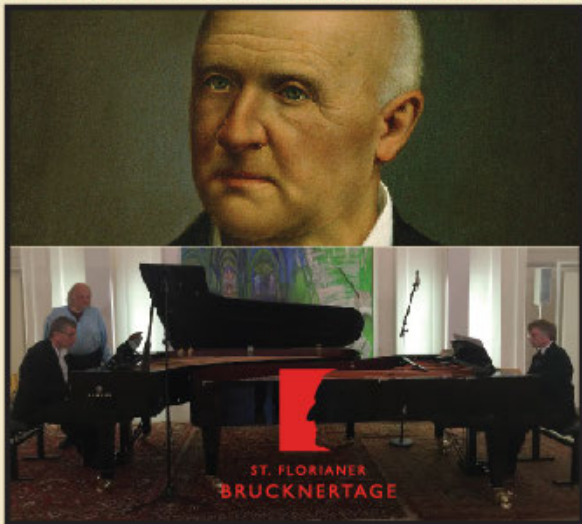


Anton Bruckner

Symphony 9 in D-minor

(in 4 movements) arranged for two pianos





ANTON BRUCKNER (4 September 1824 – 11 October 1896)

Symphony 9 in D-Minor (1887 – 1896)

In Four Movements, with Finale completion by William Carragan

Disc 1:

1. Kopfsatz – Feierlich, misterioso [24:27]
2. Scherzo – Bewegt, lebhaft; Trio – Schnell [11:11]

Disc 2:

1. Adagio – Langsam, feierlich [22:19]
2. Finale – Allegro moderato [22:58]

Till Alexander Körber & Reinhold Puri-Jobi - Two Pianos, Four Hands
Recorded in public concert 20 August 2015 - Sala Terrena, Stift St. Florian, Austria
Recorded in High-Resolution, 4.0 Channel Surround Sound

Producer & recording engineer: John Gladney Proffitt

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"This was a real triumph....The pianists displayed extraordinary skill of ensemble and of recreation of orchestral sound....The piano cannot create the full range of orchestral dynamics, but the pianists used every resource of energy and attack to bring the great climaxes to life....so the whole symphony seemed to be wonderfully transported, with a rolling, rarely interrupted rhythmic overlay....[But] never before has the formal clarity of the Finale been displayed to me with such focus and coherence....The two great waves of Carragan's coda attained considerable dramatic power, the symphony sounded complete, its finish positive and triumphant. The audience responded with a standing ovation for the completer (William Carragan) and the superlative performers!"

~ Ken Ward, Editor, The Bruckner Journal, November 2015

Anton Bruckner (1824 – 1896) worked on his Symphony No. 9 in D minor up to and including the day of his death, 11 October 1896, leaving the last movement incomplete. Bruckner dedicated this, his last symphony, "to the beloved God" (in German, "dem lieben Gott"). Bruckner had worked on his Ninth almost exclusively from 1891 on, with the first three movements completed by 1894. Bruckner consigned the manuscripts for movements 1 through 3 to the Imperial Court Library (now the Austrian National Library) at the time of his move into the caretaker's cottage of Vienna's Belvedere Castle. During the remaining months of his life, Bruckner worked assiduously on the fourth movement Finale, and it is possible the movement was complete in its initial phase at the time of the composer's death. However, pages are missing from the emerging manuscript, perhaps taken by souvenir hunters who passed through Bruckner's apartment in the days immediately following his death. The surviving manuscript material of the Finale, some of it fully orchestrated and contained in a series of sequentially numbered bifolios, comprises about 2/3 of the movement, leading right up to the coda, which, except for a couple of brief sketches, is unfortunately missing. There have been several reconstructions or completions of the Finale, all of which require an Editor to reconstruct the missing manuscript pages and in essence compose the coda a la Bruckner. The most well-known completions and recordings are those by William Carragan [Profil], Sébastien Letocart [abruckner.com], and the editorial team of Nicola Samale, Giuseppe Mazucca, John Phillips, and Benjamin Gunnar Cohrs. [EMI]



The experience of hearing the Bruckner Ninth in its four-movement form is an unambiguous affirmation of the historical fact that the composer to his dying day never accepted this masterwork as a three-movement “whole.” The performance tradition of a three-movement Ninth is clearly an established precedent, but this is both anachronistic and flies in the face of the composer’s clear intent and the now known legacy of the Finale material that survives and is available for all to hear and consider. Complaints that the reconstructed Finale is somehow “illegitimate” or “unworthy” due to editorial intervention fail to acknowledge the precedents of the Mozart Requiem, Mahler Symphony 10, Puccini’s Turandot, and Berg’s Lulu (much less the Elgar Symphony No. 3!), all of which required substantial editorial intervention and are now performed with minimal complaint or controversy. Likewise, hearing the actual music of the Finale reveals some of Bruckner’s most advanced, audacious, and powerful musical rhetoric – a clear refutation of the long-held belief in some circles that a sick, feeble Bruckner had lost the inspiration, will or ability to create magnificent music in his final months.

The tradition of orchestral music being made available in piano transcription dates from the pre-electric, pre-phonograph era of the 19th Century, when for many the only opportunity to hear new or unfamiliar orchestral works was in the salon or home, and on the piano. Some composers obliged with their own piano transcriptions; others were taken up by third parties, such as Karl Grunsky (1871–1943), a German music critic and author who wrote musicological tracts on Wagner and Bruckner, and who transcribed symphonies 1–9 of Bruckner for two pianos. Grunsky’s transcription, modified to conform to the Orel/Nowak score, is used for the first three movements of this recording, which ends with William Carragan’s own two-piano transcription derived from his Finale completion for full orchestra (2010).

Hearing a Bruckner symphony in such a transcription has both negative and positive aspects. On the downside, one loses the various colors of the orchestral instruments, both in solo and massed musical passages. Obviously, a massive crescendo and climax à la Bruckner can only be hinted at from the keyboards. Sustained, legato phrases in the orchestra are rendered with an unavoidable percussive effect. Advantages include the clarity of themes and articulation (the upside of the piano’s percussive nature), the transparency of counterpoint allowing the listener to hear themes, counter-themes, and accompanying figuration normally submerged into the orchestra palette. And the overall sound-picture remains transparent at all dynamics, from ppp to fff. No question that the two-piano Bruckner experience is quite different from the orchestral experience; and in this day and age of modern transportation and electronic media, it should never replace exposure to the “real thing” in the concert hall.

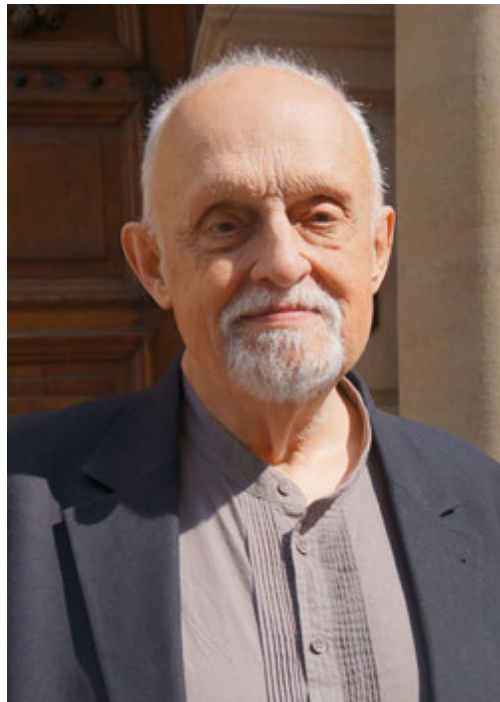


Till Alexander Körber and **Rheihold Puri-Jobi** are both teachers at the Anton Bruckner Private University in Linz, Austria, just a few kilometers from Bruckner's spiritual home and final resting place, St. Florian. Körber was born in Tübingen, Germany, and studied piano, song accompaniment and choral conducting at the Academy of Music in Freiburg/Breslau and was a student of Hans Petermandl at the Vienna Academy of Music. As a pianist and composer he has won several prizes, for example from the Mozarteum Salzburg in 1997 and in 2003 the Austrian State Scholarship for Composition. Concerts as a soloist, song accompanist and chamber musician as well as radio, television and CD recordings have brought him to many European countries. Between 1994 and 2003 he taught contemporary piano music at the Graz Conservatory. Since 1999 Körber has taught a class for piano and piano chamber music at the Anton Bruckner Private University in Linz.

Rheinhold Puri-Jobi studied piano and conducting at the Bruckner Conservatory in Linz and graduated with honors in piano studies in 1986, continuing his studies with Michael Krist at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna and graduated 1993. He is an award winner of several competitions, including First Prize at 18th Bösendorfer Stipendium in 1985; Special Prize at the Talent Competition in Linz in 1986; Special Prize, which was donated by Paul Badura-Skoda, at the 27th Stepanow Piano Competition in Vienna in 1988; and Second Prize at the 23rd Heydner Piano Competition in 1990. Puri-Jobi works as a soloist, an esteemed chamber musician and accompanist, and frequently is involved in numerous concerts, playing the piano and celesta with the Bruckner Orchestra of Linz, conducted by its Music Director, Dennis Russell Davies, and other guest conductors. He teaches at the Anton Bruckner Private University and at the Music School in Linz.

William Carragan, musicologist and harpsichordist, is known for his research in both baroque chamber music and 19th Century symphonic literature. His recent publication, through the auspices of the Bruckner Society of America, is *The Red Book*, formally known as "Anton Bruckner – Eleven Symphonies". This book is a milestone in English-language scholarship on Bruckner, as well as an informative and accessible guide through the history and characteristics of the various versions of Bruckner symphonies.

. Carragan studied piano with his mother, Martha Beck, and with Stanley Hummel; harpsichord with Louis Bagger; horn with Ralph Pottle; and composition with Alfred Swan. He has prepared harpsichord versions of two multiple violin concertos of Vivaldi, and presented them in 2009-2010 in a three-state tour by the group Taconic Harpsichordists. He has also devoted considerable time to research on Gregorian chant and to the preparation of Slavic harmonic liturgical music for the Eastern Orthodox churches, so far in fifteen volumes, with ten more volumes in preparation covering Byzantine service music in detail. Carragan was Professor of Physics at Hudson Valley Community College in New York from 1965 to 2001, and is the author of a comprehensive four-volume textbook of introductory university physics including relativity and quantum mechanics. His numerous monographs and essays on the music of Bruckner can be found at www.carragan.com



Carragan is a contributing editor of the Anton Bruckner Collected Edition in Vienna, for which he prepared a new edition of the Bruckner Second Symphony in two versions at the request of Leopold Nowak. The 1872 First Concept version has received multiple acclaimed recordings by such as Rémy Ballot [Gramola], Kurt Eichhorn [Camerata Japan], Simone Young [Oehms], and Georg Tintner [Naxos]. He has also reconstructed the earliest version of the Bruckner First Symphony, which was recorded on Naxos in 1996, and a previously unperformed version of the Third, which was premiered in Japan in 2007. All three of these editions were heard at the 2011 Ebracher Musiksommer in Germany, performed by the Philharmonie Festiva under the direction of Gerd Schaller. Then at the 2012 Musiksommer Maestro Schaller performed Prof. Carragan's collection of four intermediate variants of the Eighth Symphony.

From 1979 to 1983 Carragan devoted himself to a completion of the fragmentary Finale of the Bruckner Ninth, which was first recorded for Chandos Records with Yoav Talmi conducting the Oslo Philharmonic. Subsequently, it has been performed and recorded in various countries, including The Netherlands with the Utrecht Symphony Orchestra under Hubert Soudant in 1985; the Tokyo Japan New City Orchestra under Akira Naito in 2006; at the 2010 Ebracher Musiksommer in Germany under the baton of Gerd Schaller; and in Croatia in 2017 with Mladen Tarbuk conducting the Croatian Radio Symphony Orchestra. Carragan has also made arrangements of the Bruckner Fourth (1874), Fifth, Seventh, and Eighth (1887 and 1892) Symphonies for two pianos, along with his

completion of the Finale of the Ninth for performance at the Brucknertage 2015, the premiere recording of which is heard here.

Brucknertage St. Florian (BrucknerDays St. Florian)

Since 1997 the Brucknertage St. Florian international music festival has presented in mid-August an annual week of events, recitals, symposia, and concerts centered on the life and work of Anton Bruckner, all presented in the “spiritual home” of the great Austrian composer. Each year the festival presents a major orchestral performance in the Stiftsbasilika featuring a Bruckner symphony, along with other concerts and recitals spotlighting the Bruckner Organ and chamber music performed in the Library, Marmorsaal [Marble Hall], and Sala Terrena within the Monastery.

In 2023 the Brucknertage completed the first-ever recording project of Bruckner symphonies recorded in high-definition multichannel Surround Sound, in public performances, in the St Florian Stiftsbasilika. For this project, Brucknertage Resident Conductor Rémy Ballot led the Altomonte-Orchester St Florian in symphonies 1 – 5, 7, 9, and the early Symphony in D-Minor of 1869. Symphonies 6 and 8 were performed and recorded with the Jugendsinfonie Orchester Oberösterreich [Youth Symphony Orchestra of Upper Austria]. All are available on individual SACDs and a Compact Disc boxed set from Gramola Records of Vienna.

The Augustinian **Stift St. Florian** is one of the largest and most famous Baroque monasteries in Europe, located in the market town of St. Florian near Linz in Upper Austria . The basilica church and monastery are Austrian national monuments. Founded in 1071, St. Florian has been home to a community of Augustinian canons dedicated to teaching music. The beautiful, High Baroque monastery and Stiftsbasilika were designed and built under the direction of architects Carlo Antonio Carlone and Jacob Prandtauer during the years 1686-1750. Austrian painter Bartolomeo Altomonte (1694–1783), after whom the resident symphony orchestra of St. Florian takes its name, was responsible for many of the High Baroque paintings and frescoes found throughout the Abbey. As a young boy, Anton Bruckner went to St. Florian for musical studies and sang in the historic St. Florian Boy Choir, and from 1848 until 1855 he served as principal Organist for the Abbey. Throughout his life, Bruckner would frequently return to St. Florian as an honored guest, and many of his compositions were written there during periods of retreat from the cosmopolitan pressures of Vienna. Upon his death in Vienna in 1896, Bruckner was returned to St. Florian, his lifelong spiritual home, for burial in the basilica crypt directly beneath the pipe organ, now renamed the Bruckner Organ in his honor.

~ Notes by John Proffitt

