



FRANZ SCHUBERT  
SYMPHONY

“DEATH AND THE MAIDEN”

arr. András Vass

PAUL HINDEMITH  
SYMPHONIC METAMORPHOSIS  
OF THEMES OF CARL MARIA VON WEBER

SCHUBERT  
ROSAMUNDE OVERTURE

Texas Music Festival Orchestra, Houston  
Moore School Symphony Orchestra, Houston

Franz Anton Krager, conductor  
Mei-Ann Chen, conductor

**“A musical genius confronts his own mortality in this deeply personal masterpiece”**

**FIRST INTERNATIONAL RECORDING**

FRANZ SCHUBERT – SYMPHONY “DEATH AND THE MAIDEN”

arranged for full orchestra by András Vass,  
from String Quartet in D-Minor, D.810, “Der Tod und das Mädchen”

PAUL HINDEMITH – SYMPHONIC METAMORPHOSIS  
OF THEMES OF CARL MARIA VON WEBER

SCHUBERT – ROSAMUNDE OVERTURE, D.644

Texas Music Festival Orchestra, Houston  
Moores School Symphony Orchestra, Houston

FRANZ SCHUBERT – Symphony “Death and the Maiden”, after D.810

[1]	Allegro	16:16
[2]	Theme and Variations - Andante con moto	14:14
[3]	Scherzo and Trio – Allegro molto	03:52
[4]	Rondo Tarantella – Presto	10:38

Texas Music Festival Orchestra, Houston  
Franz Anton Krager, conductor  
*First International Recording*

PAUL HINDEMITH – Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes of C. M. von Weber

[5]	Allegro	04:12
[6]	Scherzo (Turandot)	08:21
[7]	Andantino	04:17
[8]	Marsch	04:34

Texas Music Festival Orchestra, Houston  
Mei-Ann Chen, conductor

[9]	SCHUBERT – Rosamunde Overture, D.644	10:55
-----	--------------------------------------	-------

Moores School Symphony Orchestra  
Franz Anton Krager, conductor

Recorded in public concerts in the Moores Opera House, University of Houston

Schubert “Death and the Maiden”- 11 June 2022; Hindemith – 25 June 2022

Schubert “Rosamunde” – 20 November 2021

Produced & Recorded by John Gladney Proffitt

5.0 channel Immersive Surround Sound

High Resolution 24-bit, 192k sampling rate

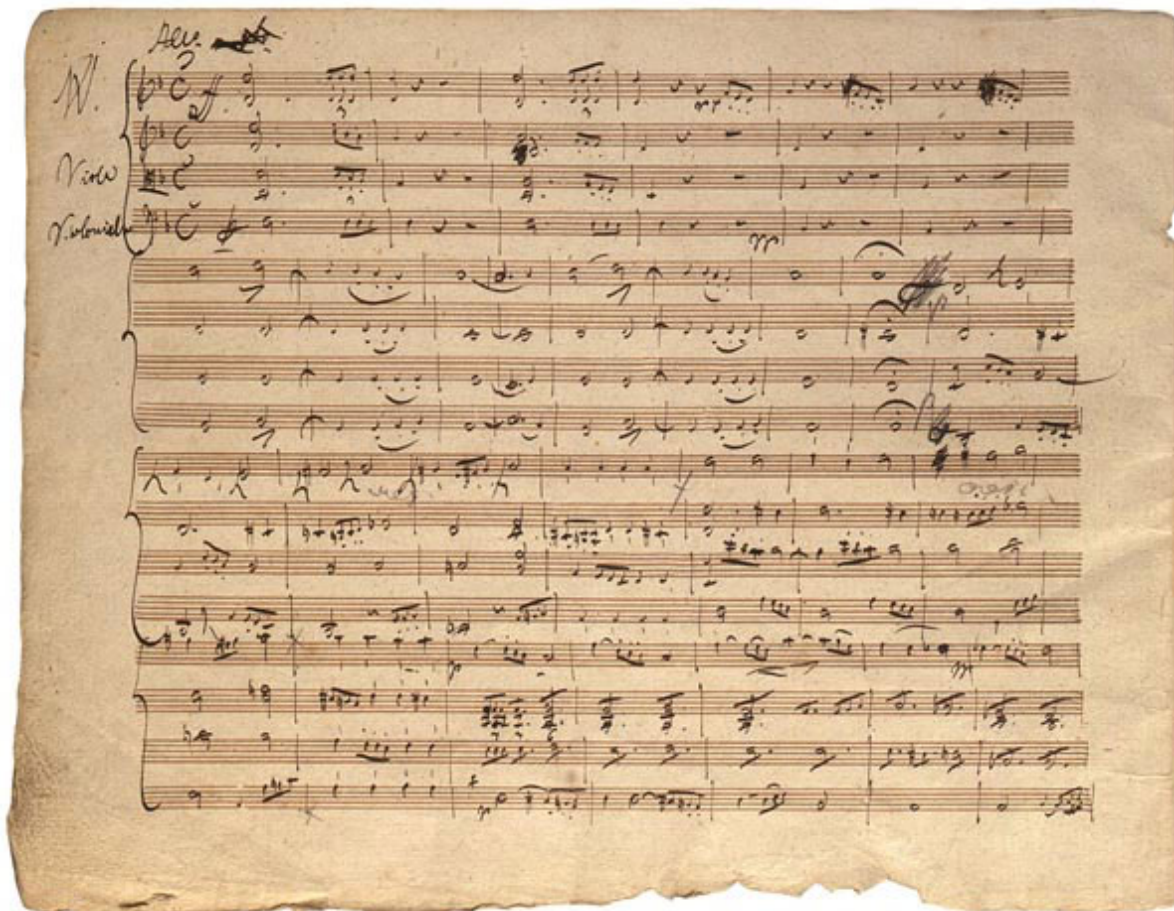
Stereo Mix & CD downsampling/ mastering - John Proffitt

Multichannel Blu-ray Audio mastering – Robert Witrak

PURCHASE OF THIS RECORDING BENEFITS THE TEXAS MUSIC FESTIVAL

**FRANZ PETER SCHUBERT** (31 January 1797 – 19 November 1828) was a pre-eminent Austrian composer of the late Classical and early Romantic musical eras. Despite his short lifespan, the musical genius Schubert left behind a remarkable legacy – numerous oeuvre including a vast collection of Lieder, seven completed symphonies and a clutch of incomplete symphonic movements, sacred music, operas, piano solo, and chamber music.





The String Quartet in D-Minor, subtitled "**Der Tod und das Mädchen**" ["Death and the Maiden"] is one of Franz Schubert's late masterworks, composed in 1824 at a time of ill health – his battling syphilis and depression - and the realization that he was probably dying, a premonition that turned out to be correct. The resulting death-obsessed Quartet in D-Minor derives its nickname by quoting the theme of his earlier, February 1817, Lied [D.531] with the same title, in which Schubert set a text from an even earlier poem by Matthias Claudius (1740-1815):

#### **Das Mädchen (The Maiden)**

Vorüber, ach vorüber. (Pass by, oh pass by!)  
Geh, wilder Knochenmann! (Go, you savage skeleton!)  
Ich bin noch jung, geh Lieber! (I am still young, so go, dear!)  
Und rühre mich nicht an. (And do not touch me.)

#### **Der Tod (Death)**

Gib deine Hand, du schön und zart Gebild! (Give me your hand, you fair and tender form.)  
Bin Freund und komme nicht zu strafen. (I am a friend and come not to punish.)

Sei gutes Muts! ich bin nicht wild. (Be of good cheer! I am not savage.)  
Sollst sanft in meinem Armen Schlafen! (Gently in my arms shall you sleep.)



It is not a stretch of imagination to see that it's not just the Maiden that Death is pursuing, but rather Schubert himself. In a March 1824 letter to a friend, he wrote:

"I find myself to be the most unhappy and wretched creature in the world. Imagine a man whose health will never be right again, and who in sheer despair continually makes things worse and worse instead of better; imagine a man, I say, whose most brilliant hopes have perished, to whom the felicity of love and friendship have nothing to offer but pain at best, whom enthusiasm (at least of the stimulating variety) for all things beautiful threatens to forsake, and I ask you, is he not a miserable, unhappy being? 'My peace is gone, my heart is sore, I shall find it nevermore,' I might as well sing every day now, for upon retiring to bed each night I hope that I may not wake again, and each morning only recalls yesterday's grief."

This music, then, is a reflection of Schubert's state of mind. It is filled with that resignation he spoke of, as well as an all-pervading anguish and yearning.

The text and affect of the Lied make explicit the underlining theme of the entire Quartet, one of foreboding with a bleak presentiment of death. From the violent fury of the *fortissimo* opening unison, the first movement runs a harrowing race through terror, pain, and resignation to Fate, with frequent dramatic shifts and explosive outbursts from *fortissimo* to *pianissimo* – slashing chords in the string quartet original, magnified and rendered imperious in Vass's orchestration. Thus the first movement sets the musical stage for 45 minutes of a *Sturm und Drang* symphonic drama of maximum impact on the listener.

The title melody appears in the Quartet's second movement, marked *andante con moto* - an elaborate and brooding Theme and Five Variations on "Der Tod und das Mädchen", which in many ways is the emotional heart of the Quartet. Using the theme from his original song and building variations upon it, Schubert creates a pattern where the darkly powerful entreaty of Death is met by the soft lyrical reply of the Maiden. Or, alternately, the defiance and terror of the Maiden against the gentle subverting caress of Death. It is a dialogue which continues throughout the quartet, and there is little respite from the fear and fury in the overall tone of the music. This pervasive dialogue between the Maiden and the Grim Reaper is at times resigned, seductive, defiant, noble, and ultimately accepting in the closing musical sigh, resolving from G-Minor to G-Major.

The third movement offers the only moments of slight repose from the death-obsessed character of the balance of the Quartet. It presents a very Viennese Classic scherzo-trio-scherzo form that prefigures many of the similar symphonic movements composed by Anton Bruckner. While the dance-like high spirits of the Scherzo section present an almost maniacally extrovert response to what came before in the variations, the Trio presents a relaxed contrast: beautiful, bucolic, and even restful.

The last movement is a frenetic rondo-tarantella in 6/8 time, *presto*, and concluding *prestissimo* coda. The secondary chorale-like theme of this movement has been associated with yet another death-obsessed Lied of Schubert's, Der Erlkönig [D.328].

The tarantella was a traditional folk dance to ward off madness and death, and at this late point in the composer's life he was clearly grappling in this music with the mortal questions of death, spirituality, and the resulting inward struggle. The Finale serves as the dire bookend of the Quartet in mirroring the life-and-death high drama of the first movement. Here, Schubert captures the despair of the human spirit in its last moments, striving to escape the inevitable.

In adapting Schubert's Quartet for orchestra, Andrés Vass has used the instruments and orchestral disposition that parallel the Composer's own orchestral and symphonic compositions of his later years, such as the "Unfinished" Symphony, the "Great" Symphony in C-Major, and the Incidental Music to Rosamunde. The explicit drama and implicit grand, symphonic scale of the Quartet in D-Minor D.810 is brought to the fore in its translation to full orchestra.



**PAUL HINDEMITH** (16 November 1895 – 28 December 1963) was a German composer, music theorist, teacher, violist, and conductor.



Hindemith wrote his **Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes of Carl Maria von Weber** in America in 1943. The idea of composing a work based on Weber's music was first suggested to Hindemith in 1940 by choreographer and dancer Léonide Massine, who suggested that the composer should use this as the basis for a ballet. Differences of opinion on the execution of the proposed composition led to a parting of ways between Massine and Hindemith, but the idea continued to germinate with the composer. The result, his *Symphonic Metamorphosis* which indeed used and transformed Weber's music, was completed in August, 1943.

Hindemith took various melodies from some of Weber's more obscure piano works. He preserved the themes pretty much exactly as Weber composed them. However, to fully personalize his new work, Hindemith changed everything else, which included the harmony, extended melodic phrases, and the development of the work as a whole.

The *Symphonic Metamorphosis* is in four movements: *allegro*, *scherzo*, *andantino*, and *Marsch* ("March").

The first movement, *Allegro*, is upbeat and militaristic. It is based on Weber's *Piano Sonata for Four Hands*, which Hindemith used to play with his wife. Hindemith expands this simple melody into a full-fledged orchestral movement.



The second movement, scherzo, develops and expands the incidental music that Weber originally composed for the contemporary play *Turandot*, set in ancient China, by one Carlo Gozzi. The first melody heard in Hindemith's rendition reflects Chinese musical tradition, with Hindemith then highlighting the progression through different eras, starting at the baroque and ending in 20<sup>th</sup> century America. The end brings thunderous drumming and a reprise of the main *Turandot* melody.

The third movement, andantino, is based on Weber's *Piano Duet op. 3/2*. The serenity within this slow movement is a relaxed contrast to what came before and what follows.

The fourth movement, *Marsch*, is based on another Weber piano 4-hands work, his op. 60/7. Hindemith has expanded this material to essentially show off every instrument of the orchestra, bringing his *Symphonic Metamorphosis* to a rousing conclusion.

As a product of Hindemith's sojourn in the USA during World War II, the work was composed with the particular virtuosity of American symphony orchestras in mind. It was premiered in 1944 by Artur Rodzinski and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra. In a review of the premiere, the *New York Times* described the new work as "...one of the most entertaining scores that [Hindemith] has thus far given us, a real *jeu d'esprit* by a great master of his medium in a singularly happy mood." It remains one of the composer's most popular and frequently performed works.

Hindemith became an American citizen in 1946, eventually returning to Europe in 1953.



FRANZ SCHUBERT initially wrote the Overture associated with his *Rosamunde* incidental music for an earlier Singspiel, *Die Zauberharfe* ("The Magic Harp") from 1820. In 1823 he added it to the collection of incidental music he wrote for the play *Rosamunde, Fürstin von Zypern* ("Rosamunde, Princess of Cyprus").

The closest he ever came to composing dramatic stage music was the incidental music to the play *Rosamunde*. This has remained a standard in the orchestral repertory but the play itself is long forgotten and apparently lost. Schubert began composition of the incidental music, comprising approximately 50 minutes of music, on 30 November 30, finishing it on 18 December 1823, just two days before the premiere. That deadline left him no time to write an overture, so he recycled an earlier composition, the overture to *Die Zauberharfe* (The Magic Harp).

The overture opens with a lengthy dramatic introduction, followed by a typical lively and lyrical Schubertian sonata-form movement. The energetic closing theme is also in keeping with the standard 19th-century opera overture. Sometime after the failed production, the incidental music disappeared, only to be discovered in 1867 when Sir George Grove and Sir Arthur Sullivan went to Vienna in search of lost Schubert manuscripts.

**András Vass** began his music studies in Tirgu-Mures, his home city in Hungary, and he later graduated from the Franz Liszt Music Academy in Budapest.



After winning an international conducting competition, Vass became the assistant to Maestro Iván Fischer at the Budapest Festival Orchestra. At the present he is the Permanent Conductor of the Pannon Philharmonic Orchestra in Pécs, Hungary. He has conducted the Budapest Festival Orchestra, the Hungarian National Philharmonic

Orchestra, the Franz Liszt Academy of Music Symphony Orchestra in Budapest, the Georg Solti Chamber Orchestra, the Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra, and additional orchestras in Europe. He regularly conducts opera and ballet repertoire, and has conducted symphonies by Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms, Beethoven, Mozart (his last great symphonies), and others.

His work as an orchestrator focused, among others, on transcribing the quartet "Death and the Maiden" by Franz Schubert for symphonic orchestra, which has been premiered in several European countries and has had its USA premiere in Houston, Texas; the Quartet in G Minor No. 1, op 27 by Edvard Grieg; and other smaller pieces. He has organized masterclasses in numerous international music camps.

In recent years Vass has worked on the authentic interpretation of the repertoire from the Baroque and Classical Viennese periods and he has organized concerts and projects dedicated to this theme. At the core of these projects one may find the vocal, symphonic, and orchestral repertoire of J. S. Bach, G. F. Handel, G. P. Telemann, A. Vivaldi; the symphonies, concertos, and symphonic works of Haydn and Mozart. Alongside László Dobos he is the Artistic Leader of the Pannon Philharmonic Festival Choir whose main aim is the authentic interpretation of the Baroque and Classic Viennese repertoire.

The **Immanuel and Olshan Texas Music Festival**<sup>®</sup> was founded in 1990 to provide young professional musicians with a high-level environment in which to develop skills in orchestral, chamber music, and solo performance. The TMF Orchestra is the largest ensemble gathered for the summer festival.



The intensive Orchestral Institute on the University of Houston campus is guided by distinguished artist-faculty from the Moores and Shepherd Schools of Music, principals and members of the Houston Symphony, Houston Grand Opera, and Ballet orchestras; and internationally recognized guest artists. TMF faculty members perform as soloists with the Festival Orchestra and as part of the PERSPECTIVES chamber music series.

- Intensive three-week orchestral training program in Houston
- For college, graduate, and young professional players (Ages 18-30)
- 80 talented orchestral musicians are selected to participate each year
- All TMF Orchestra Fellows receive fellowships covering tuition and weekly lessons valued around \$3,500
- International musical community
- Master classes with renowned musicians as well as principals and members of the Houston Symphony and other major orchestras
- Cynthia Woods Mitchell Young Artists Competition
- Weekly private lesson instruction

The **Moores School Symphony Orchestra** is conducted by UH Director of Orchestras, Franz Anton Krager. As a major ensemble with over 110 members, the orchestra performs as a leading ensemble in the area of new music as well as being an important repository for the standard literature, presenting works from all major orchestral genres including full orchestra, chamber orchestra, opera, oratorio and ballet.



The orchestra collaborates on a regular basis with the Moores Opera Center, MSM choirs and the Houston Ballet Academy. The high level of its performances has been hailed by international artists and critics alike as a student ensemble of professional quality and versatility.

**Franz Anton Krager** is Music Director of the Immanuel and Helen Olshan Texas Music Festival, held each summer at the University of Houston, and is also the Hourani Endowed Professor of Music, Director of Orchestras, and Chair of the Conducting Department at the University of Houston Moores School of Music, where he has brought the Moores School Symphony Orchestra and the conducting program to international prominence.



The Texas Music Festival Orchestra and the Moores School Symphony Orchestra are both heard on PRI Public Radio International and have commercially recorded the music of Thomas Fortmann, Percy Grainger, Michael Horvit, Peter Lieuwen, Robert Nelson, and Stephen Shewan on various labels, including Divine Art (Métier), Albany, MSR Classics, and Newport.

For HDTT High Definition Tape Transfers in its “Immersive Surround Sound” series of multichannel Blu-Ray Audio discs and digital downloads by producer John Proffitt, Krager has recorded music of Bruckner, his Great Mass in F-Minor and Symphony 7; of Respighi, his “Roman Trilogy” Tone Poems; of Leonard Bernstein, his *Jeremiah Symphony*, *Symphonic Dances from West Side Story*, and excerpts from “Candide”; of Mahler, his Symphony 2, “Resurrection”; and with organist Robert Bates, the *Symphonie concertante of Jongen* and the *Organ Concerto of Poulenc*; and the symphonic arrangement of “Death and the Maiden” by Schubert, heard on this recording. Forthcoming releases include *Lincolnshire Posy* by Percy Grainger, arranged for full symphony orchestra; *Symphony 2, “Romantic”* by Howard Hanson; *Concerto for Orchestra* by Rob Smith; “Light Years” by Peter Lieuwen; and *Cityscape* by John Wineglass.

Krager has made his artistic presence felt both at home and abroad with performance engagements in some of the world’s most celebrated concert halls and musical centers. Since making his prize-winning European conducting debut in Copenhagen’s Tivoli Koncertsalen in 1978, Krager has led orchestras in the Leipzig Gewandhaus, Moscow’s State Kremlin Palace, Manchester’s Bridgewater Hall, Birmingham England’s Adrian Boult Hall, Guangzhou China’s Xinghai Music Center,

the Sydney Opera House, The Hague's Congresgebouw, Kazan's State Philharmonic Hall in Russia, Guadalajara's Degollado Theater, and Sarasota's Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall.

His affiliations with leading music festivals include the Lancaster International Concert Series and Lichfield and Aberystwyth International Arts Festivals in the U.K.; the Festival Internacional de Santa Lucía in Mexico; and the Texas Music Festival and Interlochen National Music Camp in the United States.

Krager has led the Houston Russian State Traverse City, Michigan, and Florida West Coast Symphony Orchestras; Romanian and Kazan State Philharmonics; and orchestras in Berlin, London, Chicago, Paris, Singapore, Leipzig, Bratislava, Monterrey, Pordenone, Ingolstadt, Neuss, and Honolulu.

In 2015, he was appointed Principal Guest Conductor of the North Shore Chamber Arts Ensemble in Chicago. Krager is the Founding Co-Artistic Director of the Virtuosi of Houston, Artist-in-Residence at The Kinkaid School, and Evaluator/Clinician for the Orchestra America National Festival.

Taiwanese-American conductor **Mei-Ann Chen** is a regular guest conductor with the summer Texas Music Festival, Houston. She is acclaimed for infusing orchestras with energy, enthusiasm, and high-level music-making, galvanizing audiences and communities alike.

For **HDTT High Definition Tape Transfers**, Ms. Chen and the TMF Orchestra can also be heard on Blu-ray Audio and CD in the *Negro Folk Symphony* by William Levi Dawson, Symphony 10 by Dmitri Shostakovich, Tchaikovsky *Romeo and Juliet*, Britten Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra [St. John Flynn, narrator], and Stravinsky *Petrushka*.



Music Director of the Chicago Sinfonietta since 2011, Ms. Chen has also been appointed as an artistic partner with Washington State's Northwest Sinfonietta. She has been Chief Conductor of Austria's Grosses Orchester Graz at Styriarte since fall 2021, after two seasons as the orchestra's first-ever Principal Guest Conductor, making her the first female Asian conductor to hold this position with an Austrian orchestra.

She continues as the first-ever Artistic Partner of Houston's ROCO River Oaks Chamber Orchestra, a post she was named to in 2019. Ms. Chen also has served as Artistic Director & Conductor for the National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra Summer Festival since 2016. Highly regarded as a compelling communicator and an innovative leader both on and off the podium, and a sought-after guest conductor, she continues to expand her relationships with orchestras worldwide - over 110 orchestras to date.



Producer & Recording Engineer John Proffitt and conductor Franz Anton Krager