

BRUCKNER * SYMPHONY No. 9

stereo

SCHURICHT * V.P.O.

Bruckner
Symphony
No. 9



Carl
Schuricht
Vienna
Philharmonic
Orchestra

Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)

SYMPHONY No.9 in D MINOR

(Original version)

CARL SCHURICHT conducting the **VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA**

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END PAGE TWO

- Band 1 - 2nd movement:
Scherzo (Ragel, Schlegel) & Tale (Schlegel)
- Band 2 - 3rd movement:
Adagio (Langson, Schlegel)

Receiving first published 1991

SHEDDING BOLD-CONSTRUCTIVE was Beethoven's description of Bruckner's symphonies, and this was by no means the unadmitted child sold about three during the last century. Even today some consider these were notable mainly for their length. But what is length to music? A piece lasting for only a few moments can be over-long, whereas one taking a substantial time can prove to be a masterpiece. The music of Bruckner is a case in point. In the case of Bruckner a good argument can be made not for his symphonies being too short. Their unusual, contrary to a widely held view, is often very compressed. The first movement of the ninth, even though it lasts almost an hour, is an excellent example of this, for here the development and recapitulation sections, and even to some extent the coda, are compressed into a few minutes. The second movement of the same symphony, which is a movement not even heard extended by seven or eight minutes at least.

sthetic creation. The sketches that Bruckner left for it, although substantial, are not sufficiently advanced to be completed by another hand. When the composer realized that he might not live to finish the work, he suggested that his *Te Deum* could be used to a conclusion. The idea has been tried but is in no way proved satisfactory, whereas as the symphony now stands it forms a completely satisfactory whole.

It was first performed in 1905, seven years after the composer's death, under the direction of Ferdinand Löhr, who also prepared it for publication in the same year. Unfortunately Löhr made numerous alterations, watering down Bruckner's more striking harmonic innovations and even adding some bars of his own. It was not until 1954 that Bruckner's original appeared in print. Since then it has rightly ousted Löhr's misdeeds but well-intentioned revision. The work is scored for triple woodwind, eight horns (four of them changing to Wagner tubas for the third movement), three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani and strings.

The first monument's expansion fills some three groups of thurnes. Some of these grew out of such other, while others provide a strong contrast. As no other, Bruckner starts with a pedal on the key note, but the first idea, where it arrives shortly afterwards on the eighth notes, reflects the key of D minor. So, too, does the second idea, which appears in the next group of thurnes being quickly stated by the first violin. Next the woodwind introduce a theme, a predominant feature of which is the fall of an octave. The full orchestral situation at this, giving rest, is a dominating unique element, the last piece of material in the first group of themes.

There follows a bridge passage (*pizzicato* violins and cello) with woodwind interjections leading to the second group. In contrast to the dramatic nature of the first group, this section has a more lyrical character. The thurner actor in this section, The third group begins with a subtle drama shared by the string line in escape-

followed by another in similar vein and given on the same instruments. After these have been worked up to a fair-sized chunk the tension subsides, paving the way for the development. Here the themes at first reappear in the same order as before, but then comes the surprise of the development and the recapitulation.

The Scherzo is one of the most original pieces of music that Brahms ever composed. Indeed one might go further and say that it is the most advanced Scherzo written before the twentieth century. Some of the chords and flamboyant suspensions remind us of Liszt's Scherzo. Such chords are not the result of uncontrolled port writing, as it is quite clear that the movements of the arms and legs, almost all the theoretical material consists of recognizable rhythmic patterns, stamping notes, sometimes not. In addition the movements have a degree of rhythmic energy comparable to early Liszt or even Stravinsky. Great demands are made on the string players' ability to play pizzicato as usual. The Trio, with its two contrabass subjects, is light-hearted by comparison and trips along at great speed. It has been said that Brahms was a simple person who did not like to show off. The Scherzo is one of the few pieces in which he does.

Bruckner wrote no more deeply-felt music than this third movement, in which much use is made of the subtle contrast of tone colour between horns and Wagner tubs. The movement begins in an clearly defined sonata with a theme whose wide leaps create great emotional intensity. The basic material is less capricious here than in the first movement, there being only two thematic groups. In place of a third the quaking *trout* returns in inversion, in which form it loses nothing of its original expressive quality. Unusually, the whole of the development section falls into four bars. There is an recapitulation, its place being taken by a substantial coda that brings the symphony to a conclusion unsurpassed in serenity.

Note 42: Melrose, November, 1962. MALCOLM SATHCHEL

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Symphony No. 9 in D Minor (ed. Nowak)

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| 1. I. Feierlich. Misterioso | 25.37 |
| 2. II. Scherzo: Bewegt, lebhaft - Trio: Schnell | 10.28 |
| 3. III. Adagio: Langsam, feierlich | 20.17 |

Wiener Philharmoniker

CARL SCHURICHT

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