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BRUCKNER SYMPHONY No. 4 IN E FLAT

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Anton Bruckner's **Symphony No. 4 in E-flat major** (WAB 104) is one of the composer's most popular works. It was written in 1874 and revised several times through 1888. It was dedicated to Prince Konstantin of Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst. It was premiered in 1881 by Hans Richter in Vienna with great success. (In a well-known and amusing story that illustrates Bruckner's good-natured naivety, the composer gave a coin to the aristocratic conductor after a successful rehearsal and told him to buy himself a beer.)

The symphony's nickname of *Romantic* was used by the composer himself; however it does not refer to the modern conception of romantic love but rather the medieval romance as depicted in the operas *Lohengrin* and *Siegfried* of Richard Wagner.

There exists much evidence that Bruckner had a program in mind for the Fourth Symphony. In a letter to conductor Hermann Levi of 8 December 1884, Bruckner wrote: *In the first movement after a full night's sleep the day is announced by the horn, 2nd movement song, 3rd movement hunting trio, musical entertainment of the hunters in the wood.*

There is a similar passage in a letter from the composer to Paul Heyse of 22 December 1890: *In the first movement of the "Romantic" Fourth Symphony the intention is to depict the horn that proclaims the day from the town hall! Then life goes on; in the Gesangsperiode [the second subject] the theme is the song of the great tit Zazipe. 2nd movement: song, prayer, serenade. 3rd: hunt and in the Trio how a barrel-organ plays during the midday meal in the forest.*

The autograph of the Scherzo and Finale of the 1878 version of the symphony contains markings such as *Jagdthema* (hunting theme), *Tanzweise während der Mahlzeit auf der Jagd* (dance tune during the lunch break while hunting) and *Volksfest* (people's festival). In addition to these clues that come directly from Bruckner, the musicologist Theodor Helm communicated a more detailed account reported via the composer's associate Bernhard Deubler:

Mediaeval city -- Daybreak -- Morning calls sound from the city towers -- the gates open -- On proud horses the knights burst out into the open, the magic of nature envelops them -- forest murmurs -- bird song -- and so the Romantic picture develops further...

There does not seem to be any clear hint of a program for the third version (1880) of the symphony's finale.

These notes and more can be found at Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symphony_No._4_\(Bruckner\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symphony_No._4_(Bruckner))

Full scores for the Symphony are available for free download at The International Music Score Library Project: <http://imslp.org>

Restoration notes

My main aims with this recording were two-fold. First and foremost the sound, although clear for its age, suffered from quite a hard 'edge' and as a result a certain flatness or lack of dimension. I suspected rightly that this would be alleviated by XR remastering as it would almost certainly have been caused by an uneven frequency response in the recording equipment (most probably the microphone) rather than any shortcomings in the tape medium itself. Thus by correcting the frequency response as a part of the XR process I was able to solve this hardness, as well as extending the previously-constricted bottom end of the recording. The effect is to open out the whole recording and give a real sense of air and space around the instruments, something further experienced in our Ambient Stereo version.

The second issue anyone listening to this recording would surely have with it in its original form would be the almost constant intrusion from audience coughs and other noises. It seemed the good people of Stuttgart were having a particularly bronchial evening during this concert, especially during the quieter sections, and I've worked hard to either eliminate completely or reduce considerably hundreds of these unwanted interruptions. Unfortunately not all could be excised without risking damage to the musical content - thus you will not hear a completely cough-free performance, but certainly a much quieter audience than was actually the case on the night in question. **AR**

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM

SARL Pristine Audio, Le Bourg, 24610 St. Méard de Gurçon, France - Tel. (00) 33 553 821857
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BRUCKNER SYMPHONY No 4 IN E FLAT "ROMANTIC"

WILHELM
FURTWÄNGLER
CONDUCTING THE
VIENNA PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA

LIVE IN STUTTGART

22ND OCTOBER, 1951

Furtwängler conducts Bruckner

BRUCKNER Symphony No. 4, 'Romantic' in E flat major, WAB104

(1889/1890 First Edition)

- 1 1st mvt. - Bewegt, nicht zu schnell (17:37)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Andante, quasi allegretto (18:09)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Scherzo. Bewegt - Trio: Nicht zu schnell (10:30)
- 4 4th mvt. - Finale: Bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell (19:13)

Recorded live in Stuttgart, 22nd October, 1951

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler



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XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of **Willem Furtwängler**

Total duration: **65:29**

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