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KARL BOHM
Bruckner - Symphony No. 7

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Böhm conducts Bruckner

SYMPHONY NO. 7

AMcG - There are other ways of doing Bruckner 7 aren't there, which don't have that absolute sense of calm and stillness for so much of the music

JD - Yes, the calm is in there of course, but this is a very varied work indeed and there are other ways of doing the symphony. A direct contrast to this is the 1943 Böhm recording, which is highly dramatic. Incidentally, this is done before the appearance of the Robert Haas edition, so he didn't know anything about all of that. This is part of the second part of the middle section of the first movement, and you can hear just how dramatically Böhm is attacking this music - quite different...

[Musical excerpt played from Preiser CD]

- Karl Böhm and the Vienna Philharmonic from 1943. OK, vintage recorded sound, but the electricity of that just slices through, doesn't it? It's young Böhm as well...

- Yes, it's not all heavenly bliss in this symphony. It bristles with expression, in structure as well, and the young Böhm is fearless in bringing all this out. His later recordings tend to be a bit more prosaic, unfortunately, and I much prefer this over the later ones with the Vienna Philharmonic, for example. His later recordings are better engineered, obviously, and one drawback with this early recording is that the recording quality is a little dubious in places.

- It makes is hard to recommend, doesn't it, against some others...

- Yes, the frequency variations - in fact the orchestra seems to change in pitch in some places - so it's a pity about that, because I think this is actually one of the outstanding performances of this

- Everyone should hear this. I came to it new last week, and I found it really exciting

- Yes, it's definitely to be recommended.

Andrew McGregor in conversation with **John Deathridge**, Professor of Music, King's College London
CD Review, BBC Radio Three, 13 December 2014, "Building a Library: Bruckner 7"

Producer's Note

The short quote from BBC Radio Three's CD Review provided, in a nutshell, the inspiration for tackling this recording, made over two days but apparently live, so I'm guessing in two halves for broadcast. It has appeared on a number of labels in various states of distress over the years - mislabelling has been rife, the third and fourth movements have been transposed by a semitone, and sound quality has ranged from the barely adequate to the abysmal. This release aims to correct that, as much as is possible. Pitch issues have finally been conquered using Capstan software to correct some quite significant drifting down towards the ends of what I can only assume were reels of German tape, a technology still in its infancy but widely used in Nazi Germany at a time when it didn't exist elsewhere: the final four minutes of the first movement, for example, sees a gradual fall of almost a complete semitone. I'm pleased to report that a total sonic transformation has also been possible, moving on from the thin and harsh sound of the very best previous issues to something much fuller, richer and more powerful than ever heard before in this recording. It is an outstanding performance, and it needs to be heard.

Andrew Rose



VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Live Studio recording, 1943

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BRUCKNER SYMPHONY No. 7 IN E MAJOR
BÖHM, VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

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XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of Karl Böhm

Recorded 4-5 June, 1943
Großen Musikvereinssaal, Vienna

Total duration: 67:19

BRUCKNER SYMPHONY No. 7 IN E MAJOR
BÖHM, VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

PASC 435

PRISTINE
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BRUCKNER Symphony No. 7 in E major

(Gutmann Edition)

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro moderato (19:02)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Adagio. Sehr feierlich und sehr langsam (27:35)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Scherzo. Sehr schnell (10:00)
- 4 4th mvt. - Finale. Bewegt, doch nicht schnell (10:42)

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Karl Böhm, conductor

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