

6 May
Sydney Town Hall

MAHLER'S FOURTH SYMPHONY



«SYDNEY»
«SYMPHONY»
«ORCHESTRA»

Principal Partner



SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PATRON Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC

Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has evolved into one of the world’s finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world’s great cities. Resident at the iconic Sydney Opera House, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales, and international tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the Orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence.

The Orchestra’s first chief conductor was Sir Eugene Goossens, appointed in 1947; he was followed by Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Moshe Atzmon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux, Sir Charles Mackerras, Zdeněk Mácal, Stuart Challender, Edo de Waart and Gianluigi Gelmetti. Vladimir Ashkenazy was Principal Conductor from 2009 to 2013, followed by David Robertson as Chief Conductor from 2014 to 2019. Australia-born Simone Young has been the Orchestra’s Chief Conductor Designate since 2020. She commences her role as Chief Conductor in 2022 as the Orchestra returns to the renewed Concert Hall of the Sydney Opera House.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra’s concerts encompass masterpieces from the classical repertoire, music by some of the finest living composers, and collaborations with guest artists from all genres, reflecting the Orchestra’s versatility and diverse appeal. Its award-winning education program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music, and the Orchestra promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program.

Simone Young

Chief Conductor
Designate

Donald Runnicles

Principal Guest
Conductor

Vladimir Ashkenazy

Conductor Laureate

Andrew Haveron

Concertmaster
Chair supported by
Vicki Olsson

FIRST VIOLINS

Andrew Haveron

Concertmaster

Sun Yi

Associate
Concertmaster

Lerida Delbridge

Assistant
Concertmaster

Fiona Ziegler

Assistant
Concertmaster

Jenny Booth
Sophie Cole
Claire Herrick
Georges Lentz
Emily Long
Alexandra Mitchell
Alexander Norton
Anna Skálová
Léone Ziegler
Brian Hong*

Harry Bennetts

Associate
Concertmaster

Kirsten Williams

Associate
Concertmaster
Emeritus

Nicola Lewis

SECOND VIOLINS

Marina Marsden

Principal

Marianne Edwards

Associate Principal

Emma Jezek

Assistant Principal

Alice Bartsch
Victoria Bihun
Rebecca Gill
Emma Hayes
Monique Irik
Wendy Kong
Benjamin Li
Nicole Masters
Maja Verunica
Shuti Huang

VIOLAS

Roger Benedict*

Guest Principal

Tobias Breider

Principal

Amanda Verner

Acting Principal

Justin Williams

Acting Associate
Principal

Sandro Costantino
Rosemary Curtin
Stuart Johnson
Justine Marsden
Felicity Tsai
Leonid Volovelsky

Anne-Louise

Comerford

Associate Principal

Jane Hazelwood
Graham Hennings

CELLOS

Catherine Hewgill

Principal

Leah Lynn

Acting Associate
Principal

Kristy Conrau
Fenella Gill
Timothy Nankervis
Elizabeth Neville
Christopher Pidcock
Adrian Wallis
David Wickham

DOUBLE BASSES

Kees Boersma

Principal

Alex Henery

Principal

David Campbell
Steven Larson
Richard Lynn
Jaan Pallandi
Benjamin Ward

FLUTES

Joshua Batty

Principal

Emma Sholl

Associate Principal

Carolyn Harris
Lisa Osmialowski*

OBOES

Diana Doherty

Principal

Nicola Bell*

Alexandre Oguey

Principal Cor Anglais

CLARINETS

Francesco Celata

Acting Principal

Christopher Tingay

Alexander Morris

Principal Bass Clarinet

James Burke

Principal

BASSOONS

Todd Gibson-Cornish

Principal

Fiona McNamara

Noriko Shimada

Principal

Contrabassoon

Matthew Wilkie

Principal Emeritus

HORNS

Ben Jacks

Principal

Euan Harvey

Acting Principal 3rd
Horn

Marnie Sebire

Rachel Silver

Emily Newham*

Geoffrey O'Reilly

Principal 3rd Horn

TRUMPETS

David Elton

Principal

Anthony Heinrichs

Daniel Henderson*

TROMBONES

Scott Kinmont

Associate Principal

Dale Vail*

Christopher Harris

Principal Bass

Trombone

Ronald Prussing

Principal

Nick Byrne

TUBA

Steve Rossé

Principal

TIMPANI

Mark Robinson

Acting Principal

PERCUSSION

Rebecca Lagos

Principal

Timothy Constable

Ian Cleworth*

Joshua Hill*

HARP

Genevieve Lang*

Guest Principal

* = Guest Musician

° = Contract Musician

† = Sydney Symphony
Fellow

Grey = Permanent
Member of the Sydney
Symphony Orchestra
not appearing in
this concert

MAHLER'S FOURTH SYMPHONY

UMBERTO CLERICI conductor
JACQUELINE PORTER soprano

MARK HOLDSWORTH (BORN 1990)
Excelsior

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797–1828)
Orch. Jacques Offenbach
Serenade (Ständchen), D.957 No.4

Orch. Anton von Webern
Du bist die Ruh, D.776

Orch. Max Reger
Gretchen am Spinnrade, D.118
Nacht und Träume, D.827

GUSTAV MAHLER (1860–1911)
Symphony No. 4 in G
Bedächtig. Nicht eilen [Deliberately. Do not hurry]
In gemächlicher Bewegung, ohne Hast [Leisurely in tempo. Without haste]
Ruhevoll [Calmly]
Sehr behaglich [Very comfortably]

Mark Holdsworth's Excelsior was made possible through the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's 50 Fanfares Project and was commissioned by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, supported by Peter Howard.

ESTIMATED DURATIONS

4 minutes, 20 minutes,
interval 20 minutes,
54 minutes

The concert will conclude
at approximately 3.15pm.

COVER IMAGE

Emma Sholl, Sydney
Symphony Associate
Principal Flute
Photo: Nick Bowers

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

UMBERTO CLERICI conductor

With a career spanning more than 20 years as a cello soloist, orchestral musician, and now emerging conductor, Umberto Clerici is swiftly gaining a reputation as an artist with a diverse and multifaceted career.

As a cello soloist, Umberto made his debut at the age of 17 performing Haydn's D Major cello concerto in Japan, and has since appeared with an array of renowned orchestras internationally including the Vienna Philharmonic, St. Petersburg Philharmonic, and Russian State Orchestra of Moscow. In 2003, he made his debut at the Salzburg Festival and in 2012 he performed Tchaikovsky's "Rococo variations" conducted by Valery Gergiev. Umberto has performed on the stages of the world's most prestigious concert halls including New York's Carnegie Hall, Vienna's Musikverein, and the great Shostakovich Hall of St Petersburg.

Umberto was Principal Cello of the Sydney Symphony from 2014-2021 following time as Principal Cellist of the Royal Opera House in Turin.

Future conducting highlights include returns to the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Canberra Symphony as Artist in Residence and debuts with the Melbourne and Queensland Symphony Orchestras, as well as performances with the Izmir and Istanbul State Orchestras, Hong Kong Sinfonietta and Orchestra della Valle d'Aosta.

JACQUELINE PORTER soprano

Australian soprano Jacqueline Porter is equally at home on the operatic stage and the concert platform, appearing regularly as a soloist with Australia's major symphony orchestras.

In 2021 Jacqueline has toured with the Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra (Britten's *Les Illuminations*) and appeared in recital at the Bendigo Chamber Music Festival. She will also perform at the Australian Festival of Chamber Music Townsville as well as in concerts for the Hayllar Music Tour at Spicers Hidden Vale, Queensland.

Jacqueline's recent performance highlights also include Mozart's *Requiem*, *Solveig's Song* (Grieg), *Vocalise* (Rachmaninov), and *Messiah* (Melbourne Symphony Orchestra); *Marriage of Figaro* highlights (Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra); *St. Matthew Passion* (Melbourne Bach Choir); *Peter Grimes* and *Peer Gynt* (Sydney Symphony), recitals for Music in the Round, Melbourne Recital Centre's Salon series, Tasmanian Chamber Music Festival and Dunkeld Festival of Music.

Her opera roles include Susanna (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Despina (*Così fan tutte*), Drusilla, Virtù and Pallade (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*); L'Amour (*Orphée et Eurydice*); Saskia and Hendrickje Stoffels (*Rembrandt's Wife*); Clorinda (*Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*) and Momus (*Der Streit Zwischen Phoebus und Pan*) (Baroque Triple Bill) for Victorian Opera and Gretel (*Hansel and Gretel*) for State Opera South Australia.

Recordings include 'Love's Torment, Love's Delight: Songs by Schumann, Brahms and Mendelssohn', recently released on ABC Classics.



Umberto Clerici
Photo: Jay Patel



Jacqueline Porter
Photo: Milk Photography

Roger Benedict retires from his role with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra this year. He spoke with Leta Keens about his time with the Orchestra.

Roger Benedict had been principal viola in the Philharmonia Orchestra, London, for nine years when he was headhunted in 2002 for the same position with Sydney Symphony Orchestra. He wasn't sure he wanted the job. "I knew nothing about Sydney or the orchestra – all I knew was that Australia seemed a long way away." As soon as he set foot here, though, "I realised what an amazing place it was, and an amazing orchestra, with a very special spirit of collegiality."

During his first year or two, "some wonderful conductors" like Lorin Maazel and David Zinman came. "I'd worked with them in London, and it was very nice to see them here." Suddenly, Australia didn't seem so far away.

Over the years since, Roger singles out his concerto soloist performances and concerts with Christoph von Dohnányi and Vladimir Ashkenazy as highlights. "Sitting in the orchestra with a great conductor or great soloist is an amazing joy."

Immensely satisfying to him, too, has been his work as artistic director of the Sydney Symphony Fellowship orchestral training program he was brought out to set up, and a reason he decided to take the job with Sydney Symphony. "Passing on your skills and working with young musicians – you can't get better than that. Mentoring is a two-way process – you learn from their enthusiasm and curiosity and passion."

Roger, a renowned soloist who took up the violin at 10 before swapping to the viola at 17, has helped build the program into one of the world's best. In turn, it has set his career onto a new path. Through conducting the fellowship ensemble, he eventually made the move away from orchestral playing to full-time conducting and teaching. He is now chief conductor at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, where he is an associate professor; he has conducted orchestras both overseas and here, including the Sydney Symphony. "It can be hard to see someone you've sat next to as a colleague standing in front of you as a conductor, but everybody here has been lovely to me."

He misses sitting "in the heart of the orchestra", he says, as well as chatting to his colleagues in the Green Room, but still finds plenty of time to play the viola, "doing solo and chamber work – I've got a couple of recitals coming up, and a new recording." Not a great one for hobbies apart from reading and walking, he has always, he says, loved going to concerts. "It's great to go along and hear your colleagues. At the moment, seats are scarce but as soon as we are back to fully open halls, I'll be there."

We'll be looking for you in the audience, Roger.



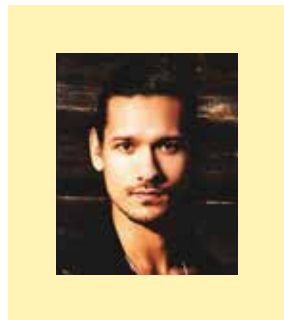
ABOUT THE MUSIC

Excelsior (from the Latin for 'higher, ever upwards') follows the narrative structure of Joseph Campbell's 'hero's journey'. Along with various thematic and motivic aspects of the piece, this structure is a nod to the composer's previous fanfare, *A Hero's Journey*. *Excelsior* is a victory through adversity venture conceived as two large sections bookended by an introduction and finale.

Excelsior opens frenetically; fragments of the piece's themes are scattered throughout the orchestra, fighting for acclaim until two portentous chords announced by the full orchestra declare a transition into the first section. This section consists of various statements and permutations of the first theme, underpinned by sinister and strident chords hammered in the low strings. The theme consists of two parts; the first, a steady and assertive melody; the second, a variation of triplets and long-short figures that allude to the traditional fanfare. The theme is first stated in the trombone before being passed around the brass and woodwinds, regularly punctuated by violent chords and atmospherically high screeches in the strings. With each iteration, the theme is subjected to various alterations as it attempts to free itself from the discordant accompaniment. The theme is fully stated by low brass and low winds to the corporeal rhythmic accompaniment of timpani and strings (taken up in the second section) before driven into the next section by ascending statements of the theme played by trumpets.

The second section is hurried and has a greater sense of urgency. The section alternates between regular, 5/8, and 7/8 metres, and this metric irregularity gives the section a sense of propulsion and urgency. A new theme is stated in the trumpet; an alarming upward melody syncopated against 7/8 chords pounding in the bass. Following a fanfaresque interlude, the second theme is restated in the major mode, thereby taking on a heroic and triumphant quality as it races towards the ending. Here the music subsides to warm swelling brass chords before launching into a bold and celebratory orchestral finale.

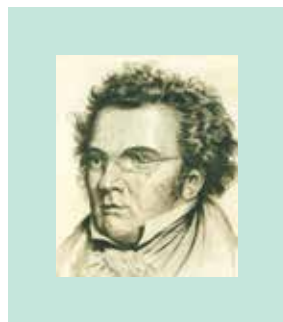
Mark Holdsworth's *Excelsior* was made possible through the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's 50 Fanfares Project and was commissioned by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, supported by Peter Howard.



Mark Holdsworth

ABOUT THE MUSIC

In his songs, Schubert transformed a bourgeois domestic entertainment into a high art form. He was, of course, building on the innovations of a more senior generation of composers, and was able to take advantage of technical advances in piano building – which made instruments both more expressive and cheaper to produce and sell. And he was notoriously promiscuous when it came to choosing texts to be sung: he could make musical silk purses out of poetic sow's ears as readily as he could set works of unquestioned literary greatness. The poetry he set often dealt with themes common in the growing Romantic literary movement – nature, the medieval world, the supernatural and death – and, like most songs before and since, Schubert's embodied the pains and joys of love.



Franz Schubert

‘Ständchen’ is taken from the collection, published after Schubert's death, known as the Schwanengesang (Swan Song). Here, poet Ludwig Rellstab evokes the lover waiting for the beloved in the twilight as nightingales sing. In his orchestration, Jacques Offenbach gives the nightingales special treatment.

Leise flehen meine Lieder
Durch die Nacht zu dir;
In den stillen Hain hernieder,
Liebchen, komm zu mir!
Flüsternd schlanke Wipfel
rauschen
In des Mondes Licht,
Des Verräters feindlich Lauschen
Fürchte, Holde, nicht. Hörst die
Nachtigallen schlagen?
Ach! sie flehen dich,
Mit der Töne süßen Klagen
Flehen sie für mich.

Gently imploring go my songs
through the night to you;
down into the quiet wood,
beloved, come to me.
Slender tree-tops stir and
whisper
in the moon's light;
of any betrayer, hostile, listening,
have no fear, my love.
Can you hear the nightingales call?
Ah! You they are imploring
with those sweet lamenting notes,
imploring you for me.

Sie verstehn des Busens Sehnen,
Kennen Liebesschmerz,
Rühren mit den Silbertönen
Jedes weiche HerzLass auch dir
die Brust bewegen,
Liebchen, höre mich,
Bebend harr ich dir entgegen!
Komm, beglücke mich!

They understand the heart's longing,
know the agony of love,
move with their sliver notes
every tender heart.
Let your heart, too, be moved,
beloved, listen to me,
trembling, I await you,
come, make my happiness!

Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866) experienced the upheavals of Europe during the Napoleonic wars and held the position of professor of oriental languages at various German universities before retiring to the country to concentrate on poetry. His vision of Peace, or someone who embodies rest, inspired one of Schubert's greatest songs, ‘Du bist die Ruh’, with its constantly transforming harmony that bespeaks quiet ecstasy. Anton von Webern orchestrated in 1903 while studying with Arnold Schoenberg.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Du bist die Ruh,	You are rest
Der Friede mild,	And gentle peace,
Die Sehnsucht du,	You are yearning
Und was sie stillt.	And also what calms it.
Ich weihe dir	Full of pleasure and pain
Voll Lust und Schmerz	I dedicate to you
Zur Wohnung hier	As a dwelling place
Mein Aug' und Herz.	My eyes and my heart.
Kehr' ein bei mir,	Stay with me,
Und schliesse du	Softly close
Still hinter dir	the gate
Die Pforten zu.	behind you.
Treib andern Schmerz	Drive away other grief
Aus dieser Brust.	From this my breast.
Voll sei dies Herz	May my heart be full
Von deiner Lust.	Of your delight.
Dies Augenzelt	The tabernacle of these eyes
Von deinem Glanz	Is lit
Allein erhellt,	Only by your radiance
O füll' es ganz.	Oh, fill it completely.

In all of his songs, Schubert's response to imagery and the psychology of the text is masterly; Max Reger's 11 versions seek to capture this in orchestral sound. 'Gretchen am Spinnrade' is a setting from Goethe's *Faust* that portrays Gretchen's yearning for Faust and her fear of heartbreak. The rippling figurations in the accompaniment represent the motion of Gretchen's spinning wheel, while below we hear a constant heartbeat over a simple bass line. The vocal line is supported by these inexorably repetitive figures, until the moment where Gretchen imagines Faust's kiss. At this point, the music stops, but this is a false climax; later in the song, where Gretchen sings 'If I could die kissing him' the vocal line reaches its top A, but just as Gretchen's love is unrequited, the music sinks back to the original phrase.

Meine Ruh' ist hin,	My peace is gone
Mein Herz ist schwer;	My heart is heavy
Ich finde sie nimmer	I find it never
Und nimmermehr.	And nevermore.
Wo ich ihn nicht hab'	Where he is not with me
Ist mir das Grab,	For me is the grave
Die ganze Welt	The whole world
Ist mir vergällt,	Tastes bitter to me.
Mein armer Kopf	My poor head
Ist mir verrückt,	Is maddened
Mein armer Sinn	My poor mind
Ist mir zerstückt.	Torn apart.
Meine Ruh' ist hin,	My peace is gone
Mein Herz ist schwer;	My heart is heavy
Ich finde sie nimmer	I find it never
Und nimmermehr.	And nevermore.
Nach ihm nur schau' ich	For him only
Zum Fenster hinaus,	Do I stare through the window
Nach ihm nur geh' ich	For him only
Aus dem Haus.	Do I leave the house.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Sein hoher Gang,
Sein ed'le Gestalt,
Seines Mundes Lächeln,
Seiner Augen Gewalt,

Und seiner Rede
Zauberfluß,
Sein Händedruck,
Und ach sein Kuß!

Meine Ruh' ist hin,
Mein Herz ist schwer,
Ich finde sie nimmer
Und nimmermehr.

Mein Busen drängt
Sich nach ihm hin.
Ach dürft ich fassen
Und halten ihn,

Und küssen ihn
So wie ich wollt';
An seinen Küssen
Vergehen sollt'!

O könnt' ich ihn küssen
So wie ich wollt'
An seinen Küssen
Vergehen sollt'!

Meine Ruh' ist hin,
Mein Herz ist schwer

His high bearing,
His noble appearance
His smiling mouth,
The strength of his glance,

And the magic flow
Of his speech,
The touch of his hand
And his kiss!

My peace is gone
My heart is heavy
I find it never
And nevermore.

My heart presses
Towards him,
Oh could I hold him
And draw him to me!

And kiss him
As I so desire
And of his kisses
So to die.

O how I could kiss him
As I so desire
And of his kisses
So to die.

My peace is gone
My heart is heavy...

Matthäus von Collin's 'Night and Dreams' celebrates the holiness of both, and bids them return after daytime.

Heil'ge Nacht, du sinkest nieder;
Nieder wallen auch die Träume
Wie dein Mondlicht durch die
Räume,
Durch der Menschen stille Brust.
Die belauschen sie mit Lust;
Rufen, wenn der Tag erwacht:
Kehre wieder, heil'ge Nacht!
Holde Träume, kehret wieder!

Holy night, you sink down;
Dreams, too, float gently down
Like your moonlight through space,
Through silent human hearts.
They listen with delight;
Calling, as the day awakens
'return, holy night!
Beautiful dreams, come back!

'It is too beautiful: one shouldn't allow oneself such a thing!' exclaimed Mahler one day in 1900. He was standing on the balcony of his newly built summer residence at Maiernigg, surrounded by forest on the shores of the Wörthersee. Mahler's career as a conductor usually left him only the summer months for composition; when he became Director of the Vienna Court Opera in 1897 and conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic in 1898 the intensity of the workload meant that he composed nothing during those years. The house at Maiernigg was a perfect retreat, and the perfect place to complete his Fourth Symphony which he had begun in the summer of 1899.



Mahler in 1897



Mahler's 'composition hut' at Maiernigg

ABOUT THE MUSIC

The symphony is at once the culmination of certain aspects of the previous two and their complete antithesis. The Second Symphony is Mahler's musical dramatisation of nothing less than death and resurrection, while in the Third, as he put it, 'all nature finds a voice'. The Fourth, by contrast, is on an altogether more modest scale: it consists of the 'standard' four movements (the first time Mahler adhered to that pattern), plays for a comparatively short 55 minutes or so, and is scored for a much smaller orchestra. What it shares with its two predecessors is a preoccupation with ideas of life and death, and a relationship to the collection of folk poetry, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (*The Youth's Magic Horn*), which Mahler mined for various song settings. The final movement—which Mahler first set in 1892 and which was originally planned for inclusion in the Third Symphony – is taken from the *Wunderhorn* collection, and describes a child's vision of heaven.

Commentator Paul Bekker has suggested that the whole symphony was germinated by the song, and Michael Kennedy has noted that all the movements are 'thematically interconnected'. Dramatically, too, the work is unified by a pervasive sense of innocence: Mahler's music is never naïve, and its simplicity is deceptive given the formal sophistication of its structure and elaboration of its counterpoint, but the work is careful to avoid the obtuse, the rhetorical and the monumental. The philosopher Theodor Adorno points out that the whole work's 'image-world is of childhood. The means are reduced, without heavy brass; horns and trumpets are more modest in number. No father figures are admitted to its precincts.'

This first movement quickly establishes the mood of childish innocence with the sound of four flutes and sleigh bells, simple melodies (one derived from Schubert) with pizzicato accompaniment from low strings. Various solo instruments appear like characters in a child's story; the four flutes at one point play low in unison to give the effect of what Adorno calls a 'dream ocarina'. But as the great Mahler scholar Deryck Cooke once put it, the serene surface of the work conceals figures whom he described as 'moving behind a veil which obscures their naked horror and makes them like the bogeymen who appear in illustrations to books of fairy tales'. Neville Cardus compared these musical goblins to the shadows cast by candlelight on a nursery wall. There is perhaps latent danger in the brief eruption of the Fifth Symphony's tempestuous fanfare in the first movement of this work, but the movement ends with a moment of seraphic peace before its good humoured conclusion.



Ludwig Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano (below), who collected and edited *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*



ABOUT THE MUSIC

One ‘bogeyman’ is ‘Freund Hain’, a devilish fiddler such as we also meet in Saint-Saëns’ *Danse Macabre*. In an early sketch for his Scherzo Mahler wrote ‘Freund Hain spielt auf’ (Our friend Hain strikes up). In the final version of this movement with its *Ländler* (a peasant dance in triple time) Trio section – there is a prominent solo for a violin which is tuned higher than normal to make it sound like Ein Fiedel’ (a fiddle). Kennedy argues that Hain is ‘picturesque rather than macabre’, but quotes Mahler who compared composing this work with ‘wandering through the flower-scented garden of Elysium and it suddenly changes to a nightmare of finding oneself in a Hades full of horrors.’

There is no horror in the opening of the work’s central *Adagio*, by far the longest movement in the work. A set of variations, it is unified by the device of the pizzicato double bass which plays a repeated figure or *ostinato*. There is a violent passage towards the end of the movement, where the timpani take over the basses’ figure playing, as Adorno says, ‘as drums once seemed before the age of seven.’

In the final movement the orchestra is joined by the soprano soloist for the *Wunderhorn* song, and it is here that the work’s ambiguities come into clear focus. Ostensibly a cute account of how a child might see heaven, it is actually a cleverly disguised set of variation which allow Mahler to seem simple while constantly spinning new and fascinating sounds. It characterises various saints carrying on their earthly tasks to produce the gastronomic delights of the afterlife: St Martha cooks, of course; St Peter fishes, Herod (somehow admitted through the pearly gates) is the butcher. As Adorno notes

These are not only the modest joys of the useful south German vegetable plot...Immortalised in them are blood and violence; oxen are slaughtered, deer and hare run to the feast in full view on the roads. The poem culminates in an absurd Christianity.

After hymning St Cecilia, the work ends quietly. For Cooke it is a ‘peaceful close’, for Adorno this ‘fairy-tale symphony is as sad as the late works...Joy remains unattainable, and no transcendence is left but yearning.’ Like Maiernigg, this work is perhaps ‘too beautiful’ to be true.

Gordon Kerry © 2021

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Wir geniessen die himmlischen Freuden	We taste the joys of Heaven
d'rum thun wir das Irdische meiden.	leaving behind all that is earthly.
Kein weltlich'Getümmel	No worldly strife
hört man nicht im Himmel!	is heard in Heaven.
Lebt Alles in sanfterster Ruh'!	We live here in sweetest peace!
Wir führen ein englisches Leben!	We live an angelic life,
Sind dennoch ganz lustig daneben!	yet we are merry as can be.
Wir tanzen und springen	We dance and spring
wir hüpfen und singen!	and skip and sing
Sanct Peter in Himmel sieht zu!	while St Peter in heaven looks on.

Johannes das Lämmlein	St John lets the lamb go running,
auslasset,	
der Metzger Herodes drauf	the butcher Herod is waiting for it.
passet!	
Wir führen ein geduldig's,	We lead the patient,
unschuldig's, geduldig's,	meek, guiltless
ein liebliches Lämmlein zu Tod!	little Lambkin to death!
Sanct Lucas den Ochszen thät	St Luke is slaughtering the oxen
schlachten	
ohn'einig's Bedenken und Achten,	without care or consideration,
der Wein kost kein Heller	The wine is free
im himmlischen Keller,	in the heavenly tavern,
die Englein, die backen das Brot.	and the angels, they bake the bread.

Gut' Kräuter von allerhand Arten,	Fine vegetables of every kind
die wachsen im himmlischen	grow in the gardens of Heaven,
Garten!	
Gut' Spargel, Fisolen,	good asparagus and beans,
und was wir nur wollen!	whatever they fancy,
Ganze Schüsseln voll sind uns	big bowls are prepared for us!
bereit!	
Gut' Äpfel, gut' Birn' und gut'	Good apples and pears and
Trauben!	grapes!
die Gärtner, die Alles erlauben!	The gardeners let us take all!
Willst Rehbock, willst Hasen,	Do you want a roebuck or hare?
Auf offener Strassen	Here in the open streets
sie laufen herbei!	they run about!

Sollt ein Fasttag etwa kommen	And when there is a fast day
alle Fische gleich mit Freuden	the fish come swarming in merrily!
angeschwommen!	
Dort läuft schon Sanct Peter	St Peter, he runs
mit Netz und mit Köder	with net and with bait
zum himmlischen Weiher hinein.	to fish in the heavenly pond.
Sanct Martha die Köchin muss	St Martha is the cook, who else?
sein!	

Kein Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,	No music on earth
die uns'rer verglichen kann	can compare with ours.
werden.	
Elftausend Jungfrauen	Eleven thousand virgins
zu tanzen sich trauen!	come forward to dance!
Sanct Ursula selbst dazu lacht!	Even St Ursula laughs to see that!
Kein Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,	No music on earth
die uns'rer verglichen kann werden.	can compare with ours.
Cäcilia mit ihren Verwandten	Cecilia and her relations
sind treffliche Hofmusikanten.	are excellent court musicians!
Die englischen Stimmen	The angelic voices
ermuntern die Sinnen!	lift our spirits
dass Alles für Freuden erwacht.	and all things awaken to joy!

(Translation by Hedwig Roediger)

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