

MahlerFest XVIII



**Johannes Brahms, Tragic Overture
Gustav Mahler, Symphony No. 9**

**Boulder, Colorado
January 12-16, 2005**

**Robert Olson
Artistic Director & Conductor**

MAHLERFEST XVIII

Schedule of Events

CHAMBER CONCERTS

Wednesday, January 12, 7:00 PM

Boulder Public Library Auditorium, 9th & Canyon

Friday, January 14, 7:30 PM

Rocky Mountain Center for Musical Arts, 200 E. Baseline Rd., Lafayette

An all-Mahler lieder recital:

Three movements from *Das Lied von der Erde* (Wednesday only)

Selections from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*

Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen

SYMPOSIUM

Saturday, January 15, 10:00 AM

Music Theater in Imig Music Building (Lower level, northeast corner)

Kelly Dean Hansen, M. Mus.– Defining a “Tragic” Work

Dr. Stuart Feder, M.D. – A Biographical and Psychological Context for
Mahler’s Ninth Symphony

Dr. Stephen E. Hefling – An Analytical View of the Ninth Symphony

Prof. Marilyn McCoy – Stepping, Sliding, and Soaring:

Navigating Some of the Ups and Downs of the First Movement of Mahler’s Ninth Symphony

Jerry Fox – On Features of the Recordings of the Ninth Symphony

Video (time allowing) – Leonard Bernstein on Mahler

Panel Discussion, moderated by Prof. Marilyn McCoy

SYMPHONY CONCERTS

MahlerFest Orchestra, Robert Olson, conductor

Saturday, January 15

Sunday, January 16

Mackay Auditorium, CU Campus, Boulder

See page 3 for details.

Funding for MahlerFest XVIII has been provided in part by grants from:

*The Boulder Arts Commission, an agency of the Boulder City Council
The Scientific and Cultural Facilities District, Tier III, administered by the Boulder County Commissioners
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MAHLERFEST XVIII

Not only has Mahler's music "begun to find a home," he has become the eleventh most performed composer in the repertoire, and this almost unbelievable explosion of popularity in the last three decades has, at its core, a fundamental reason. With Mahler, music was a manifestation of the self, and listeners find a sympathetic connection with one who so honestly and simply explored the age-old questions of life and death, of love and loss, and the meaning of our existence, and who so nakedly exposed his soul in his musical creations. As the writer David Hall stated, "I do not feel when I listen to Beethoven, Bach, Bruckner, or Sibelius that I am coming into a sort of psychic contact with the men behind the music. I recognize their tone, their style and technical setup, the idiom, and so on; but I do not get a sense of a personal presence. With Mahler, his music seems as though it is being projected or ejected from his very being, from his innermost nature, even as we are listening to it in a performance. It comes to us at times as a kind of ectoplasm of tone."

Eighteen years ago, performances of Mahler symphonies were the exception rather than the rule; one was likely to hear only the popular *First* and *Fourth* Symphonies with all but the major orchestras. Thus came the idea to create a Festival dedicated first to the performance and study of the entire repertoire and life of Mahler, and secondly to the devoted musicians and scholars who creatively share Mahler's vision of the world, of life, and of music. A Festival in which dedicated amateur and professional musicians gather from different orchestras across the State, and, as it has turned out, across the continents, to perform what are generally considered the greatest (and most difficult) symphonic creations in the repertoire. Perhaps most gratifying is the fact that the Colorado MahlerFest has become an event propelled and driven by the artistic spirit that compels each of its creative participants to be a part of this unique and highly personal experience.

Mahler performances are not all that rare anymore, but MahlerFest in Boulder — the only one of its kind in the world, a multi-media Festival with a full program of Mahler's music and talks by the world's leading Mahler experts — continues to present his works in sequence, many of which are rarely heard. "A symphony is like the world. It must embrace everything ..." Mahler once declared to Jan Sibelius. Boulder's MahlerFest brings that Mahlerian world to our audiences.

Early every January the Colorado MahlerFest allows its participants and audiences to explore one of history's greatest musical prophets!



Robert Olson, Artistic Director and Founder

Welcome to Mahler's Ninth, a Work of Deep Philosophy and Resignation

Later in this program book Kelly Hansen probes the musical structure of Mahler's last completed work, and Jerry Fox comments on some interesting facts of its history, in which, for example, he presents arguments for and against considering it one of Mahler's farewell works. Jerry comes down on the side of pro, but after much reflection I myself am persuaded that this complex work, ending in one of the most beautiful and personal *adagios* in the literature, is more of a paean to life. My own feelings are very personal which, with your indulgence, I will share with you.

As my dear wife Patricia felt herself losing her 20-year struggle with cancer, she and I reminisced about the wonderful fifty years we had together, and the thirteen years we shared work on MahlerFest. In fact it was she who urged me, in preparation for MahlerFest V, to take on the task as Chairman of the Board when the first chairman accepted a long-term research assignment in Europe. Pat loved Mahler as I did, but she was quick to explain that he stood only very close third, behind Berlioz and Sibelius, whose voices are also unique and who also filled their music with deep personal feelings. Pat, as Secretary of the Board, sold all the tickets to our sold-out MahlerFest VIII from our home phone, and she also devised a computer program to make it easier to keep track of available seats for MahlerFest IX. She hosted at our home the experts who spread scores and manuscripts all over our extended dining room table to compile a "corrected" score to the Joe Wheeler version of Mahler's unfinished Tenth and prepared daily the list of corrections for Bob Olson and the orchestra. She was the gracious hostess who welcomed all the new visitors to MahlerFest and organized the social events. Finally, as she felt the cancer robbing herself of her life. I feel sure that her love of music and the arts, and her dedication to people, gave her the strength to say on her penultimate day: "It is time. I am ready. I am not afraid."

As I read Kelly's description of the final fading away of the *Adagio*, I am reminded of the poignant description of its ending, written by a Mahler lover who also felt her life ebbing away from cancer. Elizabeth Hawes, a member of the Internet MahlerList wrote what sums up best for me how I feel as I listen to the last five minutes of this work, in the glowing reading by Maestro Olson and the MahlerFest Orchestra of 1996:

"The fade-out is the ultimate in coming to terms with our mortality, an acceptance of the inevitable, a blessing for all that has been, and a quiet sadness for what will not be."



Stan Ruttenberg, President

MAHLERFEST XVIII

Robert Olson
Artistic Director and Conductor

SYMPHONY CONCERTS

Saturday, January 15, 7:30 PM

Pre-concert Lecture by Prof. Marilyn McCoy, 6:30 PM

Sunday, January 16, 3:30 PM

Pre-concert Lecture by Prof. Marilyn McCoy, 2:30 PM

Macky Auditorium, CU, Boulder

The Colorado MahlerFest Orchestra

Robert Olson, conductor

Johannes Brahms: *Tragic Overture*, Op. 81

Mahler: Symphony No. 9

I. Andante comodo—Allegro risoluto—Tempo I

II. Im Tempo eines gemächlichen Ländlers

III. Rondo. Burleske. Allegro assai. Sehr trotzig

IV. Adagio

The MahlerFest XVIII concerts are dedicated to the loving memory of Patricia Ruttenberg who passed away in 2004. Pat was a longtime MahlerFest supporter and music lover, whose good business sense and professionalism in MahlerFest's early years greatly contributed to our success. In recent years Pat has been our "godmother" and social secretary, and her absence will be keenly felt.

MahlerFest also wishes to acknowledge the passing in 2004 of Prof. Edward Reilly, one of the world's leading Mahler authorities, and a great friend and supporter of MahlerFest.

MahlerFest also pays special thanks to so many of our friends who donate funds to support these concerts, as well as to our community and foundation donors, without whose help MahlerFest could not continue to provide you, our audience, with the wonders of Mahler's music.

MAHLERFEST XVIII

Terese Stewart Memorial Chamber Concerts

Wednesday, January 12
Boulder Public Library Auditorium, 7:00 PM
9th & Canyon, Boulder

Friday, January 14
Rocky Mountain Center for Musical Arts, 7:30 PM
200 E. Baseline Rd., Lafayette

Note: The two programs are slightly different—those marked ♠ will be performed on Wednesday only, and those marked ♣ will be performed on Friday only.

Three movements from *Das Lied von der Erde*
(1911) ♠

Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde
Von der Jugend
Der Trunkene im Frühling

Jeong-Kwon Kim, tenor
Mutsumi Moteki, piano

From *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (1892-1901)

Der Schildwache Nachtlied ♣

Trost im Unglück ♣

Verlor'ne Müh'

Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht? ♣

Rheinlegendchen ♣

Das irdische Leben

Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt

Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen

Revelge ♣

Der Tamboursg'sell

Lob des hohen Verstands

Lied des Verfolgten im Turm

Clea Nemetz, mezzo-soprano
Sang-Jun Yoon, baritone
Margaret McDonald, piano

Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen (1884)

Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht

Ging heut Morgen über's Feld

Ich hab' ein glühend Messer

Die zwei blauen Augen von meinen Schatz

Samuel Mungo, baritone
Michael Tilley, piano

Colorado Mahlerfest

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MahlerFest acknowledges with sincere thanks
collaboration with the University of Colorado's
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Colorado MahlerFest XVIII Orchestra

Violin I

Annamarie Karacson,
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Kai Lin Yong, Boulder,
assistant concertmaster
Briana Borth, Kansas City
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Violin II

Debby Fuller*, Denver
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Viola

Jennifer Puckett*, Miami, FL
Juliet Berzsenyi Byerly**,
Lafayette
Christine Arden, Boulder
Judy Cole, Boulder
Debbie Corisis, Boulder
Liz Dinwiddie, Boulder
Alexis John, Aurora
Hannah Kuchar, Lafayette
John Leininger, Littleton
Adwyn Lim, Berthoud
Miguel Ramos, Boulder
Eileen Saiki, Louisville
Megan Tipton, Boulder
Erin Wight, Kansas City

Cello

Marcelo Sanches*, Westminster
Yoriko Morita**, Louisville
Rowanna Bobo, Louisville
Rebecca Davis, Boulder
Eileen Farnsworth, Loveland
Nada Fisher, Berthoud
Rebecca Flintoff, Boulder
Phil Norman, Boulder
Heather Plattenberger, Boulder
Beth Ringel, Boulder
Beth Rosbach, Boulder

Bass

Todd Lockwood*,
Bloomington, IN
Jennifer Motycka**, Longmont

Jared Connor, Aurora
Dale Day, Boulder
Suzanna Ford, Boulder
Erik Habbinga, Loveland
Nicolai Jacobsen, Kansas City, KS
Karina Olgilvie, Boulder
Erica Schmitt, Thornton
Christina Underwood, Boulder

Harp

Rachel Starr Ellins*, Longmont
Tanya Jilling, Denver

Flute/Piccolo

Kay Lloyd*, Longmont
Nicole Reiner, Greeley
Peggy Bruns, Lafayette
Jennifer Merrill, Broomfield
Gina Vega, Caracas, Venezuela

Oboe/English horn

Margaret R. Davis*, Englewood
Rebecca Mindock, Boulder
Jennifer Johnson, Boulder
Kimberly Brody, Boulder

Clarinet/Eb Clarinet/Bass clarinet

Jason Gresl*, South Bend, IN
Aaron Diestel, Ballwin, MO
Linda Shea, Boulder
Michelle Eudeikis, Morrison, CO
Brian Collins, Nederland

Bassoon/Contrabassoon

Yoshi Ishikawa*, Boulder
Kirsten Boldt, Boulder
Darrel Hale, Boulder
Kaori Uno, Boulder

Horn

Richard Oldberg*, Estes Park
Christopher Leuba**, Seattle
Kelly Drifmeyer, Potsdam, NY
Rusty Robison, Longmont
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Trumpet

Keith Benjamin*, Kansas City
Leah Schuman, Chicago
T. J. Menges, Lenexa, KS

Trombone

John Neurohr*, Broomfield
Gregory Wellems, Berthoud
Daryl Burghardt, Boulder

Tuba

Thomas Stein*, Kansas City

Timpani

Alan Yost*, North Andover, MA

Percussion

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Ed Blasewitz, Boulder
Greg Garcia, Boulder

*Principal; **Associate Principal

Orchestra affiliations (past and present) of the members of the MahlerFest Orchestra

Alton (IL) Symphony • American Chamber Players • Anchorage Symphony • Ann Arbor Symphony • Arapaho Philharmonic • Aspen Chamber Ensemble • Austin Symphony • Bay Area Women's Orchestra • Boulder Bach Festival • Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra • Breckenridge Music Institute • Centennial Symphony Orchestra • Central City Opera Orchestra • Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra • Chicago Symphony Orchestra • Cincinnati Symphony and Pops • Civic Orchestra of Chicago • Civic Orchestra of KC • Colorado Ballet Orchestra • Colorado Music Festival • Colorado Springs Symphony • Colorado Symphony Orchestra • Columbine Chamber Orchestra • Concord (MA) Orchestra • Conservatory of Music, University of Missouri Kansas City • Corpus Christi Symphony • Des Moines Symphony • Estes Park Chamber Orchestra • Evergreen Chamber Orchestra • Fairbanks Symphony • Ft. Collins Symphony Orchestra • Ft. Worth Symphony • Four Seasons Chamber Orchestra • Fresno Philharmonic • Greeley Philharmonic • Greensboro Symphony Orchestra • Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra • Jefferson Symphony Orchestra • Jerusalem Symphony • Kansas City Civic Orchestra • Kansas City Symphony • Las Cruces Symphony • Liberty Symphony (MO) • Longmont Symphony Orchestra • Lyric Opera of Chicago • Mansfield (OH) Symphony • Merced Symphony Orchestra • Meridian (MS) Symphony Orchestra • Midland-Odessa Symphony Orchestra • Mississippi Symphony • Mostly Strauss Orchestra • National Repertory Orchestra • New England Philharmonic (Boston) • New Jersey Symphony • New Orleans Philharmonic • New World Symphony • New Zealand Symphony • New World Symphony • North Carolina Symphony • Northeast Symphony Orchestra (Oklahoma) • Northwest Indiana Symphony • Northwest Mahler Festival • Northland Symphony (Missouri) • Norwegian Chamber Orchestra • Oberlin Conservatory Orchestra • Pasadena Symphony • Portland (OR) Opera Orchestra • Reno Philharmonic • Ridgewood Symphony (NJ) • Rocky Mountain Symphony • Salt Lake Symphony • Santa Fe Opera Orchestra • Seattle Symphony • St. Joseph (MO) Symphony • St. Louis Symphony • St. Petersburg State Chamber Orchestra (Russia) • Sinfonia of Colorado • Sioux City Symphony • Spokane Symphony • Spoleto Festival Orchestra • Strauss Symphony of America • Timberline Orchestra • Tucson Opera Orchestra • Tucson Symphony • U.K. Philharmonic • University of Colorado Orchestra • University of Northern Colorado Orchestra • Utah Festival Opera • Westminster Symphony • Windsor (Ontario) Symphony • Wyoming Symphony

MAHLERFEST XVIII

Mahler, Mahler, Everywhere in 2005

February 5, Fort Collins Symphony Orchestra, *Kindertotenlieder*, Lisa Relaford Coston, soloist, Wes Kenney, conductor. For full details, call 970-482-4823, or see www.fcsymphony.org.

May 7, Arapahoe Philharmonic, Vincent LaGuardia, conductor, Symphony No. 2, Maureen Sorensen, soprano & Leann Scherlong, alto. Performance at Orchard Road Christian Center, just west of I-25 on Orchard Road. Ticket information at 303-781-1892 or www.arapahoe-phil.org.

May 21, Timberline Symphony Orchestra, Brian St. John, conductor: Symphony No. 1. For venue and time, call 720-352-5790, or see www.TimberlineSymphony.org.

Web surfers can find concert performances in most cities by visiting: www.culturefinder.com

MahlerFest Record of Works Performed

Aria from <i>Die Tote Stadt</i> (Korngold)	1999	<i>Non piu andrai</i> (Mozart)	2000
<i>Bei Mondaufgang</i> (Wolfes)	1998	Piano Quartet in A minor (Mahler)	1988, 1997, 2004
<i>Brettli-lieder</i> (Schoenberg)	1995	Prelude to <i>Die Meistersinger</i> (Wagner)	2004
<i>Das Klagende Lied</i> (two-part version)	1991	<i>Sieben Frühe Lieder</i> (Berg)	1990
<i>Das Lied von der Erde</i>	1998	Suite from BWV 1067 and BWV 1068 (Bach/Mahler)	1989
<i>Das Lied von der Erde, Abschied</i> , piano/voice version	1998	Song by Arnold Bax	2000
<i>Das Lied von der Erde</i> (I, III, V), piano/voice version	2005	Song by Claude Debussy	2000
<i>Das Lied von der Erde</i> , VI, (choreographed)	1994	Songs by Kurt Weill	2000
<i>Des Knaben Wunderhorn</i> , with orchestra	2001	Song by Roger Quilter	2000
Five Poems, Opus 10 (Griffes)	1998	Song by Sergei Rachmaninoff	2000
Four Early Lieder (Gustav Mahler)	1996	Songs and Movie Songs (Korngold)	1999
<i>Galgenlieder</i> (Graener)	1995	Songs by Joseph Marx	1998, 1999
<i>Greeting from Arias and Barcaroles</i> (L. Bernstein)	1997	Songs from <i>Des Knaben Wunderhorn</i> , voice & piano	1989, 1994, 1997, 1999, 2003, 2005
<i>Hochsommer</i> (Felix Weingartner)	1997	Songs from <i>Land of Smiles</i> (Franz Lehar)	1998
<i>Hütet euch!</i> (Zemlinsky)	1997	Songs to Poems by Rückert	1989, 1997
<i>Kindertotenlieder</i> , piano & voice	1990, 1996	Songs, Opus 3 (Grosz)	1998
<i>Kindertotenlieder</i> , orchestra & voice	2002	Songs, Opus 8 (Wellesz)	1998
<i>Klavierstück</i> , Opus 19, No. 6 (Schoenberg)	1997	Rusalka's <i>Song to the Moon</i> (Dvorak)	2000
<i>Lieder</i> (Berg)	1996	Symphony #1	1988
<i>Lieder</i> (Brahms)	2000, 2001	Symphony #1 (Hamburg Version 1893)	1998
<i>Lied</i> (Humperdinck)	2001	Symphony #2	1989, 1999
<i>Fuge</i> (John David Lamb)	2001	Symphony #3	1990, 2000
<i>Lied</i> (Josephine Lang)	2001	Symphony #4	1991, 2001
<i>Lieder</i> (Alma Mahler)	1991, 1992, 2003	Symphony #4, IV, Mahler performing on piano	1994
<i>Lied</i> (Mendelssohn)	2001	Symphony #4, IV, (Schoenberg Society arrangement)	1991
<i>Lieder</i> (Louise Riechart)	2001	Symphony #5	1992, 2002
<i>Lied</i> (Max Reger)	2001	Symphony #6	1993, 2003
<i>Lieder</i> (Schoenberg)	2001	Symphony #6, I, two piano version (Zemlinsky)	1993
<i>Lieder</i> (Schubert)	2000, 2001, 2004	Symphony #7	1994, 2004
<i>Lied</i> (Schumann)	2001	Symphony #8	1995
<i>Lied</i> (Friedrich Silcher)	2001	Symphony #9	1996, 2005
<i>Lieder</i> (Richard Strauss)	1993, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2001	Symphony #10, J. H. Wheeler version	1997
<i>Lieder</i> (Wolf)	1995, 2000	Tragic Overture (Brahms)	2005
<i>Lieder</i> from Opus 2 (Zemlinsky)	1995, 2003	<i>Vier Lieder</i> , Op. 2 (Schoenberg)	1996
<i>Lieder und Gesänge</i>		<i>Vier Stücke für Klarinette and Klavier</i> (Berg)	1990
<i>aus der Jugendzeit</i> (Mahler)	1988, 1993, 1997, 1999	<i>Der Zwerg</i> final scene (Alexander von Zemlinsky)	2002
<i>Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen</i> (Mahler)	1988, 1993, 1995, 2005		
Marches & Ländler by Schubert	2000		

Thank You!

Presenting our annual MahlerFest is a labor of love for our volunteer MahlerFest Orchestra, Board of Directors and other Volunteers. However, not all expenses are met by ticket sales and grants, and audience donations are a crucial and significant component of our funding base.

**Your contributions of any amount are significant, and highly prized.
For those we offer our heartfelt thanks!**

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In-Kind Contributions

Tom Karpeichik (Web design)
AES Consulting & Michael Komarnitsky, Komar Consulting Group (Web-hosting)
Ann Alexander Leggett (Publication design & desktop publishing)

Robert Olson, MahlerFest Artistic Director

"Electrifying! The most exciting musical experience I've had in eight years here. Period."—*Kansas City Star*.

"This great performance is the equal of any Eighth I've ever heard."—*Fanfare* magazine.

"One of the major American conductors"—*Musique in Belgium*.

"Exquisite. Breathtaking. Spiritual. Noble."—*The American Record Guide*.

"A world class performance"—*On the Air* magazine.

"The orchestra loved you, the public loved you." —Karlovy Vary Symphony Orchestra, Czech Republic.

"Magnificent! A fine orchestra and an outstanding conductor."—*Longmont Times-Call*.

Such is a sampling of reviews garnered by Maestro Robert Olson, Artistic Director and Conductor of the Colorado MahlerFest since its inception eighteen years ago. He brings an amazingly active and varied career to the podium, currently holding conducting posts with four different organizations, encompassing the entire spectrum of the concert stage—symphony, opera and ballet—and conducting nearly sixty performances a year.

Currently a resident of Kansas City, Olson holds posts with three other orchestras. He is the conductor for the Kansas City Ballet, a post he has held since 1992, having conducted more than 400 performances with the Kansas City and St. Louis Symphonies. He is Director of Orchestras/Opera at the University of Missouri-Kansas City where his two orchestras and, in particular, the opera productions consistently receive critical acclaim. With a repertoire of over 60 operas, recent productions include *Turandot*, *A Midsummer's Night Dream*, *Manon*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and many others. He is also Music Director and Conductor of the Longmont Symphony in Colorado, an orchestra that has consistently received rave reviews from Colorado critics. During his 22-year tenure, the orchestra has flourished, presenting an eleven-concert season to enthusiastic audiences.

Prior to his move to Kansas City he was on the faculty of the University of Colorado College of Music for sixteen years, where he was music director of the opera program and Associate Conductor of Orchestras. Local audiences also know him as conductor for years of the immensely popular Colorado Gilbert & Sullivan Festival.

He has held conducting posts with the Omaha Symphony, Boulder Baroque Chamber Orchestra, Boulder Civic Opera, Arapahoe Chamber Orchestra, Arvada Chamber Orchestra, the Colorado Lyric Theater, and the Rocky Ridge Music Festival.

An active guest conductor, he has guest conducted many orchestras in the United States and made his European debut in 1990 in Belgium. This resulted in engagements in Venezuela, return invitations to Belgium, Bergamo and Milan, Italy, the Czech Republic, the Ljubljana Music Festival, Oporto, Portugal, and the National Symphony of China in Beijing. In February of 2001 he conducted four major Stravinsky works in a Stravinsky Festival sponsored by the Kansas City Symphony as well as five performances for the Miami City Ballet. In April of 2004 he took "first place" conducting the Korean National Symphony in a 10-orchestra



competition, a concert that was televised live over much of Asia.

In addition to the success of the *Mahler Eighth* CD, a performance described as "legendary" by several national publications, his concert recording of the Wheeler version of Mahler's *Tenth Symphony* is available on CD from the Colorado MahlerFest. This work received its world premiere performance at MahlerFest X in 1997 after Olson and a small international team spent over a year editing and preparing the Wheeler realization. His recording of the same symphony for NAXOS records with the Polish National Radio Orchestra was released in May 2002 to such reviews as "second only to Rattle and Berlin." He is also recorded on the CRS label.

He is married to Victoria Hagood-Olson. They have two children, Tori (17) and Chelsea (14), both budding musicians.

The Colorado MahlerFest, initiated by Olson on a dream and \$400 seventeen years ago, has flourished to become not only "one of Boulder's most valuable cultural assets," but a world class festival, dedicated to the cultivation of all things Mahlerian!

Why Mahler?

Jonathan Carr, Königswinter, Germany, November 2004

What is so special about Mahler? Why do one hundred or so musicians converge each year on Boulder to play his music at the Colorado MahlerFest? It certainly isn't for the money! And why do so many people turn up in chilly January to listen? Not just because they like the town itself, attractive even loveable though it is. You might compare Colorado's Boulder to Bavaria's Bayreuth, another outlying festival shrine to which an army of pilgrims annually streams. But then Wagner lived in Bayreuth, he built the theatre there specifically for the performance of his own works and one of his descendants still runs the show. That adds up to an irresistible draw for most Wagnerites. Boulder, alas, can claim no such special connection. In his last years, Mahler did indeed get to New York, even to Buffalo—but not to Colorado.

So why Mahler, why Boulder? Why 18 years of the Colorado MahlerFest? Some of the answers are rather obvious. It is happily no longer necessary to argue, against a battery of critical jeers, that Mahler was a great symphonist fully worthy to be spoken of in the same breath as Beethoven and Brahms. That battle has long since been won, although skirmishes can and do (and probably always will) go on about whether Mahler always found the ideal structure for his vast content. Arguably he did not, but did Bruckner, or Schumann, or Schubert or even Beethoven? Nor does one need to work hard to make the case that Mahler was a key influence on the music of countless successors from Shostakovich to Britten, from Hartmann to Crumb. With one foot planted in the 19th century and the other in the 20th, he also formed the bridge across which the atonalists like Schoenberg and Berg walked—or rather “prowled” as one clever critic put it.

Even those who think little of the symphonies and regret that the atonalists were offered a bridge at all, cannot credibly deny Mahler his greatness as an orchestrator. The means he chooses at any given moment, even in his earliest work, are as finely calculated as a scale of gold dust. Take away an instrument or two, even in the biggest climaxes, and almost invariably the balance will change—at least it will for those with ears to hear. Few composers have achieved that ideal so consistently, not even Mahler's brilliant colleague and rival Richard Strauss, who once claimed he could set a head of beer to music if offered a decent fee. It is true that Mahler went on tinkering with his scores to the end of his life, but then (unlike Strauss) he was always on a quest for a perfection that this life does not afford. That goes too for his role as one of the finest of all conductors, drawing from his benighted players more than they felt they could deliver but still urging them on towards the unattainable. Never satisfied, never compromising, never comfortable. No wonder he was so often loathed—and adored.

Much, too much perhaps, has been made of Mahler as prophet. Leonard Bernstein famously argued that only after an array of horrors ranging from Auschwitz to McCarthyism (today he could have found lots more examples) “can we finally listen to Mahler's music and understand that it foretold all.” It's easy to see what Bernstein meant but his vision is too limiting. The demons Mahler calls up in his music and never quite lays

to rest are those of every age, not just of his and ours. Of course he was deeply influenced by (though never firmly rooted in) his own world and era, turn-of-the-century Vienna and the crumbling Habsburg Empire. Born as a Jew in Bohemia, ineluctably drawn to Austro-German literature, philosophy and music, he was dismally well-placed to pick up the pre-1914 tremors; the rise of nationalism, the backlash of anti-Semitism, the impotence of the well-meaning emperor Franz Josef as his vainglorious world slid, flags flying and bands playing, towards the abyss. But what Mahler made of all that was no reportage, no snapshot series in sound. He transmuted his experience into an art as timeless and universal as, say, Shakespeare's or Dante's.

None of that, though, quite gets to the heart of what makes Mahler so special—even among the undeniably great masters. Simply to say that he has an intensely personal style is to tempt the correct rejoinder that lots of other composers do too. But with Mahler there is an uncannily real sense of the man himself—his personality, even his physical presence—emerging from the music. Bruno Walter once wrote that some of Mahler's movements like the *Nachtstücke* of the seventh symphony recalled to him “a certain mysterious expression in his face which I knew so well. Mysterious! That was how he often impressed people, even his intimate friends.” What Walter describes is what Mahlerians instinctively feel. Although they never met the man his complex nature seems especially vivid, indeed almost tangible in its humour and bitterness, nostalgia and daring, sense of wonder and fierce realism. Not every listener likes that special, almost embarrassing, intimacy of course. But for the many who do respond, Mahler is not just “a” great composer but also one whose symphonic odyssey becomes peculiarly their own.

And odyssey it is. To talk of Mahler's output as a cycle of symphonies (with a lot of splendid songs thrown in along the way) is not wrong but it misses the point. From those fresh but mysterious bars that open the first symphony, like mist clearing in a spring dawn, to the dying fall that ends the ninth (and, if you will, the semi-complete tenth as well), Mahler time after time poses his biggest questions that are ours too: “Why did you live? Why did you suffer?” Is it all nothing but a huge, frightful joke? The certainty he seemed to win with one work he would lose—and then usually regain—with the next. For him there was no easy answer. Perhaps there was, in the end, no answer at all—or rather, the answer lay in the search. In other words Mahler did not so much compose nine-and-a-half symphonies (or ten-and-a-half if you include *Das Lied von der Erde*) as construct a single, huge, constantly evolving oeuvre. Of course you can enjoy, or be shattered by, this or that work—but to appreciate the full magnitude of Mahler's achievement you need the chance to put each part in context. That is what Boulder's MahlerFest offers, year in year out, and that is what makes it a special festival honouring a very special composer.

Program Notes

Kelly Dean Hansen
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JOHANNES BRAHMS -TRAGIC OVERTURE, Op. 81 (*Allegro ma non troppo*) 2/2 Meter ("cut time"). D Minor

The "Tragic" Overture, Op. 81, is the dramatic counterpart to the festive "Academic Festival" Overture, Op. 80, composed by Brahms in 1880 after receiving an honorary doctorate from the University of Breslau. The "Tragic" has never been one of the composer's most popular works, although it is one of his most innovative uses of sonata form. Quite unlike any of his symphonic movements, it also has a larger orchestra than any of the four symphonies, utilizing both piccolo and tuba, but eschewing the percussion of the "Academic Festival."

The principal theme group contains at least five distinct elements: (1) the two hammer-like opening chords, (2) the opening tune, a rising and falling arpeggio, (3) A clipped dotted-rhythm figure that follows the arpeggio, (4) another rising and falling figure beginning with a longer note, and (5) a rising scale in triplets serving to introduce the dotted-rhythm figure again. This is an unusually diverse "first subject" complex for Brahms, and it provides several seeds for the development section later on.

Syncopated strings lead to the transition passage, which features a series of descending wind figures that are curiously similar to the opening of Mahler's First Symphony (which dates from about a decade later). These are actually derived from the two opening chords. It is this passage that introduces both piccolo and tuba. The secondary theme in F major is a broad violin tune with many notes crossing the bar lines over arpeggiated low strings. Before long, the "tragic" mood returns for an intensely dramatic closing section drawing from both subjects.

The end of the exposition veers back to the tonic D minor as the opening "hammer" chords return. They leave an extended tympani roll exposed as fragments of the opening arpeggio tune serve as a transition to the development. The piccolo makes its second appearance here, again in a transition. The development section itself is quite extraordinary. The tempo is cut in half, and the dotted-note rhythm is developed into a slow march, beginning in the winds, and later moving to the strings. The march is in the keys of A minor and B minor.

The development ends in B minor, which is relative to D major. Brahms uses this relationship to circumvent D minor by going directly to the "Mahler-like" transition passage. The descending figures are now given in both winds and strings. The first subject tries to assert itself, but the music becomes chorale-like, and the trombones play a very solemn version of the main arpeggio theme. This passes directly into the second subject, now in D major. Brahms has thus "slipped" into his recapitulation, almost completely circumventing the formerly huge first subject as well as its minor key. The second theme, however, is close to its exposition presentation, and D minor returns for the dramatic closing section.

The hammer blows return again, introducing the coda, which at first intensifies the tension at the end of the recap. Trumpet and horn fanfares seem to signal the end,

but Brahms has one more surprise in store. Just as it seems he is going to close with a huge chord, he suddenly tapers down to quiet string tremolos. The clarinets and other winds present shy hints of the main theme before the real closing flourish interrupts decisively with the dotted figure and triplet scale, finishing firmly in the minor key.

Symphony No. 9

FIRST MOVEMENT: *Andante comodo* 4/4 Meter. D Major

While the first movement of the Ninth is among the composer's longest in actual performance time, usually lasting about half an hour, the amount of actual thematic material is actually quite economic for him. Indeed, its 454 measures are nowhere near the most in a Mahlerian movement. The tempo is slow and leisurely, but not excessively so. It is the epic, long-breathed character of the movement that seems to prolong it. This becomes most noticeable in several episodes near the end. The structure is one of the composer's most innovative variations on the basic sonata form. The multi-section development, which is twice as long as the exposition, is typical of middle to late Mahler, as is the greatly varied reprise. But it is the exposition itself that exhibits ambiguities. The most likely "second subject" appears in the same tonal center as the first; only the mode is changed. After the appearance of the "second theme," a full statement of the first occurs, and only with the "closing material" (which uses material from both subjects as well as new themes), does the expected move away from the home key occur, to B-flat, in every way the movement's "secondary key." Commentators have tried to explain it as a double-variation or a rondo, but the best interpretation does seem to be a sonata form with an unusually structured exposition. A hallmark of the movement is its five rises to climaxes, none of which is brought to fulfillment.

The movement literally grows out of nothing, and very gradually. The first introductory measures present four ideas that will consistently recur over the movement's vast canvas: (1) a halting, syncopated repeated-note rhythm in the horn, (2) a four-note "motto" (the second and fourth are the same), with a rest after the second note, initially given by the harp, (3) another syncopated phrase from the horn, this one an arching figure, and (4) a distinctive tremolo in the violas. Out of this canvas the serene main theme in D Major emerges. With rests in almost every measure and consisting mainly of two- or three-note fragments, this tune retains the "hesitant" character of the introduction. Its second strain is more lyrical.

The second theme emerges in D minor, and features strange chromatic inflections, but it is quite similar to the "main" melody. In an unexpectedly brief time it leads to the first of the movement's many climaxes. At its peak, a highly distinctive trumpet figure leads back to the major

mode and a full-bodied restatement of the main theme. This gradually subsides, taking a brief detour to B-flat major on the way, and comes to rest on a rather abrupt stopped horn note. B-flat is now established as the tonal center for the closing material. This introduces some new ideas, most notably a triumphant phrase ushering in the second climax. Speed and intensity increase dramatically, and the exposition that began with such uncertainty ends with a glorious fanfare.

This is, however, quickly brushed aside by the two motives that opened the movement, heralding the long development section. The repeated-note syncopation is blasted this time instead of stuttered, but the horn remains the instrument. The four-note "motto," however, is transferred from the harp to the thumping timpani. Strange bass clarinet figures are also present. This first section of the development, perhaps the darkest passage of the movement (following the brightest), consists largely of what Hefling calls a "pathetic" variation of the main theme. This disintegrates very gradually into low-string tremolos and a "marching" harp. The violins make several attempts to begin something, and only after much effort does the music rise from the ashes. When it does, what emerges is a very sweet new version of the principal theme in the home key of D that will increase in prominence. It almost has the character of a waltz (although still in 4/4 time), and is the material for the second section. As B-flat again returns, fanfares intrude unexpectedly and lead to yet another climax, the third. This one utilizes the syncopated passage (3) from the introduction and also much material, including the "triumphant" phrase, from the exposition's closing section. It is prolonged for a great while before an almost spectacular collapse where fulfillment was again expected.

The third part of the development is a variation of the second theme in dark B-flat minor (which, however, uses the same opening melodic notes as the D-minor version). Even this material, however, attempts a Mahlerian "break-through" (the fourth climax) as D major asserts itself, and this would have been an ideal moment for fulfillment, but as before, it is cut short, and the trombones play a very dark version of the formerly bright trumpet figure. As at the beginning of the development, the music disintegrates into low tremolos, and this time Mahler marks the music "Schattenhaft" ("Shadowy"). It takes even longer for the "sweet waltz" variation in D to arrive, and it provides the material for this fourth section, as it had for the second. As it had before, it rises quickly to another climax. This one, the fifth and last, is the most intense, taking place in B major, a "heavenly" key for Mahler. Somehow, however, the listener knows that it is not to be, and after the most promising rise, the disintegration is the most shattering. The opening repeated-note syncopations from the very beginning are blasted out "with greatest force" by trombones and tubas, entering at the biting interval of a tritone. This seals the movement's fate, and the final (fifth) section of the development is played "like a heavy funeral procession." This section, featuring very "pathetic" fanfares, has many features from the development's beginning: the sound of the tam-tam, for example, and especially the re-emergence of the "motto" in the timpani. At the end, this motto is heard on three low bells, which creates a wonderful effect just before the reprise of the exposition.

This recapitulation, as Hefling notes, seems much shorter than the exposition, when in fact it is not. The

return of the main theme almost overlaps the bells of the funeral march, and what we hear is the full-bodied version of the theme. There are to be no more attempted climaxes, however. When the second theme arrives, again in D minor, it is interrupted by an extraordinary chamber-like episode played "suddenly significantly slower." The texture is thinned until the flute and horn emerge in a strange duet. After this passage, there is really nowhere else for the movement to go. The second theme material makes a last attempt, but it is more like a reminiscence of climaxes past. The horns play the "trumpet figure" two more times before the music settles into the brief coda. Two formerly ebullient elements—the "trumpet figure" and the "triumphant phrase" from the end of the exposition, are now played serenely and quietly by the horns. This leads to a heavenly, soaring flute solo. The last word is given to the "sweet waltz" version of the theme before the final piercing high D that ends this incredible movement, a journey in itself.

SECOND MOVEMENT: Im Tempo eines gemächlichen Ländlers. Etwas täppisch und sehr derb

3/4 Meter. C Major

The formal complexity of the first movement does not appear in the other three. They are all rather artful but simple variations on a rondo type of design. The first movement also had rondo-like elements, which perhaps gives the symphony some sort of unity based on similar forms. The second movement is a combination of German Ländler and Viennese waltz. Mahler presents us here with two examples of each. The two waltzes are more tied together than are the two Ländler, but the sequence of the four over the course of the movement becomes rather unpredictable, lending the piece much of its interest, for the material itself is deliberately coarse and parodistic. Three of the four always enter in the same key: the first Ländler in C major (three times), the second waltz in E-flat (twice), and the second Ländler in F (also twice). The first waltz varies its key each time it appears (E, D, and B-flat respectively), and its appearance usually provides the element of surprise and variety. Mahler's means of bringing interest to comically banal basic material is unusually skilled here.

The structure is also articulated by three clearly differentiated tempo markings. The first Ländler, the principal material of the piece, is also taken at the most moderate tempo (designated "Tempo I"). The two waltzes are in the faster speed necessary for that dance ("Tempo II"), and the second Ländler, which functions somewhat as a "Trio" section, is the slowest ("Tempo III"). The opening Ländler, according to Hefling, stretches its meager material as thin as it possibly can. There are variations and new gestures, to be sure, but it is largely the orchestration that lends the interest (such as the horn decorations that emerge about halfway through). The initial gesture, a simple motion up the scale, is almost unduly emphasized, as is the more "melodic" idea that follows in the violins.

The arrival of the first waltz is perfectly timed for maximum surprise and maximum relief. It first appears in E major, which arrives abruptly and with no mediation. The new tempo is also very sudden. The music is as breathless as the Ländler was unhurried. Another unusual tonal shift to E-flat brings the second waltz, where the music becomes even more coarse, with low brass and

strings introduce material reminiscent of organ grinder music. It is in this section that a descending, lamenting phrase first appears that will gain prominence as the movement progresses. Its more "chromatic" character contrasts with most of the movement's material. The opening gesture of the main Ländler intersperses itself unexpectedly as this second waltz progresses.

The arrival of the second Ländler ("Tempo III") is more prepared, and serves as a point of relaxation. Its appearance marks the "middle section" of the movement. It is far less grotesque and banal than what has gone before, and the slow tempo allows both the musicians and the listeners to breathe a little. Subsequent statements in new keys, however, become more varied and complex, until, unexpectedly, the first waltz interrupts. As before, its arrival is jarring, and although its key here, D major, is less abrupt, it enters even faster than before, which provides the ultimate contrast to the slow second Ländler. (The key of D here also marks the only tonal connection to the first movement.) It becomes increasingly wild, ultimately leading to the chromatic descent first heard in the second waltz. The slow Ländler in F returns a second and final time, but the waltz has taken away its more "serene" characteristics.

The "middle section" of the movement is terminated by the appearance of the first, moderate Ländler in the home key. Its appearance in the midst of the second waltz assured that it was not forgotten, but it too has changed significantly in its scoring and its effect, and its presentation is much shorter. The "chromatic descent" is now heard here. Again it leads into the waltz material, but the order of the waltzes is here reversed, and the arrival is less jarring. The second waltz is given a full presentation, mostly in its "home" key of E-flat, but beginning in C minor and with a significant and unexpected diversion to G-flat, where a new countermelody is added. This music is even more grotesque and wild than it was before and is given three statements in all. It is directly followed by two statements of Waltz 1, marked to appear even faster now, and in its third tonal center of B-flat.

In a role reversal, it is now the original Ländler in the original moderate tempo that arrives suddenly. Its final statement quickly takes on the role of a dissipation. It is no longer sturdy and rustic, but almost tentative in character, combined again with the "chromatic descent." Eventually, it moves to the minor mode for the first time, and stays there for a while. Over the course of this minor-key statement, the texture and orchestration thins, string and wind instruments speaking in an almost disheartened dialogue. The final statement of the ubiquitous opening ascent is masterfully scored for piccolo and contrabassoon, the highest and lowest voices of the orchestra, five octaves apart, emphasizing the sense of exaggeration that pervades the entire movement.

THIRD MOVEMENT: RONDO-BURLESKE-

Allegro assai. Sehr trotzig

2/2 Meter (Cut time). A Minor

An even simpler Rondo design characterizes the third movement, yet, as Hefling notes, the complexity lies in the harmonic language. This is the most advanced musical idiom in which Mahler ever composed, and this movement surely has much to do with his influence on twentieth-century composers such as Schoenberg. The piece is at once parodistic and nihilistic, both humorous and trag-

ic. The movement has much in common with the second movement of the Fifth Symphony, with which it shares both key and many musical gestures. As with that movement, the negative energy and harsh tonal language are tempered by an episode toward the end that seems almost like an intrusion. Another movement of the Fifth, the finale, is recalled in the fugal episodes, where Mahler's contrapuntal skill is at its most advanced. The secondary section, which Adorno called a parody of Léhar, is the closest in character to the previous movement. The structure, where B is this secondary section, follows the pattern A-fugue-B-A'-fugue-B'-fugue-C (interrupting episode)-A''-Double Coda

The principal A-minor Rondo refrain as initially presented contains several melodic ideas that will serve as source material for the fugal sections. The opening gesture is an unmistakable signal for its return as the movement progresses. Unlike the principal Ländler of the second movement, the musical material gains more interest and potential as it continues, culminating in harshly punctuated march variant that makes up its second half. The first fugal section in D minor, the orchestration of which is as skilled as its counterpoint, develops motives from the primary refrain.

The "trivial" secondary section is initially presented in F Major. If Léhar is indeed recalled, it is through the lens of Mahlerian harmony, for although the musical idiom has elements of the banal, the advanced language continues, though the tinkling triangle lends the section a somewhat brighter quality. It is structured as a song in four verses. The second appearance of the primary refrain (A') enters loudly and in the very remote key of A-flat minor, whose daunting array of seven flats presents an additional challenge to the players in a movement that is already virtuosic. The principal key of A minor returns for the second part, the "march variant."

The second fugal section is again in D minor, but now the use of the primary theme from the main section is more pronounced, the trombones presenting it very loudly. Against this is a new descending countermelody in the clarinets that will gain much importance later on. This is followed by the second and final appearance of the "B" section, now in the home key of A (but more major than minor), and reduced to three verses. The glockenspiel now joins the triangle in lending brightness to the passage. It is immediately followed by the third and final fugal passage. This is by far the most advanced of the three. A new upward leap is added to the beginning of the descending countermelody and, most strikingly, the fugue moves in a "circular" pattern through the keys, avoiding the more traditional tonic/dominant answers of the other two. It also introduces a new turn figure that has great implications not just for the burlesque, but also for the rest of the symphony.

Those implications are now realized in the huge D-major episode. Although the material for this episode was introduced in the preceding fugue, the whole section seems strangely out of place in the burlesque. It is certainly calculated that this section is in the symphony's principal key. The passage is introduced by the descending countermelody to the fugue, played by the brass, but the texture quickly thins, dominated by shimmering string tremolos and glissandi. The new turn figure now becomes the principal material for the section, which begins in a calm and serene manner. It is played in various instruments and developed at length before rising to a full-

hearted climax. Shortly thereafter, however, the episode wants to continue in this vein, but is interrupted by a surprisingly brash statement of the turn figure from the clarinets. The string tremolos try to restore order, but it is to no avail. The turn figure has lost its serenity and begins to hint at the harsh character of the rest of the movement. The tremolos return three more times and, before the last one, the opening motive of the main section asserts itself in the clarinet. The turn figure fights mightily to regain its calm character for one last passage. The main section material has the upper hand, however, and eventually leads to a sudden return to the faster tempo for its final full statement.

This last statement is particularly rough and wild, and includes elements from the secondary and fugal sections. It begins in D minor (following the D major of the long episode), but moves to the home key of A minor. The two-part coda is basically a continuation of this, ratcheting up the tempo twice, so that by the end of the movement, the music has reached a frenzy that is unusual even for Mahler. Of the four movements, only this one has an emphatic conclusion. It is, in fact, one of the most exciting finishes in Mahler's entire output, but at the same time, one of the most bizarre.

FOURTH MOVEMENT: Adagio. **Sehr langsam und noch zurückhaltend** **4/4 Meter. D-flat Major**

The finale of Mahler's Ninth is at once strange and glorious. No other movement in his oeuvre has nearly as large a discrepancy between number of measures (actual musical material) and time for performance. Not even in the final "Abschied" of *Das Lied von der Erde* is the motion as consciously slow. Ending a symphony with a slow movement was not new. (Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique*—a work sharing many structural similarities with the Ninth—was well known by then.) Mahler's own Third ended with a long slow movement, but that led to a resounding, full, triumphant conclusion. This movement is quite unique in its ending that literally "dies away." The finale of the *Pathétique* had done this, but Mahler takes the idea to extremes here. Judging from the amount of pages left in the score at this point, it is hard to believe that the piece lasts almost as long as the first movement, but indeed it does.

The key is worth noting, a half step below the symphony's principal key. It thus reverses exactly the direction of the Fifth Symphony (a work quite similar to the Ninth in many ways, but the path of which is very different), which moved up from C-sharp (same pitch as D-flat) to D. It is, like the previous two movements, a rondo structure, and quite a simple one. The music never strays far from the tonal center—indeed, the secondary theme usually appears in C-sharp minor, merely changing the mode, not the central key. The extreme musical connection to the long D-major episode of the preceding Burleske is also notable (and recalls similar connections in the Fifth Symphony).

The principal theme group is preceded by two bars of introduction that directly recall the "turn" figure from that episode, and that turn accompanies most of the principal theme itself. The melody is warm and soothing, but tinged with biting chromaticism. Its presentation in the strings alone recalls the Fifth's "Adagietto" movement. The second half of the first theme is stronger, characterized by a

downward chromatic three-note descent. But before this second half, Mahler inserts a strange premonition of the secondary theme in the bassoons, the first wind instruments to intrude on the string texture.

The second theme itself is far more dark and ominous than the first. Scored thinly and still moving very slowly, it is droned out in minor from the lowest instruments of the orchestra. Its rising scale possibly recalls the Ländler from the second movement in a radical transformation.

A more developed variation of the first theme group follows with the return of the major mode, the horn now playing a major role, and it builds gradually to a small climax before being cut off by a sudden *pianissimo*. The turn figure from the Burleske has been obvious throughout, but now Mahler inserts an actual four-measure quote from that movement before the music winds down for the next statement of the secondary theme. It is also varied, introducing a distinctive "tick-tock" motive in the accompaniment (appropriately in the harp, doubled by clarinet).

As the "tick-tock" motive dies away, the first theme group enters again, but it is the more dramatic (and more chromatic) second half, which serves to lead to the climax of the movement. It is extremely intense, and marked by the first entrance of the trumpets in the movement. The orchestra suddenly cuts off, leaving the violins lamenting passionately on a repetition of the note C-flat. The energy of the climax continues as the principal theme's first half is now given its richest statement yet. Mahler directs the music to move even slower, but the theme is accompanied by the horn playing the turn figure in shorter note values in the instrument's most full-blooded vein). The texture remains rich and full for some time before suddenly becoming quiet. There is time for one more attempt at a breakthrough, the trumpet valiantly playing the turn figure, but it is short lived. The wind instruments exit for good, the English horn providing their last word. The texture begins to dissipate entirely, the string instruments fading away one by one until the cellos alone provide a long drawn-out line featuring the turn. Here is Mahler's first noting of the term "ersterbend" ("dying away").

But there is still some music left—one of Mahler's most incredible codas. It is only one page of score, but a page that typically takes about five minutes to play. Mahler marks it "Adagissimo," and scores it only for strings, using material from the secondary theme and the second half of the first. But he introduces a most amazing self-quotation from one of his "Kindertotenlieder," so subtle that commentators missed it for many years. The quotation is marked "with deepest feeling." There is no doubt that this coda, as Leonard Bernstein said, represents "death in music." Following the quotation, the strings slow the turn figure down to near motionlessness. Over the last measures, Mahler directs them to be played "utterly slowly." The final dying statement is given to the violas.

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Musings on Mahler's Ninth Symphony

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This article examines issues apart from the symphony's musical content, but which we hope will enhance your understanding and enjoyment of the music. Peripheral questions will be answered, or at least explored. Little known facts will be divulged, clues to conundrums will be proposed and surprises will be sprung. Discussed herein are:

- Did Mahler really fear the number 9 with respect to his Ninth Symphony?
- Did Mahler base the shape of his Ninth Symphony on Tchaikovsky's Sixth (*Pathétique*)?
- Are the symphonies of Mahler's third (and last) period truly "Farewell Symphonies"?
- Which recordings of Mahler's Ninth are recommended?

Fear of the Number 9. It is commonly believed that just as Arnold Schoenberg was very superstitious about the number 13 Mahler feared "9," at least for numbering his symphonies. Schoenberg's fear of 13 manifested itself in at least two interesting ways: For his opera, *Moses und Aron*, he deliberately wrote the name Aaron as "Aron," so that the opera's title would not have thirteen letters. Also, in numbering the measures of his compositions, he used 12, 12a, 14, to avoid the number 13! Schoenberg also feared number 9. In a memorial speech on October 12, 1912, he declared: "It seems that the Ninth is a limit. He who wants to go beyond it must pass away. It seems as if that something might be imparted to us in the Tenth, which we ought not yet to know, for which we are not yet ready. Those who have written a Ninth have stood too near to the hereafter. Perhaps the riddle of the world would be solved if one of those who knew them were to write the Tenth, and that is probably not to take place." (Could Schoenberg have been unaware that Mozart wrote 41 symphonies and Haydn 104, to name but two very prolific composers?)

Whether Mahler actually feared the number 9 is disputed because the primary source of that information is the not always reliable Alma. This alleged superstitious fear is predicated on the "fact" that Beethoven, Schubert, Bruckner and Dvorak did not get beyond their Ninths. (In fact, Bruckner did not even complete his Ninth. He left only sketches for the fourth movement.) But in Mahler's day, Schubert's last symphony was known as No. 7, and Dvorak's as number 5. Musicological research, well after Mahler's death, reassigned number 7 to number 9 in Schubert's case, and number 5 to number 9 in Dvorak's. Of the leading 19th Century romantic composers, that leaves only Beethoven and Bruckner with last symphonies numbered 9. Would these two be enough to frighten Mahler out of his wits? Mahler called *Das Lied von der Erde* a symphony: "The Song of the Earth: a symphony for tenor, alto (or baritone) and orchestra." However, he

did not assign number 9 to it, possibly because *Das Lied* is really a hybrid: a "song-symphony," and fear of number 9 was not a factor. Mahler did number the symphony following *Das Lied* as number 9, but (Alma explained), "Because the Ninth was really Mahler's Tenth, he reasoned that it was past 'the curse.'" Alma also claimed that Mahler refused to make corrections to the Ninth (and to *Das Lied*) because to bring these works to perfection would be to bring his life to completion.

Bruno Walter is no help in finding an answer to the Ninth Symphony conundrum. In his biography of Mahler, Walter confirms that Mahler hesitated to call *Das Lied* his Ninth because "for Beethoven and Bruckner, a Ninth was written finis. (Mahler) hesitated to challenge fate." That seems a clear victory for those who believe that Mahler feared number 9, except that Walter went on to write, "It may be that a superstitious shrinking from a Ninth prevented (Mahler) from talking about it. Yet, in that clear and powerful mind, I have never detected any trace of superstition. Nor could there have been anything of the sort here." A statement and a contradiction from the same writer!

Richard Specht, a well-known Austrian music critic and essayist who wrote many biographies, including one about his friend Mahler, leads us to believe that Mahler may have been superstitious about number 9 after all. Specht gives us to understand that after completing *Das Lied*, Mahler felt that he had warded off the fateful danger. But, did he get that information from Mahler himself, or from the unreliable Alma?

Was the Shape of Mahler's Ninth Symphony Inspired by the Tchaikovsky Sixth Symphony? Deryk Cooke pointed out that the shape of Mahler's Ninth is similar to that of Tchaikovsky's Sixth (*Pathétique*). Both works have large first movements, with slow and fast passages: both begin and end quietly; both have dance-like movements, the Mahler alternating waltzes with ländler, the Tchaikovsky in 5/4 meter, which has been described as a 3/4 waltz with a limp; both third movements feature virtuoso marches; both have powerful adagio finales, which do not end so much as die out. It is implied that Mahler copied the form of *Pathétique*, which was just 16 years old when Mahler began his Ninth Symphony. However, this becomes questionable when it is realized that Mahler had contempt for the *Pathétique* Symphony! Sometime, circa 1901, Mahler was discussing the *Pathétique* with Guido Adler, a well-known musicologist and friend of his. As Natalie Bauer-Lechner notes (*Recollections of Gustav Mahler* by NBL), Mahler told Adler that he considered *Pathétique*, "...a shallow, superficial, distressingly homophobic work—no better than salon music. Tchaikovsky's coloring is fake, sand thrown in someone's eyes! If you look closely, there is precious little there. Those rising and falling arpeggios, those meaningless sequences of

chords, can't disguise the fundamental lack of invention and the emptiness." (Phew!! Was Mahler talking about the same *Pathétique* I know and love? But, I digress.)

There are several questions regarding Mahler vis-à-vis the *Pathétique* Symphony. Why would Mahler copy the shape of a symphony he loathed? Why, after ignoring the symphony for some 16 or 17 years, did Mahler finally conduct it six times within a year (from the first time in January 1910 to the last time in January 1911)? Mrs. George R. Sheldon, the wife of a prominent banker, had established a committee with the aim of engaging Mahler to lead a "Mahler Orchestra" (really a revamping of the floundering New York Philharmonic). This would have guaranteed her heroic status in Mahler annals except that she and her New York Philharmonic Guarantors of well-to-do matrons plagued Mahler by dictating what should be on the programs (and occasionally criticizing his conducting!). Could it be that Mrs. Sheldon loved the *Pathétique* and insisted that Mahler conduct it—frequently? All six performances (except one, in Rome, with an Italian orchestra) were with the New York Philharmonic in Carnegie Hall and in the Brooklyn Academy of Music. But the question remains, why would Mahler adopt the shape of his hated *Pathétique* to his Ninth Symphony which (along with *Das Lied*) was his favorite, which he was working on in the same time frame as when he conducted the symphony six times? Coincidence or conundrum?

Are the Symphonies of Mahler's Third (and Last) Period "Farewell Symphonies?" Mahler's symphonies are generally divided into three periods—early, middle and final. *Das Lied von der Erde*, the Ninth and the unfinished Tenth comprise Mahler's last period. These three symphonies are often called Farewell Symphonies and the period is called the Farewell Period. The triumphant mode of the Eighth Symphony, expressed by Mahler for the last time in that work, gives way to a spirit of resignation and farewell in these last three symphonies. (The Eighth does not fit into that categorization—it stands alone). Certainly, death and funeral marches play a large role in Mahler's symphonies, even though most of them end in triumph, peaceful resignation or acceptance. The reasons why the symphonies of the last period are particularly death-tainted are probably because in 1907, Mahler's beloved 4-1/2-year old daughter died of diphtheria and scarlet fever, and Mahler was told by his doctor that he had a fatal heart disease. The doctor was wrong about its being fatal, but Mahler believed him. I have deliberately not listed Mahler's "forced resignation" from the Vienna Court Opera as one of the blows of fate of 1907 because Jonathan Carr, in his excellent Mahler biography, proves (to me, at least) that his resignation was not "forced." Mahler resigned because he all but had a contract from the New York Metropolitan Opera, which offered him three times the Viennese salary for one third of the work! Difficulties with the Vienna Court Opera's artists and management and anti-Semitism are given as the principal reasons for Mahler's "forced" resignation. But he had dealt with difficult opera issues off and on and had faced anti-Semitism stoically throughout his life and contended with

it. No, the main reason for his resignation from the Vienna Opera was the Metropolitan Opera's contract, which offered Mahler much more money for much less work (allowing him to set aside an inheritance for wife and daughter), and placed him favourably towards his goals of having the funds and the time to cease conducting and to compose exclusively. Sadly, his death prevented him from achieving that goal.

But, again, I digress. 1907 was surely a terrible year for Mahler, but 1910 also contributed to Mahler's anguish, for at that time, he became aware of Alma's affair with the young architect, Walter Gropius. It was that bombshell which sent Mahler to Sigmund Freud.

Some commentators argue that the Ninth should not be considered a farewell symphony, but the evidence is overwhelming that Mahler considered it as such. I think there is merit also in touching upon the other two symphonies of Mahler's last period. The last movement of *Das Lied von der Erde* is called *Der Abschied* (The Farewell), and the lyrics are about the bittersweet farewell of two friends parting ("I wait for him to bid the last farewell"). The music, of course, reflects this sadness and certainly "farewell" looms large in *Das Lied's* finale. Bruno Walter, who knew a thing or two about Mahler and his music, wrote "The last movement of (*Das Lied*) *Der Abschied*, might have been used as a heading for the Ninth." Clearly, Walter believed the Ninth a "Farewell: Symphony," but so did Mahler! He made specific references to this by repeatedly quoting the "farewell" motive from Beethoven's Op. 81a Sonata, which Beethoven called *Les Adieux* (The Farewell). Beethoven actually wrote in the score of the sonata the word "*lebewohl*" (farewell) over that motive. Also, in the draft of his score, Mahler wrote "Leb'wohl, Leb'wohl!" (on page 52). In fact, each of the Ninth's four movements has at least one central theme, which begins with that same motive. And, in the original draft, Mahler wrote in the margin, "O vanished days of youth! O scattered love!" Farewell indeed. As for the unfinished Tenth, it is a farewell symphony if only because it is the last thing that Mahler wrote, but even more than that, on one of the pages of the sketches for the Tenth, he wrote, "Leb'wohl mein saittenspiel! Leb'wohl, Leb'wohl, Leb'wohl" (Farewell my lyre, farewell, farewell, farewell). There is support from music critics, musicologists and musicians who were convinced that at least Mahler's Ninth is, indeed, a farewell symphony.

- a) Richard Specht, Mahler's intimate friend and biographer, wrote (of the Ninth's) evening sun and farewell mood."
- b) The unknown critic of the newspaper *Fremden Blatt*, felt that Mahler's and Bruckner's Ninth had "The Farewell to life" in common.
- c) In 1913, Mahler's close friend, the musicologist Guido Adler, stated that in the Ninth, Mahler said farewell to life, and that the symphony closed "dying."
- d) Mengelberg: "The Ninth is farewell from all whom he loved and from the world."
- e) Dr. Moriz Schleyer, a critic attending the premiere, wrote, "...the resigned farewell of an unsteady person who finally went to his rest."

Why then are some so adamant about Mahler's last three symphonies not being farewell symphonies? Perhaps it is because "farewell" has negative connotations—loss, loneliness, abandonment, even death—but these, Mahler's last symphonies, are not downbeat, despite their being "farewell" works. Mahler, himself, actually wrote lightly about the Ninth. If he believed it a bleak, tragic work, would he have notified Bruno Walter of its completion so gaily? "(The Ninth) is a very satisfactory addition to my little family." All Mahler symphonies, even the Sixth, called "*The Tragic*," have upbeat pages, even triumphant ones. It is true that the music of the second part of "*The Abschied*" is sad and desolate, yet the last words of *The Abschied* (some of which Mahler wrote himself) are among the most uplifting in all Mahler: "The lovely earth, all, everywhere, revives in spring and blooms anew, all everywhere and ever and ever, shines the blue horizon, ever, ever, ..., ever" (ewig, ewig, ewig).

When *Das Lied* was all but complete, Mahler told Alma that living in Munich was so inexpensive and the climate so salubrious that they should consider settling there eventually. These are hardly the words of a man who thought that he was at death's door, nor obsessed with thoughts of his own death: During the summer of 1909, when he was composing the Ninth, he was not in the least careful about following his own doctor's orders. He wrote to Alma that he tramped down to Toblach and back everyday in all kinds of weather. Moreover, he had planned 100(!) concerts for the 1910-1911 season in New York. Yes, the last page of the Ninth was described by Bernstein as "the most musically realistic description of death itself." And yet, Mahler included even humor in the Ninth (albeit, sardonic, bitter humor). In fact, the *Rondo Burleske* third movement is a vicious satire, dedicated to Mahler's "brothers in Apollo," a contemptuous reference to those critics who claimed Mahler could not write counterpoint. It is no accident that the movement has a masterly double fugue (That'll tell 'em). It also has low humor. Listen to the nose-thumbing e-flat clarinet! Mahler's music embraces the tragic, as well as the happy, at the same time. Perhaps Deryk Cooke said it best: "Although the Ninth is Mahler's ... dark night of the soul, ... his unquenched love of life still shines through, thanks to the capacity of great music for expressing contrary feelings simultaneously." No composer conveys this duality of expression as masterfully as Mahler.

Mahler certainly did not die in a valedictory mood, even in these farewell symphonies. Note the great orchestral sign towards the end of the Tenth Symphony, surely the last or almost the last orchestral statement he made. It says to me, "I accept death; but would dearly love to continue to live." Bottom line: The Ninth and the other two of Mahler's last period are assuredly "Farewell" symphonies, but each has many uplifting and even humorous pages. Mahler truly believed, and acted upon, his famous statement to Sibelius: "A Symphony must be like the world. It must be all embracing."

Recommended Recordings of Mahler's Symphony No.

9. There are 63 recordings of the Ninth listed in Peter Fülöp's Mahler Discography of 1995. Since that time,

there have been many more recordings added. I have limited my recommendations to two recordings:

1) **Vienna Philharmonic/Bruno Walter, 1938.** This is one of the first recordings made commercially of a concert performance and the first ever of the Mahler Ninth. Considering the technical difficulties of a concert recording as compared to a studio effort, the sonics are remarkably good. The Vienna Philharmonic, for the most part, plays with sheer beauty and deeply felt expression. The last movement, at a little over 18 minutes, is the fastest of any of the 63 recordings in Fülöp's discography (by comparison, the slowest is James Levine's, at almost 30 minutes); yet because of the phrasing, the beauty of the playing, Walter's musicianship and, perhaps, something extra: the orchestra's anticipation that the Nazis would be in Austria in weeks, ending the glory of both Mahler's and Walter's contribution to Austrian music (both had been Jews), I am never aware of undue haste when I play this recording. It always sounds gorgeous and apropos. The transfer of the recording from 78-rpm discs to CD has been accomplished so well that it might be taken for a taped recording of 20 years later. The recording has been released on several labels. Mine is EMI CDH63029, but I understand that the Dutton and the Naxos issues are at least as good.

2) **Berlin Philharmonic/Leonard Bernstein.** This is also a concert performance. It is the most awesome, intensely emotional performance I know, and is so incredible that it is one of the tops in my list of recordings, despite a gross error in the fourth movement, where the trombones failed to enter in bars 118-121 (Critical Edition). It was the first and only time Bernstein ever conducted the Berlin Philharmonic, which probably explains why the bars with the missing trombones could not be corrected by splicing in from another performance. I do not think that the error would bother most listeners (or even be noticed by them.) The recording is DG album 435378-2.

MAHLERFEST XVIII

Our Principal Participants



Stuart Feder, M.D. is a graduate in music and medicine, and a practicing psychoanalyst, Einstein School of Medicine, New York. His Mahler publications are well known and his two books on Charles Ives are an important part of the literature on this American maverick composer. As Dr. Feder describes in his book on Ives, *My*

Father's Song, Ives may well have heard Mahler conduct in New York but, notwithstanding many stories (myths), there is no evidence that the two ever met or that Mahler ever saw scores of Ives. Dr. Feder gave lectures at MahlerFest XI, XII, and XV and we are delighted to welcome him again for MahlerFest XVI. Dr. Feder's new book, *Mahler in Crisis*, has recently been published by Yale University Press.

Stephen E. Hefling received the A.B. in music from Harvard and the Ph.D. from Yale, with a dissertation examining Mahler's *Todtenfeier* movement from the dual perspectives of programmatic influence and compositional process as documented in Mahler's surviving sketches and drafts. Currently Professor of Music at Case Western Reserve University, he has also taught at Stanford and Yale Universities as well as Oberlin College Conservatory.



Prof. Hefling has written numerous articles and book chapters for *19th Century Music*, *Journal of Musicology*, *Journal of Music Theory*, *Performance Practice Review*, the revised *New Grove Dictionary*, *A Mahler Companion* (Oxford, 1999), *The Nineteenth-Century Symphony* (New York, 1997), etc. He rediscovered Mahler's manuscript version of *Das Lied von der Erde* for voices and piano, and edited that work for the *Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Vienna, 1989). He introduced the *Abschied* from the piano version which was performed at MahlerFest XI. His

monograph on *Das Lied* appeared in the Cambridge Music Handbooks series in 2000, and he has written program notes for Mahler recordings by leading conductors including Pierre Boulez and Lorin Maazel. Recently he has both edited and contributed to the volumes *Mahler Studies* (Cambridge, 1997) and *Nineteenth-Century Chamber Music* (New York, 1998).

For his work on Mahler, Prof. Hefling has been awarded grants from The Martha Baird Rockefeller Foundation and the American Philosophical Society, as well as a Morse Junior Faculty Fellowship at Yale University; he has been a speaker at international conferences on the composer in Vienna, Paris, Hamburg, Rotterdam, New York, Montpellier, London, and Boulder.

Also a specialist in baroque performance practice, Prof. Hefling has performed widely with early music ensembles in the northeastern US, and has served as director of the Yale Collegium Musicum and the Cleveland Baroque Soloists; his book *Rhythmic Alteration in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Music* (New York, 1994) is widely regarded as the standard reference on that topic.

Prof. Hefling was one of our guest lecturers for the Symposium during MahlerFest XI, appeared in our MahlerFest XIV and XVI symposia and we are delighted to welcome him back for MahlerFest XVII.

Marilyn L. McCoy is a musicologist, teacher and lecturer active in the Boston area. Since moving to New England from California in 1999, she has served on the music faculties of the University of New Hampshire and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Though primarily a "Mahler Scholar," she worked at the Arnold Schoenberg Institute in Los Angeles for the last three years of its existence (1995-1998), serving as Assistant Archivist and co-author of *A Preliminary Inventory of Schoenberg Correspondence*.



In addition to her contributions to *Schoenberg and His World*, edited by Walter Frisch, and *The Reader's Guide to Music: History, Theory, Criticism*, edited by Murray Steib, her article "It is my very self": The Multiple Messages of Gustav Mahler's 'Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen,'" was published in *Music Observed: Studies in Memory of William C. Holmes*, ed. Colleen Reardon and Susan Parisi (Harmonie Park Press, 2004). Dr. McCoy presented authoritative lectures on the Mahler Symphonies No. 5 and 6 at MahlerFest XV and XVI, and has acted as pre-concert lecturer since 2003. This year she will take part in the Festival Symposium and present the pre-concert lectures.

Kelly Dean Hansen is a graduate student in musicology at CU's College of Music, working on his Doctorate. He has a Bachelor's Degree in piano from Utah State University and a Master's degree in musicology from CU. Hansen serves as a member of the board of directors of MahlerFest. He has a special interest in Mahler, but also Brahms and Dvorak. He writes concert reviews for the Boulder



Daily Camera and the Longmont *Times Call*, and gives pre-concert lectures during the summer for the Colorado Music Festival. He hails from St. George, Utah.

Patrick Mason, a baritone on the faculty of the University of Colorado, performs operatic and concert repertoire throughout the world. Most recently he has been heard in recitals at the Library of Congress and in the Cairo Opera House in Egypt, in contemporary music at New York's Alice Tully Hall and in a leading role in the new opera *Sara McKinnon* in Las Cruces, New Mexico. In October of 2000 he sang the New York premiere of the opera, *Black Water*, by John Duffy and Joyce Carol Oates at the Cooper Union. Mr. Mason has been a guest soloist with the Syracuse Symphony, the Rochester Philharmonic and the Colorado Springs Symphony. He has recorded music from tenth-century chant to songs by Stephen Sondheim for Sony, Vox, l'Oiseaux Lyre and Erato. His two most recent CD releases on the Bridge



Records label are Schubert's *Winterreise* (BCD 9053) and French Melodies (BCD 9058) by Ravel, Fauré, Dutilleux and Poulenc. Having been born and raised in the low clay hills above the Ohio River, his passions are (naturally) hiking and ceramics.

Steven Bruns is Associate Professor at the University of Colorado-Boulder, where he has taught since 1987. From 2001–04 he was chair of the composition and theory faculty. Previously, he taught at Western Michigan University (1984–85) and Western Kentucky University (1985–87). As an NEH Summer Seminar member, he studied Wagner's operas with Robert Bailey (NYU, 1990) and German modernism with Walter Frisch (Columbia, 1994). His research interests have included the music of Schubert, Mahler, Alma Schindler Mahler, and song analysis. His current research is on the music of George Crumb, and he expects to complete a comprehensive analytical monograph in 2005. His research has been presented at conferences and Crumb festivals in Prague, Bratislava, Boulder, Houston, Montreal, Rochester (NY), DePauw University, and Colorado College. His essays have appeared in several recordings, most recently Vol. 6 of the Complete Crumb Edition (Bridge Records, 2003) and Margaret Leng Tan's recently released CD & DVD recordings of Crumb's *Makrokosmos I & II* (Mode Records 2004). He is the co-editor, with Ofer Ben-Amots, of a new book, *George Crumb and the Alchemy of Sound: Essays on His Music* (Colorado College Music Press, 2004).



Bruns has been on the Board of Directors of the Colorado MahlerFest since 1991. In 1998, he organized a Mahler conference on the Boulder campus, which involved 20 scholars from across North America and Europe. He was a founding board member of the Rocky Mountain Center for Musical Arts, Lafayette, CO, 1995–2000.

A Brief History of Colorado Mahlerfest

Stan Ruttenberg

Robert Olson won a Fulbright scholarship in 1973 to study conducting in Vienna with Hans Swarosky, who earlier had been the mentor for Claudio Abbado and Zubin Mehta. In Vienna it was easy to become saturated with the late-romantic music, with so many concerts and opera of high quality. Olson was already consumed with the symphonic brilliance of Mahler's First and Fourth Symphonies, but he observed an unusual occasion that made a life-long impression upon him. The President of Austria had died. He was venerated by the public and was given a simple but engaging funeral. Olson observed the funeral procession—three horse drawn carriages (one containing the body of the President), on one of which was mounted a sound system, blaring forth the funeral march from Mahler's Fifth Symphony as it paraded slowly around the Ringstrasse of Vienna, and he was deeply moved by it. His year in Vienna involved learning many of the other Mahler symphonies, purchasing critical editions, along with visiting the Gustav Mahler Gesellschaft and many of the Mahler sites in Austria. In short, he was hooked.

On his return to the USA, Olson took a position at the College of Music at the University of Colorado (CU) in Boulder. Olson became the Music Director and Conductor of the opera program and associate conductor of the orchestras. I witnessed many of Olson's performances at the time, including a moving account of Leonard Bernstein's Mass, all very good considering the limited resources he had at his disposal, and never dreaming that one day I would become his close associate in MahlerFest, a concept that I could not imagine at that time.

Here is how this dream was realized, as Olson tells the story. Olson's wife, Victoria, is a violist, and she played in the summer Breckenridge Music Festival, housed in the old mining town cum ski resort of Breckenridge, at an altitude of 9,600 feet. Olson often relaxed with a book, or studying scores while Vicki was at rehearsals, and he often chose as a favored spot the shore of near-by Lake Dillon, a reservoir framed by the magnificent 14,000-foot peaks of the Colorado Rockies. What a beautiful spot, Olson mused, not unlike Mahler's summertime composing environs.

On this particular day he was reading a Mahler biography, and it (and the beauty of the moment) was the catalyst for creating a performing outlet for the countless musicians he knew who shared his passion for the music of Mahler. Why not a Colorado MahlerFest? One symphony every year, performed by the best available and interested musicians in the area at the highest level they could achieve in a short period of time.

There would be many reasons *not* to do a MahlerFest; after all, there are many "Mozart" or "Bach" festivals, where small numbers of orchestral players are needed. But a Mahler festival? If it were to survive into the second year (to perform the "Resurrection" Symphony), it would need almost 300 performers! And so the concept began to crystallize. The musicians would have to be volunteers because it would be impossible to find the funds to pay 100+ musicians every year. Olson chose the first week in January because it was still between semesters at the

University, and it was a "dead" time in the arts calendar in the 1980s. As to recruiting an orchestra, he felt confident he could find enough musicians to do the First Symphony, especially since he had astutely just programmed the same piece with the community orchestra he conducted, the Longmont Symphony, just a month earlier; thus, if he could not recruit enough good players from the "Front Range," he would ask his orchestra simply to "perform it (Mahler's First) again." In addition, as a conductor at the University, he had an additional pool of talented players he felt he could "talk into" playing, if necessary.

Olson was adamant from the beginning that the festival be multi-faceted in concept; i.e., chamber as well as orchestra concerts, lectures by experts on Mahler as well as on the general art scene of the turn of the twentieth century in Vienna, Mahler-related films and videos, and, as it turned out, also drama and ballet.

Imagine my surprise, and that of my wife, when we opened the local newspaper one day in November and read: MahlerFest I, January 16-17, 1988, at the CU music building. "Oh yeah," my wife and I said, "a Mahler festival in Boulder!" We have to see it to believe it. We could not wait!

Well, the magical weekend came, and we witnessed an exciting set of concerts. The program for January 16 included a lecture by Prof. Steven Bruns, of the CU faculty, on "Mahler, the Early Works." This was followed by performances of the Piano Quartet, and the *Lieder und Gesänge aus der Jugendzeit*. The orchestra concert the next day included the First Symphony and *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*. The performances were spirited but certainly not without problems, the audience was wildly enthusiastic, and the press was kind. At the end of the orchestra concert, my wife and I looked at each other and said something like, "WOW!"

What I could not have known was what Olson was going through to make the festival happen. He did everything without any assistance, from recruiting the orchestra, soloists, and lecturers, writing press releases, printing the program, even buying the food and snacks for the orchestra—still a tradition for the final dress rehearsal. One of his favorite anecdotes comes from the first orchestral performance. As he was walking on stage to begin the concert, Olson realized that he (being also the lighting and stage manager) had forgotten to dim the house lights and brighten the stage lights. So, he turned around, ran around the building to the lighting panel, changed the lights, ran back to the stage, and proceeded, completely out of breath, to begin the concert, all the time promising to himself "This will never happen again." The total budget for the first year was, according to memory, \$431.00! The concert, lectures, and film showing were all free to the public.

MahlerFest II in 1989 posed formidable problems for logistics, and Olson was skeptical at best. It was one thing to find enough musicians to do the First Symphony, and it is quite something else to find the 110-115 musicians for the Second Symphony, along with a large chorus and two soloists. Much to his surprise, Olson had more interested musicians than he could use, for at that time in concert history the Second was not performed very often and many

wanted the opportunity. The same was true for the vocal forces: "I would walk over glass from Chicago to sing Mahler," stated one soloist. He also hired some students help to assist with the many details that accompany such an undertaking. This time, it was necessary to charge admission to offset the "increased" budget (approximately \$2500!)

The problems were solved and MahlerFest II took shape. First were again lectures, and then the chamber concert, featuring more songs from the *Lieder und Gesänge* and a few from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, the *Rückert Lieder* and the Bach Suite that Mahler arranged from BWV 1067 and BWV 1068. The single performance of the "Resurrection" Symphony garnered a tremendous response from the public and press alike, and the MahlerFest was launched, proving that it could handle the gigantic Mahler works as well as the smaller chamber works. To the delight of all of us Mahler fanatics, MahlerFest proceeded to grow and gain recognition in ways that no one imagined.

MahlerFest III 1990 featured the Third Symphony. By now you realize that Olson planned to do the Mahler symphonies in order, one each year, as the general scheme of MahlerFest. By this time, Olson had also found a way to produce a handsome full-format program book, at the beginning of which was the MahlerFest motto: Dedicated to the performance and study of the entire Mahler repertoire. Ken Russell's film was shown again, and Visconti's beautiful film *Death in Venice* was also shown. There were several lecturers, and for the first time, a non-local expert was invited. The chamber program included four piano pieces and three songs of Alban Berg; *Ablösung im Sommer*, Mahler's song which provided the basic theme for the fourth movement of the Third Symphony; Mahler's song *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen*, arranged for small chorus; and Mahler's song cycle *Kindertotenlieder*. The 500-seat concert hall was packed full, with the overflow audience listening in the lobby.

Soon afterward Olson accepted the position of Head of Orchestras and Opera at the University of Missouri, Kansas City. He certainly didn't want to abandon MahlerFest in Boulder; to provide an organizational mechanism to do the planning and fund-raising, Olson incorporated MahlerFest as a 501(c)(3) corporation and consequently had to organize a Board of Directors. When my wife and I were invited to join the Board, little did I know then how this would change my life. And change my life it did indeed.

MahlerFest soon achieved national and international recognition. Mahler scholars were willing and happy to come to Boulder to take part in MahlerFest for nominal fees, and even many recognized singers were eager to perform with MahlerFest for fees at which any agent would scoff. We look forward to complete Cycle 2 of MahlerFest in a few years and having as our legacy a set of fine digital recordings of essentially all the Mahler that there is to play, all under one conductor and played by one orchestra. Our orchestra changes little year to year—some players move away but many of them return to Boulder at their own expense for a week of hard work and the joy of audience acclaim for their performances.

MahlerFest, essentially all volunteer, sets an example of what love for great music can accomplish. Some dreams do indeed come true!

Things To Come

When in the 1930s H. G. Wells peered into his crystal ball, he foresaw a new world, full of technology unimaginable at that time. Translated into a film in 1936, "Things to Come," this remains a cinema classic. MahlerFest as we know it today also seemed unimaginable, seen from the perspective of 1987 when we first began—18 years ago. Robert Olson's dream has been more than fulfilled. MahlerFest Cycle 1 has become a Mahlerian classic in the world of Mahler Festivals.

As we look into our own crystal ball today, we foresee some exciting plans for our much-nearer future. **Caution!** These are *plans*, yet to be translated into reality. We share them with you as we are past the mid-point of MahlerFest Cycle 2, and as we dream of how to complete this cycle making it even more complete and better than Cycle 1. The German visionary Goethe wrote something to this effect: "Dare to dream the impossible. Just the dream has a way of becoming the first step."

2006 — *Das Lied von der Erde*. We closed MahlerFest Cycle 1 with the alto version of this compelling work. How could we top that? Well, we dreamt of engaging a leading Mahler baritone to perform it for Cycle 2. Conversations in 2002 with one of the world's leading Mahler baritones, Thomas Hampson, proved promising. Mr. Hampson told us that the proposed dates for 2006 were not yet filled in his busy schedule and he agreed to keep them open for us. What a great treat that will be if this dream finally comes to fruition! Not only is he a great Mahler lieder singer, he is a dedicated Mahlerian, having collaborated with colleagues and the Mahler Society of Vienna in producing a Critical Edition of the Mahler Lieder for voice and piano, significantly different from the usual reductions for piano from the orchestral scores. Mr. Hampson is also a champion of young talent and he often gives master classes when he appears in concerts, so we have this hope also for 2006. Stay tuned.

200? — *Symphony No. 8*. As we explained in our July 2004 Newsletter, difficulties of scheduling the required large choruses prevented this great event from happening in 2005. Many different possibilities were explored, to no avail. We are not giving up, however, as we continue to explore possible ways to repeat our success from 1995, even to the point of scheduling this special event for May instead of January to give choruses more time to prepare after their strenuous year-end concerts. Again, stay tuned.

200? — *Das Klagende Lied*. Recall that in 1991 we performed Mahler's revised two-part cantata. Inasmuch as it is the mission of MahlerFest to perform as much Mahler as is available, and that the Vienna Mahler Society has published a new critical edition of the original three-part version, Mahler's Opus 1 for orchestra, we plan to include this rarely heard version in a MahlerFest to come.

What Else? We cannot promise, as Jerry Fox did in his provocative essay in this program book, to spring additional surprises, but we are investigating how else to complete Cycle 2 in a suitably grand and "MahlerFestian" manner.

Stay Tuned!

NEUNTE SYMPHONIE

I.

Andante comodo.

2. Horn in F. *rem.* *offen (Echo)* *pp* *p*

4. *p*

1. Harfe. *f*

1. Violine. *Andante comodo.*

2. Violine. *p*

Viola. *pp* *1. Hälfte* *pp*

Violoncell. *pp*

Kontrabaß. *Flag.* *pp*

1. 2. 3. Clar. in A. *1* *su 3* *pp*

2. Hr. in F. *espress.* *sempre pp*

1. Harfe.

1. Vl. *espress.*

2. Vl. *espress.*

Vla. (get.) *pizz.* *p*

Vlc. (get.) *pizz.* *pp* *pp* *pp sempre*

Kb. *pizz.* *pp* *1*

Longmont Symphony

Music for the Heart — 2005



Robert Olson, Music Director & Conductor • Vance Brand Auditorium, Longmont

January 29 — Family Concert: **Theme and Variations**, Robert Olson, Conductor, 7:30 PM — with the Longmont Youth Symphony, Brian St. John, conductor

Young Artist winner, concerto to be announced; *Variations on a theme of Haydn*, Johannes Brahms; *Enigma Variations*, Edward Elgar; *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, Benjamin Britten, narrated by Patrick Mason.

March 5 — **Nancy Nixon Memorial Concert: The Romance of Italy**, Robert Olson, Conductor; 7:30 PM
W. A. Mozart, Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat Major, with soloists from the orchestra; *Les Preludes*, Franz Liszt; *The Pines of Rome*, Ottorino Respighi

April 16 — **Ultimate Romantic Story**, Robert Olson, Conductor, Dr. Richard Kogan, M.D., piano, 7:30 PM. Selections from *Cinderella*, Sergei Prokofiev; *Symphonie-Mathis der Maler*, Paul Hindemith; Piano Concerto No. 1, Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

May 8 — **POPS Concert, Romance of Broadway**, Maureen Sorensson, soprano; Tenor TBA; Steven Taylor, baritone. Selections from such composers as Rogers & Hammerstein, Rodgers & Hart; Leonard Bernstein; Andrew Lloyd Weber, and many others.

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Thank you for all of your help in achieving a 65% voter support for SCFD's renewal effort! We (SCFD and Citizens for Arts to Zoo) had a lot of support from organizations that SCFD funds as well as their volunteers, staff, audience and board members—sign distributions, monetary contributions, audience education efforts, and political advocacy were just part of everything that was done.

65% approval means that the public looked at our 16 year record of responsibly using their funds to bring direct benefit to the residents of the district; to reach the children through schools, civic groups, and outreach efforts; to commit to high quality and innovative programming and education efforts; to invest in operating the best facilities this community can afford; to be open and inviting; to support cultural tourism and economic development; and to account of public dollars along the way; and to participate in the broader community.

SCFD will continue through June 2018. Many of the children our cultural community reaches today will be our voters in 2016. Give them loving care, give them fun, give them great experiences. Thank you for all that you do. Thank you for your help during the last four years. The work is never done, but today we can celebrate!

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