

## **Understanding Classical Music**

The subject at the October meeting was the Austrian composer Anton Bruckner. Bruckner is usually thought of as a symphonist but this BBC podcast explored the composer's works from the beginning of his musical career. Bruckner trained as an organist from a very early age but after his father's death his mother sent him to train as a teacher, though not of music. He obtained a position as general teacher and organist at the age of 21 and continued his teacher training to become qualified to teach in higher education.

Bruckner's family were staunch Catholics so it is not surprising that his early compositions were religious in nature. Eventually he became teacher of musical composition at the Vienna Conservatory. However, it wasn't until the first performance of his 7<sup>th</sup> symphony that Bruckner gained international recognition – at the unusually late age of 55.

In the second part of the meeting the group watched a video explaining the intricacies of Bruckner's 8<sup>th</sup> symphony, considered to be one of his finest works.

The next meeting will be 25<sup>th</sup> November when Howard Goodall will recount 'The Truth About Christmas Carols' (BBC video).