2025–2026 | 126th Season
Marian Anderson Hall

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Friday, March 6, at 2:00
Saturday, March 7, at 8:00
Sunday, March 8, at 2:00

Yannick Nézet-Séguin Conductor
Ying Fang Soprano
Joyce DiDonato Mezzo-Soprano
Philadelphia Symphonic Choir
Joe Miller Director

Mahler Symphony No. 2 in C minor ("Resurrection")
I. Allegro maestoso
II. Andante moderato
III. In ruhig fliessender Bewegung—
IV. "Urlicht"—
V. Finale

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 30 minutes, and will be performed without an intermission.

The March 6 concert is sponsored by **Wayne Titerence and Vicki Mechner**.

The March 7 concert is sponsored by **Robert Pratter in memory of Gene E.K. Pratter**.

The March 8 concert is sponsored by **Allan Schimmel in memory of Reid Reames**.

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Jeff Fasco

The Philadelphia Orchestra

The world-renowned Philadelphia Orchestra strives to share the transformative power of music with the widest possible audience, and to create joy, connection, and excitement through music in the Philadelphia region, across the country, and around the world. Through innovative programming, robust education initiatives, a commitment to its diverse communities, and the embrace of digital outreach, the ensemble is creating an expansive and inclusive future for classical music. In June 2021 the Orchestra and its home, the Kimmel Center, united. Today, The Philadelphia Orchestra and Ensemble Arts brings the greatest performances and most impactful education and community programs to audiences in Philadelphia and beyond.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin is now in his 14th season with The Philadelphia Orchestra, serving as music and artistic director. His connection to the ensemble's musicians has been praised by both concertgoers and critics, and he is esteemed by the musicians of the Orchestra, audiences, and the community. In addition to expanding the repertoire by embracing an ever-growing and diverse group of today's composers, Yannick and the Orchestra are committed to performing and recording the works of previously overlooked composers.

The Philadelphia Orchestra takes great pride in its hometown, performing for the people of Philadelphia year-round, at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, throughout the community, over the airwaves, and online. The Kimmel Center has been the ensemble's home since 2001, and in 2024 Verizon Hall at the Kimmel Center was officially rededicated as Marian Anderson Hall in honor of the legendary contralto, civil rights icon, and Philadelphian. The Orchestra's award-winning education and community programs connect, uplift, and celebrate nearly 40,000 Philadelphians and 250 schools from diverse communities annually, through inclusive arts education and vibrant engagement that reflect our city's voices and expand access to creative opportunities. Students, families, and other community members can enjoy free and discounted experiences with The Philadelphia Orchestra through programs such as the Jane H. Kesson School Concerts, Family Concerts, Open Rehearsals, PlayINs, and Our City, Your Orchestra community concerts.

Through concerts, tours, residencies, and recordings, the Orchestra is a global ambassador and one of our nation's greatest exports. It performs annually at Carnegie Hall, the Mann Center, the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, and the Bravo! Vail Music Festival. The Orchestra also has a rich touring history, having first performed outside Philadelphia in its earliest days. In 1973 it became the first American orchestra to perform in the People's Republic of China, launching a now-five-decade commitment of people-to-people exchange through music.

Under Yannick's leadership, the Orchestra returned to recording with 15 celebrated releases on the Deutsche Grammophon label, including the GRAMMY® Award–winning *Florence Price Symphonies Nos. 1 & 3*. The Orchestra also reaches thousands of radio listeners with weekly broadcasts on WRTI-FM and SiriusXM. For more information, please visit www.philorch.org.

Music and Artistic Director

Landon Nordeman

Canadian-born conductor and pianist **Yannick Nézet-Séguin** is currently in his 14th season with The Philadelphia Orchestra, serving as music and artistic director. An inspired leader, Yannick is both an evolutionary and a revolutionary, developing the mighty "Philadelphia Sound" in new ways. His collaborative style, deeply rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm have been heralded by critics and audiences alike. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* has said that under his baton the Orchestra is "at the top of its considerable form"; the Associated Press has called it "a premier orchestra at its peak"; and the *New York Times* wrote, "the ensemble, famous for its glowing strings and homogenous richness, has never sounded better."

Yannick has established himself as a musical leader of the highest caliber and one of the most thrilling and sought-after talents of his generation. He became the third music director of New York's Metropolitan Opera in 2018. In addition, he has been artistic director and principal conductor of Montreal's Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000. In 2017 he became the third-ever honorary member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. He served as music director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic from 2008 to 2018 (he is now honorary conductor) and was principal guest conductor of the London Philharmonic from 2008 to 2014. He has made wildly successful appearances with the world's most revered ensembles and at many of the leading opera houses.

Yannick has shown a deep commitment to expanding the repertoire by embracing an ever-growing and diverse group of today's composers and by performing and recording the music of underappreciated composers of the past, including Florence Price, Clara Schumann, William Dawson, Lili Boulanger, Louise Farrenc, and William Grant Still. In 2018 he signed an exclusive recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon. Under his leadership The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to recording with 15 releases on that label, including *Florence Price Symphonies Nos. 1 & 3*, which won a GRAMMY® Award for Best Orchestral Performance in 2022.

A native of Montreal, Yannick studied piano, conducting, composition, and chamber music at Montreal's Conservatory of Music and continued his studies with renowned conductors, most notably Carlo Maria Giulini; he also studied choral conducting with Joseph Flummerfelt at Westminster Choir College. Among Yannick's honors are an appointment as Companion of the Order of Canada; Companion to the Order of Arts and Letters of Quebec; an Officer of the Order of Quebec; an Officer of the Order of Montreal; an Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres; *Musical America*'s 2016 Artist of the Year; ECHO KLASSIK's 2014 Conductor of the Year; a Royal Philharmonic Society Award; Canada's National Arts Centre Award; the Prix Denise-Pelletier; the Oskar Morawetz Award; and honorary doctorates from the University of Quebec, the Curtis Institute of Music, Westminster Choir College of Rider University, McGill University, the University of Montreal, the University of Pennsylvania, Laval University, and Drexel University.

To read Yannick's full bio, please visit philorch.org/conductor.

Soloist

This season Chinese soprano **Ying Fang** makes her debut at Houston Grand Opera in the United States premiere of Robert Wilson's staged version of Mozart's arrangement of Handel's *Messiah* conducted by Patrick Summers; sings Ilia in Mozart's *Idomeneo* with the Vienna State Opera; and joins the San Francisco Symphony and Manfred Honeck for Mozart's Requiem. She also records Mahler's Second Symphony with the Pittsburgh Symphony and Mr. Honeck and joins the Manchester Camerata and Gábor Takács-Nagy for an all-Mozart concert, which will be recorded and released by Chandos Records. Further highlights include Mahler's Symphony No. 8 with the Vienna Philharmonic and Andris Nelsons and her return to the Aix-en-Provence Festival as Pamina in Simon McBurney's production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* under conductor Raphaël Pichon, with whom she maintains a fruitful collaborative relationship. This past summer, she returned to the Baden-Baden Festival, where she joined Yannick Nézet-Séguin for performances of Mozart's Mass in C minor and Requiem and a lieder recital, all recorded for release on Deutsche Grammophon. She also appeared at the Verbier Festival in Bach's Mass in B minor and made her role debut as Lauretta in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* alongside baritone Bryn Terfel. At the Salzburg Festival, she joined Riccardo Muti in Bruckner's Mass No. 3.

Last season Ms. Fang made her long-awaited debut at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, as Susanna in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* in a production by David McVicar, followed by a return to Lyric Opera of Chicago for the same role. She debuted at the Bavarian State Opera as Pamina in *The Magic Flute* and made her role debut as Marzelline in Beethoven's *Fidelio* at the Metropolitan Opera, conducted by Susanna Mälkki and broadcast on the Met's *Live in HD* series. She also sang Ilia in *Idomeneo* in her debut at San Francisco Opera. On the concert stage, she joined the Sydney Symphony and Donald Runnicles for Mahler's Fourth Symphony and lieder of Richard Strauss; the Boston Symphony and Andris Nelsons as Mater Gloriosa in Mahler's Eighth Symphony; Montreal's Orchestre Métropolitain and Mr. Nézet-Séguin for her first Beethoven Ninth Symphony; and the Orchestra of St. Luke's and Mr. Pichon at Carnegie Hall for a program of works by Schubert, Schumann, and Weber.

A native of Ningbo, China, Ms. Fang is the recipient of the Martin E. Segal Award, the Hildegard Behrens Foundation Award, the Rose Bampton Award of the Sullivan Foundation, the Opera Index Award, and the First Prize Award of the Gerda Lissner International Vocal Competition. In 2009 she became one of the youngest singers to win the China Golden Bell Award for Music, one of China's most prestigious awards. She holds a master's degree and an Artist Diploma in Opera Studies from the Juilliard School and a bachelor's degree from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. She was a member of the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program and made her Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 2016.

Soloist

Chris Gonz

A multiple GRAMMY-Award winner and winner of the 2018 Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in Opera, Kansas-born mezzo-soprano **Joyce DiDonato** entrances audiences across the globe. She has soared to the top of the industry both as a performer and a fierce advocate for the arts. With a repertoire spanning over four centuries, a varied and highly acclaimed discography, and industry-leading projects, her artistry has defined what it is to be a singer in the 21st century. She made her Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 2015 at Carnegie Hall.

Ms. DiDonato's 2025–26 season includes season-opening concerts for both the Minnesota Orchestra and Montreal's Orchestre Métropolitain, as well as with the St. Louis Symphony in the world premiere of Kevin Puts's *House of Tomorrow*. She returns to Musikkollegium Winterthur for performances of Rachel Portman's *Another Eve* and collaborates with Radio France for Mahler's *Rückert-Lieder* in Paris and Dijon. She reunites with pianist Craig Terry for recitals at the Théâtre de Genève and Suntory Hall in Tokyo and embarks on her first major tour of Australasia with the Melbourne, Tasmania, and New Zealand symphonies. In the United States she makes her Lincoln Center Theater stage debut as the Mother in Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and her much-anticipated role debut at the Metropolitan Opera in Kaija Saariaho's *Innocence*. Concert appearances include Mahler's Symphony No. 3 with Yannick Nézet-Séguin and the Berlin Philharmonic. Recent highlights include Handel's *Theodora* for the Teatro Real in Madrid; a highly acclaimed European recital tour with performances at the Teatro alla Scala, Staatsoper Berlin, the Athens Megaron, and the Palau de la Música de Valencia; and debut appearances with the Norwegian National Opera Orchestra and the London Philharmonic. In December 2024 she toured the United States with the Dallas-based a cappella group Kings Return with a festive program entitled "Kings Re-Joyce."

Ms. DiDonato's latest project, EDEN, completed a groundbreaking three years of global touring and anticipation is now building for her next album release and touring project. A newly commissioned song cycle written by Mr. Puts for her and the GRAMMY Award–winning string trio Time for Three, featuring the poetry of Emily Dickinson, had its world premiere at the Bregenz Festival in August 2025, with further performances across the United States, including Kansas City, Chicago, and Carnegie Hall. Her expansive discography also includes Berlioz's *Les Troyens* (winner of *Gramophone*'s coveted Recording of the Year) and Handel's *Agrippina* (*Gramophone*'s Opera Recording of the Year). Other albums include Schubert's *Winterreise* with Mr. Nézet-Séguin; the GRAMMY Award–winning *Songplay; In War & Peace,* which won *Gramophone*'s 2017 Best Recital Award; *Stella di Napoli;* the GRAMMY Award–winning *Diva, Divo;* and *Drama Queens*. Other honors include *Gramophone*'s Artist of the Year and Recital of the Year awards and an induction into the *Gramophone* Hall of Fame.

Choir

Jeff Fusco

The Philadelphia Symphonic Choir made its debut in December 2016, performing in three programs with The Philadelphia Orchestra that season. Consisting of talented vocalists auditioned from around the country, the ensemble was created to marry gifted and unique voices of Philadelphia and beyond with the legendary "Philadelphia Sound." Performance highlights with the Orchestra include the world premiere of the concert version of Kevin Puts's opera *The Hours* and Beethoven's *Missa solemnis* in Philadelphia and at Carnegie Hall. The ensemble has also sung in performances of Haydn's *The Seasons,* Puccini's *Tosca,* Bernstein's Symphony No. 3 ("Kaddish"), Rossini's Stabat Mater, Bruckner's "Christus factus est" and Te Deum, Brahms's *A German Requiem,* and Mozart's Requiem, as well as holiday performances of Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and multiple season performances of Handel's *Messiah.*

The Philadelphia Symphonic Choir is directed by Joe Miller, professor of conducting and director of choral studies at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM). He has served as artistic director of choral activities for the Spoleto Festival USA in Charleston, South Carolina, a role he concluded in June 2025 after a 19-year tenure. This year marks his inaugural season as music director of the Vocal Arts Ensemble of Cincinnati. He has served as conductor of the Philadelphia Symphonic Choir since 2016 and made his conducting debut with The Philadelphia Orchestra in 2021 leading *Messiah.* In addition to these current performances, featured concerts with the Philadelphia Symphonic Choir in the 2025–26 season include Handel's *Messiah* under the baton of Yanick Nézet-Séguin this past December and Mozart's Requiem conducted by Jane Glover in April.

In the 2024–25 season, the Philadelphia Symphonic Choir joined The Philadelphia Orchestra for performances of Handel's *Messiah,* Mahler's Symphony No. 3, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, and Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* with Yannick Nézet-Séguin; Verdi's Requiem with Riccardo Muti; and Holst's *The Planets* with Daniele Rustioni. The 2023–24 season marked the premiere of the film *Maestro,* a collaboration with Bradley Cooper and Netflix featuring the Philadelphia Symphonic Choir and the music of Leonard Bernstein. The movie received a Best Picture nomination for the Academy Awards. Music from the film has been released on Deutsche Grammophon. The American Guild of Musical Artists, AFL-CIO, the union of professional singers, dancers, and production personnel in opera, ballet, and concert, represents the choral artists in these performances.

The Philadelphia Symphonic Choir
Joe Miller Director

Sopranos
Leigha Amick
Laura Berman
Katharine Burns
Abigail Chapman
Lauren Cohen
Ryan Colbert
Maria Palombo Costa
Marisa Curcio
Natalie Esler
Laura Fishman
Alexandra Gilliam
Greta Groothuis
Jina Jang
Erica Johnson
Colleen Kinderman
Rachael Lipson
Jessica Moreno
Sophia Santiago
Rebecca Shimer
Emily Tiberi

Altos
Christine Browne-Munz
Marissa Chalker
Lori Cummines-Huck
Alyson Harvey
Jessica Kerler
Shannon Lally
Renee Macdonald
Megan McFadden
Meghan McGinty
Heather Mitchell
Catherine Moore
Natasha Nelson
Sam Rauch
Rebecca Roy
Sarah Sensenig
Cecelia Snow
Lisa Stein
Kaitlyn Tierney
Kaitlyn Waterson
Kathryn Whitaker

Tenors
Aldo A. Aranzulla
Sam Barge
Brendan Barker
Nathaniel Bear
Roberto Guevara, Jr.
Jonathan Hartwell
Bryan Umberto Hoyos
Joshua John
George Johnson III
Jordan Klotz
Tom Leighton
William Lim, Jr.
Joshua Lisner
Max Marques
Timothy Morrow
Jacob Nelson
Kev Schneider
Royce Strider
Daniel Taylor
Mike Williams

Basses
Christopher D. Aldrich
Graham Bier
Gordon Blodgett
Greg Boatman
Maxwell Brey
Peter Christian
Sam Duffey
Matthew Fisher
Connor Fluharty
Loren Greer
Robert James Lamb
Matthew Marinelli
Ian Martin
Bryan McClary
Alexander Nguyen
Carlos Pedroza
Erik Potteiger
Scott Purcell
John T.K. Scherch
Kirby Traylor

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1894
Mahler
Symphony No. 2

Music
Debussy
Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun
Literature
Kipling
The Jungle Book
Art
Degas
Femme à sa toilette
History
Dreyfus Affair

Gustav Mahler, in his 20s and 30s, was a busy man on the rise. He spent most of his time building his career as a conductor, chiefly of opera, meteorically ascending from provincial theaters to the most prized position in Europe: music director of the Vienna Court Opera. This pace left little time for composing, most of which he did during the summer. At first he was conflicted about what kind of music to write and concentrated on songs and program music. What we now know as his Symphony No. 1 premiered as a "Symphonic Poem in Two Parts" and for some time he planned a sequel with a massive single-movement piece called *Todtenfeier*—Funeral Rite—which became the first movement of the Second Symphony we hear today.

It is remarkable that the Second Symphony, composed over the span of nearly seven years (the longest gestation for any of Mahler's works), should emerge as one of his most powerful and seemingly unified compositions. When he began it in 1888, at age 28, he had no idea where it would go, and the process of discovery—and self-discovery—addressed issues no less weighty than the meaning of life and death. How to conclude the work was a particular problem and the solution, when it came, proved a revelation: a choral finale setting a "Resurrection" poem by the 18th-century German writer Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock, which Mahler adapted with his own words.

What became known as the "Resurrection" Symphony is one of the longest, most ambitious, and profoundly moving orchestral works ever composed, its unusual impact and message have been celebrated ever since Mahler conducted the premiere in Berlin in 1895.

The Music

Symphony No. 2 ("Resurrection")

Gustav Mahler
Born in Kalischt (Kaliště), Bohemia, July 7, 1860
Died in Vienna, May 18, 1911

List-making figures among the diverting games many music lovers enjoy playing: lists of unforgettable performances one has heard, of great recordings collected, of favorite composers, pieces, performers, and so forth. Gustav Mahler's Second Symphony often ranks high in such reckonings, especially when musicians and audiences remember transformative experiences with the work.

Testimonials to the power of this particular symphony began with its premiere in Berlin under Mahler's direction in December 1895. His sister Justine recalled: "The triumph grew after every movement. Such enthusiasm is seen only once in a lifetime! Afterward I saw grown men weeping and youths falling all over one another." The composer Ernest Bloch heard a performance a few years later and wrote: "For me the impression will never be effaced, nor will it be for anyone fortunate enough to have shared in it. The excited audience, transported and oblivious to its surroundings, gave the composer an enthusiastic ovation; it sensed the presence of an independent work, a work coming from the heart which spoke directly to their hearts."

The effect on the younger generation of composers in Vienna, Mahler's greatest admirers, was profound. Arnold Schoenberg stated that he was "overwhelmed, completely overwhelmed" by the piece: "I remember distinctly that the first time I heard Mahler's Second Symphony I was seized, especially in certain passages, with an excitement which expressed itself even physically in the violent throbbing of my heart." Alban Berg said that his initial encounter with the piece was so intimate he felt the need to confess "infidelity" to his fiancée.

"A Special Place Among My Works" The Second Symphony seems to have held a special place for Mahler as well. He chose it as the first of his symphonies that he conducted in Vienna and also as his farewell there in 1907. It was likewise the first one he presented in Munich, New York, and Paris. According to her memoirs, he told his confidant Natalie Bauer-Lechner:

> Never again will I attain such depths and heights, as Ulysses only once in his life returned from Tartarus. One can create only once or twice in a lifetime works on such a great subject. Beethoven in his C minor (Fifth Symphony) and his Ninth, Goethe with *Faust,* Dante with the *Divine Comedy,* etc. Without putting myself on their level,

> or comparing myself to them, I am amazed that I was able to write this that summer in Steinbach! It was only thanks to the long interruption that had been forced on me, after which the waters gushed forth, as they do from any obstructed pipe.

In many ways the overwhelming impact of the Second Symphony is hardly surprising. It projects a powerful narrative of Life over Death that resonates with philosophical issues Mahler explored throughout his career. It is a monumental piece written for an enormous orchestra and capped off by a magnificent chorus that is reserved until the end of the final movement. After completing the work, Mahler remarked: "What effect I could have achieved if I had used the chorus and organ earlier, but I wanted to save them for the climax and would rather relinquish its effect in other places."

As a great conductor, especially of opera, Mahler certainly knew how to gauge effects; he was well aware of what was compelling dramatically and knew how to build to a shattering conclusion. Mahler came to expect the success of the work with audiences. After performing it in Paris the year before his death in 1911, he told a friend: "My Second Symphony occupies a special place among my works: If it is successful anywhere, this means nothing for my other works!"

A Protracted Genesis And yet the effect, power, and success of the Symphony might not have been predicted given its unusually protracted genesis. The work gave Mahler a lot of trouble over the course of the nearly seven years he took to write it, a longer period than for any other piece. Moreover, when he began composing the Symphony early in 1888, he had no central vision of its content or structure nor did he know how it would all end.

In November 1889 Mahler conducted the premiere of his "Symphonic Poem in Two Parts" in Budapest, where he served at the time as director of the Royal Hungarian Opera. This five-movement work would later lose its second movement entirely and be retitled "Symphony in D major," what we now know as his First. The year before he had already begun composing a new Symphony in C minor, of which he drafted an enormous opening movement. Somewhat later he decided to name it *Todtenfeier* (Funeral Rite, more literally: Celebration of the Dead) and promote it as an independent piece, which he tried to get published as such in 1891. The title most likely derives from a ballad called *Dziady* (Forefathers' Eve) by the celebrated Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz, which had recently been translated as *Todtenfeier* by Mahler's close friend Siegfried Lipiner. Mahler wrote to the journalist Max Marschalk in 1896 about the movement, saying "if you would like to know, I am interring the hero of my D-major (First) Symphony, whose life I capture in a pure reflection from a higher vantage point."

Todtenfeier remained unperformed and unpublished as the larger symphonic project stalled for some five years. During this hiatus, Mahler played the movement on the piano for the eminent conductor Hans von Bülow, who had led the premieres of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. But when Mahler looked up from the keyboard, he saw Bülow covering his ears; afterwards his mentor stated that the work made *Tristan* sound like a Haydn symphony. This discouraging response to *Todtenfeier*, compounded by his taxing conducting duties and the deaths of his parents and a sister, led to even further

delays in what would eventually become the five-movement Second Symphony.

Songs Within a Symphony The "long interruption"—the "obstructed pipe" that Mahler mentioned to Bauer-Lechner—ended in 1893, when he resumed work on the Symphony. That year he also orchestrated two songs that would become two of the middle movements. Once again he called upon poetry from the early-19th-century folk collection *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (The Youth's Magic Horn), poems that obsessed him for more than a decade. In addition to some two dozen vocal settings with piano and/or orchestra, he also used the collection in his early symphonies.

The two *Wunderhorn* songs employed for the third and fourth movements of the Second Symphony were originally written for piano and voice but joined the second movement Andante to provide a three-movement interlude leading to the finale. The third movement is a purely instrumental version, much expanded, of the ironic song "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt" (St. Anthony of Padua's Sermon to the Fishes.) The fourth movement, "Urlicht" (Primal Light), retains the vocal part, sung by a mezzo-soprano.

Yet Mahler was still baffled about how to end the Symphony. The breakthrough came in March 1894 while attending a memorial service in the same Hamburg church where he would himself be baptized three years later. The occasion—a "Todtenfeier," in fact—honored Bülow, who had died in Cairo the previous month. "The way in which I received inspiration for the Finale is deeply indicative of the essence of musical creation," Mahler would later tell critic Arthur Seidl:

> I had long considered the idea of employing a chorus for the last movement, and only the fear that this might be seen as a superficial imitation of Beethoven made me hesitate time and again. Then Bülow died, and I went to his funeral. My mood as I sat there thinking of the man who had died was wholly in tune with the work that was growing in my mind. Suddenly the choir chanted from the organ-loft the Klopstock chorale "Aufersteh'n!" It was as if I had been struck by lightning—the whole work now stood clearly before me! Such is the flash for which the creator waits, such is sacred inspiration!
>
> After that I had to create in sound what I had just experienced. Nonetheless, if I had not already been carrying the work within me, how could I have experienced this moment? Weren't thousands of other people with me in the church? That's how it always is with me. I only compose when I truly experience something, and I only experience it when I create!

And so Mahler crafted the finale of the Second Symphony using a poem by the 18th-century German writer Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock, which he heavily edited and vastly expanded with his own words. The final movement begins with a cataclysmic dissonance, looking back to the "cry of despair" of the Scherzo, that is comparable to the famous "terror fanfare" (as Wagner called it) with which Beethoven opened the finale of his Ninth Symphony. And indeed, it was Beethoven's final symphony that served as a model in other respects as well. For example, Mahler brings back themes from the earlier movements at

the opening of the finale, thus lending unity to the disparate work he composed over so many years.

He worked on this last movement in the summer of 1894 in Steinbach, in Austria's majestic Salzkammergut region. The Symphony was completed in December and Mahler conducted the first three movements with the Berlin Philharmonic in March 1895. He presented the premiere of the complete Symphony with the same orchestra in December and although the critical response was tepid, the general audience response was apparently enthusiastic.

Possible Programs If the preceding narrative gives something of the story behind the lengthy creation of the Second Symphony, there is also a story, perhaps several of them, within the work itself. Over the course of his career Mahler vacillated concerning "programs," one of the most important aesthetic issues in 19th-century music. To what extent should a composer connect a piece to extra-musical ideas or stories and how much should then be disclosed to audiences? Mahler at first embraced a programmatic approach, which meant bestowing titles to his works and engaging with the genre of the symphonic poem—hence the early idea of *Todtenfeier* as a standalone piece. Over time he grew increasingly reluctant to say much about his music, at least publicly. This may have been in part to distance himself from the works of his friend and rival Richard Strauss. Mahler withdrew programs he had devised for his early symphonies but then would on occasion divulge information again. And so back and forth he went.

About the Second Mahler gave various accounts, some in private as well as at least one for public consumption. All of them sketch a fairly similar scheme for the piece. Not long after finishing the Symphony, he told Marschalk that it grapples with the question: "'Why did you live? Why did you suffer? Is it all nothing but a huge, frightful joke?' We *must* answer these questions in some way, if we want to go on living—indeed, if we are to go on dying! He into whose life this call has once sounded must give an answer; and it is his answer I give in the final movement." The explanation Mahler gave for public consumption in 1900 was originally intended for a Munich performance but was suppressed in the end. It was printed, however, for a presentation the next year in Dresden. Somewhat less well known than his earlier private accounts, it is excerpted here:

> First Movement: We are standing near the grave of a beloved man. His whole life, his struggles, his sufferings and accomplishments on earth pass before us. And now, in this solemn and deeply stirring moment, when the confusion and distractions of everyday life are lifted like a hood from our eyes, a voice of awe-inspiring solemnity chills our heart, a voice that, blinded by the mirage of everyday life, we usually ignore: "What next?" it says. "What is life and what is death? Will we live on eternally? Is it all an empty dream or do our life and death have a meaning?" And we must answer this question, if we are to go on living.
>
> The next three movements are conceived as intermezzos.
>
> Second Movement, Andante: A blissful moment in the dear departed's life and a sad recollection of his youth and lost innocence.

Third Movement, Scherzo: A spirit of disbelief and negation has seized him. … He loses his perception of childhood and the profound strength that love can give. He despairs both of himself and of God. The world and life begin to seem unreal. Utter disgust for every form of existence and evolution seizes him in an iron grasp, torments him until he utters a cry of despair.

Fourth Movement: "Urlicht" (Primeval Light) from the *Knaben Wunderhorn*. The stirring words of simple faith sound in his ears: "I come from God and I will return to God!"

Fifth Movement: Once more we must confront terrifying questions, and the atmosphere is the same as at the end of the third movement. The voice of the Caller is heard. The end of every living thing has come, the last judgment is at hand, and the horror of the day of days has come upon us. The earth trembles, the graves burst open, the dead arise and march forth in endless procession. The great and the small of this earth, the kings and the beggars, the just and the godless, all press forward. … The last trumpet sounds. … In the eerie silence that follows we can just barely make out a distant nightingale, a last tremulous echo of earthly life. The gentle sound of a chorus of saints and heavenly hosts is then heard: "Rise again, yes, rise again thou wilt!" The God in all His glory comes into sight. A wondrous light strikes us to the heart. All is quiet and blissful. Lo and behold: There is no judgment, no sinners, no just men, no great and small; there is no punishment and no reward. A feeling of overwhelming love fills us with blissful knowledge and illuminates our existence.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Christopher H. Gibbs is James H. Ottaway Jr. Professor of Music at Bard College and has been the program annotator for The Philadelphia Orchestra since 2000. He is the author of several books on Schubert and Liszt, and the co-author, with Richard Taruskin, of The Oxford History of Western Music, College Edition.

Mahler composed his Second Symphony from 1888 to 1894.

Leopold Stokowski conducted the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of Mahler's Second, in May 1921, with soprano May Peterson, contralto Merle Alcock, and the Philadelphia Orchestra Chorus. The last subscription performances were in October|November 2014, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin with soprano Angela Meade, mezzo-soprano Sarah Connolly, and the Westminster Symphonic Choir.

The Orchestra recorded the "Resurrection" in 1970 for RCA, with Eugene Ormandy, soprano Evelyn Mandac, mezzo-soprano Birgit Finnila, and Singing City Choir.

The work is scored for four flutes (all doubling piccolo), four oboes (III and IV doubling English horn), four clarinets (IV doubling E-flat clarinet II), E-flat clarinet, four bassoons (III and IV doubling contrabassoon), 10 horns (VII–X doubling offstage horns), 10 trumpets (VII–X doubling offstage trumpets), four trombones, tuba, timpani (one offstage), onstage percussion (bass drum, cymbals, glockenspiel, high and low tam-tams, orchestra bells, rute, snare drum, triangle), offstage percussion (bass drum, cymbals, triangle), two harps, organ, strings, soprano and mezzo-soprano soloists, and mixed choir.

Performance time is approximately 80 minutes.

IV. "Urlicht" (**Mezzo-Soprano**)
(**from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn***)

O Röschen rot!
Der Mensch liegt in grösster Not!
Der Mensch liegt in grösster Pein!
Je lieber möcht' ich im Himmel sein!

Da kam ich auf einen 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!

V. "Aufersteh'n" (**Chorus, Soprano, and Mezzo-Soprano**)
(**Friedrich Klopstock**)

Aufersteh'n, ja aufersteh'n wirst du,
mein Staub, nach kurzer Ruh!
Unsterblich Leben! Unsterblich Leben
wird der dich rief dir geben.

Wieder aufzublüh'n wirst du gesät!
Der Herr der Ernte geht
und sammelt Garben
uns ein, die starben!

(**Mezzo-Soprano**)
O glaube, mein Herz, o glaube:
es geht dir nichts verloren!
Dein ist, ja dein, was du gesehnt,
dein, was du geliebt, was du gestritten!

(**Soprano**)
O glaube:
du wardst nicht umsonst geboren!
Hast nicht umsonst gelebt, gelitten!

IV. "Primal Light" (**Mezzo-Soprano**)
(**from *The Youth's Magic Horn***)

Oh little red rose!
Mankind lies in greatest need!
Mankind lies in greatest pain!
How I would rather be in heaven!

I came upon a broad path:
A little angel came and wanted to
turn me away.
Ah no! I would not be sent away!
I am from God and will return to God!
Dear God will give me a little light,
will light my way to eternal, blessed life!

V. Resurrection (**Chorus, Soprano, and Mezzo-Soprano**)

Rise again, yes you will rise again,
my dust, after a short rest!
Immortal life! Immortal life
will be given to you by Him who called you.

You are sown in order to bloom again!
The Lord of the harvest goes
and gathers the sheaves
of us who have died.

(**Mezzo-Soprano**)
Oh believe, my heart, believe:
You have lost nothing!
Yours, yes, yours is what you have longed for,
yours, what you loved, what you fought for!

(**Soprano**)
Oh believe:
You were not born in vain!
You have not lived and suffered in vain!

(Please turn the page quietly.)

(**Chorus and Mezzo-Soprano**)
Was entstanden ist, das muss vergehen!
Was vergangen, auferstehen!
Hör' auf zu beben!
Bereite dich zu leben!

(**Soprano and Mezzo-Soprano**)
O Schmerz! Du Alldurchdringer!
Dir bin ich entrungen!
O Tod! Du Allbezwinger!
Nun bist du bezwungen!

Mit Flügeln, die ich mir errungen,
in heissem Liebesstreben
werd' ich entschweben
zum Licht, zu dem kein Aug' gedrungen!

(**Chorus**)
Mit Flügeln, die ich mir errungen,
werde ich entschweben!
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!

(**Chorus and Mezzo-Soprano**)
What was created must perish!
What has perished must rise again!
Cease trembling!
Prepare yourself to live!

(**Soprano and Mezzo-Soprano**)
Oh pain, all-pervading,
from you have I been wrested!
Oh death, all-conquering,
now are you conquered!

With wings that I have earned
in fervent, loving aspiration,
will I soar
to the light that no eye has penetrated!

(**Chorus**)
With wings that I have earned
will I soar!
I shall die, that I may live!

Rise again, yes you will rise again,
my heart, in an instant!
What you have fought for,
will carry you to God!

English translation by Darrin T. Britting

Musical Terms

Cadence: The conclusion to a phrase, movement, or piece based on a recognizable melodic formula, harmonic progression, or dissonance resolution
Chorale: A hymn tune of the German Protestant Church, or one similar in style. Chorale settings are vocal, instrumental, or both.
Chord: The simultaneous sounding of three or more tones
Chromatic: Relating to tones foreign to a given key (scale) or chord
Dissonance: A combination of two or more tones requiring resolution
Dynamics: The varying and contrasting degrees of loudness
Harmonic: Pertaining to chords and to the theory and practice of harmony
Harmony: The combination of simultaneously sounded musical notes to produce chords and chord progressions
Intermezzo: A short connecting instrumental movement in an opera or other musical work
Intonation: The treatment of musical pitch in performance
Legato: Smooth, even, without any break between notes
Meter: The symmetrical grouping of musical rhythms
Polyphony: A term used to designate music in more than one part and the style in which all or several of the musical parts move to some extent independently
Scale: The series of tones which form (a) any major or minor key or (b) the chromatic scale of successive semi-tonic steps
Scherzo: Literally "a joke." Usually the third movement of symphonies and quartets that was introduced by Beethoven to replace the minuet. The scherzo is followed by a gentler section called a trio, after which the scherzo is repeated. Its characteristics are a rapid tempo, vigorous rhythm, and humorous contrasts. Also an instrumental piece of a light, piquant, humorous character.
Tempo: The speed of music
Timbre: Tone color or tone quality
Tonality: The orientation of melodies and harmonies toward a specific pitch or pitches
Tonic: The keynote of a scale

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)
Allegro: Bright, fast
Andante: Walking speed
Maestoso: Majestic
Moderato: A moderate tempo, neither fast nor slow

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