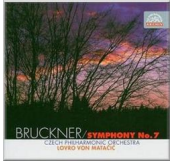


Anton Bruckner – Symphony No.7 (Matacic) [1967]

Written by bluesever

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1. *Symphony Nr.7 - I. Allegro moderato* 2. *Symphony Nr.7 - II. Adagio. Sehr feierlich und sehr langsam* 3. *Symphony Nr.7 - III. Scherzo. Sehr schnell* 4. *Symphony Nr.7 - IV. Finale. Bewegt, doch nicht schnell* Czech Philharmonic Orchestra Lovro von Matacic – conductor

Lovro von Matacic's luminous and moving Bruckner Seventh employs relaxed tempos in the first two movements (similar to Chailly's), but also naturally breathing phrasing alongside rich orchestral sonorities that create an immediately ingratiating atmosphere that he sustains throughout the entire performance. Every passage flows effortlessly out of the one before it--listen to how Matacic skillfully manages the transition from the serene opening to the dancing second subject--here completely fluid where many other readings clumsily lurch from one section to the next. Matacic is at his best at building those great Brucknerian climaxes, such as the long upward drive at the end of the first movement, or the tremendous emotional release in the Adagio (percussion included).

The Czech Philharmonic offers harmoniously beautiful playing, with the brass section sounding forth powerfully (especially in the finale), yet fully integrated into the ensemble balance. The 1967 sound has surprisingly rich presence and satisfying dynamic impact. Libor Pešek also recorded the Seventh with the Czech Philharmonic in the 1980s, a performance some may prefer for its bracingly quick tempos. But those content to immerse themselves in the magical world Matacic creates will find much to treasure in this release. ---Victor Carr Jr, ClassicsToday.com, arkivmusic.com

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