



**GRANT PARK
MUSIC FESTIVAL
IN MILLENNIUM PARK**

Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus
Carlos Kalmar, *Principal Conductor*
Christopher Bell, *Chorus Director*

Kalmar Conducts Bruckner

Wednesday, July 31, 2013 at 6:30PM

Jay Pritzker Pavilion

GRANT PARK ORCHESTRA

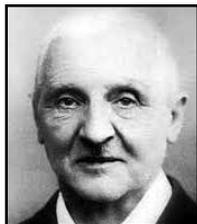
Carlos Kalmar, *Conductor*

BRUCKNER Symphony No. 2 in C Minor (1877 version)
Moderato
Andante: Feierlich, etwas bewegt
Scherzo: Mässig schnell
Finale: Mehr schnell

The position of Artistic Director and Principal Conductor
is partially underwritten by a generous gift from the
Sage Foundation



CARLOS KALMAR's biography can be found on page 8.



SYMPHONY NO. 2 IN C MINOR

(1871-1872, 1876, 1877)

Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)

Bruckner's Symphony No. 2 is scored for pairs of woodwinds, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, and strings. The performance time is sixty minutes. This is the first performance of this Symphony by the Grant Park Orchestra.

The 44-year-old Anton Bruckner, whose blazing musical genius enfolded itself in the unlikely lifelong penumbra of a shuffling peasant, moved from provincial Linz to the worldly and sophisticated Habsburg capital of Vienna in 1868. His former counterpoint teacher at the Vienna Conservatory, the much-respected Simon Sechter, had passed away the preceding September, and Bruckner was appointed to take his place as professor of harmony and counterpoint largely through the advocacy of Johann Herbeck, court conductor and one of the city's chief musical movers. Herbeck recognized not only Bruckner's demonstrated ability as a teacher and one of the country's finest organists (he also took up the post of court organist upon his arrival in Vienna), but sensed as well a burgeoning talent for composition, though his output to that date was largely limited to religious works. Bruckner's interest in orchestral composition had been enflamed by his first acquaintance with the music of Wagner (a performance of *Tannhäuser* in 1863), but before being named to the Vienna post, he had completed only an Overture in G minor and two symphonies which he regarded as student exercises and refused to dignify with a number. (They later came to be known by the remarkable designations of Symphony No. 00 and Symphony No. 0.) The premiere of his acknowledged Symphony No. 1 took place in Linz on May 9, 1868, just weeks before he moved to Vienna, and proved Herbeck's faith in him justified. Despite one critical claim that the First Symphony suffered from "wildness and formlessness," the audience gave the piece a standing ovation.

The press of Bruckner's duties at the Conservatory and at the Hofburg chapel allowed him little time for creative work during the first years after he arrived in Vienna, a situation exacerbated when he was forced to take on additional obligations as a teacher at the College of St. Anna late in 1870 because the paltry salary paid by those institutions did not provide him with a living wage. Herbeck continued to be a staunch supporter of Bruckner during those busy, difficult early years in Vienna, seeking opportunities for him and encouraging the many facets of his work. In 1869, Herbeck arranged for Bruckner to spread his reputation into France by giving a series of organ recitals in Nancy; the concerts were so well received that he was invited to play at Notre Dame in Paris. Two years later, Bruckner was selected to represent Austria (by a jury which Herbeck chaired) at the conclave of organists which was one of the principal cultural adornments of the 1871 International Exhibition in London. When Bruckner arrived in the English capital on July 29, 1871, he was astonished to find that "everywhere my name appears in letters bigger than myself." His concerts at the just-opened Albert Hall and the Crystal Palace, most of which were largely devoted to his improvisations, including an inevitably popular one on "God Save the Queen", were all enthusiastically received (he claimed in a letter to a friend that one recital attracted 70,000 auditors), and plans were made for his return the following year to tour the major British cities. The venture never materialized, but the acclaim that he received during his London visit proved to be the spark that again set off his symphonic creativity.



In October 1871, Bruckner began his Second Symphony and completed it the following September, though it was extensively revised in 1876-1877. The first movement follows traditional, though expansive, sonata form. A hushed but portentous mystery pervades the opening pages, with the tremolo strings providing accompaniment for the short-breathed main theme presented by the cellos. Other thematic kernels appear as the movement unfolds — broad broken chords, a scalar motive in sturdy dotted rhythms, a two-plus-three figuration that was to prove a favorite rhythmic device of Bruckner — before the music quiets to allow three soft taps on the timpani and a moment of silent repose to indicate the arrival of the second theme, a lyrical melody again entrusted to the cello above the pizzicato foundation of the basses and a gently rocking pattern in the violins. Other motives are heard, most notably a curious, repetitious idea begun by the unison strings. The exposition is closed by a brief but optimistic melody with a turn figure initiated by the oboe and then appropriated by the other woodwinds. Another silence and an arpeggiated horn solo mark the onset of the development section, which manages to incorporate most of the thematic material of the movement. A full recapitulation of the themes and a stentorian coda in the tragically heroic home key conclude the movement. The *Andante* is one of Bruckner's grand symphonic hymns, an affirmation of his abiding faith, into which is woven a quotation from the "Benedictus" movement of his Mass in F minor of 1872. In the *Scherzo*, Bruckner unleashed propulsive, stomping rhythms that are balanced by a playful, major-key trio in the style of the Austrian *Ländler*. The massive finale is in sonata form, and uses another quotation from the F minor Mass (the closing measures of the "Kyrie" in a hymnal setting for strings following a huge climax and a ringing silence) to mark the end of the exposition section. A blazing paean to C major brings the Symphony to a grand, life-affirming close.

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