

# Minnesota Orchestra

Osmo Vänskä, conductor

Jennifer Johnston, mezzo

Women of the Minnesota Chorale, Kathy Saltzman Romey, artistic director

Minnesota Boychoir, Mark Johnson, artistic director

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Thursday, November 10, 2022, 11 am | Orchestra Hall

Friday, November 11, 2022, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

Saturday, November 12, 2022, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

## Gustav Mahler

Symphony No. 3 in D minor (1906 revision)

ca. 92'

Part 1

Kräftig. Entschieden

Part 2

Tempo di Menuetto. Sehr mässig

Comodo. Scherzando. Ohne Hast

Sehr langsam. Misterioso. Durchaus ppp

Lustig im Tempo und keck im Ausdruck

Langsam. Ruhevoll. Empfundener

[There is no pause between the final three movements.]

*Jennifer Johnston, mezzo*

*Women of the Minnesota Chorale*

*Minnesota Boychoir*

An English translation of the text from Mahler's Third Symphony will be projected as surtitles.

The concert is performed without intermission.

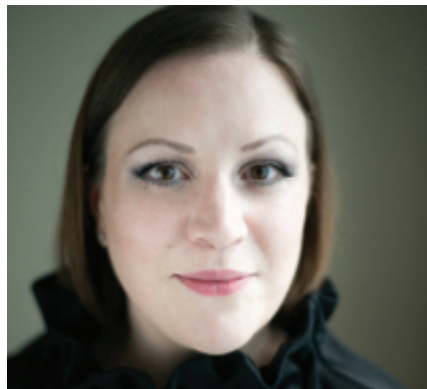
Minnesota Orchestra concerts are broadcast live on Friday evenings on stations of [YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio](#), including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities.



**Osmo Vänskä**, conductor

Minnesota Orchestra Conductor Laureate Osmo Vänskä, whose 19-year tenure as the Orchestra’s music director concluded this past summer, is renowned internationally for his compelling interpretations of the standard, contemporary and Nordic repertoires. His multi-year recording project with the ensemble to record all ten of Gustav Mahler’s symphonies concludes this month with sessions of the Third Symphony that follow this week’s concerts. Vänskä’s previous recordings with the Orchestra include all of the Sibelius and Beethoven symphonies, which included discs that earned a Grammy Award for Best Orchestral Performances and two additional Grammy nominations. Vänskä also led the ensemble on major tours to Cuba, Europe and South Africa. As a guest conductor, he has received extraordinary praise for his work with many of the world’s leading orchestras. He has served as music director of the

Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra and Finland’s Lahti Symphony, which, during two decades as music director, he transformed into one of Finland’s flagship orchestras. He began his music career as a clarinetist and continues to perform on that instrument, including in a Brahms trio at Orchestra Hall this past summer. This fall he is leading the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra on a major European tour to Vienna, Salzburg, Amsterdam and London. His other engagements in the 2022-23 season include concerts with the symphony and philharmonic orchestras of Bamberg, Chicago, Los Angeles, Helsinki, Israel, Houston, Montreal and Pittsburgh, among other ensembles. More: [minnesotaorchestra.org](http://minnesotaorchestra.org), [harrisonparrott.com](http://harrisonparrott.com).



**Jennifer Johnston**, mezzo

Jennifer Johnston, winner of the Royal Philharmonic Society’s Singer Award 2021, is a former BBC New Generation Artist, and a graduate of Cambridge

University and the Royal College of Music. She is particularly associated with the Bayerische Staatsoper, and she has appeared in operas at the Teatro alla Scala, Salzburg Festival and Festival d’Aix-en-Provence. She has performed with many of the world’s greatest orchestras and conductors, and her recent engagements have included Wagner’s *Wesendonck Lieder* with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Mahler’s Second Symphony with the London Philharmonia, Mahler’s Third Symphony with the Oslo Filharmonien, Mahler’s *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Barcelona Symphony Orchestra, *Woman: Interrupted* with pianist Malcolm Martineau at Wigmore Hall, and Verdi’s *Requiem* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra at the First Night of the Proms. Her engagements in the 2022-23 season include singing Mrs. Sedley in *Peter Grimes* at the Bayerische Staatsoper and Juno in *Semele* at the Glyndebourne Festival; concert performances with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Malmö Symphony Orchestra, Irish National Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra and Hallé Orchestra; and recitals with Malcolm Martineau and Joseph Middleton. More: [askonasholt.com](http://askonasholt.com), [jenniferjohnstonmezzo.com](http://jenniferjohnstonmezzo.com).

one-minute note

**Mahler: Symphony No. 3**

Mahler declared that a symphony should contain the whole world, and his Third Symphony—comprising six movements and more than 90 minutes of music—is the one in which he came closest to realizing that ideal. This is a work not only of huge dimensions but also one of immense expressive range: how quickly it moves, at the very beginning, from exuberance to a funeral cortège. The worlds the symphony embraces include the sweetest of pastoral landscapes, a darkly contemplative poem by Nietzsche, an innocent jubilation of children and, for a glorious conclusion, a musical love letter to Beethoven, the great Adagio composer.

**Women of the Minnesota Chorale**  
**Kathy Saltzman Romey**, artistic director  
**Barbara Brooks**, accompanist and artistic advisor

The Minnesota Chorale, principal chorus of the Minnesota Orchestra since 2004, has sung with the Orchestra for more than four decades, most recently last season in performances of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Joel Thompson's *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed* and Mahler's Eighth Symphony. It will collaborate with the Orchestra twice later this season, in performances of Haydn's *The Creation* and the world premiere of *brea(d)th* by Carlos Simon with libretto by Marc Bamuthi Joseph. Last month the Chorale celebrated its 50th anniversary with a special concert featuring its family of choirs. Its other recent and upcoming performances this season include the continuation of its Bridges program in a joint concert with Border CrosSing; holiday season performances of Handel's *Messiah* and Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*; and a collaboration with Minnesota Dance Theatre featuring Orff's *Carmina burana*. Founded in 1972 and led since 1995 by Artistic Director Kathy Saltzman Romey, the Chorale is Minnesota's preeminent symphonic chorus and ranks among the foremost professional choruses in the U.S. Among the Chorale's multi-generational initiatives are the acclaimed Bridges community engagement program, the Minneapolis Youth Chorus and Prelude Children's Choir, the Voices of Experience choir for older adults, Side by Side for high-school tenors and basses, InChoir open rehearsals and an Emerging Conductor program. More: [mnchorale.org](http://mnchorale.org).

Laura E. Amos  
 Jaime Anthony  
 Sarah Zach  
 Erin Berg  
 Kristi Bergland\*  
 Kate Biederwolf  
 Anna Boeser  
 Penny Bonsell  
 Alyssa K. Breece\*  
 Nancy Buller  
 Deborah Carbaugh\*  
 Chelle-Reneé Childs\*  
 Gina K. Cruciani  
 Ruth Dalager Buuck  
 Monica deCausmeaker\*  
 Deyhdra Dennis-Weiss\*  
 Becca Donley  
 Laurel E. Drevlow\*  
 Susan Sacquitne Druck\*  
 Kristina Dudley\*  
 Alyssa Ellson\*  
 Gloria Fredkove  
 Debra Gilroy\*  
 Grace Gonzalez  
 Michelle Hackett  
 Mallory Harrington  
 Lindsey Hartjes  
 Michelle Hayes\*  
 Dee Hein  
 Heather Hood\*  
 Sarah Jennings  
 Suzanne Kennedy \*  
 Patricia Kent\*  
 Maddie Kertson  
 Megan Kosse  
 Juliann Kunkel

Maureen Long  
 Elizabeth Longhurst\*  
 Wendy Lukaszewski  
 Pamela Marentette\*  
 Meghan McCabe  
 Celia McCoy  
 Shannon McGuire\*  
 Mary Monson\*  
 Merilu Narum  
 Linda Neuman  
 Alyssa Northrop  
 Damara O'Malley\*  
 Molly Palmer  
 Elizabeth Pauly\*  
 Elizabeth Pemberton\*  
 Erica Perl\*  
 Krista Petersen  
 Adriana Pohl  
 Barbara S. Prince\*  
 Deborah E Richman  
 Joy E Roellinger  
 Mitra M. Sadeghpour\*  
 Emma Schiltz  
 Natalie Scholz  
 Shari M. Speer\*  
 Polly Stregé  
 Elizabeth Sullivan\*  
 Maya Tester  
 Lucy Thrasher\*  
 Marcia VanCamp  
 Karen R. Wasiluk  
 Suzanne Wiebusch  
 Natalie Wishcop  
 Sara Zanussi

\* Section leader

**Minnesota Boychoir**  
**Mark Johnson**, artistic director  
**Todd Price**, accompanist

The Minnesota Boychoir is the oldest continually operating boys choir in the Twin Cities. For over 60 years, the Boychoir's reputation for excellence has brought invitations from local and national music conventions as well as sporting events, local theater productions and touring Broadway companies. The Boychoir has performed with the

Minnesota Orchestra—including at last June's season finale concerts of Mahler's Eighth Symphony—Minnesota Opera, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony, Prague Philharmonic and a long list of local, regional and national performing artists, ensembles and theater companies. The Boychoir has traveled on national and international tours, having thrilled audiences in twenty states and on five continents. The boys headlined the World Voices Australia International Choral Festival at Sydney's famed Opera House in 2007 and in 2011, in celebration of the choir's 50th anniversary, toured and performed for Mass in Saint Peter's Basilica at the Vatican. The choir sang at Monserrat Abbey and Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, Spain, to celebrate its 55th anniversary in June 2017 and celebrated its 60th anniversary with a tour of Ireland in June 2022. More: [boychoir.org](http://boychoir.org).

James Bicek	Esben Lund
Gavin Bohler	Noah Mabry
Teddy Childs	Griffin Malone
Brennan Cogswell	Oliver Monosmith
Linus Cuchetti	Henry Nesje
Jonathan Dierking	Cole O'Connor
Micah Friesen-Carper	Morrow Piper
Torin Froslee	Whitsun Piper
Aaron Gips	Falcon Scarpello
Will Grudem	Noah Scharback
Kaleb Hansen	Frank Schave
Jacob Hartwell	Kai Swanson
Philip Hug	Oskar Swanson
Rowan Jones	Henry Thielen
Toren Klopp	Frederick Thomann
Easton Kroetsch	Evan Walz
Simon Larson	Riley White



**Gustav Mahler**

**Born:** July 7, 1860,  
Kalischt, Bohemia  
**Died:** May 18, 1911,  
Vienna, Austria

**Symphony No. 3 in D minor  
(1906 revision)**

**Premiered:** June 9, 1902 (original  
version)

When Gustav Mahler visited Jean Sibelius in 1907, the two composers argued about “the essence of the symphony,” Mahler rejecting his colleague’s creed of severity, style and logic by countering with “No, a symphony must be like the world. It must embrace everything.” Twelve years earlier, while working on his Third, Mahler had remarked that to “call it a symphony is really incorrect since it does not follow the usual form. The term ‘symphony’—to me this means creating a world with all the technical means available.”

Mahler completed his Second Symphony in 1894—and this gave him confidence: he was sure of being in perfect control of his technique. In the summer of 1895 he escaped for some months from his duties as principal conductor of the Hamburg Opera and installed himself in his new one-room cabin at Steinbach on the Attersee, some 20 miles east of Salzburg, with his sister Justine and his friend Natalie Bauer-Lechner to look after him. He then set out to make a world to which he gave the overall title “The Happy Life—A Midsummer Night’s Dream.”

**writing and rewriting**

Before he wrote any music, he worked out a scenario in five sections, titled “What the Forest Tells Me,” “What the Trees Tell Me,” “What Twilight Tells Me” (“strings only,” he noted), “What the Cuckoo Tells Me (Scherzo),” and “What the Child Tells Me.” He changed all that five times as the music began to take shape in his mind during the summer. The trees, the twilight and the cuckoo were all taken out, supplanted by flowers, animals and morning bells. He added “What the Night Tells Me” and saw that he wanted to begin with the triumphal entry of summer, which would include an element of something Dionysiac and even frightening.

In less than three weeks he composed what are now the second through fifth movements. He went on to the *Adagio* and, by the time his composing vacation came to an end on August 20, he had made an outline of the first movement and written two independent songs, “Lied des Verfolgten im Turm” (Song of the Persecuted Man in the Tower) and “Wo die schönen Trompeten

blasen” (Where the Lovely Trumpets Sound). It was the richest summer of his life.

In June 1896 he was back at Steinbach. Over the winter he had made some progress scoring the new symphony and continued to work, realizing that here were two movements that wanted to be one, and there, he saw, to his alarm, the first movement was growing hugely—it would be more than half an hour long—and it was also getting louder and louder. He made significant changes and in the eighth and last scenario, dated August 6, 1896, the superscription is simply “A Midsummer Noon’s Dream,” with the following titles given to the individual movements:

First Part:

Pan Awakes. Summer Comes Marching In (Bacchic procession)

Second Part:

- What the Flowers in the Meadow Tell Me
- What the Animals in the Forest Tell Me
- What Humanity Tells Me
- What the Angels Tell Me
- What Love Tells Me

However, at the 1902 premiere, on June 9 in Krefeld, the program page showed no titles at all, only tempo and generic indications (Tempo di Menuetto, Rondo, Alto Solo, etc.).

When we look at the earlier movement titles in the Third Symphony, even though they were finally rejected, we are looking at a series of attempts to put into a few words the world of ideas, emotions and associations that lay behind the musical choices Mahler made as he composed. We too can draw intimations from them and then remove them as a scaffolding we no longer need. That said, let us look at the musical object Mahler left us.

**part one: dark to light**

The first movement accounts for roughly one-third of the symphony’s length. In the division of the work Mahler finally adopted, it makes up the entire first section.

Starting with magnificent gaiety, it falls at once into tragedy: see-sawing chords of low horns and bassoons, the drumbeats of a funeral procession, cries and outrage. Mysterious twitterings follow, the suggestion of a distant quick march, and a grandly rhetorical recitative for the trombone. Against all that, Mahler poses a series of quick marches that have tunes you can’t believe you haven’t known all your life and the sort that used to cause critics to complain of Mahler’s “banality.” They are elaborated and scored with an astonishing combination of delicacy and exuberance. Their swagger is rewarded by a collision with

catastrophe, and the whole movement is the conflict of the dark and the bright elements, culminating in the victory of bright.

Two other points might be made. One concerns Mahler's fascination with things happening "out of time." The piccolo rushing the imitations of the violins' little fanfares is not berserk—but merely following Mahler's direction to play "without regard for the beat." That is playful, but the same device is turned to dramatic effect when, at the end of a steadily accelerating development, the snare drums cut across the oom-pah of the cellos and basses with a slower march tempo of their own, thus preparing the way for the eight horns to blast the recapitulation into being.

Second, it is worth noting that several of the themes heard near the beginning will be transformed into the materials of the last three movements—fascinating especially in view of the fact that the first movement was written after the others.

## part two

What follows is, except for the finale, a series of shorter character pieces.

## II. flower piece

Here is the *Blumenstück*, the first music he composed for this symphony. This is a delicately sentimental minuet, with access, in its contrasting middle section, to slightly sinister sources of energy.

## III. forest and posthorn

In the third movement, Mahler draws on his song "Relief in Summer," whose text tells of waiting for Lady Nightingale to start singing as soon as the cuckoo is through. The marvel here is the landscape with posthorn, not just the lovely melody itself, but the way it is presented: the magic transformation of the highly present trumpet into distant posthorn, the gradual change of the posthorn's melody from fanfare to song, the interlude for flutes, and, as Arnold Schoenberg pointed out, the accompaniment "at first with the divided high violins, then, even more beautiful if possible, with the horns." After the brief return of this idyll and before the snappy coda, Mahler makes spine-chilling reference to the Last Judgment "Great Summons" music in the Second Symphony's finale.

## IV: Nietzsche and midnight

Now low strings rock to and fro, the harps accenting a few of their notes. The see-sawing chords from the first pages return; a human voice intones the "Midnight Song" from Friedrich Nietzsche's *Also sprach Zarathustra*. Each of its 11 lines is to be imagined as coming between two of the twelve strokes of midnight. *Pianississimo* throughout, Mahler warns. "Lust tiefer noch als Herzeleid" (Joy deeper still than heartbreak) is set with solo violin.

## V: bells and angels

From here the music moves forward without a break and, as abruptly as it changed from the scherzo to Nietzsche's midnight, so does it move now from that darkness to a world of bells and angels. The text of the fifth movement comes from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (The Boy's Magic Horn). However, the interjections of "Du sollst ja nicht weinen" (But you mustn't weep) are Mahler's own. A three-part chorus of women's voices carries most of the text, with the solo contralto [mezzo in these performances] returning to take the part of the sinner. The boys' chorus, confined at first to bell noises, joins later in the exhortation "Liebe nur Gott" (Only love God) and for the final stanza.

## VI: adagio

Mahler realized that in choosing this ending he had made a very special decision. "In Adagio movements," he explained to Natalie Bauer-Lechner, "everything is resolved in quiet. The Ixion wheel of outward appearances is at last brought to a standstill. In fast movements—minuets, allegros, even andantes nowadays—everything is motion, change, flux. Therefore I have ended my Second and Third symphonies contrary to custom with adagios—the higher form as distinguished from the lower."

A noble thought, but there is some gap between theory and reality. This *Adagio* makes its way at last to a sure and grand conquest, but during its course—and this is a movement, like the first, on a very large scale—Ixion's flaming wheel can hardly be conceived of as standing still.

The *Adagio's* original title, *What Love Tells Me*, refers to Christian love, *agape*, and Mahler's draft carries the superscription "Behold my wounds! Let not one soul be lost!" The performance directions, too, speak to the issue of spirituality, for Mahler enjoins that the immense final bars with their thundering kettledrums—this is decidedly not a movement in which "everything is resolved in quiet"—be played "not with brute strength [but] with rich, noble tone." Likewise, the last measure is "not to be cut off sharply"; rather, there should be some softness to the edge between sound and silence at the end of this most riskily and gloriously comprehensive of Mahler's worlds.

**Instrumentation:** solo mezzo, women's chorus, children's chorus and orchestra comprising 4 flutes (each doubling piccolo), 4 oboes (1 doubling English horn), 3 clarinets (1 doubling bass clarinet), 2 E-flat clarinet, 4 bassoons (1 doubling contrabassoon), 8 horns, 4 trumpets (1 doubling posthorn), 4 trombones, tuba, 2 sets of timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, suspended cymbal, rute, tambourine, tamtam, triangle, glockenspiel, chimes, 2 harps and strings

*Program note excerpted from the late Michael Steinberg's The Symphony: A Listener's Guide (Oxford University Press, 1995), used with permission.*

