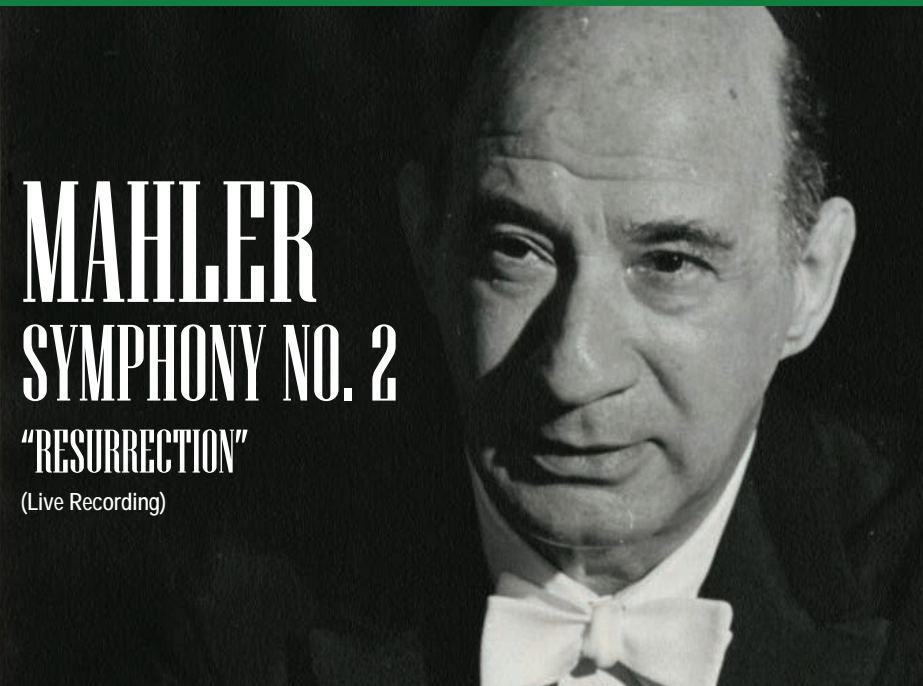


The advent of Nazi rule in 1933 effectively ended his German career. He was restricted to conducting concerts for the Jewish Culture League in Frankfurt and Berlin. This was an insidious creation of the Nazis that both furthered its institutionalized anti-Semitism by creating a segregated organization for a segregated orchestra, while preserving the illusion that the Nazis goals went no further than ethnic separation. Steinberg left Germany in 1936 for Palestine, where he conducted the new orchestra there that eventually became the Israel Philharmonic. The Palestine Philharmonic's first concert was conducted by Arturo Toscanini. After working with Steinberg, Toscanini invited him to go to the United States as associate conductor of his NBC Symphony Orchestra. Steinberg took up that position in 1938.

Toscanini and Klemperer were Steinberg's two mentors. He adopted their clear, faithful approach to the classic scores and, like Klemperer, lost much of his early interest in modern music. Steinberg guest conducted regularly during his tenure with the NBC Symphony Orchestra. In 1945 he became Music Director of the Buffalo (New York) Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1952 he obtained the major appointment of his career, as music director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. He restored that orchestra to an artistic high point. Concurrently, he was musical director of the London Philharmonic Orchestra (1958 - 1960).

In 1960 he scored a great success guest conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra and was the preferred choice of its board for their next music director, as Charles Münch was stepping down from the position. However, RCA, the orchestra's record company, successfully pressured them to appoint Erich Leinsdorf, already on their roster of conductors. After Leinsdorf's tenure, one of mixed success, ended, they did appoint Steinberg to the post effective 1969. This was also only a partial success, because then health problems interfered with his abilities and caused frequent substitutions. He left the position in 1972 and restricted his activities.



MAHLER

SYMPHONY NO. 2

"RESURRECTION"

(Live Recording)

William Steinberg conducts the
Boston Symphony Orchestra

Mahler completed what would become the first movement of the symphony in 1888 as a single-movement symphonic poem called *Totenfeier* (Funeral Rites). Some sketches for the second movement also date from that year. Mahler wavered five years on whether to make *Totenfeier* the opening movement of a symphony, although his manuscript does label it as a symphony. In 1893, he composed the second and third movements. The finale was the problem. While thoroughly aware he was inviting comparison with Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*—both symphonies use a chorus as the centerpiece of a final movement which begins with references to and is much longer than those preceding it—Mahler knew he wanted a vocal final movement. Finding the right text for this movement proved long and perplexing.

When Mahler took up his appointment at the Hamburg Opera in 1891, he found the other important conductor there to be Hans von Bülow, who was in charge of the city's symphony concerts. Bülow, not known for his kindness, was impressed by Mahler. His support was not diminished by his failure to like or understand *Totenfeier* when Mahler played it for him on the piano. Bülow told Mahler that *Totenfeier* made Tristan and Isolde sound to him like a Haydn symphony. As Bülow's health worsened, Mahler substituted for him. Bülow's death in 1894 greatly affected Mahler. At the funeral, Mahler heard a setting of Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock's poem "*Die Auferstehung*" (The Resurrection), where the dictum calls out "Rise again, yes, you shall rise again / My dust".

"It struck me like lightning, this thing," he wrote to conductor Anton Seidl, "and everything was revealed to me clear and plain." Mahler used the first two verses of Klopstock's hymn, then added verses of his own that dealt more explicitly with redemption and resurrection.^[5] He finished the finale and revised the orchestration of the first movement in 1894, then inserted the song "*Urlicht*" (Primal Light) as the penultimate movement. This song was probably written in 1892 or 1893.

Autograph manuscript of the symphony

Mahler initially devised a narrative programme (actually several variant versions) for the work, which he shared with a number of friends (including Natalie Bauer-Lechner and Max Marschalk [de]). He even had one of these versions printed in the program book at the premiere in Dresden on 20 December 1901. In this programme, the first movement represents a funeral and asks questions such as "Is there life after death?"; the second movement is a remembrance of happy times in the life of the deceased; the third movement represents a view of life as meaningless activity; the fourth movement is a wish for release from life without meaning; and the fifth movement – after a return of the doubts of the third movement and the questions of the first – ends with a fervent hope for everlasting, transcendent renewal, a theme that Mahler would ultimately transfigure into the music of *Das Lied von der Erde*. As generally happened, Mahler later withdrew all versions of the programme from circulation.

William Steinberg (born Wilhelm Hans Steinberg) was a conductor and an exceptional orchestra builder and interpreter of the Romantic to early-twentieth century repertory.

He developed precociously as a musician. At the age of 13 he composed and conducted a cantata for chorus and orchestra based on selections of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. He was also a fast-developing pianist and violinist. He studied at Cologne Conservatory with Franz Bölsche in music theory, Lazzaro Uzielli in piano, and Hermann Abendroth in conducting. He won the Wüllner prize in conducting in his graduation year of 1920.

He obtained a position conducting at Cologne Opera, where he was assistant to Otto Klemperer. When Klemperer left in 1924, Steinberg received the appointment as Principal Conductor. In 1925 he accepted the post of conductor of the German Theater in Prague. In 1929 he became musical director of the Frankfurt Opera. His tenure there was marked by an interest in modern opera. His productions included Berg's *Wozzeck*, Schoenberg's *Von heute auf Morgen*, Antheil's *Transatlantic*, and Weill's *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*.

MAHLER SYMPHONY NO. 2

William Steinberg conducts the
Boston Symphony Orchestra

- 1 Allegro Maestoso - Schnell 19:11**
- 2 Andante Moderato 9:33**
- 3 In Ruhig Fließender Bewegung 10:02**
- 4 'Urlicht': Sehr Feierlich 3:47**
- 5 Im Tempo Des Scherzos. Wild Herausfahrend Maestoso
Sehr Langsam Und Gedeht Etwas Bewegter 29:37**

Soloists: Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum
Benita Valente Beverly Wolff

Recording Info: Recorded 9-30-1972 at Boston Symphony Hall



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or visit our website:
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