



TESTAMENT

NEW RELEASE

Previously unpublished



Compact disc 1	77.28
Anton Bruckner 1824-1896	
□-4 Symphony No.5 in B flat	
Compact disc 2	28.16
Franz Schubert 1797-1828	
□-2 Symphony No.8 in B minor, D.759 <i>Unfinished</i>	
New Philharmonia Orchestra	
Conducted by Otto Klemperer	



SBT2 1485
2 CDs at a reduced price
Release Date:
February 2013

No less an interpreter of Bruckner than Günter Wand once called the Fifth Symphony 'the most perplexing work in the composer's canon'. Under Otto Klemperer performances of the Symphony (which he had substantially to relearn when the new Robert Haas edition restored a 122-bar cut in the finale) were always something of an event, even if audiences outside Austria and Germany – especially American ones in the late 1930s, and Walter Legge in the 1950s – at first found the work something of a trial.

Klemperer first conducted the Symphony in June 1927, in his last days as general music director at the Wiesbaden Opera. He repeated this programme in October 1932 when he had become sole director of the Berlin Staatskapelle concerts, ignoring a request from Furtwängler to substitute another symphony to avoid duplication with the Berlin Philharmonic later in the season. Enthusiastic reviews preferred Klemperer's 'sharper outlines and clear, cooler light' to Furtwängler's 'essentially romantic' approach. The *Berliner Börsen Courier* found that 'Klemperer gave the enormous Symphony all the splendour of colour, the pathos, the hymn-like fervour it calls for. The structure was entirely

clear, never before has one experienced the intellectual unity of the finale so strongly... precisely because Klemperer never exaggerated... everything was contained by a calm that comes with complete maturity'. It was Furtwängler who had to change his programme that season.

This is now the ninth performance of a Klemperer Schubert *Unfinished* to be preserved. It follows an early 1924 studio version with the Berlin Staatskapelle (one of Klemperer's first discs), the EMI Philharmonia recording of 1963, and 'live' performances in Budapest, Turin, Jerusalem, Munich, Vienna and London (the last two also available on Testament). The Symphony was always a Klemperer favourite and one which responded well to his characteristic forward woodwind balance... .

Klemperer's choice of the Symphony to open the programme for Bruckner's Fifth made for a less abrasive, perhaps more relevant start to the concert than the Beethoven and Mahler he would have preferred before the war.

Excerpts from the booklet note: © Mike Ashman, 2012

TESTAMENT

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