, fine playing--another bargain (Arte Nova 74321 72101 2, from BMG Conifer Classics).

Colin Anderson

"Cantate Domino" - Birmingham Bach Choir
 Birmingham Bach Choir CD 4 [from Linda Gresham, 71 Woodfield Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham B13 9UL]

Bruckner's Os justi, Locus iste and his four-part setting of Christus factus est give him the lion's share of the 15 items on a well-planned disc. The vocal pieces range from psalms by Giovanni Gabrieli and Monteverdi to a motet by that celebrated cellist, Pablo Casals. Director Paul Spicer, who draws consistently stylish singing from his responsive choir, observes a direct line of descent from Bach (the great "Lobet den Herrn") through Mendelssohn to Bruckner, Brahms and Rheinberger. All these composers, he argues in the accompanying booklet, share a natural feeling for voices. Robert Sharpe plays solo organ works by Brahms and Henri Mulet. --The disc costs £12 including postage, cheque payable to 'Birmingham Bach Choir'.

Peter Palmer

CD ISSUES MARCH - JUNE 2000

Compiled by Howard Jones and John Wright

Devotees of Sergiu Celibidache will be pleased to see some of his Stuttgart performances issued in official recordings with decent sound. DG have promised a second set later this year containing Symphonies Nos 3, 4 and 5. The six Dohnányi discs listed below are available in a set (Decca 466 348-2DF10) which also includes four Mahler symphonies. Our contacts have made us aware of other releases, in particular from Japan. Because of the difficulty of obtaining these CDs, they have not been included here.

SYMPHONIES

* = new issue

- No. 00 *Tintner/RNSO (Glasgow 9-98)
with "Volksfest" Finale to No. 4 NAXOS 8.554432 [37.25 + 19.03]
- Nos 3 & 8 Dohnányi/Cleveland Orchestra (Cleveland 6-93, 2-94)
DECCA 466 333-2 [57.32/82.25]
- No. 4 *Skrowaczewski/Saarbrücken RSO (Saarbrücken 10-98)
ARTE NOVA 74321 72101-2 [70.32]
- Nos 4 & 5 Kempe/Munich PO (Munich 12-75/1-76; 5-75)
ACANTA 44 2188-2 [65.13/75.12]
- Nos 4 & 9 Dohnányi/Cleveland Orchestra (Cleveland 10-89, 10-88)
DECCA 466 339-2 [63.09/57.57]
- No. 5 Horenstein/BBC SO (London 9-71) BBC LEGENDS BBCL 4033-2 [73.18]
- Nos 5 & 7 Dohnányi/Cleveland Orchestra (Cleveland 1-91, 8-90)
DECCA 466 336-2 [73.59/64.05]
- No. 6 *Janowski/French Radio PO (Paris 4-99) ... as part of a 4-CD set
including other composers LE CHANT DU MONDE 378081.84 [54.52]
- No. 7 Chailly/Berlin RSO (Berlin 6-84) DECCA 466 574-2 [69.14]
Maazel/Berlin PO (Berlin 2-88) EMI RED LINE 573748-2 [73.48]
Klemperer/Philharmonia (London 11-60)
with Rameau Gavotte EMI CDM5-67330-2 [65.11]
*Jochum/French Nat RO (Paris 2-80) ... with Brahms Symphony No. 1
and Wagner Prelude & Liebestod INA memoir VIVE 247782 [69.35]
Rosbaud/South-West German RSO (Stuttgart 12-57)
with Mahler Das Lied von der Erde VOX CDX 25518 [63.03]
- Nos 7-9 Celibidache/Stuttgart RSO (Stuttgart 6-71, 11-76, 4-74)
with Schubert Symphony No. 5 and rehearsal extracts of Nos 7 & 8
DG 445 471-2 [66.32, 83.20, 59.18]
- No. 8 Kempe/Zurich Tonhalle Orch (Zurich 11-71) SOMM CD 016-2 [82.02]
- Nos 8 & 9 Jochum/Staatskapelle Dresden (Dresden 11-76, 1-78)
EMI CZS5 73827-2 [75.59/60.28]
- No. 9 *Barbirolli/Hallé Orchestra (London 7-66)
with Mahler Symphony No. 7 BBC LEGENDS BBCL 4034-2 [53.10]

The Rozhdestvensky recordings listed here in March are available from Yamano Music, Tokyo, at Y 3059 per pair of discs, plus postage. The fax number is 81335679056, and they accept payment by credit card. They can also supply, at Y 2380 per CD, the first six issues of a 'new' Bruckner cycle with Kegel and the Leipzig RSO, all recorded 'live'. These are Nos 3 (1978), 4 (1960, 1971), 8 (1975) and 9 (1975, 1969) on Ode Classics ODCL 1012, 1014, 1015, 1020, 1021 and 1022.

"You know, I think Bruckner must have been Welsh" — Wyn Morris

* * *

[Soon after being interviewed by Colin Anderson for this journal, the conductor Wyn Morris parted company with the New Queen's Hall Orchestra. Nonetheless, the following comments arising out of a rehearsal for Bruckner's Seventh Symphony with period instruments were thought too good to "spike". Born in 1929, Wyn Morris was trained at the Royal Academy of Music and the Salzburg Mozarteum, and was founding conductor of the Welsh Symphony Orchestra. He premiered the final revision of Deryck Cooke's performing version of Mahler's Tenth Symphony (1972) and made a pioneering recording of Bruckner's Helgoland for male chorus and orchestra]

* * *

After I had packed my tape recorder away, writes Colin Anderson, Wyn Morris came out with the above remark! A light note on which to end our conversation. But would our respect for Bruckner be sullied if there was indeed a Celtic gene in him? More pertinently, how often do we think of Bruckner's music as playful, seductive and humorous — elements which emerged in a West London rehearsal studio?

Until the end of 1998 Morris was principal conductor of the New Queen's Hall Orchestra. "It's not period instruments in the old sense. It's reviving what the original Queen's Hall Orchestra [founded by Henry Wood in 1895] was, and the kind of instruments which were used then." Morris did not intend bringing an historical perspective to the orchestra's repertoire. "It would be difficult, because one has to do things as one feels at the moment. I can't pretend I arrived here by hansom cab and everything's lit by candles." What interests Morris is that "it looks at great masterpieces from a different angle: it's viable, valid and very much to be encouraged."

John Boyden, who revived the orchestra in 1992, notes in his article 'Redressing the Balance': "modern brass instruments swamp the orchestra, leaving the woodwind and strings to harden their sound in an effort to be heard." Certainly the sound of the NQHO is warmer and mellower than we are used to. The woodwinds and brass — English- and French-made instruments — have a distinctive reedy or bronzed timbre. For the conductor, is a balance more easily achieved? "Exactly," says Morris, "it's a problem which solves itself."

Morris divides his first and second violins antiphonally, placing the double basses across the back. "The Classical composers wrote for the violins to answer each other. I think Stokowski started the fad of putting the seconds next to the firsts. You gain power but lose the antiphony. Bass is so diffuse, so it's better to get bass sound (in recording terms) coming out of both speakers."

And why does Wyn Morris conduct? "From a very early age I was drawn towards it. It happens that some critics have been generous enough to compare my conducting, at least in style, with Furtwängler's. Subconsciously that might be due to the fact that when I was a schoolboy, my father used to build short-wave radios and I listened to German

broadcasts. Those naturally contained a lot of the Berlin Philharmonic conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler." Morris also admits to having a high regard for Knappertsbusch. And why conduct Bruckner? When Wyn Morris was young, the chances of hearing a Bruckner symphony live were "almost unheard of...very rare in the concert hall". It was through those German broadcasts that Morris first heard Bruckner. "I heard the Fifth first — I think it was Furtwängler." Further exposure to the symphonies, and he became immensely attracted by them. He would love to do all the symphonies eventually.

Wyn Morris studied with George Szell and Igor Markevich. How does he remember them? "With great affection and enormous admiration. I was very privileged to study with Szell in Cleveland for about three years; that was really quite stimulating. There was never any formal teaching as such. We would discuss technical points as they came up. Markevich demanded that his pupils did exactly what he asked of them, but with a reservation: 'Now that you've learnt to do things my way, when you're on your own take what you need of my teaching and make up your own mind.' I think that was very fair."

During the rehearsal of Bruckner's Seventh, with the strings only, I jotted down some of Morris's instructions. "Don't be afraid of portamento", "molto cantabile", "stress the singing line" and "like Elgar". This last request immediately obtained a nobile style that we would recognise as Elgarian. [Elgar attended the British premiere of the Seventh Symphony conducted by Hans Richter in London on 25 May 1887. — Ed.] Much is urged upon the string players during the first movement. One second violin phrase carries with it Morris's direction to think of Tchaikovsky's song, None but the Lonely Heart. Shortly after, he's urging the firsts to be "playful".

Playful? That fits in with my belief that the Finale of the Seventh contains examples of Haydnesque wit, and that the Till Eulenspiegel-like clarinet interjections in the Finale of the Fifth might legitimately raise a smile. Does Morris feel that Bruckner displays a sense of humour? "I do! He hasn't got a reputation for humour or being light-hearted or playful, but there are moments when he's very much so."

And on the thorny issue of which edition to choose: "Ah, that's a big problem! Generally I use Nowak, but ultimately it's Bruckner who is responsible for the questionable versions. There's a very interesting article by Deryck Cooke who compares the various editions." [Cooke's 'The Bruckner Problem Simplified' was published in four instalments in The Musical Times. The revised text is included in the posthumous Vindications: Essays on Romantic Music, London 1982.] Mention of Cooke prompts thoughts of three symphonies in different states of incompleteness: Mahler's Tenth, Elgar's Third and, naturally, Bruckner's Ninth. Although Morris regards Cooke's Mahler as quite remarkable, and Anthony Payne's Elgar 'elaboration' as something we would be the poorer without, he feels that Bruckner's Finale sketches should be left alone.

At the rehearsal, I'm struck by Morris's very slow tempo and intense phrasing for the Trio of the Seventh and write "seductive" and "love song". I put this to Morris. "It's such a beautiful melody," he comments. "It's almost like a very high-class pop song...Bruckner's being himself, idiosyncratic maybe, but a joy to conduct and a joy to listen to."

THE ROYALE BRUCKNER THIRD

By Mark Kluge

HOWARD Jones in the March 2000 issue of The Bruckner Journal mentions a recording of Bruckner's Third Symphony on Allegro Royale 1579: "The performers are given as the 'Berlin Symphony Orchestra under Gerd Rubahn'; Lani Spahr identifies them as the Berlin Philharmonic under Leopold Ludwig." Since I was the source for the identification in Lani's discography, it might be of interest to describe the trail leading to that identification.

One of the long-standing mysteries of the LP record era involves the real performers on pseudonymous releases by the Royale, Gramophone, Varsity, Allegro-Elite, and related labels. It is only recently that dedicated research has managed to provide some answers. The most exhaustive investigation of this topic has been performed by Ernst Lumpe of Soest in Germany.

The detective work involved in unmasking these recordings is typified by the case of Bruckner's Third Symphony. The late Jack Diether first wrote of this recording in the 1958 issue of Chord and Discord:

Brucknerites may be as astonished as I was to learn that a deleted single LP issued by Allegro-Royale (1579) actually contained the 65 minute 1878 version intact. The recording was technically nothing to boast of, and it was performed by a conductor pseudonymously listed as 'Gerd Rubahn'. Whoever he may actually be, the gentleman here knows his Bruckner.

Diether again mentions the Royale disc in a review of Bernard Haitink's Bruckner Third recording on Philips:

It was issued some 12 years ago by Allegro-Royale and alleged to be performed by 'the Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Gerd Rubahn,' the latter being a pseudonym frequently invoked by Royale at that time. No edition was specified in the subtitles, but in 1958, while preparing a Bruckner discography for Chord and Discord, I discovered it to be in fact a recording of the 1878 version (as edited for the Brucknerverlag Wiesbaden by Fritz Oeser in 1950), even though the record annotator had unwittingly remarked that the 1890 version is the one 'which is played today'.

I was privately informed later that the conductor was 'probably Jascha Horenstein'. I can well believe it, for the performance was a more authoritative one than the present one by Haitink (though the recording was miserable, presumably originating as an aircheck), and Horenstein since has been widely touted as an outstanding interpreter of the 1878 Third. Deryck Cooke, for example, refers to the first of two recent live performances of it which he heard under Horenstein as 'a tremendous experience'. In any case, the fact that the Royale 'Rubahn' is manifestly

THE ROYALE BRUCKNER THIRD

more than one person will be evident to anyone who has heard both this recording and Royale's Mahler First of the same period. The Bruckner Third 'Rubahn' produces the most beautifully conceived and controlled of pianissimi; the Mahler First 'Rubahn' scarcely seems to know what a pianissimo is.

Ernst Lumpe raised the subject of this recording in a letter to the author in 1994. He had already established that most of the Royale performances came from pirated radio studio broadcast tapes (some made during the war by the Reichsrundfunk Gesellschaft, others recorded after the war) or postwar concerts aired by the major German radio stations: RIAS-Berlin, Radio Berlin (Eastern sector), NWDR-Hamburg, WDR-Cologne, SWF-Baden Baden, Bavarian Radio, etc. Eli Oberstein, president of the parent Record Corporation of America, operated Royale and its sister labels. Oberstein publicly admitted that many of his recordings came from a tape contact in Berlin, to whom he reportedly paid several hundred thousand dollars. Although much of his material, like the Bruckner Third, was pirated, Oberstein only ran into legal difficulties over a notorious issue of Wagner's Ring cycle. This set originated from a 1953 Bayreuth Festival broadcast, and was quickly withdrawn upon discovery.

In the case of the Royale Bruckner Third, it was apparent that the source was a live broadcast of a concert by one of the major orchestras. The fact that this performance used the seldom-heard Oeser edition of Bruckner's 1878 version of the Third suggested a promising line of investigation. The Oeser score appeared in 1950, and the Royale record bears a copyright date of 1954 (implying that the performance it contains was given no later than the beginning of that year). The question was, who had performed this version with a major German orchestra during this brief time window?

As Diether noted, Jascha Horenstein achieved a reputation in Great Britain for his advocacy of the Oeser edition in the mid-1960s. An undated BBC tape of a Horenstein performance presumably dates from that period. In addition to Cooke, Neville Cardus favorably reviewed a February 1965 Horenstein performance of the 1878 Third with the London Philharmonic.* However, Diether seems not to have pursued any hard evidence for his speculation. When Herr Lumpe and the author researched this question, no documentation of a Horenstein Bruckner Third performance surfaced from 1950-54 in any of the major Austro-German musical centers. Indeed, the only known surviving Horenstein performance from the 1950s, broadcast over Venezuela Radio in 1957, used the 1890 edition of the score. This point suggests that Horenstein embraced the 1878 edition some time **after** the Royale disc appeared.

Research revealed the prominent conductors who performed the Third in the years and locales of interest were Volkmar Andreae and Hans Knappertsbusch. Both of them consistently used the 1890 edition of the Third, which Knappertsbusch recorded for Decca/London in 1954, and Andreae recorded for Philips/Epic in 1955. Documented live performances by Knappertsbusch (Salzburg 1950, Vienna 1951, Berlin and Munich, 1954) and Andreae (Vienna and Linz, 1952) also used the familiar 1890 edition.

* reprinted in Cardus on Music: A Centenary Collection, ed. D. Wright (London 1988), 143-45

THE ROYALE BRUCKNER THIRD

Herr Lumpe then uncovered an interesting entry in Peter Muck's 100 Jahre Berliner Philharmonisches Orchester. On March 2 and 3, 1952 Leopold Ludwig conducted concert performances of the Third Symphony with the Berlin Philharmonic. The same forces then made a studio recording of the work for the RIAS radio station on March 6. The RIAS recording precluded any reason to maintain a tape from one of the live concerts. However, the performance could easily have been taped off the air when one of the original concerts was broadcast. Moreover, the reason for RIAS's interest in preserving this reading was clear: the Muck volume stated the Berlin Philharmonic and Ludwig had in fact given the première of the Oeser edition. The Ludwig broadcasts were the only German Oeser performances uncovered for the 1950-54 period of interest. Ludwig again conducted the Oeser edition in a Cologne Radio (WDR) Symphony Orchestra concert in 1956.

Leopold Ludwig, born in Moravia in 1908, was appointed conductor at the Vienna State Opera in 1939. Following the war, he served as Generalmusikdirektor of the Hamburg State Opera from 1951 to 1970. He frequently guest conducted the Berlin Philharmonic in the 1940s and 1950s. Ludwig also made several recordings with the Berlin Philharmonic that appeared on the Deutsche Grammophon and Urania labels. He recorded a wide variety of works by Mozart, Haydn, Brahms, Strauss, Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky, Massenet, Hindemith, Mahler, etc., with other orchestras. Ludwig died in 1979.

Ironically, Leopold Ludwig was also one of the many names used by Royale for their pseudonymous releases. For example, the Beethoven Egmont and Namensfeier Overtures on Royale 1380 are credited to the "Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Ludwig". In reality, these recordings were pirated from Bavarian Radio tapes, performed by the Munich Philharmonic under Robert Heger. Herr Lumpe has not yet uncovered any cases where the Royale "Leopold Ludwig" corresponds to the actual conductor. Lumpe's research also confirms that "Gerd Rubahn" on Royale represented **several** real conductors; among them are Franz Marszalek, William Schüchter, Victor Alessandro, Walter Goehr, and Clemens Krauss!

It was barely possible that another early performance of the Oeser edition of the Bruckner Third could have been used by Royale. Rafael Kubelik conducted the first performances of that edition in Holland with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra from January 27 to February 2, 1954. However, the hall sound heard on the Royale disc is considerably drier than the famed acoustic of the Concertgebouw. Neither does the orchestra feature the distinctive sound of the Dutch ensemble. Herr Lumpe has found no cases where live Concertgebouw performances were pirated by Royale. The available evidence strongly indicates that the Bruckner Third recording on Royale is one of the March 2-3, 1952 first performances of the Oeser edition, with Leopold Ludwig conducting the Berlin Philharmonic.

The story of pseudonymous Bruckner performances does not end here. Allegro-Elite issued a recording of the Fourth Symphony, identified as the "Hastings Symphony Orchestra directed by Jan Tubbs". The true performers on this album, Allegro-Elite 3106/7, have so far escaped even a speculative identification.

[On page 35 of this issue Mark Kluge writes on recordings of the Scherzo of Bruckner's Sixth.]

REFLECTIONS ON SYMPHONY No. "0" ("Die Nullte") in D minor

Completed 1869; published 1924 ed. Wöss, 1968 ed. Nowak

THIS WONDERFUL symphony seems more mature and appealing each time one hears it. It should be performed more often; its unfortunate history has held it back. Ironically, there was little help from Bruckner himself. "Symphony '0', quite invalid (only an attempt)," he wrote on the score when he showed it to his pupil August Göllerich in 1895, a year before his death. Yet instead of destroying the manuscript, he bequeathed it in his will to a museum in Linz. The designation "0" (Bruckner began numbering his symphonies when working on the official No. 3 in 1872) has probably not helped matters, either. Furthermore, there had been the symphony's rejection by the conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic, Otto Dessoff, with his comment to Bruckner at rehearsal: "Where's the first theme?" Such attitudes and comments were to have an influence upon the composer throughout his creative life.

For scholars the work's date of composition is very interesting. Although there is some uncertainty over the chronological order of the individual movements, it now seems that most of the music was written in 1869. This means that the work came after Bruckner's Symphony No. 1 in C minor. Various dates from 1869 are noted in the autograph score for each movement--but some material could be the revision of earlier work. In their biography Göllerich and Auer suggested the earlier date of 1863/64. Bruckner told Göllerich that No. "0" came from his Linz period, which ended when he moved to Vienna in October 1868. Was his memory at fault? Intriguingly, as Derek Watson remarks in his Master Musicians volume, both 1869 and Linz might be correct in the sense that Bruckner returned to Linz for his holidays! On the other hand, Bruckner's No. "0" could be taken as an indication that the work came before Symphony No. 1 from a chronological standpoint.

Among those who have favoured the year 1869 was Hans Redlich. Writing on 'Bruckner's Forgotten Symphony (No. "0")' [Music Survey ii, 1949], Redlich argued that the work could not have been composed during Bruckner's last years in Linz because of time spent on the three great Masses and because of the nervous breakdown of 1866/67. But the main clues to a later date of composition are to be found in the music itself. It inhabits a different world from that of the F minor ("Study") Symphony and the Symphony No. 1. It has a devotional aura that points forwards to Bruckner's later and greater works. In this symphony we are in an unsullied and unfallen world of beauty and refinement--and the Andante has a lovely lyricism. There is clarity and coherence, a structural subtlety which refutes any complaint about the location of themes.

How much did Bruckner underrate himself here? The first movement is masterly. The main theme, which Dessoff failed to recognise, was to supply a thematic background for the trumpet motif of the Symphony No. 3, also in D minor. There are quotations from the F minor Mass in the first movement's development and two statements from the E minor Mass in the Andante movement. The Finale quotes from the earlier Requiem in D minor and Bruckner's seven-part Ave Maria setting.

RAYMOND COX

BRUCKNER'S LATE LETTERS

by Andrea Harrandt

AFTER many years of hard work the first volume of Bruckner's correspondence was published in 1998 [see The Bruckner Journal, November 1998, p.8]. It is the first complete edition since Max Auer's and Franz Gräflinger's editions in the 1920s. Some more documents can be found in Göllerich and Auer's great biography of the composer (1922-1937), in Gräflinger's biography (1911, 2nd edition 1927) and in other books and articles.

Bruckner's correspondence is not like that of Mozart or Beethoven, Brahms or Wagner. His letters are documents of his everyday life, of struggles on behalf of his music etc. But they also provide personal glimpses. We find remarkable persons and famous names--the German writer Hans von Wolzogen, for instance--among his correspondents. Bruckner writes in the style of his time and uses different forms of salutation and conclusion depending on the religious or secular calling of the recipient.

The two-volume edition will contain about 1,000 letters altogether: letters to and from Bruckner as well as "third party" letters. Most of the material is housed in the Austrian National Library in Vienna and in the archives of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde and St Florian Abbey. The rest can be found in other Austrian archives and libraries as well as in collections in Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Great Britain, the United States and Canada. Some letters are also in private ownership. Many items went missing in the 1939-1945 war, and more letters are mentioned in the literature and in second-hand dealers' catalogues. Both Bruckner and his correspondents often mention letters which are now lost, so there is always the possibility that a letter will turn up unexpectedly in an archive or in private ownership anywhere in the world.

The first volume contains correspondence from 1852, the year of Bruckner's first surviving letter, to 1886. The first part--up to 1868--consists of letters, mostly applications and petitions, written from Upper Austria. But we also find a self-confident Bruckner, for instance in a letter to Hans von Bülow:

I was so happy to have achieved a reputation as an organist in Austria. In Vienna they called me repeatedly the best organist in Austria. [20 June 1868]

So there are always two sides to a letter: the lamenting or complaining Bruckner and the self-confident man who has faith in his own abilities.

The most personal letters are those written to Rudolf Weinwurm in Vienna. Weinwurm was a man in whom Bruckner could confide and to whom he could express his feelings. In his letters to Weinwurm from Bad Kreuzen in 1867, he gave a precise description of his illness as well as the prescribed therapy. Earlier, Weinwurm made arrangements for the composer's accommodation in Vienna while he was studying with Simon Sechter. Unfortunately a large part of the correspondence with Sechter is

BRUCKNER'S LATE LETTERS

lost; all that remain are some letters which Sechter wrote to his pupil.

With the move to Vienna in 1868 came a change in Bruckner's circle of correspondents. He maintained close contacts with his Upper Austrian roots: with his family--his sister in Vöcklabruck and brother in St Florian--and with friends in St Florian Abbey and Kremsmünster Abbey. But with the increasing success of his symphonies in the 1880s there were more contacts with conductors and journalists from outside Austria, especially in Germany--with Hermann Levi and Arthur Nikisch and, later on, with Jean Louis Nicodé, Siegfried Ochs and others. Bruckner's letters are full of details about the success or failure of his works and the opinions of critics, etc.

I want to concentrate now on the second volume, which will contain correspondence from 1887 to Bruckner's last letter in 1896. There are some remarkable findings and some hitherto unpublished documents which are worth considering here. My discussion will be confined to four topics:

1. A new source in the discussion of the Eighth Symphony

In August 1887 Bruckner finished his Eighth Symphony and then wrote to Hermann Levi in September to give him the news:

Hallelujah! At last my Eighth is finished and my artistic father has to be the first to be informed.

Levi expressed his thanks. When he studied the score, however, he was perplexed by it and had to write to Josef Schalk for help in breaking the news to Bruckner [letter of 30 September 1887. All letters cited henceforward will appear in Volume 2 of the new edition]. On October 18 Schalk wrote to Levi that his letter had "affected Bruckner badly" and that he felt unhappy, upset and desperate. Hermann Levi's letter was missing, but a copy was found by chance in his copybook [dated 7 October 1887; the copybook is in the Munich Staatsbibliothek]. In this comprehensive letter the conductor tried to explain his feelings about the score:

For more than a week I have been trying to write long letters to you. Never before has it been so difficult to find the right words to express what I wish to say to you! But finally I have to do it....

The themes are marvellous and magnificent, but their working-out seems dubious, and in my opinion the instrumentation is impossible.

Levi had reasonable doubts about the possible reaction of the orchestra and the public.

What do your Viennese friends say, then? I cannot imagine that I have suddenly lost all ability to understand your music.

He gave Bruckner the following advice:

Do not lose heart, take up your work once more, confer with

BRUCKNER'S LATE LETTERS

your friends, with Schalk; perhaps a lot can be achieved through revision....

This is what Bruckner eventually did. Levi ended his letter by saying:

Be good to me! Regard me as a fool, it does not matter to me; but don't think that my feelings towards you have changed or ever will change. In true devotion....

Bruckner wrote back four months later:

Certainly it is for me to feel ashamed--regarding the 8th Symphony. I am the fool. Now it looks quite different.

[23 February 1888]

2. Appreciation and Understanding

In the Bruckner literature we can always find stories about the lack of understanding of Bruckner's music during his life-time and the failure of his contemporaries to appreciate him. The second volume of his correspondence includes many documents which show that this was not the case.

The large number of letters Bruckner received for his 70th birthday in September 1894 provide evidence of recognition and appreciation. There are more than 200 letters from musical organisations, students, old friends from Upper Austria and admirers, together with the prince-bishop of Vienna, the mayor of Vienna, the governor of Upper Austria etc. Most of these letters have not been printed before. They are full of memories of former times, appreciation of the famous composer and recognized artist. A Viennese girl writes as "an enthusiastic worshipper of the beloved master Anton Bruckner" [Christine Brezina to Bruckner, September 1894]. An Upper Austrian friend hopes that Bruckner will remain in the service of "Frau Musica" so that "your excellent works may continue to fill the musical world with delight and admiration" [Franz Hölzlhuber, 3 September 1894]. His old friend Rudolf Weinwurm recalls the old days:

In those days you belonged to me and a few friends. But now you belong to the world, which will never tire of esteeming and admiring you....

[3 September 1894]

The greetings from the Vienna Tonkünstlerverein (Association of Composers) are of great interest. The letter is signed by Johannes Brahms, Richard Heuberger, Ignaz Brüll, Hugo Conrat and others--all names from the anti-Wagnerian faction. They write:

You can look back on a long life and think with satisfaction of the recognition and honours you have received for your serious and lofty ambitions.

[Letter dated "Wien im Oktober 1894"]

They also mention the Munich writer Paul Heyse's support of Bruckner and the "clear endorsement" of his views, as well as the admiration of students in Vienna [see Stephen Johnson's Bruckner Remembered, London 1998, p.151].

BRUCKNER'S LATE LETTERS

Different performances of Bruckner's works also resulted in enthusiastic letters from friends and admirers. After the performance of the Fourth Symphony in Vienna in January 1888, Betty von Mayfeld from Upper Austria wrote to Bruckner:

At long last our compatriots are beginning to understand your music and the critics are becoming aware of your genius!!!!!! What a miracle and illumination from above! I am full of pride that I have always recognised you and that I am sufficiently musical to understand your music and have a feeling for it. Three cheers for you, and may our Beethoven of today continue composing for a long time, so that your music will resound not only in Austria but throughout the world!!! [27 January 1888]

Karl Waldeck, an organist from Linz, wrote after the "glorious" performance of the Fourth Symphony in Linz in October 1895:

Like me, every discerning listener will be convinced anew that Anton Bruckner is the most powerful of living composers and one of the greatest composers of all time. [27 October 1895]

And the Viennese critic Theodor Helm recalled the premiere of the second version of the Eighth Symphony in Vienna in December 1892:

Sometimes I am really doubtful as to who is the greater: Bruckner the master of the symphony or Bruckner the master of church music. Let us be happy to have both. [5 January 1893]

The success of his works resulted in many invitations to concerts (e.g. in Troppau, Graslitz, Heidelberg, Mainz, Dresden and Brno) which Bruckner could not attend because of illness. His success in Berlin is corroborated in letters written by Max von Oberleithner and by the Berlin author, Gertrud Bolle. Oberleithner informed Ferdinand Löwe of the magnificent success of the Seventh Symphony, one of Bruckner's "most joyful experiences": "his work as well as his personality won him all hearts, he was received with great applause" [letter of 1 June 1891]. In contrast, Gertrud Bolle also reports the misunderstanding of the Berlin public to Franz Bayer in 1894: "Bruckner received an enthusiastic response from all pro-Germans." The response of the other listeners was not worth mentioning. There seemed to be a recognition, however, that Bruckner had not attained the position of pre-eminence he deserved: "I saw ladies weeping because they thought he had reached old age 'without being discovered'." At the end of her letter, Bolle advises Bayer that Bruckner should give up all his teaching duties and concentrate on composing:

He still possesses a youthful, almost superabundant creative power, and under no circumstances should this outpouring be disturbed. Because of this, we want to form a Bruckner Society of understanding Brucknerians. [15 January 1894, nine days after another performance of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony in Berlin]

BRUCKNER'S LATE LETTERS

The reverse side of the successful composer was the ill old man. In Bruckner's last years it was often difficult to deal with him. Letters between the two Schalk brothers provide examples. After the performance of the Mass in F minor in March 1893, Josef Schalk wrote to his brother:

Bruckner [...] gave me hell and tortured me in the final rehearsals in such a manner that there was unanimous indignation with him. It really is impossible to accomplish anything for him when he is present. The demon drives him to make the most malicious and cutting remarks. No insinuation, no insult is too low for him when he is irritated. It borders on the miraculous that I came through all these exertions unscathed. Richter, who was also aware of the situation, reprimanded Bruckner for his behaviour and finally said, half jokingly: "You should do nothing but write; you are unbearable when you're not composing!" [15 April 1893]

There is also a distressing document from Bruckner's last days. Josef wrote to Franz Schalk on 24 September 1896:

As regards Bruckner, I have very sad news. His mind is disintegrating, and the spectre of religious mania holds him ever faster in its grip. It makes a dreadful impression, and perhaps a quick end would be the best thing as recovery is out of the question. He is, however, astonishingly tenacious of his bodily health. On my last visit (before the holidays), he exchanged a few words with me, then, ignoring me completely, he desperately recited the Lord's Prayer, loudly repeating each sentence. It was hard for me to hide my distress, so I crept away. At the moment I dare not visit him; I cannot bear it, it is too terrible. Admittedly, there will be better days, but they are impossible to predict.

[English translation from S. Johnson, op.cit., p.170]

Let us turn now to a more pleasant topic!

3. Bruckner and Women

Bruckner's letters to young women are always a source of interest. In the first volume we find the only proposal of marriage which he penned during his life--to Josefina Lang [16 August 1866]. But at the same time he was also interested in other girls, and he corresponded on this subject with his friend Rudolf Weinwurm. In addition there are his letters to other girls such as Maria Bartl in Oberammergau, Marie Reinhardt and Marianne Selch.

In his later years Bruckner wrote many more letters to young women. He asked friends for addresses and more details about the girls--about their families and their financial circumstances, which seemed to be very important to him. In 1891 he wanted to marry a young Upper Austrian girl, Mina Reischl, but she wrote:

BRUCKNER'S LATE LETTERS

I am very sorry that I cannot accept your most flattering proposal. You must not blame it on my youth. I ask you not to entertain any future hopes! [16 September 1891]

They kept in touch for a few years, however. Two years later Mina wrote:

This letter does not yet bring the certain Yes, but I hope to get my parents' agreement eventually. [12 October 1893]

At the same time Bruckner was corresponding with Karl Waldeck in Linz. Waldeck was supposed to be acting as a go-between, but as an old friend he had doubts about Bruckner's plans for marriage:

....as an old acquaintance and friend I have sympathy and high esteem for you as a noble and famous man; but I cannot break a lance for you because of the age difference--in a case such as this the decisive factor is the affection of the bride, which should eliminate all other considerations. [11 November 1891]

A month later Bruckner wrote to Waldeck:

The question has to be asked: do you want to agree, or don't you? [i.e. to marry Bruckner]. Yesterday I got another letter from a girl in Berlin (18 years of age). She wants to have me at any price.... [20 December 1891]

This girl was Ida Buhz, a chambermaid at a Berlin hotel whom Bruckner met in 1891. Some people appeared to know about this "affair". Josef Leitenmaier, a friend in Kremsmünster, wrote to Bruckner:

What about Meister Bruckner's Berlin girl? When are you going to marry her? I have been told here in Kremsmünster that Dr Bruckner will be getting married! Is it true?.... [26 November 1892]

4. Reception in England and America

In Bruckner's later years there are some indications of contacts with England and the United States, but there is very little proof. In many letters Bruckner mentions performances or projected performances in London as well as New York, Boston (Massachusetts), Texas and St Louis. Someone must have written to him, perhaps a conductor like Wilhelm Gericke or Hans Richter. In 1887 he mentions that Mr Barry of London has written. But this letter from Charles Ainslie Barry, a London critic, is lost, as are all the others.

In the 1880s Bruckner received a most interesting letter. In St Florian he got to know a priest from Upper Austria who had been living in the state of Wisconsin since 1866. Bruckner probably asked the priest, whose name was Ruckengruber, to establish contacts in the United States on his behalf, and Ruckengruber duly obliged. Back in Wisconsin he wrote:

BRUCKNER'S LATE LETTERS

....Therefore I went at the first opportunity to one of the leading music businesses in Milwaukee in order to discuss your symphonies. The name of Bruckner was already well known to the owner of the music-shop.

[Letter in St Florian Abbey, Bruckner Archive V/4]

In the 19th century Milwaukee was called "German-Athens" because of the many people who came from Germany and also Austria to live in the state of Wisconsin. Of course they brought with them not only their beer but also their culture and music, including a knowledge of Bruckner. Michael Ruckengruber also wrote about the possibility of publishing or performing the symphonies in Milwaukee. But there were no performances of Bruckner's music in Milwaukee until 1897, one year after the composer's death, when the Musikverein performed his Te Deum. Ruckengruber's letter also includes information about the Doctor of Music degree in Philadelphia.

What can be learnt from this special letter? It is a very good example of how much information such a document can contain. It has prompted a study of musical life in Milwaukee in the 19th century, which was dominated by the German inhabitants. There were also close contacts between the diocese of Linz and Milwaukee. Friedrich Katzer, the third Archbishop of Milwaukee, was born in Upper Austria. This letter shows that there are probably more documents in existence in the United States and elsewhere.

Resumé

Bruckner is famous because of his music, and not for his letters. But they are very important documents because they provide glimpses of his personality, private life, habits and preferences, as well as his relationship with friends and admirers. We also obtain interesting information about the reception of his works. In this case, letters from others or third-party letters often contain more information than Bruckner's own letters. These letters also refute the frequently stated idea that his symphonies were unknown or unsuccessful during his life-time. The correspondence with the conductors of his symphonies is of interest, too.

To conclude: in order to arrive at a comprehensive biography of Bruckner as man and composer, his letters must be taken into account.

The above paper was given at the first Bruckner Journal Conference held in the Djanogly Recital Hall, University of Nottingham Arts Centre, on 10 April 1999.

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Major Schumann. In our last issue Schumann's Second Symphony, in C major, was inadvertently described as being in the key of C minor. Well spotted, Howard Jones!

1999 BRUCKNER MARATHON

As reported in our last issue, Ramón Khalona invited fellow Bruckner admirers to share in an all-day celebration of the composer's 175th birthday in Carlsbad, California. The following performance notes on the series of recordings played are reproduced here by kind permission

.....

Symphony No. 1 in C -minor

Georg-Ludwig Jochum
RIAS-Symphonie-Orchester Berlin
3/4 February 1956
Tahra 162-170
Starts at 9:00 AM



WE START off with a bit of a surprise: Eugen Jochum's younger brother Georg-Ludwig (affectionately known by some American Bruckner lovers as "Tiny"). Tiny was a phenomenal talent, having been selected among 96 contenders for the post of music director in Münster while still in his twenties. Even though he did not have the benefit of a widely known recording career, as his brother Eugen did, it is very clear from the few recordings he left us that he was a passionate interpreter and every bit as dedicated to Bruckner as his older brother. In his hands, Bruckner's First ["Linz version"] emerges as an incisive, bold and even fierce work of art. Tiny's Bruckner First is one of the most exciting on disc.

.....

Symphony in D-minor "Die Nullte"

Georg Tintner
National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland
23-25 September 1996
Naxos 8.554215-16
Starts at 10:00 AM



NO BRUCKNER MARATHON would be complete without a contribution from the one who [until October 1999] might be called the greatest living Bruckner conductor. Georg Tintner now has a complete Bruckner cycle in the can, and this cycle demonstrates that Tintner's commitment to the early Bruckner symphonies is as strong as it is to the later works. Many collectors will have bought this recording mainly because of the coupling--a fine recording of the 1887 Eighth. But in Tintner's hands, "Die Nullte" comes across as a powerful and beautiful work, not at all boring, as some conductors have made it. One might even say that it would be worth getting the two-disc set for Tintner's "Die Nullte" alone.

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Symphony No. 2 in C-minor

Carlo Maria Giulini
Wiener Symphoniker

8-10 December 1974
 EMI TOCE-3394
 Starts at 11:00 AM

GIULINI recorded a number of Bruckner symphonies in the 1970s and 1980s, and then he stopped. There are EMI recordings of the Second with the VSO and the Ninth with Chicago; later Deutsche Grammophon recordings of Symphonies Nos 7-9 are with the Vienna Philharmonic.

Giulini's recording of the Second is at this time a rarity, having only been issued on CD in Japan to the best of our knowledge. It is also a rarity in that it is the only recording in wide circulation that follows Nowak's edition exactly, including the required elimination of all passages marked "vide". (The beginning of a passage to be cut is marked "vi-" in the score, while the ending of the cut passage is marked "-de".) Fortunately, it is also a wonderful performance with somewhat leisurely tempos (although not as slow as Giulini's later VPO recordings of Nos 7-9) and soaring brass.

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Lunch at noon

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Symphony No. 3 in D-minor

Kurt Sanderling
 Gewandhausorchester Leipzig
 June 1963
 Berlin Classics 2151
 Starts at 12:30 PM



EVEN THOUGH one does not think of Kurt Sanderling as a household name when it comes to Bruckner's symphonies, he has conducted the master's music with various orchestras, and several broadcast recordings of some symphonies exist. (He has been conducting Bruckner with the Concertgebouw of late, and it is our hope that some of these performances will eventually be released.) This Leipzig Third dates from just a few years after Sanderling had returned to Germany after a lengthy residence in the USSR due to World War II. His style is grand and expansive, but never boring, and he employs a sense of phrasing that is seldom heard nowadays.

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Symphony No. 4 in E flat "Romantic"

Otto Klemperer
 Concertgebouworkest Amsterdam
 3/4 December 1947
 Tahra 328
 Starts at 1:50 PM



OTTO KLEMPERER is generally known through his recordings with London's Philharmonia, and while some of those recordings show what a great conductor he was, they are generally characterized by expansive tempi and by less incisiveness than he was capable of delivering during his earlier years. This magnificent live performance of the Fourth (made upon

Klemperer's return to Europe after the war) shows what a firebrand he could be in concert and evokes some of his bold work with the Kroll Opera in Germany during the 1930s. Klemperer's commitment to Bruckner's music was constant (indeed, he conducted it in six consecutive decades, a feat not easily surpassed); he made one of the first Bruckner recordings--the Adagio of the Eighth with the Staatskapelle Berlin in 1924--and he astonished London audiences with performances of the same symphony in 1930. This Fourth is without doubt one of the most exciting and incisive on records, and we are grateful to Tahra for making it available to Bruckner lovers worldwide. (We recently discovered that this recording has been deleted, so be sure to get your hands on it before it becomes impossible to find!)

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Symphony No. 5 in B flat

Carl Schuricht
 Wiener Philharmoniker
 24 February 1963
 Deutsche Grammophon 435332
 Starts at 3:00 PM



THE NAME of Schuricht and Bruckner are almost synonymous. His was also a constant involvement with the master's music, and there exist recordings dating back to the 1930s (a splendid Seventh with the BPO from 1938 that would surely be the subject of another Brucknerthon) to prove the point. This Fifth is, in the opinion of many, Schuricht's strongest effort, and the fact that he was well into his eighties when he made it is a testament to the inspiring and rejuvenating powers of music. Listen to his lovely phrasing and his propulsive and energetic Finale, and you will appreciate a strong Bruckner tradition that is far removed from the less personal and more uniform performances one is likely to encounter today. Although this treasurable recording is very difficult to obtain as released by DG, it is available on several Italian labels with only marginally inferior sound. [In 1992 the recording was reissued in Europe on DG CD 435321-2 as a detachable part of a 12-CD VPO commemorative set.]

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Symphony No. 6 in A

F. Charles Adler
 Wiener Symphoniker
 17 February 1952
 Tahra 239-240
 Starts at 4:30 PM



F. CHARLES ADLER is not particularly well known, but he was especially devoted to the music of Bruckner and Mahler. Like Knappertsbusch, he favored Bruckner's first printed scores, making some of his performances almost unique. His commercial recordings of Bruckner's First, Third, and Ninth as well as the Mass in D-minor and Overture in G-minor are well known by old-time Bruckner collectors. (They are not yet on CD.)

This recording of the Sixth was first published in 1998, and its existence was a pleasant surprise to a multitude of collectors. As expected, Adler

used an edition based on the first printing, making his the only known recording of this interesting score. There are numerous changes, including the repeat of the second part of the Trio and changes in dynamics and orchestration. Adler threw in some changes of his own, such as a few extra tympani rolls! This is by no means a standard run-through of the symphony. Adler chooses tempi that will appeal to those who like a fast Sixth, while at the same time giving the performance a weight that will appeal to those who like a slow Sixth.

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Dinner at 5:30

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Symphony No. 7 in E
Eduard van Beinum
Concertgebouworkest Amsterdam
May 1953
London POCL-4589
Starts at 6:00 PM



EDUARD VAN BEINUM used to say that Bruckner was his "bread and butter". He made his dēbut conducting the Concertgebouw Orchestra in 1931 with the mighty Eighth, and for nearly thirty years he went on to conduct over 150 performances of the symphonies. He made two recordings of the Seventh for Decca (one from 1947 on 78 rpms and a remake on LP in 1953, chosen here because of its superior sound). He favored a leaner and incisive approach to Bruckner: his 19-minute Adagio is one of the fastest on record, but without losing any of its grandeur. He also favors some of the dynamic tempo variations, especially in the last movement, that have been the subject of so much controversy among Bruckner scholars. In particular, listen to the way he closes the symphony by slowing down while presenting the last movement's main theme and then accelerating towards the end with a radiant display on the lower brass.

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Symphony No. 8 in C-minor
Hans Knappertsbusch
Berliner Philharmoniker
7/8 January 1951
Music & Arts 1028
Starts at 7:15 PM



HANS KNAPPERTSBUSCH left a number of recordings of Bruckner symphonies. He made commercial recordings of Symphonies Nos 3-5 (Decca) and No. 8 (Westminster). In addition there are broadcast recordings (with and without audience) that have survived. Although best known for his Wagner performances, Kna's Bruckner is not far behind.

In regard to the Eighth, there are five surviving performances. The fastest, performed by the Bavarian State Orchestra in 1955, lasts 69 minutes, while the slowest, performed by the Munich Philharmonic, lasts 85 minutes. We have chosen the more moderate BPO performance, with a duration of 77 minutes. In addition, the playing is superior to that

found in the more extreme performances. As always, Kna used the first printing, which contains many dubious changes. But some of the dynamic changes are exquisite, especially in the Adagio. This is a beautiful and unique performance of this great symphony.

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Symphony No. 9 in D-minor (Movements 1-3)
 Wilhelm Furtwängler
 Berliner Philharmoniker
 7 October 1944
 Deutsche Grammophon POCG-2347
 Starts at 8:50 PM



THIS is probably Furtwängler's most intense Bruckner recording and it is no surprise that it was made during wartime. It is also his only surviving recording of the Ninth, but what a Ninth it is! It embodies all the tension and stirring sense of cataclysm that any good performance of this symphony should have, and it represents, as well as any Furtwängler recording, his almost mythical approach to Bruckner.

Finale, completed by Samale, Phillips, Mazzuca, Cohrs
 Johannes Wildner
 Neue Philharmonie Westfalen
 20-21 April & 5 May 1998
 SonArte 13
 Starts at 9:50 PM



Finale, completed by William Carragan
 Hubert Soudant
 Utrechts Symphonie Orkest
 16 April 1985
 Private issue CD
 Starts at 10:15 PM



SINCE performances of the Finale are still a rarity, we choose to end our party with two performances, neither of which has yet received wide circulation. But given the similar tempos of the two, it is much easier to evaluate the relative merits of the two completions we present. The first of these is by Samale, Phillips, Mazzuca, and Cohrs. Johannes Wildner is an unfamiliar name when it comes to conducting Bruckner, but this is probably due more to his youth than to his abilities. His is a name to look for in the future. He delivers a performance which is much more fiery than the more familiar, but still excellent, recording by Eichhorn.

The second completion is by Carragan, conducted by Hubert Soudant. Again, Soudant is not particularly familiar as a Bruckner conductor, but in addition to this Ninth we have heard an outstanding recording of the Volksfest Finale to the Fourth. Soudant conducted the complete Bruckner Ninth at the penultimate concert of the Utrecht Symphony Orchestra. We find this performance much more convincing than the performance of the same completion under Yoav Talmi.

F e e d b a c k

DAVID ALDEBORGH writes from Poughkeepsie, New York:

I wish to express my sincere thanks to The Bruckner Journal for publishing my paper "Franz Schalk and Bruckner's Fifth Symphony", albeit in a highly edited version. I curiously feel as if I have been somewhat "schalked", so to speak, what with your extensive abridgments (cuts) and occasional re-wordings (orchestration). For example, you consistently replaced my "with respect to" with "in respect of", this latter being (I presume) the more British idiom. Nonetheless, I find the result highly satisfactory and a compliment to your editing skills. Whether or not Bruckner would have reacted as positively to Schalk's editing must remain the unanswered question.

I must also thank Dermot Gault and Peter Palmer for their in-depth, detailed and thoughtful critiques of my defense of the Schalk edition. In my advocacy of that version, I failed to make clear that it is not my position that it should ever displace the original version in the concert repertory, but rather that it not be frozen out by a fundamentalist attitude which fails to recognize its important place in the history of Bruckner performance, as well as its aesthetic worth as an orchestral masterpiece--a worth which, in my view, goes considerably beyond that of "a well-furnished purgatory", to use Mr. Palmer's delicious metaphor.

Again my thanks for printing my paper.

[THE ABOVE LETTER HAS NOT BEEN EDITED FOR PUBLICATION--ED.]

* * *

DAVID COLEMAN of Kensington (London) writes:

In response to the comprehensive articles on the Fifth Symphony in the March 2000 issue, I'm sure both Gustav Mahlen and Franz Schalk had sincere intentions in revising the Symphony, in trying to make Bruckner's works more palatable and understandable for the general public (not to my personal taste though!).

Also, to say that Bruckner's works are "cold and unfriendly", I think is a compliment. Surely one of the endearing qualities of this music is the mysterious, rather withdrawn feel to it (especially Symphonies Nos 3, 4, 8 and 9 and Te Deum).

* * *

MICHAEL PIPER of Leamington Spa (Warwickshire) writes:

Having discovered the Bruckner Journal by chance may I say how very pleased I am with this invaluable find. Until now I have been pursuing my passion for Bruckner Symphonies in some isolation. It is comforting to know that there is a fraternity [and sonority? - Ed.] out there who share my enthusiasm. So a very big thank you for producing the Bruckner Journal.

May I also thank Robert Wardell in Viewpoint, March 1999 for drawing my

F e e d b a c k

attention to the Schalk 5th conducted by Botstein. I had to go out and buy it straightaway. The March 2000 edition of the Journal contains much technical analysis for and against the Schalk. I recorded my 'everyman's' impressions on first hearing it as "What a harsh racing pace!", "Not Bruckner as I love it", and "OK if you need to catch an early train". It may not be an alternative to the pure staple Fifth but it is exciting and provides many shortcuts for the listener impatient with the long waits between crescendos and climaxes. I enjoyed it as a stand alone experience, a sort of "Bruckner Goes to Hollywood" version, full of bangs and bright lights. I have found that only Furtwängler's frenetic 1942 (full) live recording comes anywhere near this.

* * *

GERRY ROBELLO writes from Wilmslow (Cheshire):

Sometime in 1990 I tuned in to BBC Radio 3 for a live broadcast of a concert (which I taped) given in Glasgow's then brand new Royal Concert Hall by the Concertgebouw Orchestra under Riccardo Chailly, the main work on offer being my beloved Bruckner 5. At the time I tended, on reflection, to have a fixed idea of how a symphony by this composer (from No. 3 onwards) should be performed. A slow tread appeared to me the best way of demonstrating to the listener the sheer grandeur and majesty of sound that Bruckner surely intended, and when Chailly and his players adopted this approach with some emphasis in the wonderful closing bars, I remember nodding with satisfaction: 'Now, **that** is the way to play Bruckner!'

Several years later, returning home by train from a Proms concert in London (Bruckner, of course), I settled down with my portable CD player to listen to Furtwängler's wartime (1942) performance of the Fifth with the BPO. I had just purchased the disc in the city more out of political curiosity than any expectation that it would teach me anything about the great work. How wrong can one be! Furtwängler launches into the last movement at breathtaking speed which actually increases into the coda, creating an overwhelmingly triumphant and successful conclusion.

Sometime later I re-played the Chailly performance and, to my astonishment, found it comparatively dull and uninspiring. Surely the lesson here is that there need not be any "definitive" Bruckner interpretation, and sometimes "fast" Bruckner can work. Mind you, it mostly doesn't, as anyone who purchased Franz Welser-Möst's disastrous Proms video of No. 7 will surely testify. Nevertheless, while some interpretations obviously fail, it does not follow that there must be a single correct one lurking somewhere.

I am now inclined to the view that all those versions and interpretations are not the problem they are cracked up to be, but rather an opportunity for all true Brucknerians to continue and expand their musical labour of love.

* * *

F e e d b a c k

MARK KLUGE writes from La Grange, Illinois:

An item by Howard Jones in the November 1999 issue discusses the relative timings of Henry Swoboda (Westminster LP, recorded 1950) and F. Charles Adler (Tahra CD, recorded 1952) in the Schenzo of Bruckner's Sixth. Mr. Jones refers to Adler as "slower", which will come as a surprise to those who know these two recordings. The timing is indeed longer (10:38 vs 10:01), but not one reviewer of the Adler recording seems to have noticed that the second part of the Trio is repeated. With the additional 1:32 of the repeat accounted for, Adler's timing for the conventional Schenzo text becomes 9:06. In terms of actual tempo in the Schenzo proper, Adler is rather broad at about 100 beats per minute, but Swoboda conducts it at an astonishing 88.

The added repeat is a feature only in the 1899 first edition published by Doblinger (later Universal Edition). Tahra's issue for some reason refers to this as the "Loewe" edition. It was Cyril Hynais, not Ferdinand Loewe, who worked with Bruckner before the composer's death to prepare the copy score ultimately used as the printer's copy. Leopold Nowak wrote that the copy was essentially the same as the manuscript, indicating the minor changes heard in the first publication were added at the proof stage (presumably by Hynais). Nevertheless, it would be nice to know definitively whether the added repeat was even endorsed by Bruckner.

* * *

BOB WARDELL of Thornton-Le-Dale (Nth Yorks) writes:

May I thank you for hosting the Sheffield Afternoon? It is always nice to be among fellow-enthusiasts and I much enjoyed what was on offer. It was a great idea to play the new, and largely unknown, completion of the Ninth by a 'committee of four'. I personally thought the completion was better than the Carragan version on Chandos. There is still an awful lot of second-guessing, of course: the reintroduction of the symphony's opening theme for instance. That section sounded tentative. The Hallelujah was very convincing at the end, made my hair stand on end, and it made up for what I thought were long passages of note-spinning.

Some completions work very well: Denryck Cooke's Mahler Tenth, the Mozart Requiem, Puccini's 'Turandot', even Sullivan's 'Emerald Isle' completed by Edward German is very acceptable. Others do not fare so well: Schubert's 'Unfinished' by Newbould does not work for me, nor Beethoven's 'Tenth', and I don't think any of the Bruckner Ninths will. By all means record what is left, as isolated chunks, for the Brucknerians, but it will never become accepted in the concert hall.

Your minor coup: inviting us to guess the orchestra in the last section of the slow movement of the Ninth was great fun, complete with tubular bells if you please! The orchestral sound was a bit odd, but some recordings sound odd anyway. Then the astute young man who is going to review the above-mentioned 'completion' guessed that it was an electronic simulation. Four (FOUR if you please!) keyboards playing the whole of the Ninth! As a tourist once said when I was a guide explaining the workings of a sundial at Windsor Castle: 'What will they think of next!'

C a l e n d a r

READERS are cordially invited to a meeting hosted by The Bruckner Journal at the Austrian Cultural Institute, 28 Rutland Gate, London (Tube: Knightsbridge) from 2.15pm on **Saturday, 30 September**. The editors look forward to greeting a few familiar faces and many new ones. John Boyden, former record producer and now artistic director of the New Queen's Hall Orchestra, will talk about changes in the orchestra since Bruckner's day. An open discussion will follow, and admission is free.

Our second all-day conference at the University of Nottingham Arts Centre will be held on **Saturday 7 April 2001**.

LEIPZIG. Herbert Blomstedt is to conduct the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra in Bruckner's Ninth Symphony on 25 July.

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL. Bruckner's Fourth Symphony will be performed on 15 August by the Cleveland Orchestra under Christoph von Dohnányi. Iván Fischer conducts the Budapest Festival Orchestra in No. "0" on 21 August; Günter Wand and the North German RSO will give Bruckner's Eighth on 2 September.

LONDON BBC PROMS. Iván Fischer will conduct the Budapest Festival Orchestra in Bruckner's Third (1889) at the Royal Albert Hall on 25 August. Claudio Abbado and the Berlin Philharmonic give the Seventh Symphony on 28 August.

LUCERNE FESTIVAL. Abbado and the BPO will perform Bruckner's Seventh on 1 September; Zubin Mehta will conduct the Vienna Philharmonic in No. 8 on 16 September.

Donations. Donations are gratefully acknowledged from Colin Anderson, G. Banks, Roger Bullock, Howard Jones, Dr Thomas Röder, Dr Derek Scott, Dr R.K. Smith, Mitsuru Suda, Elizabeth Thompson and David Wilson.

J o t t i n g s

HOLLAND. Sir Simon Rattle conducted the Rotterdam Philharmonic in Bruckner's Fourth in Utrecht, Rotterdam and Amsterdam between 10-13 February.

Paul Coones spoke on "Country bumpkin or tormented genius? The strange case of Anton Bruckner and the musical sublime" at Hertford College, Oxford on 23 February.

LOS ANGELES. Franz Welser-Möst and the Los Angeles Philharmonic gave three performances of Bruckner's Sixth in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion between 10-12 March. Coincidentally, Bruckner's Ninth was played by the Young Musicians Foundation Debut Orchestra under Wilson Hermanto in the Wilshire-Ebell Theatre on 12 March.

SWITZERLAND. During the Easter conference of the Anthroposophical Society, Bruckner's Ninth was given (20 April) by the Philharmonic Orchestra of Rheinland-Pfalz under Theodor Guschlbauer at the Goetheanum, Dornach.

BELGIUM. Philippe Herreweghe conducted the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra of Flanders in Bruckner's Fourth in Brussels and Antwerp on 4 and 5 May.

Geoffrey Duggan gave an illustrated talk on the music of Bruckner at the Birmingham and Midland Institute (GB) on 8 May.

Bruckner's music figured in a concert given by THE SAINT THOMAS CHOIR OF MEN AND BOYS, NEW YORK CITY, at St John's, Smith Square, London on 12 June.

The Greenwood Press (USA) has published The Wind and Wind-Chorus Music of Anton Bruckner by Keith William Kinder.

Benjamin Korstvedt's monograph on Bruckner: Symphony No. 8 from the Cambridge University Press will be reviewed in our next issue.

Tony Luker seeks information on an LP of Bruckner's Seventh conducted by Paul Hindemith; the copy he heard had a damaged finale.