Innocence

Saturday, February 8, 2025 • 7:30 p.m.
Northshore Concert Hall

Harmonia Orchestra
William White, conductor

CARL MARIA VON WEBER (1786–1826)
Overture to *Oberon*

Hsing-Hui Hsu, conductor

GUSTAV MAHLER (1860–1911)
selections from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*

Revelge
Rheinlegendchen
Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen
Lob des hohen Verstands
Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt
Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht?

Katherine Goforth, tenor

— intermission —

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906–1975)
Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 47

Moderato
Allegretto
Largo
Allegro non troppo

Please silence cell phones and other electronics, and refrain from the use of cameras and recording devices during the performance.

Refreshments will be available during intermission in the lobby.

Harmonia Orchestra and Chorus
William White, music director • George Shangrow, founder
1916 Pike Pl. Ste 12 #112, Seattle WA 98101 • 206-682-5208 • www.harmoniaseattle.org

Maestro's Prelude

Welcome to this concert and — more to the point — welcome to the Northshore Concert Hall! If you're a member of the local community, we're very glad you have joined us, and if you traveled far afield, thanks for making the extra effort. The Harmonia Orchestra is among the first non-scholastic groups to perform in this space, and I'm very excited about the program we've prepared for the occasion.

I am equally excited about tonight's soloist. This is a return appearance for Katherine Goforth, but if you'll indulge me, I really must tell you about her Harmonia début last season, because it was one of the truly unforgettable moments in my life as a musician.

It was November 2023 and Harmonia was gearing up for Haydn's oratorio *The Seasons* by pulling out all the stops: chorus, orchestra and soloists were bedecked in 19th-century costume, there were puppets and props, and we were in essence making it a semi-staged opera.

Two days before the concert, our tenor soloist fell ill. An artist dropping out of a concert is never good, but this was a real gut punch — *The Seasons* is not a piece most singers have in their repertoire, and I had no idea how we'd find a replacement on such short notice.

Frantic phone calls resulted in one rejection after another. Finally, through the recommendation of our baritone soloist, I found a tenor brave enough to step up to the plate. I was operating under the presumption that we'd need to fly someone in from New York or London to make this concert happen, but the muses were smiling on us, and the person who agreed to sing this concert on (essentially) zero notice was in Portland, Oregon. And not only had she accepted the engagement, but she was willing to get into her car that very second to drive up to Seattle.

It was now Friday at 3:30 and our dress rehearsal started at 7:30. Katherine walked into the hall as we were playing the overture. Her first aria started just minutes later; she walked onstage and sang it perfectly. The energy in the room was electric. And here's the thing — Katherine had never sung this piece before. She read the entire 2.5-hour-long oratorio singing at sight.

The concert was a triumph. Katherine did more than just sing the notes — she gave the sort of committed performance you'd expect from someone who'd known the piece for years. Her German was flawless (she's fluent), her intonation perfect, her every musical intention executed to the height of excellence. It was a feat of musical virtuosity unlike I have ever witnessed before or since.

Right then and there I told Katherine that she had her pick of repertoire for a future program, and I have awaited her return ever since. She's chosen another folk-inflected German masterpiece, Gustav Mahler's *Wunderhorn Lieder* (a piece she's actually sung before!) and I know that we're all in for something very special indeed.

Guest Artists

American vocalist **Katherine Goforth** shares the "thrilling tenor power" (*Opera News*) of her "noble, colorful and iridescent vocal sound" (*Magazin Klassik*) in vivid character portraits and heartfelt performances that "[do] not hold back" (*The New York Times*). Ms. Goforth is the recipient of Washington National Opera's inaugural True Voice Award for transgender and non-binary singers and the Career Advancement Award from the fourth Dallas Symphony Orchestra Women in Classical Music Symposium. Based in Portland, she has appeared extensively as a soloist with Pacific Northwest–based arts organizations, including Portland Opera, Bozeman Symphony, Walla Walla Symphony, Yakima Symphony, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Opera Bend, Opera Theater Oregon, Sound Salon, Artists Repertory Theatre, Fuse Theatre Ensemble and Pink Martini. She was a member of the International Opera Studio of Oper Köln, received her Bachelor's degree from St. Olaf College, her Master's degree from the Juilliard School, and attended the Franz-Schubert-Institut, Britten Pears Young Artist Programme, Heidelberger Frühling Liedakademie, Georg Solti Accademia and Boston Wagner Institute. Ms. Goforth is an instructor of voice at Reed College in Portland and Clark College in Vancouver. She returns to Harmonia after a thrilling last-minute debut in Haydn's *The Seasons*.

Conductor **Hsing-Hui Hsu** is the founding music director of the Emerald City Chamber Orchestra. She received her Bachelor of Music in clarinet performance from Rice University, where she was music director of the Rice Light Opera Society. While working as a software engineer at Amazon, she became a founding member of the Amazon Symphony Orchestra and served as its music director. She has guest-conducted the Seattle Collaborative Orchestra, Puget Sound Symphony Orchestra and Seattle Festival Orchestra, and she joins Harmonia for the 2024–2025 season as assistant conductor. Ms. Hsu is also an active clarinetist. Last season she performed Copland's clarinet concerto with the Puget Sound Symphony Orchestra, where she serves as principal clarinet. She is currently bass clarinetist and acting principal clarinetist for the Yakima Symphony Orchestra, and has also performed with the Seattle Philharmonic, Pacific Northwest Opera, Sustain Music Project, Tacoma Opera and Seattle Metropolitan Chamber Orchestra.

Program Notes

Carl Maria von Weber
Overture to *Oberon*

Weber was born in Eutin, near Lübeck, Germany, on November 18, 1786, and died in London on June 5, 1826. He began sketching his opera Oberon *on January 23, 1825, completing the overture on April 9, 1826, and conducting the premiere three days later at Covent Garden. The overture calls for pairs of woodwinds, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani and strings.*

Today, Carl Maria von Weber is represented in the concert hall (when at all) by a handful of charming concertante works featuring clarinet and bassoon, and four opera overtures: *The Ruler of the Spirits*, *Der Freischütz*, *Euryanthe* and *Oberon*. Yet between his early teens and his death just shy of age 40, he composed in a variety of genres, toured as a virtuoso pianist, and was one of the first practitioners of the art of conducting. Unlike Bach, Mozart and Beethoven, who were consumed by music, he was one of the first of a new generation of composers who maintained literary aspirations and engaged in music criticism.

Carl Friedrich Ernst von Weber (the "von" had been adopted by his father despite any evidence of nobility, with "Maria" replacing his middle names given at birth at some later date) was born into a family that included many musicians. His father, Franz Anton von Weber, was a civic music director until he founded a theater company shortly after Carl's birth. Franz's half-brother had four daughters, all of them singers: Josepha premiered the role of the Queen of the Night in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, while Aloysia studied with Mozart and turned down his proposal of marriage, after which a third sister, Constanze, became Mozart's wife.

At age 18, Weber became director of the opera at Breslau, swiftly making innovations and immersing himself in every aspect of the productions (to the annoyance of many in the company). Legend (if not fact) has it that Weber took a swig from a wine bottle that had been filled with nitric acid, ruining his singing voice; during his recovery, the company reversed his innovations, leaving him jobless.

After a stretch of unemployment that provided the opportunity to compose a number of instrumental works, he served as personal secretary to Duke Louis of Württemberg, in whose financial affairs he became embroiled, leading to charges of embezzlement and bribery that resulted in a brief jail sentence and his being expelled from Württemberg in 1810. Some years of travel followed, then a stint as an opera director in Prague, where he carried on an affair with a married woman and began suffering from a case of tuberculosis that would persist throughout the rest of his life.

In 1817, he became engaged to the actress Caroline Brandt, whom he had know for several years, and was invited to become Court Kapellmeister in Dresden, where he was given the task of establishing a German-language opera company to complement the existing Italian opera house. Here he composed *Der Freischütz* ("The Free-Shooter"), a *singspiel* (light opera with spoken dialogue in place of recitatives, in the manner of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*) that became a huge success after its 1821 Berlin premiere. Until this point, Italian opera had dominated, even in German-speaking countries, but *Der Freischütz* helped set the stage for the innovations of Richard Wagner a generation later.

Weber followed up *Der Freischütz* in 1823 with a dramatic opera, *Euryanthe*, in Vienna. The work contains what is generally regarded as some of his most sublime music, but is hampered by a ridiculously bad libretto.

The 1822 London premiere of *Der Freischütz* led to an invitation for Weber to compose an English-language opera to be staged at Covent Garden. Given a free choice of subject, he turned down Goethe's *Faust* in favor of *Oberon* (based on the same source material as Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*). His health growing weaker, Weber was reluctant to take on such an arduous task and the travel to England that would be required, but he felt the need to provide financially for his young family. He would succumb to his illness less that two months after *Oberon*'s premiere.

Weber took no fewer than 153 English lessons in preparation for setting James Robinson Planché's libretto to music, but Planché fell far behind schedule, delaying the premiere by a year. In February 1826, Weber departed Dresden for Paris — where he visited composers Cherubini, Rossini and Auber — and arrived in London on March 5, his new opera still incomplete. He saved the overture for last, composing it quickly and just in time for the premiere (where the overture was immediately encored).

London audiences lauded Weber's music and the extravagant production, but history has looked unkindly on Planché's libretto — modern performances of the opera are rare, but the overture has become a concert-hall staple.

Oberon is an elf-king who is unable to reunite with his queen (an unseen and unheard Titania) until he unites two lovers, so he presents Duke Huon of Bordeaux (a medieval crusader) with a magic horn to aid him on his quest to abduct and marry Rezia, the Caliph of Baghdad's daughter. The overture's slow introduction opens with a three-note call from the magic horn; delicate flutes and clarinets establish the fairytale setting. A shock chord leads to the main *Allegro* section and a succession of themes from throughout the opera (albeit in sonata form rather than a simple medley of tunes). These include a clarinet solo for Huon imagining Rezia, a march for the fairy Puck and his helpers, and Rezia's big aria, "Ocean, thou mighty monster"

Gustav Mahler
Selections from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*

Mahler was born July 7, 1860, in Kaliště, Bohemia, and died in Vienna on May 18, 1911. He composed these songs for voice and orchestra between April 1892 and July 1899.

Carl Maria von Weber composed at least 10 operas, several of which have been lost or were never finished. At some point after completing *Der Freischütz*, he produced sketches for a comic opera, *Die drei Pintos*, that never came to fruition. Caroline Weber, the composer's widow, led an effort to complete the work and sent the sketches to Giacomo Meyerbeer, who held onto them for two decades without making any

Mahler Texts and Translations

Revelge
Des Morgens zwischen drei'n und vieren,
da müssen wir Soldaten marschieren
das Gäßlein auf und ab,
trallali, trallaley, trallalera,
mein Schätzel sieht herab!

„Ach Bruder, jetzt bin ich geschossen,
die Kugel hat mich schwere getroffen,
trag' mich in mein Quartier,
trallali, trallaley, trallalera,
es ist nicht weit von hier!

„Ach Bruder, ich kann dich nicht tragen,
die Feinde haben uns geschlagen!
Helf' dir der liebe Gott!
Trallali, trallaley, trallali, trallaley, trallalera!
Ich muß marschieren bis in' Tod!

„Ach Brüder, ach Brüder,
ihr geht ja mir vorüber,
als wär's mit mir vorbei!
Trallali…
Ihr tretet mir zu nah!

„Ich muß wohl meine Trommel rühren,
trallali, trallaley, trallali, trallaley,
sonst werd' ich mich verlieren,
trallali, trallaley, trallala.
Die Brüder, dick gesät,
sie liegen wie gemäht."

Er schlägt die Trommel auf und nieder,
er wecket seine stillen Brüder,
trallali, trallaley, trallali, trallaley,
sie schlagen ihren Feind,
trallali, trallaley, trallalerallala,
ein Schrecken schlägt den Feind!

Er schlägt die Trommel auf und nieder,
da sind sie vor dem Nachtquartier
schon wieder,
trallali, trallaley, trallali, trallaley.
In's Gäßlein hell hinaus!
Sie zieh'n vor Schätzleins Haus.
Trallali…

Des Morgens stehen da die Gebeine in Reih'
und Glied, sie steh'n wie Leichensteine
Die Trommel steht voran,
daß sie ihn sehen kann.

Reveille
In the morning between three and four,
we soldiers must march
up and down the alley,
trallali, trallaley, trallalera,
my darling looks down from above.

"Oh, brother, now I've been shot,
the bullet has hit me hard,
carry me to my quarters.
Trallali, trallalei, trallalera,
it's not far from here!

"Oh, brother, I can't carry you,
the enemy has defeated us!
God help you!
Trallali…
I must march to my death!

"Oh, brothers, oh brothers,
you pass me by,
as if it were all over for me!
Trallali…
You're getting too close to me!

"I must beat my drum,
trallali…
otherwise I'll get lost,
trallali…
My brothers are sown thickly,
they lie as if they've been mown."

He beats the drum up and down,
he wakes his silent brothers,
trallali…
they batter their enemy,
trallali…
a terror strikes their foe!

He beats the drum up and down,
now they're back again
at camp,
trallali…
Out into the bright little alley!
They pass before his sweetheart's house.
Trallali…

In the morning the bones stand
in a row, they stand like gravestones,
The drummer stands in front,
so that she can see him there.

Rheinlegendchen
Bald gras' ich am Neckar,
bald gras' ich am Rhein;
bald hab' ich ein Schätzel,
bald bin ich allein!

Was hilft mir das Grasen,
wenn d'Sichel nicht schneid't?
Was hilft mir ein Schätzel,
wenn's bei mir nicht bleibt?

So soll ich denn grasen
am Neckar, am Rhein,
so werf' ich mein goldenes
Ringlein hinein.

Rhine Legend
Now I'll mow by the Neckar,
now I'll mow by the Rhine;
now I'll have a sweetheart,
now I'll be alone!

What good is mowing
if the sickle doesn't cut?
What good is a sweetheart,
if she won't stay by me?

So if I'm to mow
by the Neckar, by the Rhine,
I'll toss in the water
my little golden ring.

Es fließet im Neckar
und fließet im Rhein,
soll schwimmen hinunter
in's Meer tief hinein.

Und schwimmt es, das Ringlein,
so frißt es ein Fisch!
Das Fischlein soll kommen
auf's König's sein Tisch!

Der König tät fragen,
wem's Ringlein sollt' sein?
Da tät mein Schatz sagen:
„Das Ringlein g'hört mein!"

Mein Schätzlein tät springen
Berg auf und Berg ein,
tät mir wied'rum bringen
das Goldringlein mein!

Kannst grasen am Neckar,
kannst grasen am Rhein!
Wirf du mir nur immer
dein Ringlein hinein!

Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen
Wer ist denn draußen und wer klopfet an,
der mich so leise wecken kann!?
Das ist der Herzallerliebste dein,
steh' auf und laß mich zu dir ein!

Was soll ich hier nun länger steh'n?
Ich seh' die Morgenröt' aufgeh'n,
die Morgenröt', zwei helle Stern'.
Bei meinem Schatz da wär ich gern',
bei meinem Herzallerliebsten.

Das Mädchen stand auf und ließ ihn ein;
sie heißt ihn auch willkommen sein.
Willkommen lieber Knabe mein,
so lang hast du gestanden!

Sie reicht' ihm auch die schneeweiße Hand.
Von ferne sang die Nachtigall,
das Mädchen fing zu weinen an.

Ach weine nicht, du Liebste mein,
auf's Jahr sollst du mein Eigen sein.
Mein Eigen sollst du werden gewiß,
wie's Keine sonst auf Erden ist!
O Lieb auf grüner Erden.

Ich zieh' in Krieg auf grüner Haid,
die grüne Haide, die ist so weit!
Allwo dort die schönen Trompeten blasen,
da ist mein Haus von grünem Rasen!

Lob des hohen Verstands
Einstmals in einem tiefen Tal
Kukuk und Nachtigall
täten ein' Wett' anschlagen.

Zu singen um das Meisterstück,
gewinn' es Kunst, gewinn' es Glück!
Dank soll er davon tragen.

Der Kukuk sprach: „So dir's gefällt,
hab' ich den Richter wählt,"
und tät gleich den Esel ernennen.

It flows in the Neckar
and flows in the Rhine,
it swims deep down under
into the sea.

And as it floats, the little ring
is gulped by a fish!
The little fish will come
to the table of the king!

The king will enquire
Whose ring this could be?
Then my darling will say:
"The little ring is mine!"

My darling will jump
over hill, over dale,
and bring back to me
that gold ring of mine!

You can mow by the Neckar,
you can mow by the Rhine!
If you'll just toss in
your little ring for me!

Where the Lovely Trumpets Blow

Who is outside and who is knocking,
who can wake me up so quietly!?
This is the dearest to your heart,
get up and let me in!

Why should I stand here any longer?
I see the dawn rising,
the dawn, two bright stars.
I would like to be there with my darling,
with my dearest love.

The girl got up and let him in;
she also welcomes him.
Welcome, my dear lad,
you have stood so long!

She gave him her snow-white hand.
From far away, the nightingale sang,
the girl began to weep.

Oh, don't cry, my love,
you shall be mine within a year.
You shall surely become mine,
like no one else on Earth!
Oh love on this green Earth.

I'm going to war on the green heath,
the green heath, that's so far away!
There where the lovely trumpets blow,
there is my house of green grass!

In Praise of Lofty Intellect

Once in a deep valley,
cuckoo and nightingale
made a bet.

The one to sing the masterpiece,
whether by skill or by luck!
He should take the glory.

The cuckoo said: "If it please you,
I've chosen the judge,"
and immediately appointed the donkey.

„Denn weil er hat zwei Ohren groß,
so kann er hören desto bos,
und, was recht ist, kennen!"

Sie flogen vor den Richter bald.
Wie dem die Sache ward erzählt,
schuf er, sie sollten singen!

Die Nachtigall sang lieblich aus!
Der Esel sprach: „Du machst mir's kraus!
Du machst mir's kraus! Ija! Ija!
Ich kann's in Kopf nicht bringen!"

Der Kukuk drauf fing an geschwind
sein Sang durch Terz
und Quart und Quint.
Dem Esel g'fiels, er sprach nur:
„Wart! Wart! Wart!
Dein Urteil will ich sprechen, ja sprechen.

„Wohl sungen hast du, Nachtigall!
Aber Kukuk, singst gut Choral!
Und hältst den Takt fein innen!

„Das sprech' ich nach
mein' hoh'n Verstand,
und kost' es gleich ein ganzes Land,
so laß ich's dich gewinnen, gewinnen!"
Kukuk, kukuk! Ija!

Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt

Antonius zur Predigt
die Kirche find't ledig!
Er geht zu den Flüssen
und predigt den Fischen!
Sie schlag'n mit den Schwänzen!
Im Sonnenschein glänzen, sie glänzen!

Die Karpfen mit Rogen
sind all' hierher zogen;
hab'n d'Mäuler aufrissen,
sich Zuhör'n's beflissen!
Kein Predigt niemalen
den Fischen so g'fallen!

Spitzgoschete Hechte,
die immerzu fechten,
sind eilends herschwommen,
zu hören den Frommen!
Auch jene Phantasten,
die immerzu fasten:
die Stockfisch ich meine,
zur Predigt erscheinen!
Kein Predigt niemalen
den Stockfisch so g'fallen!

Gut' Aale und Hausen,
die Vornehme schmausen,
die selbst sich bequemen,
die Predigt vernehmen!
Auch Krebse, Schildkroten,
sonst langsame Boten,
steigen eilig vom Grund,
zu hören diesen Mund!
Kein Predigt niemalen
den Krebsen so g'fallen!

Fisch' große, Fisch' kleine!
Vornehm' und Gemeine!

"Because he has two big ears,
so he can hear who's bad,
and also who's good!"

They soon flew before the judge.
When he was told how the matter stood,
he bid that they should sing!

The nightingale sang sweetly!
The donkey said: "You're bothering me!
You're bothering me! Hee-haw! Hee-haw!
I can't wrap my head around it!"

The cuckoo quickly started singing
his song through thirds and
fourths and fifths.
The donkey liked it, he said:
"Wait! Wait! Wait!
I'll render judgment right away.

"You sang well, nightingale!
But cuckoo, you sing a good chorale!
And keep the beat finely!

"I speak this according
to my lofty intellect,
and though it cost an entire country,
I'll have you the winner, the winner."
Cuckoo, cuckoo! Hee-haw!

St. Anthony's Sermon to the Fish

Anthony, for his sermon,
finds the church empty!
So he goes to the river
and preaches to the fish!
They thrash around with their tails!
In the sunshine, they glimmer!

The carp with their roe
have all come;
and opened their mouths,
to listen diligently!
Never had preaching
pleased the fish so much!

The pointy-mouthed pike,
who are constantly fencing,
swam here in a hurry,
to hear the pious one!
Even those fantasists
who are constantly fasting:
the stockfish I mean,
show up for the sermon!
Never had preaching
pleased the stockfish so much!

Good eels and sturgeon,
upon whom the nobles feast,
even they settle in,
to listen to the sermon!
Even crabs and turtles,
usually slow pokes,
rise quickly from the bottom,
to hear this oration!
Never had preaching
pleased the crabs so much!

Big fish, small fish!
Noble and common!

Please turn page quietly . . .

Erheben die Köpfe
wie verständ'ge Geschöpfe!
Auf Gottes Begehren
Die Predigt anhören!

Die Predigt geendet,
ein Jeder sich wendet!
Die Hechte bleiben Diebe,
die Aale viel lieben;
die Predigt
hat g'fallen,
sie bleiben wie Allen!

Die Krebs' geh'n zurücke;
die Stockfisch' bleib'n dicke;
die Karpfen viel fressen,
die Predigt vergessen!
Die Predigt
hat g'fallen,
sie bleiben wie Allen!

Raise their heads
like intelligent creatures!
At God's behest
listen to the sermon!

The sermon ended,
they all turn away!
The pikes remain thieves,
the eels stay lusty;
though the sermon
was pleasing,
they all stay the same!

The crabs still go backward;
the stockfish stay fat;
the carp still stuff themselves,
forgetting the sermon!
Though the sermon
was pleasing,
they all stay the same!

Wer hat dies
Liedel erdacht?

Dort oben am Berg
in dem hohen Haus!
Da gucket ein fein's,
lieb's Mädel heraus!
Es ist nicht dort daheime!
Es ist des Wirt's
sein Töchterlein!
Es wohnet auf grüner Haide!

Mein Herzle is' wundt!
Komm', Schätzle, mach's g'sund!
Dein' schwarzbraune Äuglein,
die hab'n mich verwund't!
Dein rosiger Mund
macht Herzen gesund.
Macht Jugend verständig,
macht Tote lebendig,
macht Kranke gesund.

Wer hat denn das
schöne Liedel erdacht?
Es haben's drei Gäns'
über's Wasser gebracht!
Zwei graue und eine weiße!
Und wer das Liedel
nicht singen kann,
dem wollen sie es pfeifen!
Ja!

Who Thought Up This
Lovely Little Tune?

Up there on the mountain
in the high house!
From there stares out
a fine, lovely girl!
But it's not her home there!
She's the innkeeper's
little daughter!
She lives on the green heath!

My little heart is sore!
Come on, darling, and heal it!
Your dark-brown eyes
have wounded me!
Your rosy mouth
can cure a sick heart,
make young men sensible,
bring the dead back to life,
restore the sick to health.

Who thought up this lovely
little tune?
It was three geese who
brought it across the water!
Two gray ones and one white!
And whoever can't
sing the song,
they'll whistle it to them!
Yes!

progress, before returning them to the Weber's son, Max. After Max's 1881 death, the manuscript found its way to Max's son, Captain Carl von Weber, in Leipzig. The director of the local opera company then introduced the captain to the opera's young assistant conductor, the aspiring composer Gustav Mahler.

Mahler agreed to complete *Die drei pintos*, in the process spending time in the captain's household, where he became enamored with the captain's wife, Manchester-born Marion von Weber. Mahler described her as "a beautiful person" and "the sort that tempts one to do foolish things." English composer Ethel Smyth, who studied at the Leipzig Conservatory, reported that Mahler "fell in love … and his passion was reciprocated — as well it might be, for in spite of his ugliness he had demoniacal charm."

The relationship escalated to the point where Mahler felt they had no other choice to elope, in spite of the fact that he would as a result forfeit his job in Leipzig. Mahler waited on a train platform at the appointed time, but Marion failed to appear. Meanwhile, Carl Weber, according to Smyth, "shut his eyes as long as was possible," as a "scandal would mean leaving the army. … One day, travelling to Dresden, Weber suddenly burst out laughing, drew a revolver and began taking William Tell–like shots at the headrests between the seats." He was subsequently confined to a mental institution; Mahler took up a post in Prague, never to see Marion von Weber again.

Apparently Marion (her "musical, radiant and aspiring nature gave my life new meaning," effused Gustav) urged the composer to write his first symphony — some of which may have been inspired by their relationship. It draws upon material from Mahler's 1884–1885 song cycle *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* ("Songs of a Wayfarer"), consisting of four *lieder* for which Mahler created his own texts that are clearly inspired by a collection of German folk-poetry, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* ("The Youth's Magic Horn").

The three-volume *Des Knaben Wunderhorn: Alte deutsche Lieder*, published between 1806 and 1808, was the work of Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano. Incorporating German-language folk poems they had collected and freely edited (and, in some cases, created from scratch), it received high praise from such literary luminaries as Goethe, who asserted that it "has its place in every household." Carl Maria von Weber had set *Wunderhorn* poems to music, as did Franz Schubert, Felix Mendelssohn, Robert Schumann, Johannes Brahms, Arnold Schoenberg and Anton Webern.

Between 1887 and 1890, Mahler wrote nine more songs for voice and piano, all of them to *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* texts, that were published together with *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* in three volumes. In 1892, he began composing even more *Wunderhorn* settings, which he called *Humoresken*. Conceived as works for voice an orchestra, he simultaneously created versions with piano accompaniment, a dozen of which were published in an 1899 collection. These 12 songs included *Urlicht* and *Es sungen drei Engel*, which found their way directly into Mahler's Symphony No. 2 and Symphony No. 3, respectively. Mahler soon replaced these two in the

collection with *Revelge* and *Der Tambourseg'sell*. Although published as a set, he apparently never intended them to be performed in their entirety or in any specific order, or by any particular voice type.

In *The Beloved Vision*, his survey of 19th-century music, Stephen Walsh writes that, for these *Wunderhorn* songs, Mahler "tended to select poems with a strongly visual or narrative element. Often they are dialogues: the girl calls her lover to her window, the soldier marches off to war abandoning her, birds are instructed to carry this or that message. Tragedy is never very far away. … Much of the imagery recalls Mahler's childhood. Military fanfares and march rhythms echo through song after song. Cuckoos call, nightingales sing. And behind everything is a kind of idealized folk music, memories of peasant life in Moravia, but clouded by vagrant harmony, major thirds drooping to the minor, chromatic passing notes of a faintly schmaltzy kind, a deliberate intrusion of urban sophistication into the simple country life."

Gustav Mahler is generally viewed as the very definition of a "maximalist" composer (most of his symphonies exceed an hour in length, and the eighth is known as the "Symphony of a Thousand") but these *Wunderhorn* "humoresques" are exquisitely crafted miniatures.

Revelge ("Reveille"), which opens the set of six songs heard this evening, calls for the largest orchestra, including three trumpets, a contrabassoon and several percussion instruments. Composed in July 1899, it is a dark-hued military march with the trumpets tapping out a persistent drum-like rhythm. Mahler himself drew comparisons to the opening movement of his Symphony No. 3. Soldiers march in the dead of night past a fallen drummer, whose sweetheart looks on from her window. He pleads with his comrades, but they march on to their death. The next morning, the soldiers' skeletons (listen for the *col legno* strings evoking their clattering bones) rise and "stand like gravestones."

By contrast, **Rheinlegendchen** ("Rhine Legend," composed in August 1893) is a gentle *Ländler* (a rustic European peasant dance in $\frac{3}{4}$ time, although here Mahler writes in $\frac{3}{8}$) that resembles a central passage from the second movement of Mahler's Symphony No. 4. A youth sets out from Neckar (a tributary of the Rhine located in Baden-Württemberg) and daydreams of winning back his beloved by throwing a ring into the Rhine (listen for descending figure in the violins as the ring makes its way to the bottom of the river), where it will be eaten by a fish that will end up on the king's table, only to fall into the hands of the sweetheart.

Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen ("Where the Lovely Trumpets Blow," dating from July 1898) is, according to Egon Gartenberg, "a noteworthy example of how Mahler changed a text to make it completely his own. The lyrics of the song, originally titled *Unbeschreibliche Freude* ("Indescribable Joy"), were changed from a lovely midnight tryst into an eerie midnight rendezvous between a maid and the ghost of her dead soldier sweetheart. Mahler's hallmark, the trumpet motive underlining the macabre text, makes this song a miniature masterpiece."

In 1895, Mahler conducted Wagner's *Ring* cycle in Hamburg, where the soprano Anna von Mildenburg made her operatic debut singing Brünnhilde. When she presented him with a first edition of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* the following year, Mahler responded: "You cannot realize how delighted I am with the charming book. … Immediately I composed a merry little *lied*, which I shall call **Lob des hohen Verstands**" ("In Praise of Lofty Intellect"). The vocalist and the woodwinds (including an E♭ clarinet) evoke the sounds of a donkey judging a singing contest between a cuckoo and nightingale. "As a composer," wrote Edward Downes, "Mahler, who had suffered from obtuse critics, took malicious delight in portraying the cuckoo's simple-minded appeal, the misfortune of the nightingale, and the donkey's loud 'hee-haw' in praise of his own high intellect." (Mahler's original title for this song was *Lob der Kritik*, or "Praise from the Critic.") The opening melody is the obvious model for the bassoon theme at the beginning of the finale for Mahler's Symphony No. 5.

Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt ("St. Anthony's Sermon to the Fish," from the summer of 1893) may be the most recognizable of any of these *Wunderhorn* songs, due to Mahler's expansion of it as the third-movement scherzo in his Symphony No. 2. It relates a well-known story about St. Anthony of Padua who, arriving at his church only to find it empty, heads to the riverbank to preach to the fishes instead. They listen in rapt attention and offer effusive praise, but upon the conclusion of the sermon they return to their sinful ways as if the message had gone in one ear and out the other. "Mahler's sportive orchestra depicts the up and down of the waves in flowing lines of the violins," notes Downes. "Harmonic oddities beneath the waves suggest the behavior of the congregation."

Mahler combined stanzas from two separate *Wunderhorn* poems in **Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht?** ("Who Thought Up This Lovely Little Tune?," dating from April 1892 and the earliest of Mahler's music heard this evening). Another playful $\frac{3}{8}$ *Ländler*, it heaps praise on an innkeeper's daughter who lives high on mountain, replete with some Alpine yodeling.

Dmitri Shostakovich
Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 26

Shostakovich was born September 25, 1906 in St. Petersburg, and died in Moscow on August 9, 1975. He composed his fifth symphony between April 18 and July 20, 1937, in St. Petersburg (then called Leningrad), where Yevgeni Mravinsky conducted the premiere on November 21 of the same year. The work is scored for pairs of woodwinds (plus piccolo, E♭ clarinet and contrabassoon), 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, tam-tam, glockenspiel, xylophone), piano (doubling celesta), harps and strings.

In 1925, 19-year-old Dmitri Shostakovich completed his first symphony, a graduation exercise that would earn him acclaim at a fairly young age. Two more symphonies, both of which included chorus, followed in 1927 and 1930; although their musical language was far more experimen-

tal, their subject matter (the October Revolution and May Day) helped deflect any adverse reaction from the Soviet establishment.

Around this time, Shostakovich befriended Ivan Sollertinsky, a professor at the Leningrad Conservatory, who introduced him to the music of Mahler and Bruckner, as well the European modernists Paul Hindemith, Ernst Krenek and Alban Berg. Berg's *Wozzeck* served as a model for Shostakovich's own expressionist opera, *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, which debuted in early 1934 and enjoyed successful two-year runs in Leningrad and Moscow.

Shostakovich began work on his fourth symphony in September 1935, modeling it after those of Mahler, employing a huge orchestra on a vast scale with an uncompromising tonal aesthetic. That January, after completing the first two movements, he was summoned to a performance of *Lady Macbeth* — Joseph Stalin was to be in attendance. Stalin departed before the final curtain. Two days later, *Pravda* published an unsigned editorial authored by journalist David Zaslavsky at the explicit direction of Stalin, who provided the headline: Сумбур вместо музыки ("This Is Chaos, Not Music," widely translated as "Muddle Instead of Music"). It lambasted the opera and concluded with a warning that Shostakovich's present course "may end very badly."

This was not merely a threat against Shostakovich's career, but against his very life. Under Stalin's totalitarian regime, several of the composer's relatives and artistic peers had been jailed, sent to labor camps or executed. An official suggested that Shostakovich collect Russian folk tunes and incorporate them into his music, to abide by the "Socialist Realism" that the government now demanded of its artists, avoiding the "formalism" of the West. (Neither of these terms were well-defined and could change on a whim.)

Sollertinsky advised Shostakovich to complete his new composition and offer it up as a "heroic Soviet symphony" (and hope that no one found out that most of it had been written before the reprimand). The Symphony No. 4 was finished in May 1936 and scheduled for a December premiere, but after rehearsals began in November, three officials convinced Shostakovich he would be committing career (and, possibly, literal) suicide unless he withdrew it.

Some film-score commissions and a job teaching orchestration at the Leningrad Conservatory helped get Shostakovich back on a firmer footing and by April 1937 he was ready to once again tackle the creation of a major work. The result was his fifth symphony, composed over the span of three months. While in many ways it was very much *not* a capitulation to Soviet authorities, it did fall into the mold of a classical symphony, with Beethoven and Tchaikovsky chief among its many influences. Like Beethoven's Ninth, Shostakovich's Fifth begins in D minor and ends in D major, with a minuet/scherzo as its second movement, and a slow movement third. The orchestration is not much larger: Shostakovich added an E♭ clarinet, tuba, keyboard, harps and a few percussion instruments to what Beethoven used.

The initial motto theme (leaping, double-dotted figures in the strings that quickly become single-dotted) also recalls the opening of Beethoven 9. This dotted rhythm will pervade the first movement — which unfolds as a series of interrelated episodes that alternate tragedy and anguish with moments of serene beauty — and dominates its enormous climax. A second theme, sung by the violins in the sixth measure, grows out of a simple descending line that may be a quotation from Mahler's *Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt*, corresponding to "So he goes to the river and preaches to the fish." (Mahler had previously quoted the same melody in his still-unheard fourth symphony, immediately following a curious woodwind orchestration that outlines a giant nose in the score.) This melody will transform into an oppressive march theme: Mahler's marches tell of downtrodden soldiers, but Shostakovich's evoke the oppressive forces of an evil empire.

Another, more lyrical theme, introduced quietly by strings and later sung in call-and-response fashion by flute and horn, derives from a wholly unexpected source: Bizet's opera *Carmen*, specifically the phrase in the *Habanera* that begins "L'amour est un oiseau rebelle." Shostakovich had not long before become so enamored by a woman named Elena Konstantinovskaya that he planned to run away with her (until Nina Shostakovich, his wife, put an end to the relationship). Elena (or "Lala," as she was known), after being jailed for a time, journeyed to Spain, where she met a filmmaker named Roman Karmen. Other references to *Carmen* crop up here and there throughout the work.

The second movement is a minuet verging on a Mahlerian Ländler (although here the Austrian peasants have been replaced by Russian Cossacks dancing in heavy boots), with biting harmonies and grotesque humor emphasized by the occasional insertion of an extra beat into the $\frac{3}{4}$ meter.

In June 1937, Mikhail Tukhachevsky, a marshal in the Red Army who had promoted (and protected) Shostakovich for over a decade, was arrested (in a purge of accused traitors), tortured and executed. Supposedly, Shostakovich poured his grief and outrage into the third movement, composed in just three days. Dispensing with brass, it emphasizes strings (the violins divided into three sections instead of the usual two) and solo woodwind episodes.

The brass come roaring back in the finale, a D-minor march that begins slowly, but steadily accelerates. Following a slightly more relaxed central episode that begins with a gentle horn solo, timpani leads into a reprise of the march theme, culminating in a D-major finale (with strings and woodwinds shouting out 252 high A's, or "la, la, . . . ") that on the surface seems to be a celebration, but somehow rings hollow. (Shostakovich included a painfully slow metronome marking in the score, which conductors including Leonard Bernstein considered to be a typo, taking it twice as fast; the composer praised both approaches.) A modern listener might imagine Bart Simpson writing "this is a joyous ending" over and over on a chalkboard, never actually believing the statement — much like St. Anthony's fishes, who smile and nod during the sermon and then proceed to follow their own course.

—Jeff Eldridge

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