

1 NYP 19-20: Bruckner: Meet Jaap!

2 (BILLBOARD)

3 AB: ...and "this week."

4 (MUSIC EXCERPT)

5 AB: Music Director Jaap van Zweden leads a performance
6 of Bruckner's 8th Symphony. Hello. This is Alec
7 Baldwin. Thanks very much for joining me on a
8 program that also features music of Conrad Tao.
9 Conrad's piece is designed to go "attaca"—that is
10 "without pause" into the Bruckner. We'll hear more
11 about that (and more) as Jaap van Zweden
12 conducts...*The New York Philharmonic This Week.*

13 (SLIGHT PAUSE)

14 (ACTUALITY)

15 AB: Composer Conrad Tao on the first work on this
16 week's program.

17 (SLIGHT PAUSE)

18 AB: At just 24 years of age, Conrad Tao has already
19 established himself as one of those artists that
20 can truly "do it all." Equally gifted as a
21 composer, pianist, and violinist, Mr. Tao enjoys a
22 long-standing relationship with Jaap van Zweden:

23 (ACTUALITIES)

24 AB: Our program opens with a World Premiere, New York
25 Philharmonic Commission by Conrad Tao entitled,
26 "Everything Must Go." Here, again, is the composer
27 to tell us more:

28 (ACTUALITY)

29 AB: Bruckner's Eighth Symphony was the last symphony
30 the composer completed during his lifetime. Now
31 before we talk more about that, I want to dispel a
32 common myth that links the music of Bruckner and
33 the music of Mahler. Yes, both composer spoke
34 German and indeed, both men had a certain penchant
35 for composing music on a grand scale. But there is
36 a common misconception that these two were
37 contemporaries and that's simply not true. Bruckner
38 was 36 years old when Mahler was born. If the math
39 by itself doesn't mean anything to you, then
40 consider for a moment that only 14 years separated
41 Beethoven and Mozart. While Mozart's influence is
42 evident in some of Beethoven's early works, I think
43 few would argue with me that Beethoven quickly
44 asserted his own distinct voice. Even the most
45 novice listener would probably guess that the
46 composer of the Jupiter Symphony was not also the
47 composer of the Grosse Fugue.

48 Well, the same holds true for Bruckner and Mahler.
49 But misconceptions are common when it comes to
50 Bruckner ...and this was really true almost from the
51 beginning.

52 Born in a small Austrian town in 1824, Bruckner
53 considered himself Beethoven's successor in the
54 world of symphonic writing. There are those who
55 would support this argument by citing his expansion
56 of the symphonic form. He also intensified poetic
57 ideas in his writing. And his musical language is
58 nothing short of grand. Still others, however, feel
59 that Bruckner's grandeur is nothing more than
60 pretentiousness and that his poetry is overwritten
61 prose. To these detractors, his expansion of the
62 symphonic form is a mere exercise in megalomania
63 inspired by his devotion to Wagner. And so the
64 battle over Bruckner is arguably still being fought
65 eleven decades after the composer's death. Jaap van
66 Zweden tells us more:

67 (ACTUALITY)

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71 AB: I mentioned that the controversy over Bruckner's
72 music began early—and this is true from the very
73 first performances of his early symphonies. One of
74 the officials at the Vienna Conservatory told
75 Bruckner that he should throw all of his music
76 right into the trash. The first performance of
77 Bruckner's Third Symphony—dedicated quote, "*To the*
78 *Master, Richard Wagner, in deepest reverence,*" was
79 nothing short of a debacle. And even after the
80 relative success of his Fourth Symphony, critics—
81 including many famous musicians of the day, such as
82 Brahms---were savagely critical of Bruckner's
83 efforts. This continued until the Seventh Symphony—
84 which triumphed in Leipzig, Munich, and Graz before
85 being torn apart by a small, but vocal anti-
86 Bruckner constituent in Vienna. Nevertheless,
87 Bruckner persisted. Encouraged by the unprecedented
88 success of his Seventh Symphony, he immediately
89 plunged into what would become his largest
90 symphony, the 8th. Jaap van Zweden continues the
91 discussion:

92 (ACTUALIT)

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96 AB: The composer Hugo Wolf wrote that Bruckner's eighth
97 Symphony was *"the creation of a giant, surpassing*
98 *in spiritual dimension and magnitude all the other*
99 *symphonies of the master."* Like the music of his
100 idol, Richard Wagner, the sonorities are rich and
101 powerful, with strong emphasis on the low brass.
102 The beauty of this symphony is both its scale and
103 magnificent, luxurious pacing.

104 AB: After an energetic, ferocious Scherzo, a gorgeous
105 Adagio follows—filled with ravishingly lyrical
106 passages. Once again, Jaap van Zweden:

107 (ACTUALITY)

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117 AB: When discussing Bruckner, one cannot help but talk
118 about the performance edition being used. Bruckner
119 continually revised his compositions—several times
120 in some cases. The Eighth Symphony exists in two
121 versions by the composer plus some subsequent
122 editions by other composers and arrangers. The
123 original version was completed around 1887 and
124 another was completed in 1890. Primary differences
125 between these two editions include a loud ending to
126 the first movement and a different tonality for the
127 climax of the slow movement. The earlier version is
128 also notably longer than the 1890 version. It also
129 has a different instrumentation. I asked Jaap van
130 Zweden which version we'd hear on this
131 broadcast...and why:

132 (ACTUALITY)

133 AB: And there you have it. So now we hear *Everything*
134 *Music Go* by Conrad Tao...and that will go directly
135 into the Symphony No. 8 by Anton Bruckner. Jaap
136 van Zweden conducts...the New York Philharmonic.

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141 **AB:** **Symphony No. 8 in c-minor by Anton Bruckner. The**
142 **New York Philharmonic was conducted by its Music**
143 **Director, Jaap van Zweden. Just prior to the**
144 **Bruckner, we hear Conrad Tao's companion piece,**
145 ***Everything Must Go*. I'm Alec Baldwin and you've**
146 **been listening to the New York Philharmonic This**
147 **Week.**

148 (PROMO)

149 **AB:** **Simone Lamsma is the soloist in the Britten violin**
150 **concerto next time, on the New York Philharmonic**
151 **This Week. This is Alec Baldwin. Please join me**
152 **for a program that will also feature the Leningrad**
153 **Symphony by Dmitri Shostakovich. Music Director**
154 **Jaap van Zweden will conduct...the New York**
155 **Philharmonic This Week.**