

My introduction to the Music of Anton Bruckner

My interest in classical symphonic music started in high school when I first noticed some of the wonderful scores that accompanied many of the great movies of that time. These were soundtrack scores by Miklos Rosza , Dimitri Tiomkin and Jerry Goldsmith, just to name a few.

My mother was the one who suggested that I try some Tchaikovsky and the jump into classical music was quickly made.

My exposure to the classics was via record purchases at a local record store which primarily stocked Columbia and RCA releases. Much of what I listened to came from recordings made by Leonard Bernstein and Eugene Ormandy – not much Bruckner there...

It was in college when, as a freshman, I decided that the best place to study was not the dormitory, but the music room in the library. Here was an opportunity to listen to lots of different music while reading my textbook assignments.

I started working through the library collection and soon ran into the recently released DG set of Bruckner symphonies conducted by Eugen Jochum. The attraction was immediate and deep. It began with the First Symphony and kept right on going. I was thoroughly hooked.

I was taking a music appreciation course that semester and I pumped my professor for so much information that by the time the class was to learn about Bruckner, he suggested that I teach the class, which I did. I wish I had recorded the lecture. I suspect that I would disapprove of much of what I had said.

As for concerts, two come to mind: One was with Eugen Jochum (my God at the time) conducting the Bruckner Symphony No. 5 with the American Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, and the other was in Helsinki when Carlo Maria Giulini conducted the Vienna Symphony Orchestra in the Bruckner Symphony No. 2.

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