

MASTERING EQUIPMENT

Digital: Antelope Audio Eclipse 384

Weiss Saracon Sample Rate Conversion Software

Weiss POW-r Dithering Software

Analog: Studer 810 Reel to Reel with
JRF Magnetics Custom Z Heads & Siltech wiring

Aria tape head pre-amp by ATR Services
Retro Instruments 2A3 Dual-channel tube program equalizer
Sontec MEP-250EX Parametric EQ

Cables: Purist Audio Design, Siltech

VPI Classic Turntable w/ Benz Wood Cartridge
Emotive Audio Custom Phone pre-amp

Power Sources: We use a PS Audio P10 Power Plant
and Power Plant 300

Power Cords: Purist Audio Design, Essential Sound Products

Vibration Control: Symposium Acoustics Rollerblocks,
Ultra platforms, Svelte shelves

Sonic Studio CD.1 Professional CD Burner
using Mitsui Gold Archival CD's and Archival Gold DVD's

***Transferred from the original 16 bit master
on Betamax converted to analog using a Sony PCM501ES
Digital processor feeding a Antelope Audio Eclipse
analog to digital converter and converted to 24/96 resolution.
Two Neumann Km 83 microphones were used
across the front of the orchestra
Recorded at Jones Hall, Houston, Texas, 1987***

Mahler Symphony No. 1

**Christoph Eschenbach Conducting the
Houston Symphony Orchestra
Live Recording**

The Symphony No. 1 in D major by Gustav Mahler was mainly composed between late 1887 and March 1888, though it incorporates music Mahler had composed for previous works. It was composed while Mahler was second conductor at the Leipzig Opera, Germany. Although in his letters Mahler almost always referred to the work as a symphony, the first two performances described it as a symphonic poem or tone poem. The work was premièred at the Vigadó Concert Hall, Budapest in 1889, but was not well received. Mahler made some major revisions for the second performance, given at Hamburg in October 1893; further alterations were made in the years prior to the first publication, in late 1898. Some modern performances and recordings give the work the title Titan, despite the fact that Mahler only used this label for two early performances, and never after the work had reached its definitive four-movement form in 1896.

The work includes two themes from Mahler's song cycle *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (1883–1885), and the available evidence also seems to indicate that Mahler recycled music from his abandoned opera project *Rübezahl*. The opening of the third movement features a double bass soloist performing a variation on the theme of "Frère Jacques", distinguishing it as one of the few symphonic pieces to use the instrument in such a manner. Mahler uses the song, which he cites as "Bruder Martin," changed from major to minor, thus giving the piece the character of a funeral march. The mode change to minor is not an invention by Mahler, as is often believed, but rather the way this round was sung in the 19th and early 20th century in Austria. In its completed form, the symphony has four movements, since Mahler removed the so-called "Blaumine" (flowers) movement:

Langsam, schleppend (Slowly, dragging) Immer sehr gemächlich (very restrained throughout) D major

Kräftig bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell (Moving strongly, but not too quickly), Recht gemächlich (restrained), a Trio—a Ländler
Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen (Solemnly and measured, without dragging), Sehr einfach und schlicht wie eine Volksweise (very simple, like a folk-tune), and Wieder etwas bewegter, wie im Anfang (something stronger, as at the start)—a funeral march based on the children's song "Frère Jacques" (or "Bruder Martin")

Stürmisch bewegt – Energisch (Stormily agitated – Energetic)

Mahler may have conceived the D Major Symphony as program music, but it now remains a colossal invocation to aspects of Nature, with direct allusions to his songs of unrequited or tormented love. The innate lyricism of the score finds its counterpoints in heroic fanfares and dramatic surges of energy. In a letter to Bruno Walter, his former assistant and subsequently his chief apostle, Mahler, who by then had introduced seven of his symphonies and was taking up his duties with the New York Philharmonic, wrote, "Both the Funeral March and the storm that breaks out immediately afterward strike me as burning accusations hurled at the Creator."

According to the 1900 scenario, the hero is exposed to the most fearful combats and to all the sorrows of the world. He and his triumphant motifs are "hit on the head again and again" by Destiny. . . . Only when he has triumphed over death, and when all the glorious memories of youth have returned with themes from the first movement, does he get the upper hand, and there is a great victorious chorale!

The collected recordings of Christoph Eschenbach in Houston, from the acoustically rich Jones Hall, have assumed a virtual life of their own for Audiophiles. The Mahler First from 1987 is no exception, with its blazing and majestic colors and consistently dramatic sweep.

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Please Note: In the interest of preserving the superb sound quality of these historic recordings, they have been preserved in their original, pristine state for maximum fidelity. Transferred from commercially released, analog reel-to-reel tapes (some of which are more than 50 years old), the recordings themselves can be subject to certain "artifacts" which are an inseparable part of the original analog recording process, such as tape "hiss" or other defects, and these may be audible on certain music tracks.

Because your CD or DVD-A was individually "burned" in order to realize superior sound quality to stamped, mass-produced versions, microscopic cosmetic blemishes may be visible. Please regard these tiny marks as evidence of the "human touch" in the care and individual attention that each and every HD TT disc receives during its very demanding manufacturing process.

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