

Mahler calls in the score for a gap of five minutes before the second movement.

The second movement is a delicate laendler in A-flat Major with two contrasting sections of urgent, darker music. This slow movement contrasts to the two adjacent movements. Structurally, it is one of Mahler's simplest movements in his oeuvre, remembering the joyful times in the life of the deceased. The Scherzo in C Minor takes its cue from a song, "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt," from the cycle Des Knaben Wunderhorn, opening with two, short tympani strokes followed by a rhythmic tattoo which sets the tempo for the movement. With allusions to Austrian and Jewish folk music, the music reaches a frenzied climax Mahler called a "death-shriek" or "cry of despair." The fourth movement Urlicht (primal light) serves as an introduction to the massive Finale. Sung in D-flat Major by an alto, the text derives from another of the Wunderhorn entries, longing for relief from worldly anguish.

The huge Finale is divided into two large parts, the first centered in F Minor and B-flat Minor, a kind of "fate" modality Mahler had admired in Tchaikovsky. The first part is instrumental, episodic, containing a wide variety of moods, tempi and keys, with much of the material based on the "Dies Irae" death-march nexus heard in the first movement, although it also loosely follows sonata principles. New themes introduced are used repeatedly and altered. Mahler incorporates instrumental recitative in the manner of Beethoven. The recapitulation overlaps with the march, and only brief statements of the first theme group are re-stated. The orchestral recitative is fully recapitulated, and is accompanied this time by offstage interruptions from a band of brass and percussion. This builds to a climax, which leads into a re-statement of the opening introductory section. The horn call is expanded into Mahler's "Great Summons," a transition into the choral section.

The choral section, opening in G-flat Major, is organized primarily by the text, using musical material from earlier in the movement. Each of the first two verses proceeds to an instrumental interlude; the alto and soprano solos, "O Glaube," based on the recitative melody, precede the fourth verse, sung by the chorus; and the fifth verse is a vocal duet. The opening two verses appear in G-flat major, the solos and the fourth verse in B-flat minor (the original key of the recitative), and the duet in A-flat major. The goal of the symphony, E-flat major, arrives when the chorus picks up the words from the duet, "Mit Flügeln," although after eight measures the music gravitates to G major. E-flat suddenly re-enters with the text "Sterben werd' ich um zu leben," and a proper cadence finally occurs on the downbeat of the final verse, with the entrance of the heretofore silent organ (played with all stops) and with the choir instructed to sing "mit höchster Kraft" (with highest power). The instrumental coda remains in triumphant E-flat, accompanied by the tolling of deep bells. Mahler wrote of this movement: "The increasing tension, working up to the final climax, is so tremendous that I don't know myself, now that it is over, how I ever came to write it."

Facts about this Recording

Recorded by Westminster

Transferred from a 2-Track Tape Recorded 1958

MAHLER

RESURRECTION

SYMPHONY NO. 2

Mimi Cortese, Soprano
Lucretia West, Contralto
Vienna State Academy Chamber Choir
Vienna State Opera Orchestra
Hermann Scherchen Conducting

Fourth Movement

Original German

Urlicht

O Röschen roth!
Der Mensch liegt in größter Noth!
Der Mensch liegt in größter Pein!
Je lieber möcht ich im Himmel sein.
Da kam ich auf einen breiten Weg:
Da kam ein Engelein und wollt' mich abweisen.
Ach nein! Ich ließ mich nicht abweisen!
Ich bin von Gott und will wieder zu Gott!
Der liebe Gott wird mir ein Lichtchen geben,
Wird leuchten mir bis in das ewig selig Leben!

Fifth Movement

Aufersteh'n, ja aufersteh'n
Wirst du, Mein Staub,
Nach kurzer Ruh'!
Unsterblich Leben! Unsterblich Leben
wird der dich rief dir geben!

Wieder aufzublüh'n wirst du gesät!
Der Herr der Ernte geht
und sammelt Garben
uns ein, die starben!

O glaube, mein Herz, o glaube:
Es geht dir nichts verloren!
Dein ist, ja dein, was du gesehnt!
Dein, was du geliebt,
Was du gestritten!

O glaube
Du wardst nicht umsonst geboren!
Hast nicht umsonst gelebt, gelitten!

In English

Primeval Light
O red rosebud!
Man lies in deepest need!
Man lies in deepest pain!
Oh how I would rather be in heaven.
There, I came upon a broad path;
There, came a little angel and wanted to send me away.
Ah no! I would not let myself be sent away!
I am from God and will return to God!
The loving God will give me a little light,
Which will light me into that eternal blissful life!

Rise again, yes, rise again,
Will you My dust,
After a brief rest!
Immortal life! Immortal life
Will He who called you, give you.

To bloom again were you created!
The Lord of the harvest goes
And gathers in, like sheaves,
Us together, who die.

O believe, my heart, O believe:
Nothing to you is lost!
Yours is, yes yours, is what you desired
Yours, what you have loved
What you have fought for!

O believe,
You were not born for nothing!
Have not for nothing, lived, suffered! **(Cont. Over)**

Was entstanden ist
Das muß vergehen!
Was vergangen, auferstehen!
Hör' auf zu beben!
Bereite dich zu leben!

O Schmerz! Du Alldurchdringer!
Dir bin ich entrungen!
O Tod! Du Allbezwinger!
Nun bist du bezwungen!

Mit Flügeln, die ich mir errungen,
In heißem Liebesstreben,
Werd'ich entschweben
Zum Licht, zu dem kein Aug'gedrungen!
Mit Flügeln, die ich mir errungen
Werde ich entschweben.
Sterben werd'ich, um zu leben!
Aufersteh'n, ja aufersteh'n
wirst du, mein Herz, in einem Nu!
Was du geschlagen
zu Gott wird es dich tragen!

Mahler's Symphony No. 2 "Resurrection

by Gary Lemco

After the completion of his 1888 First Symphony (originally titled, programmatically, "Titan," after the author Jean-Paul Richter), Mahler began work on an extended symphonic poem in the manner of Franz Liszt called Totenfeier (Funeral Rites). Later, he returned to the movement, and added three others so that by late 1893 the first four movements of the symphony as we now know it were complete. Mahler suddenly reached an impasse, feeling he needed something else to complete it. In 1894, Mahler attended the funeral of the great Wagnerian conductor the conductor Hans von Bulow. There he heard a setting of Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock's Die Auferstehung (The Resurrection), goading him to complete his symphony—like Beethoven in his own Ninth—with a massive choral movement with text based on Klopstock's poem seeking transcendent renewal, a theme that Mahler would ultimately transfigure into the music of his sublime Das Lied von der Erde. Somewhat in honor of von Bulow's life dedicated to Wagner's music, the opening C Minor movement of The Resurrection has the convulsive fury of the Act I from Die Walküre; here, it is the soul in ardent pursuit of meaning after a bitter struggle. The C Minor first movement takes an unusual approach to sonata-form structure, grouping themes in two expositions, so that E Major emerges as a desire to escape from the cycle of will and death—established by a variant on the Dies Irae motif from the Requiem Mass—and move towards transcendence. The angry, tumultuous statement from the basses that opens the symphony is answered by a dirge in the woodwinds. The music moves intricately to a triumphant statement with trumpets in E-flat Major. Following this movement,

Continued on back

What was created
Must perish,
What perished, rise again!
Cease from trembling!
Prepare yourself to live!

O Pain, You piercer of all things,
From you, I have been wrested!
O Death, You masterer of all things,
Now, are you conquered!

With wings which I have won me,
In love's fierce striving,
I shall soar upwards
To the light which no eye has penetrated!
Its wing that I won is expanded,
and I fly up.
Die shall I in order to live.
Rise again, yes, rise again,
Will you, my heart, in an instant!
That for which you suffered,
To God will it lead you!

Gustav Mahler

Symphony No. 2 "Resurrection"

Mimi Cortese, Soprano Lucretia West, Contralto Vienna State Academy Chamber Choir

Vienna State Opera Orchestra Hermann Scherchen Conducting

Disc 1

- 1 I: Allegro maestoso (Mit durchaus ernstem und feierlichem Ausdruck) 24:37
- 2 II: Andante moderato (Sehr gemächlich) 11:39
- 3 III: In ruhig fließender Bewegung 12:14

Disc 2

- 4 IV: "Urlicht" (Sehr feierlich, aber schlicht) 6:43
- 5 V: In tempo des Scherzos. Wild herausfahrend - 6:52
- 6 Wieder sehr breit - 2:31
- 7 Ritardando ... Maestoso- 3:53
- 8 Wieder zurückhaltend - 6:40
- 9 Langsam. Misterioso- 7:37
- 10 Etwas bewegter 4:15
- 11 Mit Aufschwung aber nicht eilen 5:20

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