



PLAYING. SHARING. INSPIRING.

Yuri Ivan, Music Director

# Mahler

Saturday, May 21, 2011

7:30 PM

St. Albert the Great Catholic Church  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

## ~ Program ~

Symphony No. 1 in D Major "Titan"

Gustav Mahler  
(1860 – 1911)

- I. Langsam, Schleppend
- II. Kräftig bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell
- III. Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen
- IV. Stürmisch bewegt

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## ~ Upcoming Events ~

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Sunday, August 14 – Lake Harriet  
Sunday, August 21 – Como Lakeside Pavilion

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- Bringing learning to life through music

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## ~ Biographies ~

**Yuri Ivan** became the Music Director of the Kenwood Symphony Orchestra in 2007. He completed his formal music training in Ukraine where his main teachers were Jarema Skybinky and Mykola Kolessa. Mr. Ivan also studied with Yuri Simonov, Adalberto Tonnini, Vjacheslav Blinov and Yuri Lutsiv. After graduating from The State Conservatory of Music in Lviv, he was engaged from 1996 to 2000 as an Associate Conductor at The State Theatre of Opera and Ballet in Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine, where he conducted productions including *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, *Carmen*, *Pagliacci*, *Eugene Oneguine*, *Die Fledermaus*, *La Fille Mal Gardée*, *Giselle*, *Don Quixote*, *Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Beauty*. In 2001, Mr. Ivan was named Artistic Director of Trans-Carpathian Philharmonic, co-founded the Uzhgorod Youth Orchestra and the Young Virtuosi music festival in Ukraine. He also appeared with LVMI Opera, the National Symphony-Pops Orchestra of Ukraine, the National Broadcasting Company Orchestra of Ukraine and the Northern Hungarian Symphony. Recently, Mr. Ivan completed his doctoral studies in conducting at the University of Minnesota where he studied with Akira Mori and Craig Kirchhoff. Currently, he is the Music Director at St. Constantine Ukrainian Catholic Church. Mr. Ivan is active in the artistic life of the Twin Cities metro area, collaborating with a range of artistic and educational organizations. Since 2006, Yuri Ivan has served as the Music Director of the Lynden Hills Chamber Orchestra.

The **Kenwood Symphony Orchestra** was founded as the Kenwood Chamber Orchestra in 1972 as an adult education class at the Kenwood Community Center. From those humble beginnings, the orchestra quickly grew in membership, ability, and reputation. Over the years, several gifted conductors have graced the podium, including Uri Barnea, Lee Humphries, Jim Riccardo, Jeannine Wager, William Intriligator, Myles Hernandez, Kenneth Freed, and Jeffrey Stirling. Since 2007, the orchestra has been under the direction of Yuri Ivan. Based at Ramsey International Fine Arts Center, the KSO represents over 50 highly accomplished volunteer musicians of all ages and occupations including students, working professionals, and retirees, all passionate about playing and sharing great music. In 2003, the KSO launched an exciting venture joining Ramsey IFAC and the New England Conservatory to integrate music into the mainstream curriculum. The KSO is a nonprofit organization financed primarily by members' dues, financial gifts from friends and supporters, and our annual Masters Concerto and Aria event. Learn more at [www.kenwoodsymphonyorchestra.org](http://www.kenwoodsymphonyorchestra.org).

## ~ Program Notes ~

"It's an astonishingly accomplished *First Symphony*, especially for one so young." I'll admit, the symphony itself *is* astonishing, but the fact of its accomplishment isn't – when someone immensely talented prepares well and works hard, the conclusion is foregone. Mahler toiled away for years at his compositional skills and tried several forms including; chamber music, songs, opera, and *three* symphonies. Unfortunately, the self-critical youngster discarded the bulk of these, reprieving only the fabulous cantata *Das Klagende Lied* and the lovable *Lieder und Gesänge aus der Jugendzeit*.

Having lived on the breadline as a student, and aware that composing would provide only a meager living, Mahler pursued conducting. He thereby awakened a sleeping dragon – his exceptional interpretative talent. During 1883, his ballooning conducting career devoured his time, leaving his creative Muse high and dry...but not for long. The unhappy outcome of a tempestuous affair provoked his impatient Muse beyond endurance, compelling him to start writing the cathartic *Lieder Eines Fahrenden Gesellen* ("LEFG"). Events then took an unexpected turn – Mahler, supposedly bereft of free time, started work on a symphony!

This affair and other factors had conspired to guide Mahler to an extraordinary remedy. In what amounts to a "co-composition", both works shared LEFG's materials and the symphony's orchestration. Thereafter, by sticking to these two radical but complementary forms, he could work more efficiently without sacrificing expressive scope. He effectively declared, "From now on, my music will be either *song* – the simplest, most intimate form – or *symphony* – the most complex, most public. I need *nothing* in between." Even so, the symphony received only sporadic attention until, in 1888, he became embroiled in another passionate affair with the granddaughter-in-law of fellow composer Carl Maria von Weber. Provoked by resonances with that earlier affair and the interrelated works, he polished off his *First Symphony* in six weeks flat [see *footnote*].

Mahler's was the first truly revolutionary symphony since Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*. Already, Mahler was forcing the jaws of consonance and dissonance fully apart, at one extreme sending your sweet-tooth into transports of delight, at the other setting your teeth on edge. Already, his orchestral technique ingeniously exploited a huge orchestra to create a sound that seems to hail from a different planet altogether.

Melodically, Mahler widened the "Nationalist" principle, harvesting styles such as "martial", "urban popular" and "Jewish" – in fact,



anything audible was fair game. For his favored melodic medium he resurrected linear polyphony, where medium and melody predetermine harmony. Mahler, setting the polyphonic cat amongst the melodic pigeons, knew exactly what he was about. Most early audiences and critics, for whom Brahms's *Third* was considered modern and Bruckner's *Seventh* considered outlandish, heard only a strident mish-mash. Their affronted sensibilities prevented most from realizing Mahler's formal processes.

In the *First*, Mahler used a dramatic scenario as a structural framework, projecting Liszt's "symphonic poem" principle across multiple movements. Each movement is individually characterized, its structure blending programmatic features with artfully adapted classical forms. However, Mahler went further, melding the movements into a symphonic unity. When he declared, "A symphony must be like the World – it must contain everything!"

What's really nifty is his method – amalgamating the new-fangled Wagnerian *leitmotif* and Lisztian *thematic transformation*. Playing "God" to his symphonic "World", he fashioned thematic cells from musical clay; these he mutated, cultured, migrated across movements to mingle and mate with the "locals".

Mahler regarded his programs not as audience aids, but solely as construction tools. Given the "co-composition", it's hardly surprising that the *First Symphony's* program is the LEFG scenario writ large. In LEFG, the lad is a helpless prisoner of his juvenile self-pity. However, the symphony's more worldly-wise composer expanded the scenario from "the mess our hero is in" to "how does he sort himself out", inviting comparison with *Symphonie Fantastique*.

An aural blockbuster like this doesn't need a bald, blow-by-blow account. Instead, follow Malcolm Arnold's advice: "*Just listen to the bloody music!*" For your subsequent enlightenment, I've tried to portray Mahler's principles in practice, sketching out the contribution of LEFG, the genealogy and exploits of the main motives, and speculatively fleshing out Mahler's "secret" scenario.

**1. Langsam, Schleppend (Long, drawn out).** In the breathtaking "pre-dawn" (first subject), we hear the very sound of stillness. Nature, though, is far from still. From the haze of "A"s emerges a miniscule falling motive (A). A mutates, first forming a descending chain (B), then a shimmering fanfare (C), before itself acquiring cuckoo cockiness. Soon, A blossoms (horns) into dreamy dawn (D) whilst, underground, it distends into a slithering worm (E).

A's provenance emerges when the cuckoo-ing becomes the sturdy tread of *Ging Heut' Morgen*, LEFG's second song. In the song's

sunshine (second subject), the lad who's loved and lost takes solace amid the joys of Nature and the teeming felicities of Mahler's writing. His descent into depression ("It's a happy World. Will happiness be mine? Never!") is charted in the static, chimerical development, which extends the scenario beyond LEFG:

Our maudlin hero drifts into reverie, dreaming of bestirring himself. The sunshine (reprise) beckons. He struggles to escape the slough of despondency. Hence release, when it comes, is *exceedingly* eruptive. However, his headlong romping gradually becomes fearful flight. He is caught, and pummelled (A) into wakefulness.

A's interval isn't a third, but the more dissonant fourth. Propagated by those pervasive progeny, this undermines diatonicism's firm foundation. That bloodcurdling "struggle" crescendo, a crucial structural device, dramatically illustrates this: E1 – an aggressive derivative of E – worms in, then C slashes across the increasingly agonized texture. Finally A, stark and naked, screeches repeatedly over a seething E. It's not so much music as a protracted scream.

**2. Kräftig bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell (*Lusty and coarse, but not too fast*)** contrasts two related dances: the rustic Ländler, whose clodhopping accompaniment is dominated by A's fourth, sandwiches its urban, up-market progeny, the Waltz. Mahler re-used this idea in his *Fifth Symphony*, to convey a worrisome disparity between himself and his bride. So, he probably cadged both idea *and* purpose – programmatically, let's say the lad realizes he's lost out because the dainty damsel disdained his clumsy courting.

Instead of a counter-subject, the opening Ländler has a development section, whose increasingly bizarre sound, owing as much to Mahler's astringent harmony as to his scoring, reflects the lad's nightmare of realization. Then, during the Waltz-trio, up pops a cute little twiddle, courtesy of the *Jugendzeit* song, *Hans und Grethe*. As the song's a Ländler and concerns a lad whose amatory advances succeed, this innocuous twiddle rubs salt into the wound.

**3. Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen (*Solemn and measured, but not dragging*)**. Over plodding tympani, a solo double-bass creaks out the tune of *Bruder Martin* (otherwise known as *Frère Jacques*). Well it might – Mahler, replacing the song's "morning bells" by "mourning bells", renders the robust round as an abysmal dirge, attended by decidedly unpleasant peasant dances. Mahler's image is of "The Huntsman's Funeral", whose cortège consists of his former prey come to dance on his grave. Although he uses materials from the final LEFG song – that plodding pulse, a halting woodwind fanfare – his allusion is to LEFG's third song where the lad, seeing his love in everything, is tortured by "a glowing dagger in [his] breast", and

wishes himself on his bier, his eyes closed forever.

The entire closing stanza of LEFG appears, a shaft of purest sunlight, the restorative spur: "By the road stood a linden tree/ Where I first found rest in sleep/ I was oblivious to life/ and all was well again!" Our hero sees the light, which suggests he pull himself together. As the requiem resumes, he starts "pulling" – a theme first protesting (trumpets), then taking off (clarinets), leaving the lone lament.

**4. Stürmisch bewegt (Stormy and rough)** erupts, according to Mahler, "like the cry of a sorely wounded heart". The first movement provides virtually all the materials. Concluding a metamorphosis from "worm" to "warrior", **E1** becomes a vehement march (first subject), proving that our hero's done with suffering self-inflicted slings and arrows. **D** is the template for another "dawn" (second subject), betokening passionate self-renewal. This precipitates an urgent "goal-seeking" mission.

Suddenly, the clouds part, revealing a buoyant **E1** haloed by fanfares. Lunging onwards, our hero apprehends his "goal". This, formed from the self-effacing **B** intertwined with the first subject, blossoms – then withers away! The succeeding "flashback" is no idle reminiscence, but our hero reflecting on what went wrong.

The clues lie in the first movement echoes. That "dream" was prophetic: "Here's your spell for success, but beware! Cast it carelessly and, *as you've seen*, it'll turn on you." He realizes his mistake (surging second subject): over-hasty, he'd misread the spell, and grabbed his goal in the *wrong* key. Carefully, he now casts it as *prescribed*. Horns ring out, in both jubilation and the *right* key, heralding the release of his spirit. He romps headlong, rowdily rejoicing, to a bright new beginning. So why the final, peremptory **A**?

Mahler's symphonies evinced three remarkable achievements. Firstly, his "scenarios" generated musical melodramas, high adventures staged in the "theatre between your ears". Secondly, he harnessed an impressive technical arsenal to forge closely-knit, "absolute" structures. Thirdly, through arcane wizardry, he wedded these uncomfortable bedfellows. Remarkably, in what we must consider his first effort, this mind-boggling concept is fully-formed and functional. Maybe I was wrong about that "astonishing"?

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**Footnote:** *As with most of his music, the symphony was subject to much revision, including the excision of Blumine, the second of its original five movements.*



## ~ KSO Members ~

### **Violin I**

\* Jenny Berg  
*Leonard Pratt Chair*  
Erin Clark  
Anja Jokela  
David Otero  
Julie Pronovici  
Steve Rollin

### **Violin II**

\* Rachel Broten  
Cindy Larson  
Lita Noreen  
Larissa Reid  
Laura Simonson  
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### **Viola**

\* Ann Marie Bur  
Alyse Carpenter  
Patrick McCarthy  
Kay Miller  
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\* Greg Nelson  
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Charlotte Rogers  
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### **Bass**

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Josh King  
Neill Merck

### **Flute**

Mark Brudevold  
\* Anne Cheney  
Leslie Carlson Pietila

### **Oboe**

\* Emily Olson  
Tammy Riste Wahlin

### **English Horn**

Tammy Riste Wahlin

### **Clarinet**

Dave Clark  
Shelagh MacLeod  
\* Brian Zumwalde

### **Bass Clarinet**

Shelagh MacLeod

### **Bassoon**

Brian Hadley  
\* Ellen Maas Pratt

### **French Horn**

\* Angela House Gritton  
Christine Knutson  
Robert Meier

### **Trumpet**

Patrick Gonsalves  
John Knutson  
Amy Mann

### **Trombone**

Stephen W. Hartley  
\* Dennis Tischhauser  
Christina VanGuilder

### **Tuba**

William Mayson  
Sam Sharp

### **Percussion/Tympani**

Sally Harris  
Seth Harris  
\* John Litch  
Corey Sevet

\* = Principal

### **KSO Guest Musicians:**

Stan Adams – Violin I  
Jim Buxton - Harp  
Ryan Cavis – Trumpet 3  
Steve Cronk – Flute 4  
Melanie Ditter – Horn 2  
Clair Ganzel – Violin II  
Jennifer Greupner – Horn 7  
Lauren Hayden – Violin I  
Bojan Hoover - Percussion  
Nancy Jacobson – Bassoon 2  
Stephanie Jensen – Horn 5  
Marty Kapsch - Bass  
Karen Kelly – Assistant Horn 1

Rebecca Kimpton – Oboe 1  
Matthew Larson – Violin I  
Alex Legeros - Contrbassoon  
Jill Lestina-Warnest – Violin II  
Rod Loeffler - Percussion  
David Mills-Rittman – Horn 6  
Stuart Mitchell – Oboe 4  
Gina Monge – Horn 1  
Luke Olson – Trumpet 4  
Anna Peterson – Oboe 2  
Emily Robinson – Eb Clarinet  
Mary Schleicher – Cello  
Peter Weissmann – Trumpet 5

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