

Mahler

Des Knaben Wunderhorn

Symphony Orchestra Of The Vienna Festival Conducted By Felix Prohaska

Maureen Forrester was born and grew up in Montreal, one of four children of Thomas Forrester, a Scottish cabinetmaker, and his Irish-born wife, the former May Arnold. She sang in church and radio choirs. At age 13, she dropped out of school to help support the family, working as a secretary at Bell Telephone.

When her brother came home from the war he persuaded her to take singing lessons. She paid for voice lessons with Sally Martin, Frank Rowe, and baritone Bernard Diamant. She gave her debut recital at the local YWCA in 1953. She made her concert debut in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra under Otto Klemperer.

She toured extensively in Canada and Europe with Jeunesses Musicales. She made her New York City debut in Town Hall in 1956. Bruno Walter invited her to sing for him; he was looking for the right contralto for a performance and recording of the Mahler Symphony No. 2 "Resurrection". This was the start of a warm relationship with great rapport. Walter had been a student of Mahler, and he trained Forrester in interpretation of his works. She performed at Walter's farewell performances with the New York Philharmonic in 1957. In 1957, she married the Toronto violinist and conductor Eugene Kash. The couple had five children, including actors Linda Kash and Daniel Kash. Forrester converted to Judaism. She performed regularly in concert and opera. At the New York City Opera, she sang Cornelia in Handel's *Giulio Cesare* (1966), opposite Norman Treigle and Beverly Sills, which was recorded by RCA in 1967. She sang at the Metropolitan Opera in New York in 1975 in *Das Rheingold*, *Siegfried*, and *Un ballo in maschera*. Forrester also provided the voice of the Bianca Castafiore character in the television series *The Adventures of Tintin*. She was a strong champion of Canadian composers, regularly scheduling their works in her programs, especially when she toured abroad. From 1983-88 she served as Chair of the Canada Council.

In 1986, she co-authored her autobiography, *Out of Character*, with journalist Marci McDonald.

Maureen Forrester died on June 16, 2010, aged 79, in Toronto, after a long battle with dementia. She was predeceased by Eugene Kash, her former husband, whom she had divorced in 1974, and who died in 2004. She was survived by her five children.



Des Knaben Wunderhorn, (German: “The Boy’s [or Youth’s] Magic Horn”) song cycle by Austrian composer Gustav Mahler, composed mostly in the 1890s for solo vocalist with orchestra accompaniment. The words derive from folk roots, but the music is entirely Mahler’s.

Years before the Brothers Grimm began to publish the stories they collected, another equally ambitious effort, Des Knaben Wunderhorn (1805–08), had appeared. This three-volume compilation of folk songs, poems, and aphorisms was the work of two young writers, Clemens Brentano and Achim von Arnim, who viewed their collection as a tribute to German culture.

Brentano and Arnim were not alone in their high regard for the collection; no less a giant than Goethe believed that all intelligent people should possess a copy, and the poet Heinrich Heine wrote that “anyone who wishes to come to know the German people in its most lovable aspect should study these folk songs.” Although many German writers were moved to study the collection, composers were musically uninterested until late in the 19th century, when Mahler began to draw upon Wunderhorn for melodic inspiration.

More than half of the songs that Mahler composed in the course of his career are settings of lyrics from Wunderhorn. Of his two dozen settings of Wunderhorn texts, 12 were published together in that specific song cycle. In those songs, Mahler covered a vast range of subjects and emotions. Wistful romances are juxtaposed with tragic tales of starving children. St. Anthony preaches valiantly to impervious schools of fish, and in another song an avian vocal contest judged by a donkey conceals a satirical parable of

musical tastes. Martial imagery abounds in this ambitious cycle. Several songs concern the harsh lives and harsher deaths of soldiers. Mahler later used melodies he had written for the collection in orchestral compositions, notably his second, third, and fourth symphonies.

Heinz Rehfuss

Born: May 25, 1917 – Frankfurt am Main, Germany

Died: June 27, 1988 – Buffalo, New York, USA

The German born, Swiss, and later American bass-baritone, Heinz (Julius) Rehfuss, studied with his father, Carl Rehfuss (1885–1946), a singer and a teacher, and with his mother, Florentine Rehfuss-Peichert, contralto. The family moved to Neuchâtel, and Rehfuss became a naturalized Swiss citizen.

Heinz Rehfuss made his professional debut in opera at Biel-Solothurn in 1938. The he sang with the Lucerne Stadttheater (1938–1939) and the Zürich Opera (1940–1952). He subsequently was active mainly in Europe and in America. He became a naturalized American citizen.

Heinz Rehfuss taught voice at the Montreal Conservatory in 1961 and in 1965 was on the Faculty of the State University of New York at Buffalo. In 1970 he was a visiting professor at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. He also toured Asia, giving vocal recitals in India and Indonesia. Heinz Rehfuss was successful mainly in dramatic roles, such as Don Giovanni and Boris Godunov, but he was also a gifted J.S. Bach singer.

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Bass Vocals – Heinz Rehfuss • Contralto Vocals – Maureen Forrester

1 Reveille 6:25

2 Das irdische Leben 3:05

3 Lob des hohen Verstandes 2:27

4 Rheinlegendchen 3:15

5 Der Schildwache Nachtlied 5:34

6 Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht? 2:12

7 Verlor'ne Muh 2:32

8 Der Tambourg'ssell 5:13

9 Trost im Unglück 2:27

10 Wo die schoenen Trompeten blasen 5:58

11 Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt 4:12

12 Lied des Verfolgtem im Turm 3:55

13 Des Knaben Wunderhorn: Urlicht 5:07

Total Time 52:22

Recorded in Europe by Vanguard Records 1963



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