

## SYMPHONY NO. 1 “TITAN”

Gustav Mahler was born in 1860. He conducted the first performance of his First Symphony on 20 November 1889 in Budapest, where he was director of The Royal Opera. The work can still be considered the most original first symphony ever written.

Mahler found his musical metier early. At the age of twenty he had already established an individual style with the cantata, “Das Klagende Lied”, a work which was violently rejected a year later by a jury of which Brahms was a member. His mastery as a composer was even more evident in the “Songs of a Wayfarer” of 1884.

These songs had been inspired by Mahler’s love for a young singer, Johanna Richter, and later his first symphony echoed several of the themes from these songs. While working on the symphony in Leipzig, Mahler again fell in love, this time with Marion von Weber, whose husband was a grandson of the composer and had commissioned Mahler to prepare a stage version of his grandfather’s unfinished opera, “Die Drei Pintos”. Mahler was totally exalted by his affair with Marion von Weber, claiming that she had given a new dimension to his life. Max Steinitzer, one of those close to Mahler at this stage of his career, reported that he seemed “drunk with the beauty of the work and with that of the sounds within him.” The symphony was finished in 1888 and the ecstatic composer wrote, “Emotions became so powerful in me that they gushed forth like an impetuous torrent.”

Mahler had from the beginning been both ambitious and sure of himself. Speaking in Leipzig in 1888 of his newly completed First Symphony, he said that the work would provoke astonishment. To have to wait another eighteen months before presenting it to the public was a great disappointment. He himself directed the first performance in Budapest in 1889. It was then described as a symphonic poem in two parts but it was not well received, probably because it was not generally understood and Mahler had not provided any kind of explanatory programs. For subsequent performances, in Hamburg in 1893 and Vienna in 1900, Mahler took the precaution of providing lengthy notes to the work, now described as a symphony and titled “Titan” to represent, according to Mahler, “a strong, heroic man, his life and sufferings, his battles and defeat at the hands of Fate”.

The first movement starts with a slow introduction and immediately shows that Mahler was a born orchestrator. The music is intended to represent a forest where the sunlight of an early morning in spring shimmers, and the world is waking after the long sleep of winter. Distant hunting horns sound and the clarinet imitates a cuckoo in intervals of a perfect fourth note, as is usual, a third. The predominant interval of the entire symphony is the filling fourth and, from its use in the introduction, may conveniently be termed “the nature motif”. The tempo quickens and the cellos tenderly introduce a theme from the second of the “Songs of a Wayfarer”, a song which provides the main subject for the symphony’s first movement. The music, in somewhat free sonata form, has a youthful vitality. After a strong climax the development recovers the tranquillity of the very first bars. It then becomes darker and darker. Recapitulation and coda (both in a bright D major) are preceded by two flourishes of trumpets closely following each other, the second of which, by returning to D major, brings the movement to an end.

Like the first, and in spite of its plebeian overtones, the second movement is mostly cast in an atmosphere of mediaeval

castles and forests, which was the only aspect of the work that the critics of 1889 could understand or accept. We hear a *ländler* in A major, marked *kräftig bewegt*. The central trio, a waltz with trumpet sounds, is followed by a shortened version of the *ländler*. At its first performance the musical sound of the third movement, marked *Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen*, was a complete innovation. It is based on the song “Frère Jacques” (“Bruder Martin” in German) and is a sort of funeral march. These movements are the most typical of Mahler’s style, particularly in its contrast of moods, both disturbing and tender. The “Bruder Martin” tune appears three times all together, but on the second occasion it is only briefly suggested. In the middle of the movement, muted violins quietly introduce a second “Wayfarer” theme, the end of the fourth song. The funeral march then appears again, leading to a brief climax with a flash of tavern music and then silence.

Fritz Lohr, one of Mahler’s friends, told how during the first performance in Budapest a lady beside him jumped out of her seat at the opening chords of the last movement, dropping everything from her hands. In its dimensions, sounds and psychological weight the last movement alone counterbalances all three preceding ones. This is a feature typical of the period, but the way Mahler handled his structural problems was amazingly original. The explosive beginning is in F minor and Mahler himself described it as “the cry of a deeply wounded heart”. The movement continues on a main theme derived from the development section of the first movement. Mahler’s problem was how to equal and surpass the vitality of the earlier theme in D major. He attempts it gradually in three steps and achieves it only at the last.

Out of chaos emerges first a broad and beautiful melody in D flat major which ultimately fades; later comes a flourish of trumpets in C major and finally a great chord in D major “like a flash of lightning from another world.” This corresponds with a decisive turn of events and the second half of the movement, not without recalling the beginning of the work, consolidates this.

## SYMPHONY NO. 2 IN C MINOR

The Second Symphony seems to have been stirring in Mahler’s thoughts for a good long while before he actually sat down to commit notes to paper; sketches for the score go back to the seasons 1886-88 when Mahler, in his mid-twenties, was assistant conductor to the great Artur Nikisch in Leipzig. Mahler’s conducting career rose steadily and in 1891, at the age of 31, he became the conductor of opera at Hamburg Stadttheater. The conductor of the symphony concerts in Hamburg at the time was the man who was probably the most famous and most respected of all living conductors, Hans von Bülow. Though a thirty-year age difference existed between Mahler and Bülow, a warm relationship developed between them based on great mutual respect. Mahler’s admiration for Bülow had begun some years earlier, when the older man was in charge of the concerts of the Meiningen Orchestra at Cassel. Now it was Bülow’s turn to discover that in Mahler the Hamburg State Opera had a young and pioneering dynamo who was able to accomplish extraordinary performances.

In 1893 Bülow was forced by failing health to give up his directorship in Hamburg; the position was offered to Mahler and he accepted. That summer, at Steinbach on the Attersee Lake in Austria, Mahler set out in earnest to work on his Second

Symphony. In an enormous burst of creative energy, Mahler apparently completed all but the last movement of the score during that first summer in the Steinbach retreat.

The last movement gave Mahler some trouble, and it remained for an external stimulus to trigger its completion. Mahler himself described the circumstances. "What happened to me with the last movement of the Second Symphony is simply this: I looked through all the world's literature, even the Bible, to find the redeeming Word – and was finally forced to express my feelings and thought in my own words ... At that time I had long planned to introduce the chorus into the last movement, and had only hesitated in fear that this might be interpreted as a superficial imitation of Beethoven. Just then, Bülow died, and I attended his funeral ... The chorus, near the organ, intoned the Klopstock chorale Auferstehen! ("Resurrection!") It struck me like a bolt of lightning, and everything stood clear and vivid before my soul."

The score was given a partial premiere at a Berlin Philharmonic concert in March, 1895, when Richard Strauss conducted the first three movements, the purely instrumental ones. After the scherzo, Mahler was called out no fewer than five times, despite the less than glowing reviews of the time. The first performance of the complete work was given at a Berlin Philharmonic concert conducted by Mahler in December 1895. Thirteen years later, as conductor of the New York Philharmonic Society, Mahler introduced the symphony to the United States.

The second Symphony is a veritable colossus. It takes nearly an hour and a half to perform, it requires a large mixed chorus and two vocal soloists, and it is scored for an enormous orchestra: 4 flutes, 4 piccolos, 4 oboes, 2 English horns, 5 clarinets, 2 E-flat clarinets and bass clarinet, 4 bassoons and contrabassoons, 6 horns (and 4 horns off-stage), 6 trumpets (and 4 off-stage), 4 trombones, tuba, 2 sets of tympani, bass drum, snare drum (one or more), cymbals, small and large tamtams, triangle, glockenspiel, 3 bells, Rute (bundle of sticks), 2 harps, organ and strings (additional tympani, bass drum, cymbals and triangle are indicated "in the distance").

The Symphony has been described as a "tonal allegory of the life of man." Mahler himself described the first movement as a "Celebration of the Dead" (Totenfeier). The second and third movements, following after the tumultuous upheaval of the first, are more reflective: the second is a gentle intermezzo and the third a grim scherzo, "a recollection of the world's vulgarities." The fourth movement is titled Urlicht ("Primal Light") and is a haunting song for contralto and orchestra. The text is taken from Des Knaben Wunderhorn ("The Youth's Magic Horn"), a collection of German folk poetry much loved by Mahler and used by him in his music repeatedly. In the last movement, which incorporates the setting of Klopstock's "Resurrection" Ode, Mahler uses all the forces he can summon to portray for us a musical spectacle of the Day of Judgement. Klopstock's verses are used, but Mahler also adds verses of his own.

After Mahler completed the symphony, he apparently felt that the tender Austrian dancelike second movement was out of character with the rest of the score. Rather than remove the movement or change it, Mahler took a different and rather extraordinary course: at the end of the first movement he directed that a pause of at least five minutes should be allowed before the Andante begins. He wrote: "A definite pause for organization is necessary after the first movement because the second movement does not achieve an effect of contrast, but is merely a discrepancy after the first movement. This is my fault, and is not due to any lack of understanding on the hearer's

part... While the first third, fourth and fifth movement hang together thematically and spiritually, the second movement stands alone and interrupts, in a sense, the stern and inexorable sequence of events." Whether he thought so or not, however, Mahler created in the second movement the perfect contrast for the heaven-storming music of the first movement; the graceful contours of the Andante place the music among the most reassuring Mahler left us and its positioning in the architectural structure of the score has about it the element of inevitable rightness.

## Symphony 2- IV

### Text of Fourth Movement - Urlicht

#### (Primal Light)

(From Des Knaben Wunderhorn, "The Youth's Magic Horn", German folk poetry)

(Contralto Solo)

O Röschen roth!

Der Mensch liegt in grösster Noth!

Der Mensch liegt in grösster Pein!

Je lieber möcht'ich in Himmel sein!

Da kam ich auf einem breiten Weg!

Da kam ein Engelein und wollt'mich

abweisen;

Ach nein! Ich liess mich nicht abweisen!

Ich bin von Gott und will wieder zu Gott!

Der liebe Gott wird mir ein Lichtchen geben,

Wird leuchten mir bis in das ewig selig Leben!

### Text of Fifth Movement – Finale with Orchestra, Chorus, Soloists

(From Klopstock's chorale Auferstehen!)

(Chorus with Soprano Solo)

Aufersteh'n, ja aufersteh'n wirst du,

Mein Staub, nach kurzer Ruh!

Unsterblich Leben! Unsterblich Leben

Wird Der dich rief, dich rief dich geben.

Wieder aufzublüh'n wirst du gesät!

Der Herr der Ernte geht

Und sammelt Garben

Uns ein, die starben!

(Contralto Solo)

O glaube, mein Herz, O glaube:

Es geht dir nichts verloren!

(Chorus with Contralto Solo)

Dein ist, ja dein, was du gesehnt!

Dein, was du geliebt, was du gestritten!

(Soprano Solo)

O glaube: du wardst nicht umsonst geboren!

Hast nicht umsonst gelebt, gelitten!

(Chorus and Soloists)

Was entstanden ist, das muss vergehen!

Was vergangen, auferstehen!

Hör" auf zu beben!

Bereite dich zu leben!

(Contralto and Soprano)

O Schmerz! Du Alldurchdringer!

Dir bin ich entrungen.

O Tod! Du Allbezwinger!

Nun bist du bezwungen!  
 Mit Flügeln die ich mir errungen,  
 In Liebesstreben werd'ich entschweben  
 Zum Licht zu dem kein Aug' gedrunge!  
 (Chorus)  
 Sterben werd'ich um zu Leben!  
 Aufersteh'n, ja aufersteh'n wirst du,  
 Mein Herz, in einem Nu!  
 Was du geschlagen  
 Zu Gott wird es dich tragen!

## SYMPHONY No. 3

It was in 1895, the year after completion of the Symphony No. 2, that Gustav Mahler, conductor at the Municipal Theatre in Hamburg and a composer only during his summer holidays, started work on his Symphony No. 3. This vast symphony took shape rapidly in the cottage which Mahler had built for himself at Steinbach on the banks of the Attersee. It was here that he had spent the previous summer too, in this cottage insulated against all sounds from outside, including the voices of children and the song of birds.

As in the case of Brahms, who struggled for many years to complete his first symphony only to create a second symphony almost immediately thereafter, Mahler came to grips with this massive new work with astonishing speed, as if having been released from his fetters by completion of the Symphony No. 2.

There are many references in letters written by Mahler to friends and in the diaries of his close friend Natalie Bauer-Lechner, who jotted down Mahler's words verbatim almost every day, concerning the progress of work on this symphony. Moreover, a large number of sketches for the work are still extant, and we are thus able to gauge the creative process with some accuracy.

Mahler produced abbreviated full scores for the second and following four movements in the course of the first summer he spent on the work, and had completed a full score in draft of the fifth movement by August 1. He originally intended the work to consist of as many as seven movements, and to use a song composed in 1892 for the final movement. Full scores of several of the movements were completed by the spring the following year (1896), and in the summer he began work on the first movement, which he had left over until that year. However, the movement grew to unexpected proportions, into a massive piece taking a full thirty minutes to perform. The work as a whole was to consist of six movements, and the song "Das himmlische Leben" from "Des Knaben Wunderhorn" became the final piece as well as the point of departure for the succeeding Symphony No. 4. Mahler originally intended to use this song as the last movement of the Symphony No. 3, and suggestions of this plan remain in the sections of the first, second, and fifth movements featuring melodic and motivic variations on this song. The dates October 17 and November 22, 1896 are inscribed on the full scores of the first and sixth movements respectively, and this latter date may be assumed to be the date on which the work was brought to full completion.

The second movement achieved considerable popularity in advance of the premiere of the work in its entirety. Unusually for a work by Mahler, the piece, entitled "Blumenstück" (Flower Piece), was first performed not under the composer's own baton but by Arthur Nikisch, Mahler's erstwhile rival, in Berlin on November 9, 1896, and met immediately with a rapturous

reception. Mahler himself subsequently conducted this movement alone in 1897 and 1898. Felix Weingartner directed a performance of the second, third, and sixth movements in Berlin on March 9, 1897. The third and sixth movements met with a mixed response. The full score was published by Weinberger of Vienna in 1899, but the first performance of the entire work had to wait until June 9, 1902, when it was given at a concert in Krefeld conducted by Mahler himself.

It was not merely fortuitous that six years elapsed between the completion and the premiere of the work. The person most surprised, moved, troubled, and even awed by the enormity of the proportions the work had assumed was Mahler himself, he who had borne direct witness to the appearance of the symphony at the tip of his pen. It is interesting in this connection to observe that Mahler frequently remarked to acquaintances about his sense of being "compelled to write". By this he means that he does not compose consciously through the exercise of his own will: he senses that an entity transcending his own self and immeasurable in terms of human faculties is using him, the composer, as a medium for writing music down on paper. We may thus observe that the motive force for Mahler's creativity originated in unconscious layers deep within his spirit.

After beginning the work, Mahler remarked jokingly that it was his intention at last to compose an enjoyable work which would make him a rich man. But it had become a matter of total irrelevance by the time the first movement had been composed, and this at such an astounding speed. It was Mahler himself who was the first to question the justification of a first movement requiring such enormous orchestral forces and more than thirty minutes to perform.

Although, after its first performance, Mahler directed fifteen performances of the Symphony No. 3, this work was, until some twenty years ago, one of the most neglected of Mahler's symphonies. For example, the English musicologist Deryck Cooke, who in his later days was such a staunch and impassioned advocate of Mahler, described the work in 1960 as a failure. However, the Symphony No. 3 is now regarded as a masterpiece of central importance in terms of both Mahler performance and research. This is the first work into which Mahler incorporates his whole universe and which might appropriately be described as a manifestation of symphonic metaphysics. In reflection of this, Mahler researchers continue to bring their critical chisels to bear on this edifice as if to uncover the secrets of an entire cosmos, and to challenge from many different angles the colossal enigma presented by the work. Just as in the case of several of Beethoven's symphonies a century ago, so Mahler's Third has become a subject for debate among those with an interest in music, in the manner of the Bible or like a precipitous, unscaled peak which constantly allures the bold adventurer. The performance given on this album may itself be seen as a contribution to this challenge.

In order to rectify imbalances between the movements, Mahler here for the first time introduces units (referred to as "Abteilungen" or "parts") which stand over and above the individual movements themselves. In this work, the first movement alone accounts for Part 1, whereas the remaining five movements are gathered together as Part 2. Although the four inner movements adhere approximately to the structure of the Symphony No. 2, the two outer movements present a major contrast: the first movement is of a size and structure which make it impossible to subsume the movement within conventional concepts, and the sixth and final movement. Furthermore, the titles which Mahler wrote in the score but

which were omitted from the published edition and other testimonies indicate that the arrangement of these six movements was intended to reflect a gradual climb up through the cosmic hierarchy. The work begins on a cold and stony tone suggesting inorganic rock, the second movement is intended to represent plants, the third movement animals, the fourth movement man, and the fifth movement angels, culminating in the attainment of divine love in the sixth movement. Each movement in fact bears eight titles, but there is no space to elaborate on this here. As pointed out by the American historian William McGrath, this arrangement is based on a philosophy culled synthetically from the thought of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Wagner, who were all the rage among progressive-minded Austrian youth during the late nineteenth century. Man, who makes his appearance in the fourth movement as a being gradually becoming conscious of the anguish of the “cosmological will”, seeks redemption from the “morning angels”, redemption which comes about through divine love. Although not included in the published score, the manuscript score is inscribed with verbal entries at eleven points.

It would be going too far to interpret this symphony exclusively from such a philosophical or programmatic perspective. However, even without knowledge of such extra-musical aspects, the fact that the symphony is an image as well as an attempt to make sense of the world and the cosmos comes across in the music itself. There is perhaps no other work in Mahler's oeuvre which, when given a first-rate performance, seems to become so much shorter every time one hears it. The prolixity which seems to characterize the work on first hearing appears totally to evaporate as one grows more familiar with it.

As mentioned above, Part 1 of the work consists of the first movement alone. In the edition of the complete works and in several other editions, the work as a whole is indicated as being in the key of d minor. It is certainly true that the symphony begins in d minor and ends in D major, but Mahler himself regarded the first movement as a sonata movement with a prelude, and the movement in fact ends in F major. One should point out, however, that the form is highly unusual, and there is a lack of unity among scholars even as regards where to set the principal divisions. The key of F major plays a very important role in this movement, to such an extent that it would appear quite as justifiable to label the symphony as being in F major as in d minor. The work begins in a similar manner to the beginning of the last movement of the Symphony No. 2. The thematic groups which will come to the forefront later on in the work are initially introduced in parallel with pauses between them. The main role in the movement is played by a “democratic” march in F major. In the procession led by a military band we see not only fawns and elves, gods of many religions, Bacchanalians and animals, but also a May Day parade conceived as a nationalistic and theatrical religious celebration of the type started by Victor Adler, the founder of the Austrian Social Democratic Party, who had been a friend of Mahler since the latter's youth. We sense the procession of workers marching in a silent and orderly manner, clad in their finest outdoor wear and in national costume.

The remaining movements constitute Part 2 of the symphony. The middle movements correspond to those of the Symphony No. 2. The second movement “Tempo di Menuetto”, is the second “Blumenstück” (Flower Piece). In its unaffected innocence, which was the cause of its popularity ever since the first performance, we sense a depiction of the world of plants. Also as in the case of the Symphony No. 2, the third movement is a paraphrase of the song “Ablösung im Sommer”, composed

between 1887 and 1890 and published in 1892, based on “Des Knaben Wunderhorn”. Mahler himself referred to this movement as the “Tierstück” (Animal Piece). In duple rhythm, the piece has the character of a scherzo. The voice of a donkey appears from amidst music laced with humour and biting sarcasm, thus suggesting the content of the movement, although in the song “Lob des hohen Verstandes” this same voice is used as the symbol of the incompetent critic. A solo featuring a distant posthorn appears twice, and the interpretation of this solo both within and without its context constitutes an important point of regards understanding the symphony. A vision of the forces of nature in all their elemental horror appears momentarily as the movement approaches its end.

The semi-somnambulant fourth movement, which has as its text a passage from Nietzsche's “Thus Spoke Zarathustra”, was interestingly composed at almost the same time as Richard Strauss's famous symphonic poem of the same name. The 1890's were important years as regards acceptance of Nietzsche's philosophy. Several of the themes from the first movement are here requoted and throw light on the meaning of the text. The fifth movement, in which the contralto solo is augmented by a female chorus, a children's choir positioned high up in the hall, and bells, is also based on a poem from “Des Knaben Wunderhorn”. The bright musical conception clashes with the textual content, thus setting up a barrier to easy comprehension. The connection with “Das himmlische Leben”, which was originally intended as the Finale, can here be heard to clearest effect (Index 2).

The final movement, in a slow tempo suggesting the all-embracing light of divine love and redemption, is in the key of D major. After many twists and turns, the purified music seems to end on a tone of redemption and triumph. But is this hymn of praise real, or is it a mere illusion?

With our spirits moved to their depths, we are left to ponder everything once again, beginning with the lifeless world which emerges at the beginning of the work. Mahler's music provides us with no real solutions or conclusions: it is our own allotted task to consider what lies before us while or after listening to the music.

## Symphony No. 3

### Vierter Satz

O Mensch! Gib acht!  
Was spricht die tiefe Mitternacht?  
Ich schlief, ich schlief-,  
Aus tiefem Traum bin ich erwacht:-  
Die Welt ist tief,  
Und tiefer als der Tag gedacht.  
Tief ist ihr Weh-,  
Lust – tiefer noch als Herzleid:  
Weh spricht: Vergeh!  
Doch alle Lust will Ewigkeit-,  
-will tiefe, tiefe Ewigkeit!

### Fünfter Satz

Es sungen drei Engel einen süßen Gesang,  
Mit Freuden es selig in den Himmel klang:  
Sie jauchzten fröhlich auch dabei,  
Daß Petrus sei von Sünden frei.



Und als der Herr Jesus zu Tisch saß,  
Mit seinen zwölf Jüngern das Abendmahl aß,  
Da sprach der Herr Jesus: "Was stehst du denn hier?  
Wenn ich dich anseh', so weinst du mir."

"Und sollt' ich nicht weinen, du Gütiger Gott:  
Du sollst' ja nicht weinen!  
Sollst ja nicht weinen!  
Ich hab' übertreten die zehn Gebot;  
Ich gehe und weine ja bitterlich,  
Ach komm und erbarme dich über mich!"

"Hast du den übertreten die zehn Gebot,  
So fall auf die Knie und bete zu Gott,  
Liebe nur Gott in alle Zeit,  
So wirst du erlangen die himmlischen Freud'!"

Die himmlischen Freud' ist eine selige Stadt;  
Die himmlische Freud', die kein Ende mehr hat.  
Die himmlische Freude war Petro bereit't  
Durch Jesum und allen in Seligkeit.

## SYMPHONY NO. 4

In the Fourth Symphony (1899-1901) Mahler identifies with child-like visions – visions less simple than angelically simplistic, less banal than blazingly devotional. In her book *Mein Leben* (1959), Alma Mahler wrote that for him it was "like an old painting on a golden ground... I resented an archaizing that had no relation to our time. I could not see that he composed this because he was so naïve – because he was a child, not a casuist, as one might think at a first glance..." The first movement offers a strongly classical countenance that introduces on the one hand a parody of rusticity reminiscent of things in Haydn and Schubert, on the other an intensity of development worthy of Beethoven (one of Mahler's great spiritual gods), the whole projected against a landscape where intricate craftsmanship is the servant of sublime art, where homage to ages past goes hand in hand with romantic memories and a dream-like orientalism prophetic of things to come in *das Lied von der Erde*.

"In the second movement", according to Alma, "the composer was under the spell of the self portrait by Arnold Böcklin in which Death fiddles in the painter's ear, while the latter sits entranced". Originally called *Freund Hein spielt auf!* (a reference to that congenial spirit who in the description of Matthias Claudius used to conduct reluctant souls to the Great Beyond), it is less a bucolic Beethovenian scherzo (or a hammering Brucknerian variant) than a delicately scored spectral ländler with two trios, informed by images of Schubertian Vienna in oscillation with rituals born of a medieval Teutonic Totentanz. Conceived as early as 1892, the less obviously classical double-variation third movement, in which, Bruno Walter remembered, Mahler imagined "one of those church sepulchers showing a recumbent stone image of the deceased with the arms crossed in eternal sleep" remains one of the great lyrical outpourings of the late Romantic age. Its coda – on the one hand a resplendent, powerfully-felt vision where out of the hush of G major a high B on violins grows in strength to suddenly swing the music into E major (Beethoven's most devotional key it will be recalled) for a blazing paen proclaiming the celestial city that is the *el Dorado* of our symbolic child's journey; on the other, a statement of enigmatic, questioning cadence striking for how the home key is

finally established through dominant preparation rather than tonic confirmation (a sublime stroke) – is quite unique.

The finale, for voice and orchestra, setting *Das Himmlische Leben* from Arnim and Bretano's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* anthology originally published in 1805 and 1808, takes the form of a song in five stanzas, punctuated by an orchestral ritornello which refers back cyclically to the first movement's introductory three bars. Conceptually, it's a declaration of gentle spirit, of unorthodox idea. Never once does it resort to those mighty gestures of statement that had been the happy hunting-ground of Beethoven and Schubert, of Brahms and Bruckner. Its whispered farewell is not in G major but in E: not a wrong key, simply a return to that magical celestial world of another dimension promised so intensely by the closing dusk of the third movement. Mahler himself conducted the first performance of this symphony in Munich on 25 November 1901 – to a reception generally hostile and critical.

## Symphony No. 4

### -4-th movement

Wir genießen die himmlischen Freuden,  
D'rum tun wir das Irdischen meiden,  
Kein weltlich Getümmel  
Hört man nicht im Himmel!  
Lebt Alles in sanfter Ruh',  
In sanfter Ruh'.

Wir führen ein englisches Leben!  
Sind dennoch ganz lustig daneben!  
Wir führen ein englisches Leben,  
Wir tanzen und springen,  
Wir hüpfen und singen, wir singen!  
Sanct Peter im Himmel sieht zu!

Johannes das Lämmlein auslasset,  
Der Metzger Herodes draut passet!  
Wir führen ein geduldig's  
Unschuldig's, geduldig's,  
Ein liebliches Lämmlein zu Tod!

Sanct Lucas den Ochsen thät schlachten  
Ohn'neinig's Bedenken und Achten,  
Der Wein kost kein Keller,  
Im himmlischen Keller,  
Die Englein, die backen das Brot.

Gut Kräuter von allerhand Arten,  
Die wachsen im himmlischen Garten!  
Gut' Spargel, Fisolen  
Und was wir nur wollen!  
Ganze Schüsseln voll sind uns bereit!  
Gut' Apfel, gut' Birn und gut' Trauben!  
Die Gärtner, die alles erlauben!  
Willst Rehbock, willst Hasen  
auf offener Strassen  
Sie laufern herbei!

Sollt ein Festtag etwa kommen  
Alle Fische gleich mit Freuden angeschwommen!  
Dort läuft schon Sanct Peter  
Mit Netz und mit Köder  
Zum himmlischen Weiher hinein.

Sanct Martha die Köchin muss sein!  
Sanct Martha die Köchin muss sein!

Kein Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,  
Die uns'rer verglichen kann werden.  
Elftausend Junkfrauen  
Zu tanzen sich trauen!  
Sanct Ursula selbst dazu lacht!  
Kein Musik is ja nicht auf Erden,  
Die uns'rer verglichen kann werden.

Cäcilia mit ihren Verwandten  
Sind treffliche Hofmusikanten!  
Die englischen Stimmen  
Ermuntern die Sinnen,  
Ermuntern die Sinnen!  
Dass Alles für Freuden,  
Für Freuden erwacht.

## SYMPHONY NO. 5

Mahler's monumental Fifth Symphony was written in 1901-03 during that important middle-genesis period of the Kindertotenlieder and the Five Rückert Songs. Revised extensively in 1904, 1905 (the year of publication), 1907 and 1909, it had a run-through with the Vienna Philharmonic in 1904 before receiving its first (critically damned) public performance by the Gürzenicht Orchestra under Mahler's direction in Cologne on 18 October 1904.

Unlike the Wunderhorn symphonies (specifically Nos. 2-4 but also, by connotation, No. 1) or the Eight, the Fifth, together with its companions, the Sixth and Seventh, relies on neither programme nor words to carry its message. Yet all its symphonic might, its organic essence, its preoccupation with the abstract, it does even contain ideas and expressive states that have come to be regarded by many as clearly extra-musical in their psychology and symbolism. Such ideas are not difficult to find. The first movement, for example, is not only related to the Wunderhorn setting, *Der Tamboursg'ssell* (July 1901), but also quotes from the Fourth Symphony (the all-important opening trumpet call actually comes from the end of the first movement development section of that work), and from the first of the Kindertotenlieder (the last line, "Heil sei dem Freudenlicht der Welt!" "I bless the light that gladdens all the world" – prefaces the second trio). The famous Adagietto alludes to *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen*, the fourth of the Five Rückert Songs (1901), while the Rondo-Finale begins with a reference (on bassoon) to *Lob des hohen Verstandes*, an early Wunderhorn setting (21 June 1896). At a more generalised level, its high-Romantic journey from tragedy to triumph, from darkness to light, its evocatively suggestive handling of orchestral detail and sonority, its pages of imagery ranging from the pastoral to the military, from intimate glades to the grandest vistas of landscape, offer other elements variously open to programmatic interpretation.

In three parts, subdivided into five movements (the last two played without a break) and tonally preoccupied not so much with C sharp minor as with a progression towards the brighter (yet paradoxically flat sub-dominant-orientated) key of D major in which it ends, the Fifth opens with an extended Funeral March, one of Mahler's great essays in the form. The A minor second movement, in classical parlance a development to the introductory/expository function of the first, preoccupies itself

with the main thematic groups of this March.

The ensuing scherzo which comprises Part II has been described by Hans F Redlich as "perhaps the most strikingly Austrian movement in Mahler's symphonies": its colossal façade embraces ideas of landerlike gentility and character offset against melodic incidents of Straussian ancestry, against rhythmic patterns of unmistakeably Viennese signature.

If this scherzo is gigantic in length (819 bars) and orchestral resource, the miraculously economic Adagietto in F which opens Part III goes to opposite extremes: a mere 105 bars for harp and strings, enshrining a glowing celebration of the major key that leads inexorably to a tremulous fortissimo climax of tenderly beautiful poignancy. Like the Funeral March, it has the function to some extent of an introduction – in this case to a Rondo-Finale of the most immense scope in whose complex course different structural parameters (sonata-rondo and variation) are combined with displays of fugal and imitative texturing worthy, in the toughness of their procedure, of late Beethoven, not to say of the Mozart of the Prague or the Jupiter.

## SYMPHONY NO. 6 "TRAGIC"

Gustav Mahler was one of those musicians who were equally successful as conductors and as composers. As a strict tutor for orchestras, he was considered to be a despot. Because he made weaker players stand up during rehearsals and play difficult solo parts, he was hated and feared by almost all orchestras. As the American critic, Harold Schonberg, concluded, he was "demonic, neurotic, demanding, egoistic, noble, uncontrolled, sarcastic, unpleasant and a genius. Throughout his life, his actions were greatly reminiscent of a manic-depressive. Periods of gloominess and silence alternated with spasms of intensity and immoderation. He was thin, in poor health, susceptible to migraine." In 1900, whilst working as the court opera director in Vienna, where his sister, Justine, has resigned to being housekeeper for his bachelor household, he met Alma Maria Schindler, twenty years his junior. The young girl, highly talented and open to all arts, was well-known for her beauty and had been educated in music: she had studied composition under Zemlinsky, later the tutor of Arnold Schönberg, and had, amongst others, already composed nine piano pieces. Although Mahler forbid her to compose after they were married in 1908, she did not rebel against him: for her, Mahler was the great authority in her life (after his death she married the Bauhaus architect and in 1929 the author Franz Werfel). During the theatre season, she spent her pedantic everyday life in Vienna but the family, soon increased by two children, spent the summer months on the Wörthersee. In Maiernigg here in 1899, Mahler had built a villa and a small "composing cottage" outside the house consisting of only one room, where he retreated to work and was not to be disturbed.

In the summers of 1903/1904 in this "splendid isolation", he wrote the Sixth Symphony and conducted the first performance of this on 27<sup>th</sup> May, 1906 in Essen. Although this, in fact, was created in a period of utmost happiness, it has remained the most inaccessible of his symphonies with its pessimism and emphatic declaration of his belief in "No" – it is the only one of his symphonies to end in minor and denies itself a reconciliation view of life. Mahler's sensitivity had presumably allowed premonitions of the tragic events which would distress him three years later: the death of his daughter Maria Anna, his forced resignation from the Vienna Opera House and the diagnosis of a severe heart attack which he perceived as a death sentence. Alma

recounts. "...no work flowed so directly from his heart as this. We both had to cry during this time, so deeply did we feel the music and the premonition of what was to come. The Sixth is his most personal work as well as being prophetic. He put his life anticipating into music with his dirges for children and with the Sixth." And "The final movement of this composition with the three great blows of fate! No work went to his heart so much on the first hearing...After the final rehearsal, Mahler strode back and forth in the artist's room wringing his hands, sobbing, beside himself. "For the three blows of fate, of which the third fells the "hero" of the symphony "like an axe", he prescribed a hammer. Its thudding sound, originally meant symbolically, takes on threatening realism and recounts the destruction of everything human by a superior fate with the power prophecy from the Old Testament (after the first performance he deleted the third blow in bar 783). Mahler is said to have described the cowbells demanded as the last sound ringing out in the greatest heights to he who is isolated – they become the symbols of standing above the world. Other sound symbols in the instrumentation of the Sixth are formed by the tubular bells as a symbol of religious dogmata and the wood clappers and xylophones as Satan's scornful laughter.

The first movement ("vehement yet vigorous") is march-like, dogged formation and is only brightened by an emphatic string melody with which he wanted to describe Anna Mahler. The scherzo transforms this march rhythm into a demonic dance in 3/8 time: the trio, changing in time and with its emphasis of "Old-fashioned", seems like a paradoxical quote from another world amid the scherzo of horrors. Of the movement originally in third place, Alma Mahler states. "Mahler describes the arhythmic games of the two small children running and reeling through the sand. Horrific – the children's voices become more and more tragic and finally, a tiny, fading voice whimpers." The "andante moderato" in E flat minor seems more like a lyrical episode in autumn and like a breather before the enormously extended finale. This not only produces a confusing muddle but also a calculated interchange of negative and positive expression, and also contains melancholic reminiscences of the alpine visions in earlier phrases. March rhythms, choral phrases and ecstatically intensified cantabile parts. The coda sinks into the black sound of trombones, speaks of suffering, desolation and death, and sets a negative and destructive accent to finish with a shocking A minor stroke by the whole orchestra with hammering drums. What Mahler once said to Jean Sibelius, a colleague of his, applies to his apocalyptic "tragic symphony": "The symphony must be like the world. It must take everything in."

## MAHLER SYMPHONY NO. 7

**"This is my very best work, and its mood is predominantly cheerful"**

Gustav Mahler has long been recognized as a towering figure in the realm of symphonic music, but as in the case of other composers, the concert-going public does not appreciate all his work in equal measures. The fact that the Seventh symphony is not performed very often may be attributable to its specific tonal substance. Devotees of programmatic ideas, autobiographical clues and anecdotal references are baffled by a score that seems to develop "on its own" – an approach not generally associated with Mahler. Despite its symmetric layout in five movements and the use of some special instruments this symphony appears to be so conventional in formal design and instrumentation that it is bound to disappoint all those who are looking for apocalyptic

climaxes and eccentricities of form. Then, too, No. 7 does not fit the stereotype of Mahler the creator of transcendental music that explores the very limit of human experience, combining the treatment of death, farewell and transfiguration with the vision of a better world. After all, the composer described his work as "predominantly cheerful and humorous in content", with the high-powered finale releasing a torrent of unbridled energy which appears to invalidate any claim that greater truth is to be found in anguished music of brooding spirituality.

Authors more interested in biographical details find the matter less irritating. They stress the fact that the Seventh Symphony dates from a period when Mahler was at the zenith of his career as a composer and as an artistic director of the Vienna State Opera. It was written in 1904 and 1905 during a summer holiday at Maiernigg in the Tyrolean Alps. Immediately after finishing his tragic sixth symphony, Mahler set about writing in the two slow and relative short "Night Music" movements, the first in C minor allegedly inspired by Rembrandt's painting *The Night Watch*. Apparently, Mahler had begun his new symphony without a detailed overall conception, for when he resumed work the following year it was only after a long and frustrating search that he hit upon the rhythmically and melodically striking motif dominating the slow introduction of the first movement (suggested to him by an oarsman's stroke). Following this, he composed the remaining movements (1, 3 and 5) in rapid succession, working feverishly to finish the whole symphony within the next four weeks. But it was not until three years later that the work was introduced to the public, with Mahler himself conducting the premiere in Prague on 19 September 1908. "The Seventh was hardly understood by the audience", Alma Mahler noted later in her memoirs, for it enjoyed only "a success d'estime". The most irritating aspect, perhaps, is the extremely harsh contrast between the movements, the abrupt alternation of nightmarish episodes and pages of glowing radiance, the juxtaposition of dissonant elements which are not resolved in a "higher" harmony, but in this way emerge as allegorical images of real life. Solely the somber introduction generates sufficient momentum to keep the various threads of the extended sonata-form movement together, setting in motion a series of dramatic developments that culminate in triumphant outbursts. The heroic deeds of the day give way to the dreamy mysteries of the night. Attracted by horn calls and their weird echoes, nocturnal creatures assemble for a ghoulish march (with two trios), but their orderly procession is thrown into confusion by all manner of anarchic capers and chaotic escapades in the orchestral texture. In the third movement, a "shadowy" scherzo, they perform a ghostly dance of death full of hectic excitement that leaves no room for elementary human longing as expressed in waltz-like episodes. Similarly, the second Night Music, the fourth movement of the symphony, only evokes fragile memories of the past, fragmentary recollections of a romantic idyll with an unmistakable Viennese flavour in which an ardent lover serenades the object of his affections – only to be rejected. After these excursions into the realm of fantasy Mahler takes us back to the world of action with the martial strains of pompous finale. The object here is not to fight a battle, but to celebrate a victory. For all its brilliance and sunny exuberance, the music (which almost inevitably takes up the signal-like main subject of the first movement in the closing pages) repeatedly becomes immobilized in rigid posturing between more reflective episodes. This tends to suggest that the theatrical pomp is merely a pretence to conceal the more cryptic and contradictory facets of Mahler's personality, as in life of those who believe they

cannot afford any sensibilities in their irresistible urge to conquer themselves and the world around them.

## SYMPHONY NO. 8

When Gustav Mahler stepped onto the podium in Munich on 11<sup>th</sup> September 1910 to conduct the first performance of his Eighth Symphony, nobody could have known that it was to be his last appearance in Europe as a conductor. In another respect, too, it marked an ending: this was the last of Mahler's symphonies to be premièred during the composer's lifetime.

The symphony is often referred to as Symphony of a Thousand. This title is not the composer's own, but was invented by the promoter of the first performance – a man who, had he lived today, might have become a successful editor of a mass-circulation newspaper. For the title demonstrates a readiness to ignore what is of real significance in favour of what is seemingly sensational. True, the Eighth Symphony earns an honourable position at the very peak of late-romantic excesses of orchestration: soloists, children's choir, double chorus and an orchestra which even dwarfs that of Stravinsky's Rite of Spring, ranging from a large woodwind section (the score demands a minimum of 22 players) to organ, piano, celesta and harmonium. A noteworthy curiosity is the use of a mandolin – and this is probably where Arnold Schoenberg got the idea of using a mandolin in his Variations for Orchestra, Op.31. What is of real significance is the universe of sound which Mahler mentioned in a letter to the conductor Willem Mengelberg in August 1906:

'I have just finished my Eighth Symphony. – It's the greatest thing that I have yet done. And so individual in its content and form that it cannot be described in words. Just imagine that the Universe begins to ring and resound. These are no longer human voices, but circling planets and suns.'

The symphony, which was composed in just two months, has two movements; the second of these (the longest movement Mahler ever wrote) combines elements of slow movement, scherzo and finale and is roughly three times as long as the first movement. The text of the first movement is in Latin: the medieval Whitsuntide hymn *Veni, creator spiritus* (Come, Creator Spirit) attributed to the 9th century Benedictine monk and Archbishop of Mainz, Hrabanus Maurus. The hymn is presented at the very beginning by the double chorus accompanied by the organ; a section for soloists follows before the choir returns to conclude the exposition of this sonata-form movement. There follows a long development section culminating in a double fugue, the climax of the entire movement. After a condensed reprise the coda begins with the word *Gloria*, which leads to a unison repetition of the principal theme.

The second movement is based on a German text: the final scene of Goethe's *Faust*, Part II. It begins with the only purely orchestral section in the symphony, a prelude which contains reminiscences of themes from the first movement. The slow section which follows alludes to Goethe's scenes of the Anachoreten and of the Patres – ecstaticus (baritone) and profundus (bass). Next, in allegro tempo, we hear the chorus of the angels and other short scenes from *Faust*, presented initially by the first violins, acts as a symbol of the liberating power of love and gradually builds up to the jubilant finale, which eventually comes to an end in conjunction with the *Veni creator* theme.

## Symphony 8

### I HYMNUS: VENI, CREATOR SPIRITUS

Veni, creator spiritus,  
Mentes tuorum visita;  
Imple superna gratia,  
Quae tu creasti pectora.  
Qui Paraclitus diceris,  
Donum Dei altissimi,  
Fons vivus, ignis, caritas,  
Et spiritalis unctio.  
Infirma nostri corporis  
Virtute firmans perpeti;  
Accende lumen sensibus,  
Infunde amorem cordibus.  
Hostem repellas longius,  
Pacemque dones protinus;  
Ductore sic te praevio  
Vitemus omne pessimum.  
Tu septiformis munere,  
Dexteræ paternæ digitus.  
Per te sciamus da Patrem,  
Noscamus (atque) Filium,  
(Te utriusque) spiritum  
Credamus omni tempore.  
Da gaudiorum praemia,  
Da gratiarum munera;  
Dissolve litis vincula,  
Adstringe pacis foedera.  
Gloria Patri Domino,  
Deo sit gloria et Filio  
Natoque, qui a mortuis  
Surrexit, ac Paraclito  
In saeculorum saecula.  
Mahler did not use the text in parenthesis.

### II SCHLUSSZENE AUS "FAUST"

#### Letzte Szene aus dem zweiten Teil von Goethes Faust Last Scene from the second part of Goethe's Faust

BERGSCHLUCHTEN, WALD, FELS, EINÖDE.  
HEILIGE ANACHORETEN  
(gebirgauf verteilt, gelagert zwischen Klüften)  
Waldung, sie schwankt heran,  
Felsen, sie lasten dran,  
Wurzeln, sie klammern an,  
Stamm dicht an Stamm hinan.  
Woge nach Woge spritzt,  
Höhle, die tiefste, schützt.  
Löwen, sie schleichen stumm,  
Freundlich um uns herum,  
Ehren geweihten Ort,  
Heiligen Liebeshort.

PATER ECSTATICUS  
(auf- und abschwebend)  
Ewiger Wonnebrand  
Glühendes Liebeband,  
Siedender Schmerz der Brust,  
Schäumende Gotteslust!  
Pfeile, durchdringet mich,  
Lanzen, bezwinget mich,  
Keulen, zerschmettert mich,



Blitze, durchwettert mich!  
Daß ja das Nichtige  
Alles verflüchtige,  
Glänze der Dauerstern,  
Ewiger Liebe Kern!

#### PATER PROFUNDUS

(tiefe Region)

Wie Felsenabgrund mir zu Füßen  
Auf tiefem Abgrund lastend ruht,  
Wie tausend Bäche strahlend fließen  
Zum grausen Sturz des Schaums der Flut  
Wie strack, mit eig'nem kräft'gen Triebe,  
Der Stamm sich in die Lüfte trägt;  
So ist es die allmächt'ge Liebe,  
Die alies bildet, alles hegt.  
Ist um mich her ein wildes Brausen,  
Als wogte Wald und Felsengrund,  
Und doch stürzt, liebevoll im Sausen,  
Die Wasserfülle sich zum Schlund,  
Berufen gleich das Tal zu wässern:  
Der Blitz, der flammend niederschlug,  
Die Atmosphäre zu verbessern,  
Die Gift und Dunst im Busen trug,  
Sind Liebesboten, sie verkünden,  
Was ewig schaffend uns umwallt.  
Mein Inn'res mög' es auch entzünden,  
Wo sich der Geist, verworren, kalt,  
Verquält in stumpfer Sinne Schranken,  
Scharf angeschloss'nem Kettenschmerz.  
O Gott! beschwichtige die Gedanken,  
Erleuchte mein bedürftig Herz!

#### CHOR DER ENGEL

(Schwebend in der höheren Atmosphäre, Faustens  
Unsterbliches tragend)

Gerettet ist das edle Glied  
Der Geisterwelt vom Bösen:  
Wer immer strebend sich bemüht,  
Den können wir erlösen;  
Und hat an ihm die Liebe gar  
Von oben teilgenommen,  
Begegnet ihm die sel'ge Schar  
Mit herzlichem Willkommen.

#### CHOR SELIGER KNABEN

(um die höchsten Gipfel kreisend)

Hände verschlinget euch  
Freudig zum Ringverein,  
Regt euch und singe  
Heil'ge Gefühle drein!  
Göttlich belehret,  
Dürft ihr vertrauen;  
Den ihr verehret,  
Werdet ihr schauen.

#### DIE JÜNGEREN ENGEL:

Jene Rosen, aus den Händen  
Liebend-heiliger Büsserinnen,  
Halten uns den Sieg gewinnen  
Und das hohe Werk vollenden,  
Diesen Seelenschatz erbeuten.  
Böse wichen, als wir streuten,

Teutel flohen, als wir trafen.  
Statt gewohnter Höllenstrafen  
Fühlten Liebesqual die Geister,  
Selbst der alte Satans-Meister  
War von spitzer Pein durchdrungen.  
Jauchzet auf! es ist gelungen.

#### DIE VOLLENDETEREN ENGEL:

(Chor mit Altsolo)

Uns bieibt ein Erdenrest  
Zu tragen peinlich,  
Und wär' er von Asbest  
Er ist nicht reinlich.  
Wenn starke Geisteskraft  
Die Elemente  
An sich herangerafft,  
Kein Engel trennte  
Geeinte Zwienatur  
Der innigen beiden;  
Die ewige Liebe nur  
Vermag's zu scheiden.

#### DIE JÜNGEREN ENGEL:

Ich spur soeben,  
Nebelnd um Felsenhöh',  
Ein Geisterleben.  
Regend sich in der Näh'.  
Seliger Knaben,  
Seh' ich bewegte Schar  
Los von der Erde Druck,  
Im Kreis gesellt,  
Die sich erlaben  
Am neuen Lenz und Schmuck  
Der obern Welt.  
Sei er zum Anbeginn,  
Steigendem Vollgewinn  
Diesen gesellt!

#### DIE SELIGEN KNABEN:

Freudig empfangen wir  
Diesen im Puppenstand;  
Also erlangen wir  
Englisches Unterpfand.  
Löset die Flocken los,  
Die ihn umgeben!  
Schon ist er schön und groß  
Von heiligem Leben.  
(entzückt)  
Höchste Herrscherin der Welt,  
Lasse mich im blauen,  
Ausgespannten Himmelszelt  
Dein Geheimnis schauen!  
Bill'ge, was des Mannes Brust  
Ernst und zart beweget  
Und mit heil'ger Liebeslust  
Dir entgegen trägt!  
Unbezwänglich unser Mut,  
Wenn du hehr gebietest;  
Plötzlich mildert sich die Glut,  
Wenn du uns befriedest.

#### DOCTOR MARIANUS UND CHOR:

Mutter, Ehren würdig,

Jungfrau, rein im schönsten Sinn,  
Uns erwählte Königin,  
Göttern ebenbürtig.  
Chor:  
Dir, der Unberührbaren,  
ist es nicht benommen,  
Daß die leicht Verführbaren  
Traulich zu dir kommen.  
In die Schwachheit hingerafft,  
Sind sie schwer zu retten;  
Wer zerreißt aus eig'ner Kraft  
Der Gelüste Ketten?  
Wie entgleitet schnell der Fuß  
Schiefem, glattem Boden!  
(Mater gloriosa schwebt einher)

CHOR DER BÜSSERINNEN:  
(und Una Poenitentium)  
Du schwebst zu Höhen  
Der ewigen Reiche,  
Vernimmt das Flehen,  
Du Gnadenreiche!  
Du Ohnegleiche!

MAGNA PECCATRIX:  
(St. Lucae VII, 36)  
Bei der Liebe, die den Füßen  
Deines gottverklärten Sohnes  
Tränen ließ zum Balsam fließen,  
Trotz des Pharisäer-Hohnes:  
Beim Gefäße, das so reichlich  
Tropfte Wohlgeruch hernieder,  
Bei den Locken, die so weichlich  
Trockneten die heil'gen Glieder.

MULIER SAMARITANA:  
(St. Joh. IV)  
Bei dem Bronn, zu dem schon weiland  
Abram ließ die Herde führen:  
Bei dem Eimer, der dem Heiland  
Kühl die Lippe durft' berühren,  
Bei der reinen, reichen Quelle,  
Die nun dorthier sich ergießet,  
Überflüssig, ewig helle,  
Rings, durch alle Welten fließet -

MARIA AEGYPTIACA:  
(Acta Sanctorum)  
Bei dem hochgeweihten Orte,  
Wo den Herrn man niederließ,  
Bei dem Arm, der von der Pforte,  
Warnend mich zurücke stieß,  
Bei der vierzigjähr'gen Buße,  
Der ich treu in Wüsten blieb,  
Bei dem sel'gen Scheidegruße,  
Den im Sand ich niederschrieb -  
Zu Drei:  
Die du großen Sünderinnen  
Deine Nähe nicht verweigerst,

DOCTOR MARIANUS:  
(in der höchsten, reinlichsten Zelle)  
Hier ist die Aussicht frei,

Der Geist erhoben!  
Dort ziehen Frauen vorbei,  
Schwebend nach oben.  
Die Herrliche mittenin  
Im Sternenkranze,  
Die Himmelskönigin,  
Ich seh's am Glanze.  
Und ein büßendes Gewinnen  
In die Ewigkeiten steigerst,  
Gönn' auch dieser guten Seele,  
Die sich einmal nur vergessen,  
Die nicht ahnte, daß sie fehle  
Dein Verzeihen angemessen!

UNA POENITENTIIUM:  
(sich anschmiegend)  
(Gretchen)  
Neige, neige,  
Du Ohnegleiche,  
Du Strahlenreiche,  
Dein Antlitz gnadig meinem Glück!  
Der früh Geliebte,  
Nicht mehr Getrübte,  
Er kommt zurück.

SELIGE KNABEN:  
(in Kreisbewegung sich nähernd)  
Er überwächst uns schon  
An mächt'gen Gliedern,  
Wird treuer Pflege Lohn  
Reichlich erwidern.  
Wir wurden früh entfernt  
Von Lebechören  
Doch dieser hat gelernt,  
Er wird uns lehren.

UNA POENITENTIIUM:  
(Gretchen)  
Vom edlen Geisterchor umgeben,  
Wird sich der Neue kaum gewahr,  
Er ahnet kaum das frische Leben,  
So gleicht er schon der heil'gen Schar  
Sieh, wie er jedem Erdenbände  
Der alten Hülle sich entrafft.  
Und aus ätherischem Gewande  
Hervortritt erste Jugendkraft!  
Vergönne mir, ihn zu belehren,  
Noch blendet ihn der neue Tag!

MATER GLORIOSA:  
(und Chor)  
Komm! Hebe dich zu höhern Sphären!  
Wenn er dich ahnet, folgt er nach.

DOCTOR MARIANUS:  
(auf dem Angesicht anbetend)  
(und Chor)  
Blicket aut zum Retterblick,  
Alle reuig Zarten,  
Euch zu sel'gem Glück  
Dankend umzuarten!  
Werde jeder bess're Sinn  
Dir zum Dienst erbötig;

Jungfrau, Mutter, Königin,  
Göttin, bleibe gnädig!

**CHORUS MYSTICUS:**

Alles Vergängliche  
Ist nur ein Gleichnis;  
Das Unzulängliche,  
Hier wird's Ereignis;  
Das Unbeschreibliche,  
Hier ist's getan;  
Das Ewig-Weibliche  
Zieht uns hinan.

**SYMPHONY NO. 9**

By the time Gustav Mahler completed his Ninth Symphony in the autumn of 1909, he had already resigned his post at the Vienna Court Opera and thus severed his official ties with the Austrian capital. Artistic tensions and political intrigues, which were becoming increasingly unbearable, prevented him from continuing his vast reform project in the realm of opera. Moreover, the Viennese public had remained indifferent to his compositional efforts. Only a group of Viennese musicians who were treated with even a greater contempt expressed their highest regard for the composer: Arnold Schönberg and his pupils. In fact, it was Schönberg who in his famous speech on Mahler (Prague, 1913) pointed out the importance and greatness of the Ninth Symphony. What Schönberg said about the Ninth is true of all Mahler's late works: "In it the author hardly speaks as an individual any longer... This is a work in which his personal voice is all but silenced. It contains what may be termed objective, almost dispassionate statements of a beauty which only those will perceive who can dispense with visceral warmth and who feel comfortable in a climate of intellectual coldness."

The Ninth owes its novelty not so much to the technical resources employed, but mainly to its power of disillusionment. Mahler bids farewell to the great Viennese symphonic tradition and to the bourgeois era as well. He had given musical expression to the idea of farewell even before, most notably in the poignant "Songs of a Wayfarer", in his "Songs on the Death of Children" (settings of poems by Friedrich Rückert) and in the final movement of his "Song of the Earth", which is entitled "Farewell". In the Ninth Symphony, however, this leave-taking assumes a thematic dimension that pervades every musical aspect: articulation, declamation and instrumentation. In the first movement, he even quotes a theme from Beethoven's piano sonata known as "Les Adieux". The valedictory finale, an Adagio, is a last tribute to his mentor, Anton Bruckner. Curiously enough, this symphony, which more than any other of Mahler's works calls the pathos of classical music into question and may with some justification be classified as New Music, differs from many others in that it follows the classical four-movement layout. It seems that Mahler wanted to remain a traditionalist at least at the structural level. In fact, there is another work of striking boldness which does not exceed the bounds of the traditional four-movement pattern: the Sixth Symphony in A minor.

As far as the Ninth is concerned, the sequence of movements (Andante – Ländler-Scherzo – Rondo-Burlesque – Adagio) and the tonal design are both unusual. The work begins in the key of D major, but ends in D flat major, which is clearly of symbolic importance.

The first movement of the Ninth Symphony (initial tempo: Andante comodo) is the longest as well as the most sophisticated and most important part of the work. Some consider it Mahler's crowning achievement. The movement contains passages so enigmatic that they can hardly be described, much less interpreted. It is related to the two symphonies for voice and orchestra which preceded it, the Eighth and the "Song of the Earth", because of its pronounced tendency towards vocal expression. There is, however, an important difference. Especially in the first part of the Eighth Symphony the singer's voices are treated like instruments and the words sung become subtly contrived tone colours whereas in the first movement of the Ninth Symphony the instruments often sound like vocal parts despite the absence of any text. In marked contrast to the simpler vocal pieces found in the three Wunderhorn symphonies, the part that may be described as the principal vocal part merges with other voices to form duets and trios. This is the main reason why the score is not easily approachable. On top of this, the constant movement and intersection of voices in an enormously extended tonal space gives rise to harsh dissonances. To some extent these combinations of notes appear accidental and interchangeable because the parts often run parallel in a heterophonic manner. It is next to impossible to follow all the melodic proceedings just by listening to the music.

Understandably, Mahler required a new form for such a conception, in which instruments are made to sing. He hit upon a relatively simple solution that goes beyond the sonata or rondo form. Roughly speaking, the entire three-part movement perpetually alternates between a major-key and a minor-key theme. All other melodic figures are derived more or less freely from these and serve as intermediate themes. Instead of a conflict between antagonist themes presented in different keys we have a conflict between forms of musical treatment. This does not rule out high drama. On the contrary, dramatic climaxes occur when two forms of treatment are combined or when the major-key theme assumes the same expressive quality as the minor-key theme. Two of them disintegrate. The first collapse marks the end of Part I and the beginning of Part II of the opening movement. This, in turn, comprises three interludes and alternating major-key and minor-key themes which are treated here at a different emotional level ("mit Wut" – with anger), but they are never curtailed, much less cut up or "worked out". Instead of the classical development section which we may expect there are interludes, static "fields" with plaintive motives, melodic fragments and rhythmic ostinato formulas. The music sounds as if petrified, congealed. There is nothing to recall anything known from previous musical history. More than anything else, this accounts for the enigmatic quality mentioned above. After the second collapse, which is even more shattering, the totally dispersed music (third interlude) gathers fresh momentum, but soon turns into a funeral march ("Wie ein schwerer Kondukt"), from which Part II of the movement emerges gradually, introduced by three deep bells.

Part III of the movement is largely a condensed recapitulation of Part I. The final appearance of the D minor theme passes directly into a sort of cadence (Lento, Misterioso). The voices now proceed in totally unrelated fashion, freed from "rhyme", as though they had not yet come into their own before. The coda is a long final presentation of the major-key song theme (second period), accompanied by valedictory motives.

The second movement, a scherzo, is based on three dances: a Ländler, a waltz (Trio I) and a "very slow" Ländler (Trio II), which takes on the character of a minuet in places. The

movement is commemorative in nature. It conjures up the earlier type of Mahlerian scherzo, an evocation of rural life. However rustic and archaic the music may sound at first (in the Ländler), it assumes more urban and even vulgar features in the waltz, a dance of more recent origin.

While the first movement is marked by a continuous progress from the amorphous to the articulate, the second movement is about different time patterns. Essentially, there are three : 1. Fluctuating time pattern in the Ländler. At first, the opening motives are regular and symmetric in design. As they evolve, however, the motivic approaches defy the rules of orthodoxy as there is occasionally one approach too few or one too many.

2. Growing kinetic forward motion in the waltz.

3. The second, very slow Ländler loses its momentum and time appears to stand still.

The main tempo marking of the third movement, entitled "Rondo. Burlesque", is "Allegro assai. Sehr trotzig". The autograph score also contains words in Mahler's hand; "To my Apollonian brothers". This may be seen as an ironic allusion to the fugato style employed in the movement and as a salute to contemporary fellow composers.

Opposed as he was to conventionalism, Mahler wrote fugues only on rare occasions. So the title "Burlesque" is hardly coincidental. Apparently, the composer was not just intent on deriding the indefatigable efforts of his "Apollonian brothers", but also sought to ridicule fugal composition, which was widely regarded as their preserve.

The final movement of the Ninth Symphony, like the finale of the Third, is an Adagio. It recalls the mood of the second episode of the preceding movement, but is built up to hymnic proportions along Brucknerian lines. The musical proceedings are dominated by the opulent string texture. The theme, a broad and jagged song-like subject in D flat major, resumes the fugal or episodic theme of the third movement. The prolonged coda is suffused with an atmosphere of melancholy departure. Significantly, Mahler added the word "ersterbend" (dying away) to the final note of what became his farewell to life and art.

## DAS LIED VON DER ERDE

### The Song of the Earth

The year 1907, which began with the first performance in Vienna of the Sixth Symphony, marked a major turning point in Mahler's life. The 47-year-old composer was struck by three calamities in the course of the year: the sudden death of his eldest daughter Maria Anna, the diagnosis of a heart disease, and his retirement from the post of director of the Vienna Court Opera. Although at the height of his powers, the proximity of death brought Mahler to the realization that he was embarking, albeit prematurely, upon the final stage of his life.

Immediately after losing his beloved daughter on July 12, Mahler learnt that he was suffering from heart disease, and left Maiernigg five days later. For several years he had spent his summer vacations immersed in composition, but his vacation this year thus came to a tragic end.

However, the remaining period of around one month spent at Tirol (Alt-Schludersbach) was to give rise to a major work. According to the recollections of his wife, Alma, Mahler was strongly impressed by a poetry collection which had been sent him, and immediately began making sketches for a song cycle published that year, was "Die Chinesische Flöte (The Chinese Flute) by Hans Bethge (1876 – 1946), and the song cycle "Das

Lied von der Erde" based on poems from his collection was completed the following year.

"Die Chinesische Flöte" was an anthology of classical Chinese poetry based on existing translations into French, English, and German, although Bethge's lack of proficiency in the Chinese language meant that the translations were by no means faithful to the originals. This was a time when considerable interest was being shown in the Far East, and this small volume, with its East Asian-style binding, proved a great success.

Having retired from his post in Vienna, Mahler completed his first season at the Metropolitan Opera in New York. Returning to Europe, he composed "Das Lied von der Erde" in a single burst of creative activity in the summer of 1908 (the short scores of the individual movements are marked with dates from July to September 1) in the hut (Häuschen) which he had had specially built for composing in the new location where he was to spend his summers at Toblach (now the Italian town of Dobbiaco). After visiting Prague for the first performance of his Seventh Symphony, Mahler returned to Toblach, and had the orchestration of "Das Lied von der Erde" completed by the autumn. There are unfortunately few letters or materials referring to the circumstances of the work's composition.

Mahler continued to add details to the work, but was not himself to witness its first performance, which was given under his devoted pupil Bruno Walter on 20 November 1911 in Munich, six months after Mahler's death. The full score was published the following year.

Following on from the previous Eighth Symphony, "Das Lied von der Erde" is a symphony employing vocal resources throughout. With its six songs based on seven poems by different poets, the external aspect of the work is highly unconventional. The title might be interpreted as referring either to a song cycle labelled as a symphony or a symphony labelled as a song. It is surely not just for superstitious reasons that Mahler felt hesitant about naming this work his Ninth Symphony, but rather because of the difficulty of categorizing the work in terms of conventional classifications. The two genres in which Mahler worked, that of the symphony into which not only are songs and song melodies introduced into the music but the symphony itself is a kind of vast song, and that of songs which expand to attain the scale of small symphonies: these two genres are united here in the most personal manner in Mahler's work.

It is the scale and form of the two outer movements with their long interludes and especially the motivic unity which runs throughout the work which give "Das Lied von der Erde" the character of a symphony. The work as a whole, with its two large scale outer movements interspersed by four comparatively brief central movements (a feature shared with the Second, Third and Seventh symphonies), is given a sense of unity by the pentatonic figure based on the pitches A-G-E-C initially presented by the first violins in the fifth bar which reappears one hour later as the concluding harmony of the work.

The first movement, "Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde", a fusion of irregular strophic form with sonata form, is based in a minor, the key which Mahler employed to evoke an atmosphere of tragedy. As suggested by the use of instruments such as glockenspiel and triangle, the enormous orchestra amplifies an ironic vocal solo by a piercing, metallic tonal quality. The first minor section which conjures up images of the eternal nature of the cosmos and the earth, serves as both a middle section and a development section with a contrasting sense of tranquillity and wistfulness: it suggests a sense of hope absent from the despairful text, and completes the basic propositions of life and



death.

The central four movements each follow up in their own individual manner the problems presented by the first movement on the levels of text and form, in the manner of symbolic reflections on the basic propositions of life and death, and the developmental shaping of strophic song form. We also hear variational development of the basic A-G-E-C figure.

The second movement, "Der Einsame im Herbst", is a slow movement in the subdominant key of d minor. It is structured in complex strophic form, and opinions are divided as to the number of strophes of which it consists. Two central themes, one a woodwind monologue and the other based on a descending scale followed by its inversion sung by the soloist, are repeatedly developed to form a contrast with the espressivo motifs played by horns and celli. The sense of intolerable solitude builds up from a longing for the eternal rest provided by death to aspiration towards the "sun of love".

As if as a premonition of the first half of the last movement, the movement as a whole is dominated by the descending motion representing death.

The following two movements, which function as scherzi, are both equipped with Nietzschean titles and are in ternary form.

The third movement, "Von der Jugend", in B-flat major is the shortest piece within the work. The superficially naïve text (the original Chinese poem is not known), like an exotic miniature, appears deeply ironical due to the precise and cheerful orchestration.

The fourth movement, "Von der Schönheit", is the setting of a famous poem by Li-Po. It is in ternary form, but one could never predict the ferocity of the orchestral writing in the central section from the elegance of the opening. The postlude, with its cloying nostalgia, gives an insight into the basic spirit of this work, described by Adorno as being of an eternally vanished past, a past by no means happy but which has become so through being the object of nostalgia occasioned by the realization that it is never to return. The young girls' glances extend to the other movements too. It is interesting to note that the girls engaged in picking lotus fruits. In the translation "fruits" has been mistranslated as "blossoms", in consequence of which the social perspective of the poem – the futile longing of the privileged classes for the life of the libertine – is totally transformed into a pastoral landscape.

The fifth movement, "Der Trunkene im Frühling", is similarly rooted on the pitch of A and is closely connected with the first movement in the sense that it depicts the futility of human existence while treating the subject of wine and song. On the other hand, it corresponds to the second movement in the sense that its title refers to a single symbolically conceived human being, thus suggesting the symmetrical layout of the movements of the work as a whole. The poem, typical of Li-Po and based on a story contained in the Zhuā Zì in which Zhuāng Zì dreams he is a butterfly and upon awakening wonders if he is a butterfly imagining he is Zhuāng Zì, is completely reinterpreted in a European manner, and within the commotion of spring one notices the appearance of a phrase quoted from the fourth movement of the Seventh Symphony.

The sixth and final movement, "Der Abschied", is a setting of two poems by Mong-Kao-Jen and Wang Wei. It is the longest movement, lasting around half the total duration of the work. It begins on a low C accompanied by the ominous peals of a tamtam, as if totally to negate the previous music which had commenced in a minor and ended in A major. The melody,

harmony, and rhythm seem to be generated once again from out of nothingness, from a mood indicated by the heading "Schwer" (heavy). The tone is set by the rhythm of a funeral march, and the process whereby this regular, fateful, inescapable musical atmosphere transforms into a free, light, and vibrant tone, in other words the transformation from the c minor of death into the C major of rebirth and purification is the drama which runs throughout the music.

The circle of "Das Lied von der Erde", is not really a closed one. Even after the last sound of the music has faded away into nothingness, the phrase "ewig, ewig" ("for ever, for ever") endlessly repeated by the singer continues to ring without let within our souls, like the sighs of the person who strives knowing his ventures are in vain, as if in an attempt to come to terms with death, as if out of dread of finality.

## Das Lied von der Erde

Set by Gustav Mahler (1860-1911), 1908

### 1. Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde

Schon winkt der Wein im goldnen Pokale,  
Doch trinkt noch nicht, erst sing ich euch ein Lied!  
Das Lied vom Kummer soll auflachend  
in die Seele euch klingen. Wenn der Kummer naht,  
liegen wüst die Gärten der Seele,  
Welkt hin und stirbt die Freude, der Gesang.  
Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod.  
Herr dieses Hauses!  
Dein Keller birgt die Fülle des goldenen Weins!  
Hier, diese Laute nenn' ich mein!  
Die Laute schlagen und die Gläser leeren,  
Das sind die Dinge, die zusammen passen.  
Ein voller Becher Weins zur rechten Zeit  
Ist mehr wert, als alle Reiche dieser Erde!  
Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod.  
Das Firmament blaut ewig und die Erde  
Wird lange fest stehen und aufblühn im Lenz.  
Du aber, Mensch, wie lang lebst denn du?  
Nicht hundert Jahre darfst du dich ergötzen  
An all dem morschen Tande dieser Erde!  
Seht dort hinab!  
Im Mondschein auf den Gräbern hockt  
eine wildgespenstische Gestalt - Ein Aff ist's!  
Hört ihr, wie sein Heulen hinausgellt  
in den süßen Duft des Lebens!  
Jetzt nehmt den Wein! Jetzt ist es Zeit, Genossen!  
Leert eure goldnen Becher zu Grund!  
Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod!

### 2. Der Einsame im Herbst

Herbstnebel wallen bläulich überm See;  
Vom Reif bezogen stehen alle Gräser;  
Man meint, ein Künstler habe Staub vom Jade  
Über die feinen Blüten ausgestreut.  
Der süße Duft der Blumen ist verflogen;  
Ein kalter Wind beugt ihre Stengel nieder.  
Bald werden die verwelkten, goldnen Blätter  
Der Lotosblüten auf dem Wasser ziehn.  
Mein Herz ist müde. Meine kleine Lampe  
Erlosch mit Knistern; es gemahnt mich an den Schlaf.  
Ich komm zu dir, traute Ruhestätte!  
Ja, gib mir Ruh, ich hab Erquickung not!

Ich weine viel in meinen Einsamkeiten.  
Der Herbst in meinem Herzen währt zu lange.  
Sonne der Liebe, willst du nie mehr scheinen,  
Um meine bittern Tränen mild aufzutrocknen?

### 3. Von der Jugend

Mitten in dem kleinen Teiche  
Steht ein Pavillon aus grünem  
Und aus weißem Porzellan.  
Wie der Rücken eines Tigers  
Wölbt die Brücke sich aus Jade  
Zu dem Pavillon hinüber.  
In dem Häuschen sitzen Freunde,  
Schön gekleidet, trinken, plaudern,  
Manche schreiben Verse nieder.  
Ihre seidnen Ärmel gleiten  
Rückwärts, ihre seidnen Mützen  
Hocken lustig tief im Nacken.  
Auf des kleinen Teiches stiller  
Wasserfläche zeigt sich alles  
Wunderlich im Spiegelbilde.  
Alles auf dem Kopfe stehend  
In dem Pavillon aus grünem  
Und aus weißem Porzellan;  
Wie ein Halbmond steht die Brücke,  
Umgekehrt der Bogen. Freunde,  
Schön gekleidet, trinken, plaudern.

### 4. Von der Schönheit (Of beauty)

Junge Mädchen pflücken Blumen,  
Pflücken Lotosblumen an dem Uferrande.  
Zwischen Büschen und Blättern sitzen sie,  
Sammeln Blüten in den Schoß und rufen  
Sich einander Neckereien zu.  
Goldne Sonne webt um die Gestalten,  
Spiegelt sie im blanken Wasser wider.  
Sonne spiegelt ihre schlanken Glieder,  
Ihre süßen Augen wider,  
Und der Zephyr hebt mit Schmeichelkosen das Gewebe  
Ihrer Ärmel auf, führt den Zauber  
Ihrer Wohlgerüche durch die Luft.  
O sieh, was tummeln sich für schöne Knaben  
Dort an dem Uferrand auf mut'gen Rossen,  
Weithin glänzend wie die Sonnenstrahlen;  
Schon zwischen dem Geäst der grünen Weiden  
Trabt das jungfrische Volk einher!  
Das Roß des einen wiehert fröhlich auf  
Und scheut und saust dahin;  
Über Blumen, Gräser, wanken hin die Hufe,  
Sie zerstampfen jäh im Sturm die hingesunkenen Blüten.  
Hei! Wie flattern im Taumel seine Mähnen,  
Dampfen heiß die Nüstern!  
Goldne Sonne webt um die Gestalten,  
Spiegelt sie im blanken Wasser wider.  
Und die schönste von den Jungfrauen sendet  
Lange Blicke ihm der Sehnsucht nach.  
Ihre stolze Haltung ist nur Verstellung.  
In dem Funkeln ihrer großen Augen,  
In dem Dunkel ihres heißen Blicks  
Schwingt klagend noch die Erregung ihres Herzens nach.

### 5. Der Trunkene im Frühling

Wenn nur ein Traum das Leben ist,

Warum denn Müh und Plag?  
Ich trinke, bis ich nicht mehr kann,  
Den ganzen, lieben Tag!  
Und wenn ich nicht mehr trinken kann,  
Weil Kehl und Seele voll,  
So tauml' ich bis zu meiner Tür  
Und schlafe wundervoll!  
Was hör ich beim Erwachen? Horch!  
Ein Vogel singt im Baum.  
Ich frag ihn, ob schon Frühling sei,  
Mir ist als wie im Traum.  
Der Vogel zwitschert: "Ja! Der Lenz  
Ist da, sei kommen über Nacht!"  
Aus tiefstem Schauen lausch ich auf,  
Der Vogel singt und lacht!  
Ich fülle mir den Becher neu  
Und leer ihn bis zum Grund  
Und singe, bis der Mond erglänzt  
Am schwarzen Firmament!  
Und wenn ich nicht mehr singen kann,  
So schlaf ich wieder ein,  
Was geht mich denn der Frühling an!?  
Laßt mich betrunken sein!

### 6. Der Abschied

Die Sonne scheidet hinter dem Gebirge.  
In alle Täler steigt der Abend nieder  
Mit seinen Schatten, die voll Kühlung sind.  
O sieh! Wie eine Silberbarke schwebt  
Der Mond am blauen Himmelssee herauf.  
Ich spüre eines feinen Windes Wehn  
Hinter den dunklen Fichten!  
Der Bach singt voller Wohllaut durch das Dunkel.  
Die Blumen blassen im Dämmerchein.  
Die Erde atmet voll von Ruh und Schlaf,  
Alle Sehnsucht will nun träumen.  
Die müden Menschen gehn heimwärts,  
Um im Schlaf vergeßnes Glück  
Und Jugend neu zu lernen!  
Die Vögel hocken still in ihren Zweigen.  
Die Welt schläft ein!  
Es wehet kühl im Schatten meiner Fichten.  
Ich stehe hier und harre meines Freundes;  
Ich harre sein zum letzten Lebewohl.  
Ich sehne mich, o Freund, an deiner Seite  
Die Schönheit dieses Abends zu genießen.  
Wo bleibst du? Du läßt mich lang allein!  
Ich wandle auf und nieder mit meiner Laute  
Auf Wegen, die vom weichen Grase schwellen.  
O Schönheit! O ewigen Liebens - Lebenstrunkne Welt!  
Er stieg vom Pferd und reichte ihm den Trunk  
Des Abschieds dar. Er fragte ihn, wohin  
Er führe und auch warum es müßte sein.  
Er sprach, seine Stimme war umflort: Du, mein Freund,  
Mir war auf dieser Welt das Glück nicht hold!  
Wohin ich geh? Ich geh, ich wandre in die Berge.  
Ich suche Ruhe für mein einsam Herz.  
Ich wandle nach der Heimat, meiner Stätte.  
Ich werde niemals in die Ferne schweifen.  
Still ist mein Herz und harret seiner Stunde!  
Die liebe Erde allüberall  
Blüht auf im Lenz und grünt  
Aufs neu! Allüberall und ewig

Blauen licht die Fernen!  
Ewig... ewig

## SYMPHONY NO. 10

**Performing version of the draft for the 10<sup>th</sup> symphony prepared by Deryck Cooke- 1<sup>st</sup> edition (2<sup>nd</sup> performing version), 1976.**

During the summer of 1910 Mahler was putting the final touches to the full score of his Symphony No. 9 while at the same time making a start with his next symphony. Astonishingly, not only did he manage to complete all five movements of this enormous work in short score, but he also produced an orchestral draft, that is to say he arrived at the stage prior to production of the full score. This was a difficult time for Mahler in his private life: his marriage had reached a crisis point with the discovery that his wife Alma was having an affair with Walter Gropius. In spite of this, Mahler's creative powers were at an extraordinarily heightened level. But he died the following year, on 18 May, shortly before his fifty-first birthday, leaving the work that would have been his Symphony No. 10 unfinished. The opinions of people close to Mahler differ as to whether or not he wished the score to be destroyed.

The history of the Symphony No. 10 was set in motion once again after the First World War. On the instigation of Alma, the first and third movements of the work were first performed on 12 October 1924 at the Vienna National Opera House by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Franz Schalk. Immediately before the premiere, Mahler's own manuscript of the whole work was published in Facsimile. (The full score of the two movements published in 1951 was based on the score employed at the premiere.) Although the work had not been published in its entirety, interest was stimulated by publication of Mahler's own manuscript, and the conditions were in place for other musicians to add to and complete the work. But the Nazi era soon dawned and Mahler's music fell into eclipse.

1960, the centenary of Mahler's birth, marked a turning point in the history of the Tenth Symphony. The English musicologist Deryck Cooke, who had previously written a short book on Mahler, researched the facsimile score, and succeeded in deciphering it and making his own copy. As he did so, he became aware that the music was in fact complete and that its content was quite worthy of Mahler's name. He then went about producing a performing score of virtually the whole work. The work was first performed in this edition (with the second and fourth movements in abbreviated form) on a BBC radio broadcast on 19 December 1960, and fostered an enormous response. Cooke then tried to come to grips with the sections which still posed unresolved problems.

In the meantime, Alma Mahler was taking an increasingly negative attitude to the strivings of scholars to complete the Tenth Symphony. Irrate at these attempts, for a while she exercised her right as holder of Mahler's copyright to forbid the work to be performed. But after hearing the recording she completely changed her mind and expressed her high opinion of Cooke's achievement, giving him an unreserved go-ahead to proceed as he thought fit. Using several previously unpublished sketches which he had found, Cooke produced a "performing version" of the symphony, which was first performed in London on 13 August 1964 conducted by Berthold Goldschmidt, who had cooperated with Cooke in producing this version. A record

appeared soon afterwards. In the first performing version by Deryck Cooke, Mahler's unfinished Symphony No. 10 thus became part of the shared legacy of music-lovers everywhere.

As Cooke frequently pointed out, this full score was not intended to represent a completion of the work by a hand other than that of the composer. Cooke's intention in producing this score was to enable orchestral performance of the not entirely completed score in that form. Apart from the tasks of wading through documentation and deciphering Mahler's notation, Cooke's work involved principally rewriting the short score, which itself included a large number of specifications of particular instruments, in the form of a full score, and in several places adding subsidiary voices. But apart from this, Cooke was if anything astonishingly puritanical. The revised version of the full score published in 1976 (the first edition of Cooke's second performing version) was published in parallel with a decipherment of the short score in places where Mahler had not left an orchestral draft. Efforts were thus made to clarify which parts had been added. This edition of the score was published together with a detailed commentary and notes. Unless one objects on principle to the performance of unfinished works, it is surely impossible to throw doubt on Cooke's self-effacing and objective approach and on his deep understanding of and devotion to Mahler's music. A reading of Deryck Cooke's commentary shows that the obstinate opposition put up by Bruno Walter and Erwin Ratz was without justification.

It goes without saying that if Mahler had himself completed the work, the Symphony No. 10 would have taken a somewhat different form. Although the layout and form of the movements appears to have been fixed in Mahler's mind, it is quite possible that he might have shortened or lengthened individual movements, and Mahler's orchestration and detailed performance directions are not such as to allow of accurate imitation by anyone else. But reading through Cooke's full score and experiencing the music in performance makes us strongly aware that Mahler continued to the very end to be an innovatory composer at the height of his creative powers. By glimpsing to the other side of the incomplete manuscript, we feel a certain encouragement merely to live, for the lives of individual human beings are so often fated to end without being fully completed.

The Symphony No. 10 is set in the highly unusual key of F-sharp major. At the centre of the work is a movement entitled "Purgatorio" which is in fact the shortest in any Mahler symphony. On either side of this movement are two vast scherzo movements, while the outermost movements are for the most part in an adagio tempo. The symphony is thus structured in a symmetrical five-movement form.

The first movement is the Adagio also wellknown from its inclusion in the Complete Works edited by Ratz. As with the two outer movements of the Symphony No. 9, it is structured in free form with alternation between two thematic groups. The first theme is in F-sharp major with wide leaps in the melodic line, and appears frequently in inverted form. The ironic second subject with its characteristic pizzicato accompaniment and trills is centred on the key of F-sharp minor. Development of these two themes and the opening viola recitative reaches a climax with the appearance of a chorale in A-flat minor and a dissonant chord consisting of nine notes. The music then fades away as if having attained complete fulfilment.

The second movement is the first Scherzo, and is set in the key of F-sharp minor. The main scherzo section is characterised by the use of varied metre that changes vertiginously with almost every bar. The ländler section, which is in the key of E-flat major

and is related to the main theme of the first movement, is set in a stable triple metre which stands it off in stark contrast to the main section. According to Deryck Cooke, although Mahler created the orchestral draft of this movement, many of the details remained to be completed; he stated that it was this movement which gave him the greatest difficulty when preparing the full score. The two trio sections and the main section gradually fuse together after being presented in alternation. The overall outline of the movement is thus similar to that of the Scherzo from the Symphony No. 5, with the music coming to an end in an optimistic vein.

The third movement, entitled Purgatorio, is in the key of B-flat minor and is clearly related to the song "Das irdische Leben" from the orchestral song cycle *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. As stated earlier, this is the shortest movement in any Mahler symphony and is structured in clear ternary form. Moreover, since about half of the recapitulation consists of a literal da capo repeat, many people have expressed reservations about the music in this form. But in light of the fact that the various three-note motifs included in the main theme, the rising seven-note scalar motif, and the new theme which appears in the central section are employed as central material for the subsequent movements, in which they are used as motifs symbolizing longing and love (presumably with Alma in mind), this short movement is of key significance to the work as a whole, serving as the crux about which the dramaturgy of the work resolves.

The fourth movement is the second Scherzo and begins in E minor. Three chords ring out like a motto and pave the way for a desolate dance piece evoking the first moment of *Das Lied von der Erde*. The main constituents of the scherzo theme are an octave descent introduced from the second movement and the three-note motif which appeared in the third movement. The despairing irony of *Das Lied von der Erde* and the eeriness of the Scherzo from the Seventh Symphony here alternate with a vulgar waltz. The theme of the Trio is derived from the three-note motif. The accessory theme, with its atmosphere of a tavern waltz, appears at various junctures, often interrupting the tragic atmosphere. The piece in E-minor sinks to a nadir in D minor to the accompaniment of timpani, and the coup de grace is delivered by a hammer-like strike on a "completely muffled drum" (*vollständig gedämpfte Trommel*; Cooke specifies use of a large military drum here). Alma Mahler explained persuasively that this sound was inspired by the funeral of a fireman which Mahler observed in New York. But whether or not this is in fact the case, it is clear that this sound is intended to forewarn the arrival of an extraneous element at once inauspicious and unavoidable.

The final is structured in an extremely original manner. The introductory section in D minor is followed by the main section, marked *Allegro moderato*. The music initially progresses conventionally in sonata form. However, the appearance of music from the first movement seems to negate all that has gone before. The ensuing adagio music soon reaches the key of F-sharp major with which the work as a whole began, slowly builds up and then fades away again to bring the work to a conclusion.

The introduction of this last movement which begins with the foreboding sounds on the drum is based on material which appears in the third movement: the scalar motif in an extremely drawn-out form, the three-note motif, and the theme from the central section. The first introductory theme presented by the flutes gradually seems to thaw the frozen bass line into motion, leading to the second introductory theme and a harmonic motif

which come to play important roles. They seem to forewarn tragedy, or perhaps to indicate that the tragedy has already occurred, in which case these lyrical sections are perhaps no more than cloying reminiscences. But the interval of a seventh which has been gradually stretching out its tentacles is interrupted by the large drum, and the music enters the main section. All of the material in this main section is derived from the introduction and the third movement. The motifs from Purgatorio not only constitute the prickly main theme: the second theme which leaps in the key of D major is itself a development of the theme from the central section, and indeed incorporates direct quotes. After a quote from the fourth movement, we enter the development or central section in which the first introductory theme strives for domination and then the recapitulation of the main theme. But the vast reemergence of the first movement breaks off all vestige of hope. In the same vein as the very opening of the work, we return to the point of departure, the music reappearing, in the original key, on the horns with a contrapuntal accompaniment provided by the trumpets. We are made aware that all striving towards a Faustian or existential resolution has been in vain.

But the music at this stage is followed by a slow and purified cantabile section. We reach the nostalgic key of F-sharp major, and the harmony itself becomes reminiscent of the first theme from the first movement. Shortly before the series of introductory themes from the last movement gently rise up only to fade away again, the strings play a glissando leap of a minor thirteenth marked with a crescendo, slowly moving down towards the main harmony with the melody from the central thematic section of the third movement. Mahler rewrote this concluding section, although in both versions at this point he wrote in the name "Almschi" (Alma's pet name). One wonders what may have been the emotions he wished to inject into the music. This is not merely a question of the personal relationship between Mahler and his wife. It concerns how we should be expected to interpret this cry which, within its mood of heart-rending pathos, is imbued with a sense of quiet resignation, and, going one step further, how we should view the end of the work as part of the whole.

Having previously recorded the Adagio of the version in the Complete Works, Eliahu Inbal became aware of the value of recording the Deryck Cooke performing version of this work. A comparison between the two versions has thus become possible on the basis of performances by the same orchestra under the same conductor. The second edition (Cooke's third version) of the score was published in 1989 after Cooke's death, but the performance on the present recording is based on the first edition (Cooke's second version).