

Hi John,

A few idle thoughts about Bruckner, from my perspective:

I find Bruckner's sound world and thematic material entirely compelling. I am hugely appreciative of the efforts the musicological fraternity have devoted to Bruckner. "Clean", authentic editions are important. However, the merits of any performance, regardless of edition, outweigh, for me, any editorial consideration. This likely makes me a troglodyte.

My favored editions, when given a choice, are:

#1 Linz (1877 version), although the 1891 Vienna is intriguing (almost a different symphony) as Bruckner rethinks in his dotage

#2 Carragan has done an extraordinary service here. I prefer the inspiration of the horn sonority over that of the clarinet at the end of the Adagio.

#3 the 1878 (Oeser edition). I find the 1889-90 Nowak a bit too sane.

#4 Haas or Nowak

#5 little difference

#6 little difference

#7 Haas. The climax of the slow movement doesn't require an unsubtle smack to the head to make its effect

#8 Haas, despite it's being an amalgam

#9 little difference

My five (5) introductory, seminal recordings were, in no particular order:

1. Rosbaud SWGRO #7 (TURNABOUT)
2. Keilberth BPO #6 (TELEFUNKEN)
3. Schuricht VPO #8 (EMI)
4. Klemperer PHILHARMONIA #4 (EMI)
5. Mehta VPO #9 (DECCA)

The live Montreal Symphony Orchestra performances which galvanized my interest all took place in Montreal in Salle Wilfrid Pelletier, Place des Arts:

1. Decker #9
2. de Waart #6
3. Leitner #9
4. Herbig #8
5. Decker #7

I also owe a considerable debt to Deryck Cooke's Gramophone reviews, and to Hans-Hubert Schoenzeler's and Robert Simpson's respective books on Bruckner, all of which began with a healthy respect for Bruckner's achievement without the habitual patronization so characteristic of the period.

Best regards,

Neil Raymond