



*Bruckner*  
**REQUIEM**

Psalms 112 114

Joan Rodgers Catherine Denley  
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CORYDON SINGERS  
ENGLISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA  
MATTHEW BEST

**B**RUCKNER'S EARLY REQUIEM OF 1849 and the setting of Psalm 114 (really 116) were composed well before his long period of gruelling technical study with Simon Sechter, during which period he was permitted to compose almost nothing. That was followed by another stretch with Otto Kitzler, less prohibitive so far as creative work was concerned, but still severe; at this time he wrote the Overture in G minor, the 'study' symphony in F minor, and a number of choral pieces, including the substantial Psalm 112 (with orchestra) on this record. This period of deliberate creative abstinence has led to the belief that Bruckner was a late starter, that he wrote no music of worth before he was about forty. It is true that his greatest masses and his main development as a symphonist found fulfilment after this hiatus, and it is certainly probable that the enforced self-denial had incalculable psychological effects, on his personality as well as on his work. Nobody will ever be able to assess the mark all this may have left on his nervous system, which caused him much suffering during his life. His work, which represents a lifelong search for inner and outer peace, must have gained as a result; his natural indecisiveness and lack of confidence, though it brought about an obsession with revision (aggravated by the pressures on him by his well-meaning but disastrously mistaken friends), were part of a profound humility that eventually enabled him to achieve great things, free from self-regard.

This simplicity, often taken for simple-mindedness by the sophisticated, can be felt in all the early works on this record, and it is the **Requiem** especially that proves Bruckner to have been no tyro at the age of twenty-five. It is by no means a perfect masterpiece, but throughout its length it impresses with its naturalness, its complete sincerity, its economy of means, and above all with its quiet individuality. It can be said to be the first full demonstration that the young man was a composer of inestim-

able promise, not at all the clumsy yokel his personality may at times have suggested. There is evidence here that he must have known and studied many choral works of the distant past, as might be expected from his musical upbringing in the monastery of St Florian, but also evidence of the possibility that he knew something of the earlier symphonies of Haydn, if the opening of the first movement is anything to go by.

In feeling, the expressively reticent opening of the Requiem, with its softly shifting syncopations in the strings, may well remind us of such a beginning as that of Haydn's Symphony No 26 in D minor ('Lamentation'); this style is a tradition that must have been still alive in Bruckner's time in Linz, but he is already able to make individual use of it, and we can sense in it not merely reflections of the past—it already faintly anticipates one or two of his own symphonic passages in the two earlier D minor symphonies, for instance, Nos '0' and 3. Other rather amusing evidence of archaic practices in Bruckner's earlier time is his use of the *continuo* throughout this Requiem; the basses are carefully figured throughout. But whatever we observe, we cannot escape the solemn beauty of this music, which already has the authentic atmosphere of natural genius. Against the subtly floating rhythms of the strings, the choral writing is direct and plain; the effect is gripping enough to make one wonder why the work has been so neglected. In the best parts of it we find Bruckner's true nature, which dominated all his finest work in the future, and defines his separation from the romantic movement. The orchestra consists only of strings and trombones, a horn replacing one of the trombones in the *Benedictus*, so an austere sound is maintained throughout the work.

There are boldnesses in the use of tonality; the polyphonic *Quam olim Abrahae* is put strikingly in the key of F minor; simple textures are used with clear imagination,

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as in the juxtaposition of naive solos and plain choral responses with sensitively expressive string figuration in the *Agnus Dei*. This music needs no close analysis, which would defeat its guileless intent, and it does not unfailingly uphold its best levels. But as a whole it is a touching and very personal little work, speaking of things in the composer's heart, and of greater things to come. Hans-Hubert Schönzeler once suggested that it would go finely together in the same concert with the Ninth Symphony—the beginning and the end of the real Bruckner. Being of moderate difficulty and not needing a large orchestra, it would moreover be ideal material for good amateur choral societies. Its appeal will not fade, and it is time it found a modest but privileged place in the general repertoire.

This is the first recording of **Psalm 114 (116)** (1852), scored for five-part chorus and trombones. It is certainly also the first performance outside Austria, if indeed it were ever performed there at all, since the only existing material has hitherto been a very unclear manuscript, sometimes incomplete in detail. It has here been very skilfully realized by Matthew Best. The ambiguity in the Psalm numbering is due to the fact that 114 is on Bruckner's manuscript but the German words correspond to the first nine verses of Psalm 116 in the English Bible. These are preceded by an *Alleluia*. The music is at first of an impressive archaic austerity, bare in harmony, and strikingly simple in texture. E minor is the

opening key, but G major ultimately dominates. The most impressive passages are the simplest, and when Bruckner launches into a fugue ('I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living') the effect is sometimes more than a little stiff, and the counterpoint is decidedly pre-Sechter! As a whole, however, this small work proves itself a necessary key to the understanding of Bruckner's development, and finely performed (as it is here) can give considerable pleasure.

**Psalm 112** (1863) is an assured post-Sechter product, a trenchant B flat major setting of a song of praise, introduced (as in the previous work) by an *Alleluia*. This time Bruckner uses a full classical orchestra, and the chorus is double. There is some rich and sonorous writing, and the central fugue (on *Alleluia*) is a much more fluent affair than the one in Psalm 114 (116). Perhaps the full-scale recapitulation creates some stiffness rather than satisfying symmetry, but the whole thing has an enthusiastic punch and an already mature skill in execution that would make it an enjoyable acquisition for amateur choirs. Bruckner had already written one full-sized mass in 1854 and his next large choral work after this Psalm was to be the powerful Mass in D minor of the following year, the first of the three great Masses—so here we find him gazing, perhaps not fully realizing the fact, down the long road of the rest of his creative life, the Masses looming on the horizon and the Symphonies far beyond that.

ROBERT SIMPSON © 1987

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[1] **Requiem aeternam** dona eis, Domine.  
et lux perpetua luceat eis.  
Te decet hymnus, Deus, in Sion,  
et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem.  
Exaudi orationem meam, ad te omnis caro veniet.  
Kyrie eleison.  
Christe eleison.  
Kyrie eleison.

[2] **Dies irae**, dies illa  
Solvat saeculum in favilla,  
Teste David cum Sibylla.

Quantos tremor est futurus  
Quando iudex est venturus  
Cuncta stricte discussurus.

Tuba mirum spargens sonum  
Per sepulcra regionum  
Coget omnes ante thronum.

Mors stupebit et natura  
Cum resurget creatura  
Judicanti responsura.

Liber scriptus proferetur  
In quo totum continetur,  
Unde mundus judicetur.

Judex ergo cum sedebit  
Quidquid latet apparebit,  
Nil inultum remanebit.

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus  
Quem patronum rogaturus,  
Cum vix Justus sit securus?

Rex tremendae majestatis,  
Qui salvandos salvas gratis,  
Salva me, fons pietatis.

Recordare, Jesu pie,  
Quod sum causa tuae viae,  
Ne me perdas illa die.

*Grant them eternal rest, O Lord,  
and may perpetual light shine on them.  
Thou, O God, art praised in Sion,  
and unto Thee shall the vow be performed in Jerusalem.  
Hear my prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come.  
Lord have mercy upon us.  
Christ have mercy upon us.  
Lord have mercy upon us.*

*Day of wrath, that day  
Will dissolve the earth in ashes  
As David and the Sibyl bear witness.*

*What dread there will be  
When the Judge shall come  
To judge all things strictly.*

*A trumpet, spreading a wondrous sound  
Through the graves of all lands,  
Will drive mankind before the throne.*

*Death and Nature will be astonished  
When all creation rises again  
To answer to the Judge.*

*A book, written in, will be brought forth  
In which is contained everything that is,  
Out of which the world shall be judged.*

*When therefore the Judge takes his seat  
Whatever is bidden will reveal itself.  
Nothing will remain unavenged.*

*What then shall I say, wretch that I am,  
What advocate entreat to speak for me,  
When even the righteous may hardly be secure?*

*King of awful majesty,  
Who freely savest the redeemed.  
Save me, O fount of goodness.*

*Remember, blessed Jesu,  
That I am the cause of Thy pilgrimage.  
Do not forsake me on that day.*

Quaerens me sedisti lassus,  
Redemisti crucem passus,  
Tantus labor non sit cassus.

Juste iudex ultionis,  
Donum fac remissionis  
Ante diem rationis.

Ingemisco tamquam reus,  
Culpa rubet vultus meus,  
Supplicanti parce, Deus.

Qui Mariam absolvisti  
Et latronem exaudisti,  
Mihi quoque spem dedisti.

Preces meae non sunt dignae,  
Sed tu bonus fac benigne,  
Ne perenni cremer igne.

Inter oves locum praesta,  
Et ab haedis me sequestra,  
Statuens in parte dextra.

Confutatis maledictis  
Flammis acribus addictis,  
Voca me cum benedictis.

Oro supplex et acclinis,  
Cor contritum quasi cinis,  
Gere curam mei finis.

Lacrimosa dies illa  
Qua resurgens ex favilla  
Judicandus homo reus.  
time ergo parce, Deus.

Pie Jesu Domine,  
dona eis requiem.

**3** **Domine Jesu Christe**, rex gloriae, libera animas omnium fidelium defunctorum demanu inferni et de profundo lacu. Libera eas de ore leonis, ne absorbeat eas tartarus, ne cadant in obscura tenebrarum loca: sed signifer sanctus Michael repraesentet eas in lucem sanctam, quam olim Abrahae promisisti, et semini eius.

*Seeking me Thou didst sit down weary.  
Thou didst redeem me, suffering death on the cross.  
Let not such toil be in vain.*

*Just and avenging Judge,  
Grant remission  
Before the day of reckoning.*

*I groan like a guilty man.  
Guilt reddens my face,  
Spare a suppliant, O God.*

*Thou who didst absolve Mary Magdalen  
And hearken to the thief,  
To me also hast thou given hope.*

*My prayers are not worthy,  
But Thou in Thy merciful goodness grant  
That I burn not in everlasting fire.*

*Place me among Thy sheep  
And separate me from the goats,  
Setting me on Thy right hand.*

*When the accursed have been confounded  
And given over to the bitter flames,  
Call me with the blessed.*

*I pray in supplication on my knees,  
My heart contrite as the dust.  
Take care of my end.*

*Mournful that day  
When from the dust shall rise  
Guilty man to be judged.  
Therefore spare him, O God.*

*Merciful Jesu, Lord,  
Grant them eternal rest*

*O Lord Jesus Christ, King of Glory, deliver the souls of all the faithful departed from the pains of hell and from the deep pit: deliver them from the lion's mouth, that hell may not swallow them up, and may they not fall into darkness; but may the holy standard-bearer, Michael, lead them into the holy light; which Thou didst promise to Abraham and to his seed.*

**4** **Hostias et preces** tibi Domine offerimus: tu suscipe pro animabus illis, quarum hodie memoriam agimus; fac eas, Domine, de morte transire ad vitam.

**5** **Quam olim Abrahae** promisisti, et semini eius.

**6** **Sanctus**, sanctus, sanctus  
Dominus Deus Sabaoth: pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis.

**7** **Benedictus** qui venit in nomine Domini.  
Hosanna in excelsis.

**8** **Agnus Dei** qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem sempiternam.  
Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine, cum sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia pius es.

**9** **Requiem aeternam** dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis,

**10** **cum sanctis tuis** in aeternum, quia pius es.

**11** **Psalm 114 (116)**  
Alleluia! Liebe, liebe erfüllt mich,  
weil der Herr die Stimme meines Flehens erhört hat.  
Weil er sein Ohr zu mir neigte,  
mein Leben lang werd' ich ihn anrufen.  
Es umgaben mich die Schmerzen des Todes,  
es trafen mich die Gefahren der Hölle.  
Trübsal und Schmerz fand ich  
Trübsal und Schmerz.  
Da rief ich den Namen des Herrn an;  
O Herr, erlöse meine Seele.  
Barmherzig ist der Herr, und gerecht;  
unser Gott ist barmherzig.  
Der Herr bewahret die Kleinen:  
ich war gedemüthigt und er half mir,  
Kehre zurück, meine Seele in deine Ruh',  
denn der Herr hat dir wohlgethan,  
Denn er errettete meine Seele vom Tode,  
meine Augen von den Thranen, meine Füße vom Falle.  
Ich will gefallen dem Herrn  
im lande der Lebendigen.

*Sacrifices and prayers we offer to Thee, O Lord; receive them for those souls for whom we make memorial this day.  
Let them, O Lord, pass from death unto life.*

*Which Thou didst promise to Abraham and his seed.*

*Holy, Holy, Holy  
Lord God of Hosts. Heaven and Earth are full  
of Thy Glory. Hosanna in the highest.*

*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.*

*Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,  
grant them eternal rest.  
May light eternal shine upon them, O Lord, with Thy saints  
for ever, for Thou art merciful.*

*Eternal rest give to them, O Lord: and let perpetual  
light shine upon them,*

*with Thy saints forever, for Thou art merciful.*

*Alleluia! I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice  
and my supplications.  
Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore  
will I call upon Him as long as I live.  
The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains  
of hell gat hold upon me:  
I found trouble and sorrow,  
trouble and sorrow.  
Then called I upon the name of the Lord;  
O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.  
Gracious is the Lord and righteous;  
yea, our God is merciful.  
The Lord preserveth the simple:  
I was brought low, and He helped me.  
Return unto thy rest, O my soul;  
for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee,  
For Thou has delivered my soul from death,  
mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.  
I will walk before the Lord  
in the land of the living.*

**[12] Psalm 112**

Alleluia!  
 Lobet den Herrn, ihr Diener,  
 lobet den Namen des Herrn!  
 Der Name des Herrn sei gebenedeit  
 von nun an bis in Ewigkeit,  
 vom Aufgang der Sonne bis zum Unter gange  
 sei gelobet der Name des Herrn.  
 Hoch über alle Völker ist des Herr,  
 und über die Himmel seine Herrlichkeit.  
 Wer ist wie der Herr, unser Gott?  
 Der in der Hohe wohnt,  
 der auf das Niedrige schauet  
 im Himmel und auf Erden.  
 Wer ist wie der Herr, unser Gott?  
 der den Geringen aufrichtet aus dem Staube  
 und aus dem Kote erhöht den Armen,  
 dass er ihn setze neben die Fürsten,  
 neben die Fürsten seines Volkes.  
 Wer ist wie der Herr unser Gott  
 der die Unfruchtbare wohnen lässt im Hause  
 als fröhliche Mutter von Kindern.  
 Alleluia!

*Alleluia!*

*Praise ye the Lord, praise, O ye servants of the Lord,  
 praise the name of the Lord.*

*Blessed be the name of the Lord  
 from this time forth and for evermore.*

*From the rising of the sun unto the going down of  
 the same the Lord's name is to be praised.*

*The Lord is high above all nations,  
 and His glory above the heavens.*

*Who is like unto the Lord our God,  
 who dwelleth on high.*

*who humbleth himself to behold the things that are  
 in heaven, and in the earth?*

*Who is like unto the Lord our God?*

*He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,  
 and lifteth the needy out of the dungbill;*

*That He may set him with princes,  
 even with the princes of his people.*

*Who is like unto the Lord our God?*

*He maketh the barren woman to keep house,  
 and to be a joyful mother of children.*

*Alleluia!*

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*Anton Bruckner* (1824–1896)**Requiem in D minor** (1849) ..... [36'32]

for soloists, choir, orchestra and organ

- |           |                                               |        |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------|--------|
| <b>1</b>  | Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine .....       | [5'39] |
| <b>2</b>  | Dies irae .....                               | [6'59] |
| <b>3</b>  | Domine Jesu Christe .....                     | [4'14] |
| <b>4</b>  | Hostias et preces tibi Domine offerimus ..... | [1'47] |
| <b>5</b>  | Quam olim Abrahae promisisti .....            | [2'42] |
| <b>6</b>  | Sanctus .....                                 | [1'45] |
| <b>7</b>  | Benedictus .....                              | [5'22] |
| <b>8</b>  | Agnus Dei .....                               | [4'49] |
| <b>9</b>  | Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine .....       | [2'00] |
| <b>10</b> | Cum sanctis tuis in aeternum .....            | [1'11] |

**[11] Psalm 114 (116)** (1852) ..... [9'05]

for five-part choir and trombones; edited by Matthew Best

**[12] Psalm 112** (1863) ..... [10'04]

for double choir and orchestra

JOAN RODGERS soprano CATHERINE DENLEY contralto

MALDWYN DAVIES tenor MICHAEL GEORGE bass

THOMAS TROTTER organ, ROGER BRENNER, PHILLIP BROWN, COLIN SHEEN trombones

CORYDON SINGERS

ENGLISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

JOSÉ-LUIS GARCIA leader

MATTHEW BEST conductor