

I first heard of Anton Bruckner and his music during my college days as a music major at Illinois Wesleyan University, 1956-1960. However, I had no opportunity to hear any Bruckner because, for other students or faculty, he was not very high on the interest list. My curiosity was further piqued upon dipping into a book by the music critic Deems Taylor, *Of Men and Music*, which panned both Bruckner and Mahler. In summary, he claimed that Bruckner had something to say but didn't know how to say it, while Mahler had nothing to say though he could say it very well. Not having heard much Mahler either, I wondered why he had reached this conclusion. (How our opinions have changed over the decades!)

In those days there was no classical FM station serving our central Illinois city, but late at night one could sometimes pick up a distant AM station. One late evening I was lying on the couch listening to a broadcast from Dallas, Texas, and they played Bruckner's Third from the London recording of Knappertsbusch with the Vienna Philharmonic. The haunting strains from afar hooked me on Bruckner, and I ordered the disc from the local music store. I began to go in search of other records -- mono, of course, in those days, for \$4.98. My second Bruckner recording was the Fourth Symphony, on the Vox label (with, I believe, Klemperer). From then on I began the gradual acquisition of all the symphonies -- the early, unnumbered ones being the last to come along -- and now have multiple versions of all of them. But I think the Third is still my favorite.

Dr. Richard Leonard