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Horenstein

Bruckner: Symphony No. 6

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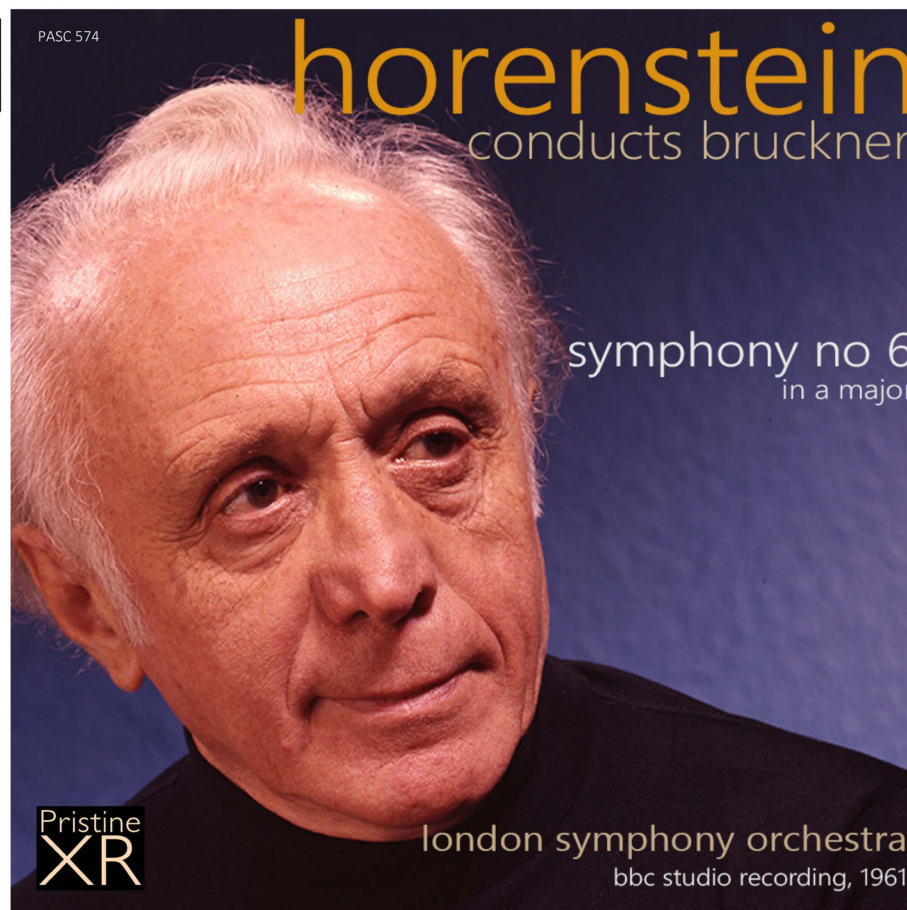
"I deplore the linking of Mahler and Bruckner. I think the culprit was my old friend Hans Redlich, who wrote that book tying them together. I liken them to Marks and Spencer. When I come to London to make plans with the orchestras I say to them, 'What do you want me to do this season, Marks's Sixth and Spencer's Fourth?'. Today, when someone asks me what works I would like to conduct, there are very few pieces by these two composers among them. You know, I also conduct Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms, not to mention Sibelius, Nielsen, Janáček, Roussel, Berg and Webern."

Jascha Horenstein talks to Alan Blyth, The Gramophone, November 1970

History has denied Horenstein's wish not to be typecast as a Bruckner and Mahler conductor and in later life, as well as posthumously, his wider reputation rested almost exclusively on this repertoire. Bruckner first entered his consciousness at age 14 when, in June 1912, he attended a concert in Vienna conducted by Artur Nikisch that included the Ninth symphony. The experience left a life-long impression: "It probably influenced me to become a conductor", he declared many years later. During the Weimar era Horenstein's fame rested to some extent on his readings of Bruckner after several enthusiastically received performances of the Ninth in Berlin and Frankfurt contributed to his meteoric rise among young conductors of the day. However his performance of the Ninth in Leningrad in April 1932 turned out to be the last time he conducted any music by Bruckner in public for the next 25 years, an inexplicably long period of time. This may have been due to some reluctance on his part to program music promoted by the Nazis, or, more likely, to a general lack of enthusiasm for the composer outside of the German speaking world he had been forced to abandon. It was only in 1957 that Horenstein reintroduced Bruckner into his repertoire when he included the Third Symphony at a concert in Caracas, but thereafter and until his death in 1973 he conducted all the numbered symphonies in various places, some of them inspired and inspiring occasions that, happily, have been preserved on disc.

Aside from his three commercial recordings, the Seventh for German Polydor (PASC 203) and the Eighth and Ninth for Vox (PASC 429), those of all the other Bruckner symphonies derive from copies of radio transmissions, including the present publication taken from its sole broadcast on May 3rd 1964 (the master tapes were later destroyed by the BBC during one of its periodic spring cleaning operations). The occasion marked the first time Horenstein conducted music by Bruckner with the LSO, which had not played the Sixth since a performance conducted by Sir Hamilton Harty in 1936, and was also the orchestra's first recording of any music by this composer. The symphony entered Horenstein's repertoire in March 1931 when he was engaged for a radio broadcast with an unidentified Berlin orchestra and was his favorite of the canon after the Third, if the number of times he performed it following this recording is any indication. The composer Robert Simpson, an authority on Bruckner, wrote that Horenstein "instinctively solved the problems of the Sixth as finely as those in the others."

Misha Horenstein



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BRUCKNER SYMPHONY NO. 6 IN A MAJOR, WAB 106
HORENSTEIN, LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

horenstein

conducts bruckner

BRUCKNER Symphony No. 6 in A major, WAB106

1. 1st mvt. - Majestoso (16:07)
2. 2nd mvt. - Adagio. Sehr feierlich (16:52)
3. 3rd mvt. - Scherzo. Nicht schnell - Trio. Langsam (8:46)
4. 4th mvt. - Finale. Bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell (14:44)

London Symphony Orchestra
conducted by Jascha Horenstein

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XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of Jascha Horenstein

Bruckner Symphony No. 6
Recorded 21 November 1961
BBC Maida Vale Studios

Source recording from the archives of
Misha Horenstein

Total duration: 56:29

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