

**ANTON** Symphony No.3  
in D minor  
**BRUCKNER**

**Orchestre de la Suisse Romande**  
**Marek Janowski**

# Anton Bruckner 1824-1896

## Symphony No. 3 in D minor (1889 version)

Nowak Edition

- |   |                               |        |
|---|-------------------------------|--------|
| 1 | Mehr langsam, Misterioso      | 20. 48 |
| 2 | Adagio. Bewegt, quasi Andante | 14. 26 |
| 3 | Scherzo. Ziemlich schnell     | 6. 25  |
| 4 | Finale. Allegro               | 11. 37 |

### Orchestre de la Suisse Romande

conducted by

### Marek Janowski

Total playing time: 53.20

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Executive Producer: Job Maarse

Recording Producer: Job Maarse

Balance Engineers: Jean-Marie Geijsen

Recording Engineer: Roger de Schot

Editing: Ientje Mooi

Biographien auf Deutsch und Französisch

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Espace 2, the cultural channel of Radio Télévision Suisse (RTS) is once again delighted to be associated with a prestigious release featuring the Orchestre de la Suisse romande.

This collaboration does not date back all the way to the origins of the orchestra (which already existed before the radio came along), but it does recall the wishes of Ernest Ansermet. As soon as the radio broadcasts began, the founder of the OSR realized that the principal radio channel in his district would certainly become an indispensable partner to a symphony orchestra of international stature.

This spirit continues to this day, as the RTS still remains the foremost broadcasting channel for the OSR, offering the majority of the concerts performed by the orchestra live, or as a deferred broadcast for listeners in western Switzerland and, through the EBU, for Europe, the USA and Japan.

Less ephemeral than a radio broadcast, may this recording also enjoy a global destiny!

Alexander Barrelet

Rédaction Culture RTS

(Chief Editor Culture RTS)

### “Where the trumpet begins the theme”

It was by chance that Anton Bruckner's Symphony No. 3 in D minor received the nickname of the “Wagner” Symphony. Early in September 1873, Bruckner set out for Bayreuth after taking the waters in Marienbad to submit and dedicate to Wagner – whom he greatly admired – his new symphonies No. 2 in C minor and No. 3 in D minor (in which he had as yet, incidentally, only outlined the finale). Bruckner wrote as follows: “It was about the beginning of September 1873 (the Crown Prince Frederick was in Bayreuth for a few days) when I asked the master if I could present to him my Symphony No. 2 in C Minor and Symphony No. 3 in D minor. He turned down my request, the glorious man, due to lack of time (the construction of his theatre), and said that he could not review the scores at that moment as he had still had to put pen to paper for the *Nibelungen*. I answered: ‘Maestro, I have no right to deprive you of even a quarter of an hour, I simply trust that, considering the Maestro's great perspicacity, a glance would suffice for him to understand the matter at hand.’ Whereupon the Maestro answered, patting me on the shoulder: ‘Well, come then,’ and went into the salon to take a look at my second symphony. He said it was quite good, although it seemed to him a bit too tame (for, at first, the people in Vienna had given me quite a fright),

then he started going through the third symphony (in D minor), at times grunting: ‘Let's see, let's see – uhuh – uhuh.’. He continued with the entire seventh section (the venerable master gave a special mention to the trumpet) and then said: ‘Leave this work here with me, I want to look at it more closely after dinner (it was then 12 o'clock).’ That same evening, Wagner received Bruckner in his house, informing him that he agreed with the dedication: ‘You are bestowing upon me an exceptionally great pleasure with this work.’ Bruckner immediately requested a written confirmation of the dedication, which one can still read on a piece of blue paper: above, in Bruckner's handwriting, “Symphony in D minor, where the trumpet begins the theme”, and below Wagner's addition, “Yes! Yes! Warm greetings.” Thus, the *Wagner* Symphony was by no means designed as such: in fact, the Symphony No. 2 in C minor – which Bruckner at that time had already completed – might just as well have received this title. However, the dedication to the “unattainable, world-famous and sublime master of poetry and music” had far-reaching consequences for Bruckner: in Vienna, he was dragged unwillingly into the controversy on musicological aesthetics then raging between the New German school and the Conservatives. And thereafter, the Vienna press, which was patently hostile to Wagner, bombarded the performances of Bruckner's works with contention and criticism.

The Symphony No. 3 in D minor is considered Anton Bruckner's symphonic “problem child”: well-loved, though not necessarily fortunate. One might say, it was the symphony that was never truly finished. The “creation” of the work took place over a period of 17 years, beginning with the first sketches in 1872 and ending with the last revision carried out in 1889. But can one really justify the term “creation” when such a lengthy period is involved? Certainly, if the reference to “creation” signifies the period in which a work as a whole becomes available in a “coherent transcript” (Roeder). Therefore, at least three phases in the development of the Third Symphony can be itemized – and the Neue Bruckner Gesamtausgabe (New Bruckner Complete Edition, Ed. Leopold Nowak) also contains three versions of the symphony.

And the different versions represent one of the most difficult but also most interesting phenomena in Bruckner's works. With the exception of his Symphony No. 5, No. 6 and No. 7, he wrote at least two versions of each symphony: there are three versions of his third symphony, and even four versions of his fourth. However, to accuse Bruckner of pure pedantry or formalism because of his mania for revision would demonstrate a failure to understand the composer's working method and his concept of the symphony. Certainly, in a few movements Bruckner merely brushes up the scoring, replaces, deletes or switches bars, alters the rhythm – but his real interventions affect the work as a whole, its inner blueprint, the

concept of the symphony. In particular, his Symphony No. 3 – and No. 4 – demonstrate in their respective versions a “change in concept” (Wagner). In 1874 and 1875, Bruckner failed in his committed attempts to present his Symphony No. 3 in its first version in a concert with the Vienna Philharmonic. The justification given for the denial was the “unplayability” of the work. The desperation with which Bruckner fought for a performance of his Symphony No. 3 is demonstrated by his willingness to agree to “a possible division of the performance of the symphony over two concerts.”!

Bruckner decided to fundamentally restructure the gigantic work (his first version of Symphony No. 3 was the most expansive, consisting of no less than 2,056 bars), basically by reducing its size, in order to comply with aspects of performance practice as well as the attention span of the audiences of the time. He completed the revision on November 12, 1877. Here we must mention that the composer also wrote his Symphony No. 4 and his gigantic Symphony No. 5 between the first and second version of his Symphony No. 3. The première of the second version took place in Vienna on December 16, 1877 under dramatically bad auspices: Johann Herbeck, who was supposed to conduct the work, had died two months previously in the October, the orchestra was in an all but hostile mood, the Symphony No. 3 was scheduled at the end of an already extremely long programme, and Bruckner’s lack of technical conducting skills was more than apparent. And thus, the concert turned into a disaster. The audience left the hall in droves and the press attacked the symphony with gusto. Bruckner’s defeat was complete, and for more than a decade the score remained untouched: i.e., without any further revision by Bruckner.

After the success of his Symphony No. 6, but especially after his long-awaited international breakthrough with the Symphony No. 7 and the unexpected rejection of his Symphony No. 8 by Hermann Levi, the composer undertook one last major period of revision, in which he also re-examined his Symphony No. 3 and carried out further revision. Together with his student Franz Schalk, Bruckner went over the work in several phases during the years 1888-89, focusing on the finale, which had been the target of criticism in 1877, and implementing further radical cuts. In November 1890, the third version of the Symphony No. 3 was published, and the world première of this version under the direction of Hans Richter on December 21, 1890 finally brought Bruckner’s problem child its long-awaited success: “I am still so very moved by the reception given to the work by the Philharmonic audience, which called me back on stage twelve times, and how! ... The new Symphony in D minor has now become very dear to me.” But were Bruckner’s words purely a consequence of the intensity of feeling aroused by the (finally) successful conclusion of the concert? For the extensive, gargantuan first version dating from the early 1870s,

with its sprawling and frenetic form, is worlds apart from the manageable, restrained, practical and trimmed-down version of 1888-89. Worlds, in which revolutionary ideas and designs full of explosive power were forced to give way to the attention spans and customs of the times. The simple, yet eloquent fact of his bequeathing his fair copies to the Imperial Library in Vienna demonstrates that Bruckner trusted future generations to demonstrate more understanding of his extraordinary ways.

The third version, which is also the one used in this recording, is still by far the most popular version of the Symphony No. 3. In the 1980s, musicologists researching Bruckner’s symphonies used the term “work in progress” to describe the various versions. Thus, they were able to cleverly avoid answering the frequent question of which version was the best. Perhaps this is a good thing, as each version has its own justification and strength.

In outward appearance, the first movement keeps strictly to the sonata form. Certainly so in Bruckner’s version with three themes, which he expanded to form large-scale thematic groups, in which in the first theme the solo trumpet motif, emerging from a soundscape, crystallizes during the further course of the work into a real theme, accompanied by an imperious descending *unisono* in the tutti. The second theme demonstrates the rhythm so characteristic of Bruckner (consecutive duplets and triplets), the third theme is a striding *unisono* in the winds. Bruckner does not even wait to elaborate his themes until the development, in which the flourish of the trumpet imperiously demonstrates its superiority, before the first theme introduces the recapitulation in *fortissimo*. In the coda, Bruckner leads the trumpet theme onwards to a triumphant rejoicing.

The Adagio of the third version is divided into three sections (as opposed to the five-section complexity of the first version): the fast part in the centre in 3/4 time is framed by two sections in 4/4. On closer inspection, one can see this external formal structure repeated in the middle section itself, in which the central part is entitled *Misterioso*. This is one of the spots in Bruckner’s music that trigger deep associations among his audiences. Associations of mourning, of remembrance, of meditation?

The Scherzo begins with a *crescendo* introduction by the strings, followed immediately by the full orchestra in a tough, reckless, and almost belligerent manner. Not much of a theme can be heard here, in the true sense; rather, the pure sound is provided with rhythm. The trio, however, is a *Ländler* (= country dance) melody accompanied by pizzicato basses.

The Finale of the third version contains only 495 bars, as opposed to the 746 bars in the first version. Here, Bruckner and Schalk have carried out massive deletions. After eight bars, the main theme, played *fortissimo*, breaks into the intensification area of the opening. Furthermore, the rhythm of the first part of the theme is identical to the rhythm of

the trumpet motif at the beginning of the work. Yet it is clear that such a theme, seemingly expelled from a catapult, cannot lead to an ending. It serves simply to guide us towards more important matters. The lyrical episode is a double-theme typical of Bruckner, with a dancing melody in the first violins that is contrasted with a chorale-like theme. The third theme group simply depicts a monumental wave-figure in *unisono*, which has an almost double resonance, thanks to the termination of the trill, and plunges into a descent of over two octaves. In the first version, the development serves as an escape valve for various pent-up, dramatic processes, creating an excess of sound that provides merely rudimentary motivic material; however, in the later versions, Bruckner carries out a true development of the themes, in which the dissipation of the tension takes place above the outburst of the trumpet motif. Furthermore, in the first version, he as yet designates this outburst for the recapitulation: however, in the third version, he virtually mutilates the recapitulation, reducing it to a limbless torso of only 30 bars. Here, he includes only the second theme group, leaving the first theme group as well as the *unisono* theme merely to exist in the mind of the listener, as it were. And thus, there is no outburst of the motif theme in the recapitulation. Obviously, Bruckner accepts the most radical consequences of the events in the development – for the motif had already broken through there. The objective of the movement from the very start is the re-establishment of the motif – and now, it is left to the coda to accomplish that. In the last part of the coda, the theme from the first movement reappears in its entirety, *fortissimo*; however, now in a bright major key, like a kind of apotheosis.

Whereas on the one hand the reduction of the reprise to a limbless torso can certainly be explained as an adjustment to the prevailing conditions of reception – thus the work was “streamlined” – on the other hand, one is definitely aware of the previously mentioned “change in concept”. The development as a central point, and not as an objective of the finale, nudges the listener prematurely towards the new idea of a teleological final conclusion, in which the “telos” (the motif) refers simultaneously to the cyclical thinking, like an all-encompassing component.

Franz Steiger

English translation: Fiona J. Stroker-Gale

## Marek Janowski

Marek Janowski has been Artistic Director of the Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin since 2002 and in 2005 he was also appointed Musical Director of the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande in Geneva. He is in demand as a guest conductor throughout the world, working on a regular basis in the USA with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (where he holds the Otto Klemperer Guest Conducting Chair), the Boston and San Francisco Symphony Orchestras, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and in Europe with the Orchestre de Paris, the Orchester der Tonhalle Zürich, the Danish National Symphony Orchestra in Copenhagen and the NDR-Sinfonieorchester Hamburg. Born in 1939 in Warsaw and educated in Germany, Marek Janowski's artistic path led him from Assistant positions in Aachen, Cologne, Düsseldorf and Hamburg to his appointment as General Music Director in Freiburg im Breisgau (1973-75) and Dortmund (1975-79). Whilst in Dortmund, his reputation grew rapidly and he became greatly involved in the international opera scene. There is not one world-renowned opera house where he has not been a regular guest since the late '70s, from the Metropolitan Opera New York to the Bayerischer Staatsoper Munich; from Chicago and San Francisco to Hamburg; from Vienna and Berlin to Paris. Marek Janowski stepped back from the opera scene in the 1990's in order to concentrate on orchestral work and was thus able to continue the great German conducting tradition in the symphonic repertoire. He now enjoys an outstanding reputation amongst the great orchestras of Europe and North America. He is recognised for his ability to create orchestras of international standing as well as for his innovative programmes and for bringing a fresh and individual interpretation to familiar repertoire. Between 1984 and 2000, as Musical Director of the Orchestre Philharmonique

## Orchestre de la Suisse Romande

The Orchestre de la Suisse Romande was founded in 1918 by Ernest Ansermet, who remained principal conductor until 1967. The orchestra employs 112 permanent musicians and performs a series of subscription concerts in Geneva and Lausanne, the symphony concerts of the city of Geneva, the annual concert for the United Nations as well as playing for opera performances at the Grand Théâtre de Genève.

Marek Janowski has been the orchestra's artistic and music director since 1 September 2005.

The Orchestre de la Suisse Romande achieved world renown under its founding conductor and under its successive music directors: Paul

Kletzki (1967-1970), Wolfgang Sawallisch (1970-1980), Horst Stein (1980-1985), Armin Jordan (1985-1997), Fabio Luisi (1997-2002), Pinchas Steinberg (2002-2005) and continues to make an active contribution to music history by discovering or supporting contemporary composers of prime importance whose works were first performed in Geneva. These include Benjamin Britten, Claude Debussy, Peter Eötvös, Heinz Holliger, Arthur Honegger, Michael

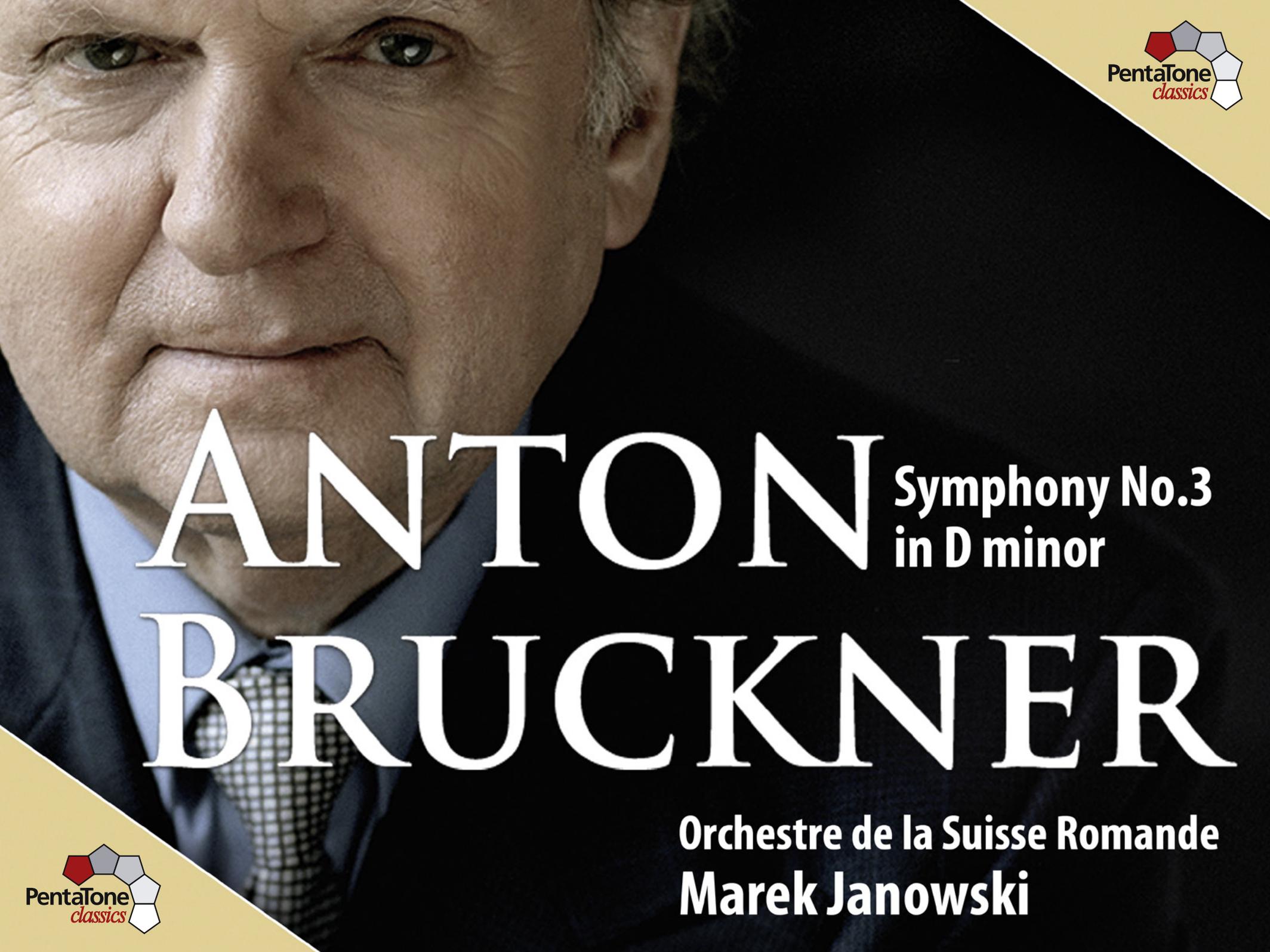
Jarrell, Frank Martin, Darius Milhaud, Igor Stravinsky and others. Since the year 2000 the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande has given the world premieres of about twenty works in cooperation with Radio Suisse Romande. The orchestra also supports contemporary music in Switzerland by regularly commissioning works from the composers William Blank and Michael Jarrell.

Working closely with Radio-Télévision Suisse Romande, music performed by the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande was very soon broadcast on radio and on short wave and was thus received by millions of listeners throughout the world. Thanks to the partnership with Decca, which gave rise to several legendary recordings, the orchestra's renown continued to grow. The OSR has also recorded for A&E, Cascavelle, Denon, EMI, Erato, Harmonia Mundi, PentaTone and Philips and many of these recordings have been awarded major prizes.

The Orchestre de la Suisse Romande has undertaken international tours and performed in prestigious concert halls in Asia (Tokyo, Seoul and Beijing), in Europe (Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Vienna, Salzburg, Madrid, Barcelona, Brussels, Amsterdam, Budapest, Istanbul, London, Paris etc.) as well as in major American cities (Boston, New York, San Francisco, Washington etc.). During the 2009/2010 season the OSR will perform in Montreux, Gstaad, Zurich, Bucharest, Prague, Turin, Zagreb and Budapest.

The orchestra has also performed at various festivals, for instance, since 2000 the Budapest Spring Festival, the Chorégies d'Orange, the Festival de Musica de Canarias, the Lucerne Festival At Easter, the Festival of Radio France and of Montpellier, the Menuhin Festival in Gstaad, the Robeco Zomerconcerten, at the Septembre Musical Festival in Montreux, at the Bucharest Festival.

The Orchestre de la Suisse Romande is supported by the canton and the city of Geneva, by Radio-Télévision Suisse Romande, friends associations as well as by several sponsors and donors. For the concerts performed in Lausanne the orchestra also benefits from support by the canton de Vaud



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