

The ElectroMusik recording of the Andante from the Bruckner Symphony No. 4

After several years of searching, The Bruckner Archive has now acquired a digital copy of a very rare and mysterious recording. It is the ElectroMusik four disc 78 rpm set containing the second movement from Bruckner's Symphony No. 4. The recording was never mentioned in the otherwise very complete *World Encyclopedia of Recorded Music* that was published in 1951. Here are the details:

Großes Orchester (no conductor)

matrix 0587 4. (romantische) Symphonie (A. Bruckner)

2. Satz I order number 5037 (4'35")

matrix 0588 4. (romantische) Symphonie (A. Bruckner)

2. Satz II order number 5037 (4'22")

matrix 0589 4. (romantische) Symphonie (A. Bruckner)

2. Satz III order number 5038 (4'18")

matrix 0590 4. (romantische) Symphonie (A. Bruckner)

2. Satz IV order number 5038 (3'42") (Total time: 16'37")

Based on these matrix numbers, this recording was made in September of 1934. The labels offer no information about the performers. It was assumed for a while that the performers were the Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Emil Kahn. Both had a long association with the ElectroMusic and Elton labels in Germany.



Emil Kahn conducting the Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra

On his own, Emil Kahn had an interesting history. He was born in Frankfurt am Main on November 10, 1896. He began his career as a conductor in Stuttgart in 1925 at the "Neues Lichtspieltheater" and later became conductor of the Stuttgart Philharmonic, which at the time was a private orchestra. This orchestra was often contracted by Süddeutsche Rundfunk AG (SÜRAG—now SWR) on an individual fee basis. Around 1927, Kahn became the part-time music director of SÜRAG. He held that position until June 30, 1933 when SÜRAG terminated the employment relationship as a "precautionary measure" because Kahn was Jewish.

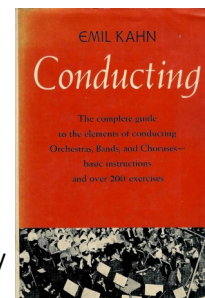


Emil Kahn (1896-1985)

When the Albert Ebner company entered the record business, Emil Kahn was commissioned to put together a band for dance music recordings, which he formed from members of the Stuttgart Philharmonic. This then played as the Elton Dance Orchestra, the Fredy Linter Orchestra and the Stuttgart Philharmonic Dance Band. These recordings also showed up on records from the ElectroMusik-GmbH, located in Vaihingen auf den Fildern, an outer district of Stuttgart. While it is unlikely that Emil Kahn was the conductor for this recording of the Bruckner, he was probably involved with the project and had conducted other classical works for the label in addition to his dance music recordings.

Mr. Kahn left Germany in 1933 and emigrated to the United States in 1935. He accepted a position as music instructor and orchestra conductor at Montclair State Teachers College (now Montclair State University) in New Jersey. He retired from the university in 1970 and was named Professor Emeritus in June of 1977.

In addition to his teaching duties, Mr. Kahn led the Senior Orchestra of New York for 13 years. His last appearance as conductor was at Carnegie Hall in May, 1983. Orchestras for which he guest conducted included the Vienna Philharmonic, the London Symphony, and the N.B.C. Orchestra. He was, in 1945 and 1946, musical director for the Ballet Russe. He was also conductor for the Music Minus One series of recordings. For that label, he recorded sections of the first movement of Bruckner's Symphony No. 3 for students of the trumpet (MMO 3806), The listed orchestra was the Stuttgart Festival Orchestra but it was probably members of the Stuttgart Philharmonic.



He wrote the book, "Conducting," while teaching at Montclair State. It was published by the Free Press in January of 1965 and soon became a standard text in its field.

Emil Kahn died of natural causes at his home on Manhattan's Upper West Side on January 24, 1985. He was 88 years old.

The Stuttgart Philharmonic was re-organized during the years that the National Socialists were in power. Many members of the ensemble also sought employment at either the Orchester des Reichssenders Stuttgart or continued to work as the "Landesorchester Gau Württemberg-Hohenzollern." Probably one of these three orchestras made the ElectroMusik recording or an ensemble was created by hiring individual players. The Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra remains active to this day and still holds performances at the Gustav Siegle House, its first home and probably the venue for this recording.

It is interesting to note that another separate recording of the Bruckner Fourth exists that was performed by the Orchester des Reichssenders Stuttgart. It was conducted by Adolf Mennerich (1902-1966) (Deutsche Rundfunkarchiv # 193-1357). The recording was made on July 30, 1936—less than a year after the ElectroMusik recording. While the musical approach is quite similar, it is clearly not the same recording.

As of this writing, this is the closest that we have come to identifying the performers on the ElectroMusik recording.

CONDUCTOR



EMIL KAHN.

STATE COLLEGE NAMES EUROPEAN CONDUCTOR

Emil Kahn of Stuttgart Is Coming to Montclair.

Emil Kahn, former conductor of the Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra and musical director of the Stuttgart Radio Station, Stuttgart, Germany, has been appointed conductor of the Montclair State Teachers College Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Kahn is a man of broad musical experience. In addition to his musical activities in Germany he has appeared as guest conductor with symphony orchestras in Holland, France, England and Cuba.

Mr. Kahn has also been active in the field of choral music. He directed the recording of a series of Gregorian chorals sung by the choir of the International Papal College of Benedictines in Rome. The recording was made especially for the Pope and is said to be one of the finest recordings of choral music ever made.

The State Teachers College Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Mr. Kahn, will give its first concert of the season on Thursday evening, Nov. 19, in the college auditorium.



ABOVE: The four disc 78 rpm set

LEFT: Article from the Montclair Times. October 9, 1936

BELOW: The Gustav Siegle House in Stuttgart. A picture taken in 1930 of the the Stuttgart Philharmonic's concert hall around the time that the Bruckner recording was made.

