

MAHLER

SUNDAY, JUNE 8, 2008 – 7:00 PM
FIRST FREE METHODIST CHURCH

ORCHESTRA SEATTLE and the SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS
George Shangrow, conductor

ZIGEUNERLIEDER, Opus 103 (Gypsy Songs)

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)

1. He, Zigeuner, Greife in Die Saiten
2. Hochgeturmte Rimaflut
3. Wisst Ihr Wann Mein Kindchen
4. Lieber Gott, Du Wesst
5. Brauner Bursche Fuhrt Zum Tanze
6. Roslein Dreie in Der Reihe
7. Kommt Dir Manchmal in Den Sinn
8. Horch, Der Wind Klagt In Den Zweigen
9. Weit Und Breit Schaut Niemand
10. Mond Verhullt Sein Angesicht
11. Rote Abendwolken Ziehn

Stephen Wall, tenor; Janeanne Houston, soprano
Mark Salman, piano

PSALM 100

ROBERT KECHLEY (born 1952)

Clint Kraus, organ

– Intermission –

SYMPHONY No. 4 IN G MAJOR, (Revision of 1906)

GUSTAV MAHLER (1860-1911)

- I. Bedächtig. Nicht eilen
- II. In gemächlicher Bewegung. Ohne Hast
- III. Ruhevoll
- IV. Sehr behaglich

Janeanne Houston, soprano

Please disconnect signal watches, pagers and cellular telephones. Thank you.
Use of cameras and recording equipment is not permitted in the concert hall.

ZIGEUNERLIDER (Gypsy Songs)

1. He, Zigeuner, greife in die Saiten ein!
Spiel das Lied vom ungetreuen Mägdelein!
Laß die Saiten weinen, klagen, traurig bange,
Bis die heiße Träne netzet diese Wange!

2. Hochgetürmte Rimaflut,
Wie bist du so trüb;
An dem Ufer klag ich
Laut nach dir, mein Lieb!

Wellen fliehen, Wellen strömen,
Rauschen an dem Strand heran zu mir.
An dem Rimaufer laß mich
Ewig weinen nach ihr!

3. Wißt ihr, [wenn]¹ mein Kindchen am allerschönsten ist?
Wenn ihr süßes Mündchen scherzt und lacht und küßt.
Mägdelein, du bist mein, inniglich küß ich dich,
Dich erschuf der liebe Himmel einzig nur für mich!

Wißt ihr, [wenn]¹ mein Liebster am besten mir gefällt?
Wenn in seinen Armen er mich umschlungen hält.
Schätzlein, du bist mein, inniglich küß ich dich,
Dich erschuf der liebe Himmel einzig nur für mich!

4. Lieber Gott, du weißt, wie oft bereut ich hab,
Daß ich meinem Liebsten einst ein Küßchen gab.
Herz gebot, daß ich ihn küssen muß,
Denk, solange ich leb, an diesen ersten Kuß.

Lieber Gott, du weißt, wie oft in stiller Nacht
Ich in Lust und Leid an meinen Schatz gedacht.
Lieb ist süß, wenn bitter auch die Reu,
Armes Herze bleibt ihm ewig, ewig treu.

5. Brauner Bursche führt zum Tanze
Sein blauäugig schönes Kind;
Schlägt die Sporen keck zusammen,
Csardasmelodie beginnt.

Küßt und herzt sein süßes Täubchen,
Dreht sie, führt sie, jauchzt und springt;
Wirft drei blanke Silbergulden
Auf das Zimbal, daß es klingt.

6. Röslein dreie in der Reihe blühen so rot,
Daß der Bursch zum Mädlein gehe, ist kein Verbot!
Lieber Gott, wenn das verboten wär,
Ständ die schöne weite Welt schon längst nicht mehr;
Ledig bleiben Sünde wär!

Schönstes Städtchen in Alföld ist Ketschemete,
Dort gibt es gar viele Mädchen schmuck und nett!
Freunde, sucht euch dort ein Bräutchen aus,
Freit um ihre Hand und gründet euer Haus,
Freudenbecher leeret aus.

Ho there, Gypsy! Strike resoundingly each string!
And the song of false and faithless maiden sing!
Let the strings all moan lamenting, sorrow weeping,
'Til the burning tears these cheeks so hot are steeping!

High and towering river Rima,
thou art so drear,
On thy shore I mourn
aloud for thee, my dear!

Waves are fleeing, waves are streaming,
Rolling o'er the shore afar to me;
On the riverbank of Rima let me
weep for her eternally!

Know ye, when my loved one is fairest of all this?
If her sweet mouth rosy, jest and laugh and kiss.
Maiden heart, mine thou art. Tenderly I kiss thee.
Thee a loving heaven hath created just for me!

Know ye, when my lover dearest is to me?
When in his fond arms, he enfolds me lovingly.
Dear sweetheart, mine thou art. Tenderly I kiss thee.
Thee a loving heaven hath created just for me!

Dear God, Thou know'st how oft I've rued this:
That I gave my lover once a little kiss.
Heart's command I kiss him, how dismiss?
And long as I live I'll think of that first kiss.

Dear God, Thou know'st how oft in still of night,
How in joy and pain on him my thoughts delight.
Love is sweet, though bitter oft to rue;
My poor heart is his and ever, ever true.

Brown-eyed laddie starts the dancing
With a blue-eyed beauty gay,
Clang the silver spurs together,
To the Czardas melody.

With a kiss he greets his darling
Whirling, twirling, shouts and springs!
With abandon silver florins
On the cymbal proudly fling.

Rosebuds three, all on one tree, ye bloom so red,
That a lad a lassie woo, is not forbade!
O dear God, if that had been denied,
Then the whole wide lovely world long since had died.
Single life's a sin, beside!

Fairest village in Alföld is Ketschemete,
There live many pretty lasses trim and neat!
Friends, go find ye there a little bride,
Sue then for her hand and build your house with pride.
Drain the glass with friendship plied!

7. Kommt dir manchmal in den Sinn, mein süßes Lieb,
Was du einst mit heil'gem Eide mir gelobt?
Täusch mich nicht, verlaß mich nicht,
Du weißt nicht, wie lieb ich dich hab,
Lieb du mich, wie ich dich,
Dann strömt Gottes Huld auf dich herab!

8. Horch, der Wind klagt in den Zweigen traurig sacht;
süßes Lieb, wir müssen Scheiden: gute Nacht.
Ach wie gern in deinen Armen ruhte ich,
doch die Trennungsstunde naht, Gott schütze dich.

Dunkel ist die Nacht, kein Sternlein spendet Licht;
süßes Lieb vertrau auf Gott und weine nicht;
führt der liebe Gott mich einst zu dir zurück,
bleiben ewig wir vereint in Liebesglück.

9. Weit und breit schaut niemand mich an,
und wenn sie mich hassen, was liegt mir dran?
Nur mein Schatz der soll mich lieben allezeit,
soll mich küssen, umarmen und Herzen in Ewigkeit.

Kein Stern blickt in finsterner Nacht;
keine Blume mir strahlt in duftiger Pracht.
Deine Augen sind mir Blumen Sternenschein,
die mir leuchten so freundlich, die blühen nur mir allein.

10. Mond verhüllt sein Angesicht,
süßes Lieb, ich zürne dir nicht.
Wollt ich zürnend dich betrüben, sprich
wie könnt ich dich dann lieben?

Heiß für dich mein Herz entbrennt,
keine Zunge dir's bekennt.
Balt in Liebesrausch unsinnig,
bald wie Täubchen sanft und innig.

11. Rote Abendwolken ziehn am Firmament,
Sehnsuchtsvoll nach dir,
Mein Lieb, das Herz brennt,
Himmel strahlt in glühender Pracht,
Und ich träum bei Tag und Nacht
Nur allein von dem süßen Liebchen mein.

Art thou thinking often now, sweetheart, my love,
What thou once with holy vow to me hast sworn?
Leave me not, deceive me not,
Thou know'st not how dear thou art to me;
Love'st thou me as I thee,
Then God's smile shall crown thee graciously.

Hark, the breezes in the branches sadly sigh:
Sweetest Love, the hour has come to say goodbye!
In your warm embrace how happy I would be!
Now the parting nears, God watch o'er thee.

Dark and gloomy night, no star gives out a light.
Sweetest Love, believe in God, weep not in fright!
Loving God will bring me safely back to you.
Living ever more, in love so rare in love so true.

Far and wide none listen I swear.
Even if they hate me what do I care?
Only dear, only you, my own beloved, you alone do I adore.
I could kiss you, embrace you, and hold you forever more.

Not a star is out this black night;
Not a single blossom shows a clear light.
Your bright eyes are my starry blossoms,
Ever blooming and sparkling and shining alone for me.

Though the moon a darkened blot,
Sweetest Love, anger stirs me not.
If embittered I behold thee,
Tell me, can I truly love thee?

Hot for you, my heart burns,
Sends a message love commands.
Now I'm drunk with love and forceful,
Now a dove, am meek and peaceful.

Rosy evening clouds hang in the firmament,
Longing-filled for thee,
my love, my heart is rent;
Heaven glows with splendrous light
And I dream by day and night
But of thee, of the sweetheart dear to me.

Mahler Text

Das himmlische Leben
(aus Des Knaben Wunderhorn)

Wir genießen die himmlischen Freuden,
Dum tun wir das Irdische meiden.
Kein weltlich Getümmel
Hört man nicht im Himmell!
Lebt alles in sanftester Ruh.
Wir führen ein englisches Leben,
Sind dennoch ganz lustig daneben.
Wir tanzen und springen,
Wir hüpfen und singen,
Sankt Peter im Himmel sieht zu.

Heaven's Life
(From Des Knaben Wunderhorn)

We enjoy heavenly pleasures
and therefore avoid earthy ones.
No worldly tumult
is to be heard in heaven.
All live in greatest peace.
We lead angelic lives,
yet have a merry time of it besides.
We dance and we spring,
We skip and we sing.
Saint Peter in heaven looks on.

Johannes das Lämmlein auslasset,
Der Metzger Herodes drauf passet,
Wir führen ein geduldig's,
Unschuldig's, geduldig's,
Ein liebliches Lämmlein zu Tod!
Sankt Lukas, der Ochsen tät schlachten
Ohn' einig's Andenken und Achten,
Der Wein kost' kein' Heller
Im himmlischen Keller,
Die Englein, die backen das Brot.

Gut Kräuter von allerhand Arten,
Die wachsen im himmlischen Garten,
Gut Spargel, Fisolen
Und was wir nur wollen!
Ganze Schüsseln voll sind uns bereit!
Gut Äpfel, gut Birn und gut Trauben,
Die Gärtner, die alles erlauben.
Willst Rehbock, willst Hasen,
Auf offenen Straßen
Sie laufen herbei!
Sollt' ein Festtag etwa kommen,
Alle Fische gleich mit Freuden angeschwommen!
Dort läuft schon Sankt Peter
Mit Netz und mit Köder
Zum himmlischen Weiher hinein,
Sankt Martha die Köchin muß sein.

Kein Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden.
Die unsrer verglichen kann werden,
Elftausend Jungfrauen
Zu tanzen sich trauen!
Sankt Ursula selbst dazu lacht!
Kein Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,
Die unsrer verglichen kann werden.
Cäcilie mit ihren Verwandten,
Sind treffliche Hofmusikanten.
Die englischen Stimmen
Ermuntern die Sinnen,
Daß alles für Freuden erwacht.

PROGRAM NOTES

Johannes Brahms

(Born in Hamburg, May 7, 1833; died in Vienna, April 3, 1897)

Zigeunerlieder (Gypsy Songs), Op. 103

Brahms originally composed this cycle of eleven songs for a quartet of solo voices with piano accompaniment; they were published in October 1888 as *Zigeunerlieder für vier Singstimmen (Sopran, Alt, Tenor und Bass) mit Begleitung des Pianoforte von Johannes Brahms (Gypsy Songs for Four Voices (SATB) with Piano Accompaniment)*, but are performed tonight by a four-part mixed chorus, with soprano and tenor solos, accompanied by the piano. Brahms composed music for a set of German texts by Hugo Conrat in Vienna during the winter of 1887-1888; the resulting songs received their first hearings in private Viennese salon concerts in early 1888, while the first documented public performance took place on October 31, 1888, at the Singakademiesaal in Berlin. Such was their popularity that, in 1889, Brahms rearranged eight of the eleven songs (Nos. 1-7 and 11) for solo voice and piano.

John lets the lambkin out,
and Herod the Butcher lies in wait for it.
We lead a patient,
an innocent, patient,
dear little lamb to its death.
Saint Luke slaughters the ox
without any thought or concern.
Wine doesn't cost a penny
in the heavenly cellars;
The angels bake the bread.

Good greens of every sort
grow in the heavenly vegetable patch,
good asparagus, string beans,
and whatever we want.
Whole dishfuls are set for us!
Good apples, good pears and good grapes,
and gardeners who allow everything!
If you want roebuck or hare,
on the public streets
they come running right up.
Should a fastday come along,
all the fishes at once come swimming with joy.
There goes Saint Peter running
with his net and his bait
to the heavenly pond.
Saint Martha must be the cook.

There is just no music on earth
that can compare to ours.
Even the eleven thousand virgins
venture to dance,
and Saint Ursula herself has to laugh.
There is just no music on earth
that can compare to ours.
Cecelia and all her relations
make excellent court musicians.
The angelic voices
gladden our senses,
so that all awaken for joy.

The Man

He was logical and studious and could be reserved, withdrawn, and even morose, but he also loved coarse humor; he was known for his caustic wit ("If there is anyone here whom I have not insulted, I beg his pardon!"), yet possessed a tenderness that he expressed through his ardent and sensuous music. He was frequently faced with the choice between love and committed relationship on one hand, and freedom on the other, and while he longed for commitment, he invariably chose freedom. We find comfort in his sublime and emotionally powerful music, especially in such stressful times as these. His name was Johannes Brahms, and he was a contradictory character who, as a pianist, conductor, and composer, was not only one of the major musical masters of the 19th century, but is now ranked among the finest composers of all time. With their lucidity of structure ("Without craftsmanship," he observed, "inspiration is a mere reed shaken in the wind"), their general lack of dependence on extra-musical images or ideas, and their lush harmonies, passion, and lyricism, Brahms' works combine the finest characteristics of both the Classical and the Romantic styles of musical composition. His four

symphonies are considered some of the best ever written, and his Lieder (he produced over 200 songs) are loved the musical world over. He could be pleasingly unassuming when it came to his own compositional prowess: asked by the daughter of Johann Strauss for his autograph, he scribbled out the opening bars of Strauss' Blue Danube Waltz on her paper and wrote beneath it, "Not, alas, by Johannes Brahms." He once commented, "It is not hard to compose, but it is wonderfully hard to let the superfluous notes fall under the table."

At the age of 10, Brahms was playing the piano in Hamburg's rough waterfront district taverns and dance halls in order to augment his family's income. He had studied piano from the age of seven and theory and composition from age thirteen, and he arranged music for his bass-playing father's light orchestra while absorbing the popular Gypsy style associated with Hungarian folk music. By the age of 20, his reputation as a pianist enabled him to become concert-tour accompanist to the famous Hungarian violinist, Eduard Reményi. Brahms' early compositions caught the eye of Joseph Joachim, the leading violin virtuoso of his time; Joachim facilitated a visit between Brahms and the composer, Robert Schumann, who praised the 20-year-old "young eagle" in his musical journal as a genius ". . . called forth to give us the highest ideal expression of our time." Brahms soon numbered among his influential musical friends and advisors both Schumann and his wife, Clara, the great pianist, to whom he remained very close after Schumann's mental collapse and subsequent death in an insane asylum in 1856, and for whom he developed a deep romantic ardor which later settled into an enduring friendship.

Brahms began his professional career as musician to the Prince of Detmold. He returned to his hometown of Hamburg in 1859, hoping to obtain an official conducting post and to devote himself to composition. The directors of the Philharmonic, however, could not forget that Brahms came from the slums of the city, and he failed to receive an appointment. He therefore became a resident of Vienna and remained there for 35 years as a renowned and successful bachelor composer of music in almost every genre except opera ("It would be as difficult for me to marry," he said, "as to write an opera. But after the first experience I should probably undertake a second!"). He conducted a Viennese musical society and revived many neglected compositions by Bach, Handel, and Mozart. He was widely acquainted with older music, edited music of the Baroque and Classical eras, and collected music manuscripts. The composer succumbed to liver cancer at age 64, ten months after the death of Clara Schumann, probably the one great love of his life, and was buried not far from Beethoven and Schubert.

The Music

With the rapid rise of the urban middle class in 19th-century Europe, an expansive market developed for "house music" that could be performed in private homes by a small group of family members or friends singing and playing various solo instruments in different combinations. At a time when the piano was the focal point of middle-class living rooms, Brahms' songs and chamber music helped to meet the seemingly unslakable thirst of performers and listeners for domestic entertainment pieces for piano and singers. This same increase

in the number of routine-bound city-dwellers also intensified the fascination of composers and audiences with the idealized image and unique music of the homeless, nomadic Romani (Gypsy) peoples, who were viewed as "romantic figures" living lives that were free, close to nature, passionate, sensual, wild, and rather melancholy. Many of the basic sounds and playing styles of Gypsy music, derived largely from the folk music of Eastern Europe and the Balkans, proved so "exotic" and attractive that such significant composers as Haydn, Schuman, Liszt, Brahms, Dvořák, and Bartók imitated them in their works.

Elements of Hungarian popular music appear frequently in Brahms' music—his *Hungarian Dances* (originally written for piano four-hands) were well-loved and very lucrative during his lifetime. Late in 1887, after his return from a winter holiday in Budapest, Brahms was given some German translations of a collection of Hungarian folk songs (*Hungarian Love Songs: Twenty-Five Hungarian Folk Songs for Medium Voice; The piano accompaniments by Zoltán Nagy*) by Hugo Conrat, a wealthy Viennese merchant and music lover, with whom Brahms was acquainted. Conrat had turned into rhymed verses the German prose versions of these Hungarian folk song texts translated by one Fräulein Witzl, the Conrat household's Hungarian-born nanny. Brahms replaced the original folk melodies that had been printed with Conrat's texts with his own colorful settings of the very brief poems (only one is longer than eight lines) that are set near the "Rimaflyt" (now called the Rimava River) in south central Slovakia, and that treat, in a relatively straightforward, folkloric style, the universal themes of nostalgia, romantic love, and betrayal. Brahms, through the musical lens of his settings, viewed Gypsy life from a wonderful variety of perspectives, and produced some of the German Lieder tradition's finest representatives.

With their rhythmically energetic melodies and evocative accompaniments, the *Zigeunerlieder* suggest elements of Hungarian folk music, but their Gypsy flavor results more from a subtle influence of genuine ethnicity (notable are Brahms' employment of phrase lengths of other than four measures, his balancing of dissimilar phrases, and the alteration of major and minor modes within the same song), than from any direct quotation. All of the songs are in the 2/4 meter of the traditional Hungarian folk dance known as the csárdás, which roving Roma bands had popularized, but their variation in tempo, mood, key, formal structure, rhythmic nuance, and harmonic hue hold the interest of performers and listeners alike. The challenging piano accompaniment often suggests the sounds, both instrumental and environmental, that one might hear in a late-18th-century Gypsy camp: Listen for guitars and mandolins (No. 1), and the cimbalom, a type of hammered dulcimer (No. 10). Sometimes the piano brings to mind natural sounds, such as the river's plunging rapids (No. 2). In the fifth song, the listener can detect both musical and environmental descriptions of Gypsy life, as the piano becomes the orchestra to which a couple dances, and echoes the "csárdás melody" mentioned in the text.

While a self-effacing Brahms called the *Zigeunerlieder* "rollicking and unpretentious pieces" and "cheerful and high-spirited nonsense," Elisabeth von Herzogenberg described

them as "... so gloriously alive—rushing throbbing stamping along, then settling down to a smooth, gentle flow. The glowing life in the first two, the charming humor in No. 6, and the adorable melancholy inwardness of [No. 7], the second part of which moves me to tears!" And Clara Schumann, who undoubtedly understood Brahms's ideas of love, observed: "How original they are and how full of freshness, charm and passion! ... so graceful and full of interest!" At the first unofficial performance of the *Zigeunerlieder* by four of Brahms'

Gustav Mahler

(Born in Kaliště, October 7, 1860; died in Vienna, May 18, 1911)

Symphony No. 4 in G Major Around the early 1870s, a small boy rushed out of his home in Bohemia (still then part of Austria) to escape the sound of his parents' fighting. The violent and strong-willed father frequently abused his wife, and on this occasion it was too much for the young man to bear. The first thing that met the distressed youth's ears after he escaped the hellish domestic scene was a popular song, played by a hurdy-gurdy on the street. Decades later, this now fully grown man shared this memory with Sigmund Freud. Dr. Ernest Jones, Freud's biographer, recounts that this trauma had a lasting effect: "...the conjunction of high tragedy and light amusement was from then on inextricably fixed in his mind, and the one mood inevitably brought the other with it."

That young man was Gustav Mahler, who by the time of his meeting with Freud was established as one of the great opera and orchestral conductors of his day, although he was enjoying a lesser degree of prestige as a composer. Mahler was the second of fourteen children, seven of whom died in infancy; by the time Gustav was born his older sister Isidor was already dead. The death of his teenage brother Ernst was a particularly devastating event for the young Mahler, who in the last months of his brother's life kept him constant company at his bedside. This experience was almost surely in Mahler's mind when he set Friedrich Rückert's *Kindertotenlieder* (Songs on the Death of Children), especially as Rückert wrote these poems shortly after losing two children, one of whom was also named Ernst. Mahler's remaining siblings, like the composer himself, were left scarred from their childhood. Mahler scholar Donald Mitchell describes both Otto and Alois Mahler as having had "no capacity whatever to adjust themselves to the requirements of everyday existence." Alois, who changed his name to Hans Christian to sound less Jewish, often "indulged in ridiculous but self-inflating impersonations, to the embarrassment of his family." Otto, despite his considerable musical talents, was plagued by self-destructive insecurity and tragically killed himself at the age of twenty-two. Of his sisters, Leopoldine entered into an unhappy marriage and died of a brain tumor, but Emma and Justine married distinguished musician brothers and, as Mitchell notes, "seemed able, eventually, to come to some sort of terms with life." Nevertheless, Justine, the closest of Mahler's siblings in his adulthood, had evinced signs of morbid neurosis as a child. While Mahler's wife Alma has proven to be a notoriously unreliable source, her claim that Justine used to entertain

friends, which took place at the home of composer and pianist Ignaz Brüll, where Fräulein Witzl was employed at the time, Brahms insisted that, as the "originator" of the song texts, Fräulein Witzl should come down to the music room from the nursery. We trust that she enjoyed "her" *Gypsy Songs*, and we hope that you will find them as delightful and thoroughly entertaining as did Brahms' friends who first experienced them 120 years ago! --notes by Lorlette Knowles

fantasies of her own death as a child is quite believable in context of the Mahler household.

It is little wonder, then, that Mahler was drawn to two poems from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, "Das irdische Leben" ("The Earthly Life") and "Das himmlische Leben" ("The Heavenly Life"), respectively depicting a child's suffering on earth and his subsequent joy in heaven. While composers such as Mendelssohn, Britten, Bruch, Brahms, Schumann, and others used texts from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, a collection of German folk poetry published in the first decade of the nineteenth century, none turned to this source more frequently than Mahler, who wrote two dozen settings of its poetry.

Mahler's first four symphonies are frequently referred to as "song symphonies" or "*Wunderhorn* Symphonies," as each incorporates text from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* or material from one of Mahler's earlier songs. In the Fourth Symphony, the final movement, a setting of "Das himmlische Leben," was conceived before any of the other movements, which were then constructed with the song in mind as their endpoint. (In contrast, Mahler suffered writer's block after completing the first three movements of the Second Symphony, and it was not until hearing Klopstock's Resurrection Ode at Hans von Bülow's funeral that the idea for the Finale came to him.) Donald Mitchell notes that in the Fourth Symphony "Das himmlische Leben" "is the controlling presence which orders and determines the total conception of the work. Whereas in the earlier symphonies song-sources had certainly played a vital role, but had not, as it were, regulated the shaping and development of the whole work....the [Fourth Symphony] in its entirety emerged from, and has its life in, the idea of the song..."

"Das himmlische Leben" was first conceived as the seventh and final movement of the immense Third Symphony, which additionally contains a *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* text in its brief fifth movement. Material from the Third Symphony, most notably the *Wunderhorn* fifth movement, is heard in "Das himmlische Leben" and serves as a reminder of its origin. Ultimately, however, Mahler decided to let his Third Symphony stand with only six movements (and even in this form it is still his longest composition at over ninety minutes), ending instead with the heartfelt slow movement entitled "What love tells me."

The Fourth Symphony, Mahler's ultimate vehicle for "Das himmlische Leben," takes on quite a different form from the grandeur of his previous three symphonies. In the First Symphony, Mahler emulated the Beethovenian victory-over-struggle paradigm in its grandiose final movement. In his

Second Symphony, nearly ninety minutes long, Mahler takes his listener from a funeral scene to a humanist vision of unconditional salvation. While the Second Symphony's vast orchestra includes as many as twelve trumpets, at least four harps, and organ, for his Fourth Symphony Mahler employs only four horns, three trumpets, and remarkably no trombones or tuba. The woodwind section has four flutes (two on piccolos), three oboes (one on English horn), three clarinets (one on E-flat clarinet and one on bass-clarinet), and three bassoons (one on contrabassoon). In addition to harp and the usual string section, Mahler also includes a percussion section requiring five musicians playing timpani, bass drum, cymbals, tam-tam, triangle, sleigh-bells, and glockenspiel. By employing a smaller orchestra than that of his other symphonies, Mahler reverts to a more "classical" aesthetic: some passages of this symphony, if heard in isolation, could almost be mistaken as contemporary of Mozart.

Mahler frequently added new sounds to his orchestras, from deep bells to hammer-blows to alpine cowbells, and the Fourth Symphony is no exception. The very first sound of the first movement is the sleigh-bells (a feature taken from "Das himmlische Leben"), accompanied only by two flutes that imitate their shaking. While a small number of later compositions, such as Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, also add sleigh-bells to symphonic scores, the bells' pure and innocent jingle remains a foreign sound to the orchestra. By beginning the Fourth Symphony with this surprising instrumentation, Mahler immediately evokes a childlike vision which is almost other-worldly, foreshadowing the child's vision of heaven in "Das himmlische Leben."

After the brief introductory passage with the sleigh-bells, the first violins introduce the primary theme of this sonata-form movement. Already Mahler's characteristic ambiguity is at play: the introductory sleigh-bells seem to establish E minor, but the primary theme is in G major. Mahler's first theme is elegant and restrained, evoking an Austrian ballroom with folk-like charm. The lyrical second theme is similarly graceful, a simple melody played by the cellos with great tone (or, as Mahler stipulates, "Tone!"). A third theme, introduced on solo oboe, maintains the Austrian charm but sounds rather more rustic, suggesting a country dance.

After introducing his main themes, Mahler does something unusual. It is requisite that the first section of a sonata-form movement (the exposition) modulate to a new key, as Mahler does here for the second theme. After the country dance music, however, he slips right back into G major as the sleigh-bells return, and the first violins begin the primary theme once more. While the material is varied from the opening bars, it sounds as though Mahler is employing a conventional repeat of the exposition (a device he used only infrequently). Rather than cycling through all the themes of the exposition again, Mahler instead constructs a serene passage characteristic for the close of an exposition, although here it is in the wrong key! Thus Mahler has cast a shadow of doubt over the apparent classicism of his symphony through creating an ambiguity in its very structure: have we heard a very truncated

repeat of the exposition, the beginning of the next section, or something in between?

After coming to rest on G major, Mahler begins (or perhaps re-begins, as the case may be) the development section of the sonata movement, signaled by the sleigh-bells. This time the key of E minor is more fully realized, and the primary theme is darkened and takes on an air of anxiety. This trouble gives way to a new theme in four flutes, the pastoral contentment of which again speaks to Mahler's love of nature. True to form, however, Mahler does not allow this respite to last: the new theme is taken up by shrill oboes and clarinets, after which the primary theme is subjected to further distortions. As the music becomes increasingly grotesque, at one point foreshadowing the horrific third movement of Mahler's Ninth Symphony, Mahler adds the menacing sound of the tam-tam. Other instruments wail out a perversely bright C major, at once mordant and hysterical, with the tinkling sounds of glockenspiel and triangle: as in a nightmare the cheerful has now become threatening. The trumpets' clarion calls are redolent with danger, hinting again at the third movement of the Ninth Symphony and also foretelling the same tattoo with which Mahler famously opens the Fifth Symphony.

The beginning of the recapitulation (the reiteration of the material from the exposition, now entirely in the home key) is difficult to pick out of the chaos. Once again the new section is heralded by the sleigh-bells, which now sound perplexed and importunate, but the actual return of the principal theme occurs in the midst of the din. This confusion stops rather abruptly, and after a pause the primary theme continues jovially, as though blissfully unaware of its abuse in the development section or the mess of its beginning of its recapitulation. While the music would like to forget, however, the listener vividly remembers, and the remainder of the recapitulation sounds somewhat harried, as though it is trying too hard to dismiss the trouble, its gaiety coming across as frankly stridently. In their last appearance in this movement, the sleigh-bells mark the beginning of the coda. The primary theme is heard once again, still vacillating between its original charm and disconcerting distortions, but this time it manages to find a resting place with the sound of ethereal violins. The theme begins quietly one final time and quickly builds to a genuinely joyful and even triumphant conclusion: the neurosis suddenly has dissolved.

This tenuously achieved jubilation is instantly dispelled by the opening of the second movement, a Scherzo in C minor. As with several other Mahler Scherzos, this movement is replete with funhouse imagery under which the demonic constantly lurks. Whereas grotesquery has infiltrated the first movement, here it is regnant. Mahler himself linked this movement to the image of Freund Hein, a figure in German lore resembling the Grim Reaper. Contributing to the bizarre atmosphere is the solo violin, which Mahler instructs to be played "like a fiddle." In addition playing a regular violin, the concertmaster also has another instrument that is tuned a whole-tone higher, an eerie and caustic effect. Benjamin Zander aptly likens this violin solo to images of Death playing the violin and to *vanitas* art, a Renaissance movement depicting skulls and decaying figures with musical instruments.

Indeed, this Scherzo may be viewed as Mahler's take on the "Dance of Death."

The principal theme of the Scherzo is stated by the horn and soon is joined by repeated notes and a bird-call figure on cackling woodwinds, serving as the introduction to the macabre fiddle music. In the middle of this first Scherzo section there is a sudden shift to C major with gently flowing strings over rumbling horns, complemented by harp and glockenspiel: a respite reminiscent of the Scherzo in the Second Symphony. The first Trio (contrasting section), in F major, adopts a landler character, and the previously shrill birdcall figure now sounds charming. Whereas traditionally returns of the Scherzo are shorter than the first iteration, here Mahler actually prolongs the Scherzo's second statement. The spooky vision is all the more disquieting for its unexpected lengthening as the music becomes increasingly tense. The C major respite is now heard twice, this time incorporating the bird-calls as the Scherzo theme is growled out by low horns. Also notable in the Scherzo's restatement is the trumpet, which blares out the figure heard in the first movement that is reminiscent of Mahler's Ninth Symphony. This harsh theme heralds the second Trio section, which is also in F major and again incorporates the bird-calls.

At the moment when one expects the final return of the Scherzo material, Mahler instead surprisingly shifts to the distant key of D major, prolonging the second Trio with a truly ethereal passage that hints at heavenly visions yet to come. The Scherzo begins again, still in the foreign key. The fiddle's theme is now heard on flute and on the regularly tuned solo violin, but as the music slides back into its demonic character the tuned-up violin returns. The Scherzo fades away broodingly, its muted dynamics threatening, with quiet bass drum and tam-tam strokes. The final C major cackle in the high woodwinds, accented by a sardonic ping from the triangle, is a nasty mockery, harkening back to the C major histrionics in the first movement's development section.

After the grim and unfunny humor of the Scherzo, the opening calm of the third movement is a welcome relief. Mahler introduces his meditative G major theme in half the cellos, accompanied by the rest of the low strings. While this section may technically be viewed as a theme with variations (and Mahler refers to it as such), the effect is far different than that of traditional "classical era" variations: as in Beethoven's later compositions, here the theme grows like a blooming flower, enriched by new countermelodies and instrumentation at each restatement. After this section gently ebbs away, the second theme of the movement is stated in the oboe. Mahler indicates that the oboe, in the sad key of E minor, is to play mournfully, and while the strings try to offer comfort they too express tender sadness. Although the music tries to move beyond its sadness, it arrives at an outpouring of grief and consolation disappears without warning.

After a dejected thinning of the orchestral texture, Mahler returns to his first theme and offers a new set of decorated variations, which seem to aspire upward to spiritual heights. Before this can be realized, however, the mournful second theme returns, and for several measures the only instruments playing are one oboe, English horn, and horn. The

trumpet's and first violins' effort to offer comfort once again quickly dissolves and gives way to the cry of grief, this one more despairing than the last. Mahler's great ability seamlessly to juxtapose anguish and beauty is again apparent as the first theme starts again in the low strings, now in flowing triple meter. The variations now begin to build in excitement, and Mahler indicates that each new variation become faster without transition from the previous. The clarinet quotes the bird-calls from the Scherzo, the cheerfulness of which belies its darker implications. Mahler builds his theme into a near-manic frenzy, including a circus-like passage for glockenspiel. While these whirlwind variations seem upbeat at face value, almost like a pleasant dream sequence, one remembers Mahler's constant association between tragedy and "light amusement."

This strange course of events ends as abruptly as it began, giving way to a drawn out episode of reflection that seems like it could be bringing to the movement a close. Suddenly, however, an upward figure in the violins, reminiscent of the Second Symphony and followed by a typically Mahlerian pause, ushers in a glorious burst of light in E major, resplendent with rapid arpeggios in the strings, harp glissandi, cymbals, and soaring triangle trill. A massive brass fanfare is underscored by timpani played with two mallets at once. As this heavenly vision subsides, the music gradually finds its way back to the home key through and comes to a close with hushed intensity. The violins end with stratospheric harmonics on the leading tone of G major, remarkably mixing a sense of peace with irresolution.

The leading tone is in fact resolved by the G major opening of the final movement, "Das himmlische Leben." While the movement is scored for soprano, Mahler is said to have remarked that he would have appreciated having the part sung by a young boy. Regardless of whether a boy or adult soprano sings the part, the childlike quality of the music is unmistakable. Just as Mahler said that the alto soloist in the fourth movement of the Second Symphony should sound like a child in heaven, here he includes an emphatic note for the soprano to sing "with a childlike, cheerful expression; quite without parody!" (Curiously, when Mahler still intended to include "Das himmlische Leben" at the end of the Third Symphony, he indicated in a letter that he intended it to be "humorous" in character.) For a previous composition Mahler had already set the companion *Wunderhorn* "Das irdische Leben" ("The Earthly Life"), in which a child dies of starvation. While that setting is not included in the Fourth Symphony, the twists and turns of the first two movements and the anguished wails in the third have depicted earthly struggle even more strikingly.

The lilting clarinet theme that opens the movement has, in fact, already been heard in the horn fanfare at the end of the previous movement, but now it sounds simple and untroubled rather than glorious. After the gracious introduction, the soprano sings about the joys of the heavenly life to appropriately playful accompaniment. After a pensive horn chorale ends the verse, however, there is a discomfiting burst of energy from the orchestra. The opening material of the first movement, sleigh-bells and all, returns with new urgency (including the shrill sound of two unison piccolos). Could this be

an impetuous burst of youthful energy, or does the sudden injection of the minor mode carry with it darker implications? That the material is a quotation from the beginning of the Symphony suggests that in fact it may be harkening back to previous struggle. Nor is the text of the poem entirely comforting, despite the abundance of heavenly food. The first outburst occurs as the child watches John and Herod slaughter a "dear little lamb" to the snarling of low horns, a traumatic vision for a child that inevitably evokes the Crucifixion. The reference to Saint Ursula and her eleven thousand attendant maidens additionally brings to mind the fabled gruesome martyrdom of these young women.

After the images of slaughter, the description of the heavenly garden begins to regain its previous contentment.

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After one final outburst of the sleigh-bells, the music re-establishes E major, the key of the joyful fanfares from the previous movement. The soprano sings that the music of heaven cannot be compared to any on earth, a line of special significance to a composer like Mahler who constantly reached for the sublime. The Symphony ends gently, the lilting accompaniment bringing it to rest with calm assurance. Though a quieter version of transcendence than the organ, bells, and tam-tams at the end of the Second Symphony, Mahler once again has depicted the heavenly realm. He concludes his vision with low E's in the double-basses and harp, a rumbling of the earth that reminds us that after achieving the heavenly vision, it is time to return to earthly life. —Notes by Andrew Kohler

SOLOISTS

American soprano **JANEANNE HOUSTON** is a versatile performer, and one of the Northwest region's busiest artists. Her extensive repertoire spans the Baroque era to the present. She has worked under the batons of many fine conductors including Gerard Schwarz, James DePreist, Sidney Harth, Dean Williamson, George Shangrow, Richard Sparks, Christophe Chagnard, and Miguel Harth-Bedoya. Concert works that she has performed many times include *Carmina Burana*, *Messiah*, *Requiems* of Brahms, Verdi, and Mozart, and Mozart's *Mass in C Minor*. Also at home on the opera stage, she has sung the roles of Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Violetta in *La Traviata*, Blanche in *Dialogues of the Carmelites* and Micaela in *Carmen*. She has recorded many of North Carolina composer Dan Locklair's songs and vocal works, and in the fall of 2006 she recorded a work titled *Lairs of Soundings* with the Slovak Radio Orchestra under Kirk Trevor for the Naxos label. A recording of world premieres by living composers titled *The Shining Place* was also released in 2006, and scheduled for 2008 a Zimbel Records release titled *Songs of the Cotton Grass* featuring music of Welsh composer Hilary Tann. Ms. Houston gave the East Coast premiere of that cycle on a New York State recital tour last October. Also in October, she soloed in the premiere of Judith Lang Zaimont's *Remembrance* with Portland Symphonic Choir. This past April she sang in a multi-organization production of Poulenc's "Gloria" in Benaroya Hall, with the venerable Rodney Eichenberger conducting. Other recordings include *So Great a Joy* (2001), *Living Mysteries* (2002), *The Chamber Music of Dan Locklair* (Albany 2004), and *So Much Beauty* (2004). The *Seattle Times* has called her singing "radiant-voiced" and Gramophone, "unfailingly responsive and dedicated." The *Journal of Singing* raves "a flawless sense of style."

Upcoming performances this year include the role of the Contessa Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Helena Symphony, Brahms' *A German Requiem* with Bremerton Symphony, and a return engagement to the *Messiah Festival of Music and Art* in Kansas. The managing and founding member of Northwest Artists and the recording label Elmgrove Productions; she has been a member of the voice faculty at Pacific Lutheran University since 1989

Tenor **STEPHEN WALL** has appeared frequently with Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers since 1985. He has been featured in leading and supporting roles with Seattle Opera, Portland Opera, Utah Festival Opera, and Tacoma Opera, and has soloed with the symphonies of Seattle, Vancouver, Spokane, Everett, Bellevue, Yakima, Pendleton, Great Falls and Sapporo (Japan). Mr. Wall appears on the OSSCS recording of Handel's *Messiah* and sang the role of Joe in Seattle Opera's heralded production of *La Fanciulla del West*.

CLINT KRAUS is Cathedral Associate Organist and Director of the Youth Music Program at St. James Cathedral. He holds degrees in organ performance from Oklahoma State University and the Eastman School of Music, and is a candidate for the Doctor of Music degree from the University of Washington School of Music in Seattle as a student of Dr. Carole Terry. At the University of Washington Clint served for two consecutive years as a Graduate Student Accompanist to the School of Music. Clint has been awarded prizes in several national and international competitions in California, Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Washington D.C., and has played for national conventions of the American Guild of Organists, and the National Association of Pastoral Musicians. His two CD recordings *Noël! Noël! Noël!* and *Receive the Song* are both available in the St. James Cathedral bookstore.

MARK SALMAN achieved a musical milestone during the 1990-91 concert season when he performed the cycle of 32 Beethoven piano sonatas in a series of eight recitals in New York City. At the age of 28, he became one of the youngest artists to join the ranks of the handful of master pianists who have played the complete cycle. His first CD, featuring the music of Beethoven, Alkan, and Liszt was released in the spring of 1994 on Titanic Records. Mr. Salman has been described as "a brilliant musical mind" and "a born public performer" by David Dubal, author of "The Art of the Piano" and "Evenings with Horowitz". One of the few pianists of his generation to avoid competitions, he has opted instead to concentrate on his development as a pianist and musician. He is presenting a series of recitals each year which encompass rarely heard masterpieces as well as the staples of the repertoire. Mr. Salman is a native of Connecticut, where he began his studies at the age of eight. Since making his recital debut at eleven, he has been a frequent performer as a recitalist, chamber musician and soloist with orchestras throughout the United States. He has performed in Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall in New York City as well as on WNCN, WQXR and Classic KING-FM radio, and has been the subject of profiles in the *New York Times* and *Kick* magazine. In October 1989 he was presented in his New York debut recital at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall, which included the New York premieres of three Liszt works. A graduate of the Juilliard School, he studied with Richard Fabre and Josef Raieff, and also counts David Dubal as a significant influence. He previously attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for two years, where he concentrated on chamber music and composition, studying with the noted composer, John Harbison. Mark relocated to Seattle in the summer of 1994. He performed the Beethoven Sonata Cycle at Shorecrest Performing Arts Center in 1996-97 under the

sponsorship of Orchestra Seattle and last season presented the complete Beethoven Piano Concerti with Orchestra Seattle.

ROBERT KECHLEY was born in Seattle in 1952. He composed this setting of Psalm 100 in 1999 as the result of a commission from Bethany Lutheran Church in Seattle, where the work was first performed in a version for solo organ and chorus. The composer revised and expanded the work in August and September of 2000, adding an orchestral accompaniment. The revised version, was performed in OSSCS' Opening Gala in Benaroya Hall in 2000, and the newly revised version gets its premiere today. The music of Robert Kechley is familiar to audiences of Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers

through the numerous works of this composer that have been premiered by both ensembles. These range from arrangements of brief folk songs and hymns to major symphonic and choral works, including the delightful Symphony No. 2 ("Ferdinand the Bull") and Frail Deeds for a capella chorus. Mr. Kechley grew up in Seattle and attended the University of Washington, where he studied harpsichord performance with Sylvia Kind and composition with Kenneth Benshoof, Robert Suderberg, William O. Smith, and others. A member of the Seattle Chamber Singers from the early days of the ensemble, he not only sang in the chorus but played oboe and keyboard. Mr. Kechley currently serves as principal harpsichordist for Orchestra Seattle.



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