

25–28 September 2024

DONALD RUNNICLES

CONDUCTS MAHLER'S FOURTH SYMPHONY



«SYDNEY»
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«ORCHESTRA»

Principal Partner



SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PATRON Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC

Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has evolved into one of the world's finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world's great cities. Resident at the iconic Sydney Opera House, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales, and international tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the Orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence.

The Orchestra's first chief conductor was Sir Eugene Goossens, appointed in 1947; he was followed by Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Moshe Atzmon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux, Sir Charles Mackerras, Zdeněk Mácal, Stuart Challender, Edo de Waart and Gianluigi Gelmetti. Vladimir Ashkenazy was Principal Conductor from 2009 to 2013, followed by David Robertson as Chief Conductor from 2014 to 2019. Australian-born Simone Young commenced her role as Chief Conductor in 2022, a year in which the Orchestra made its return to a renewed Sydney Opera House Concert Hall. The Sydney Symphony Orchestra's concerts encompass masterpieces from the classical repertoire, music by some of the finest living composers, and collaborations with guest artists from all genres, reflecting the Orchestra's versatility and diverse appeal. Its award-winning education program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music, and the Orchestra promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program.

PERFORMING IN THIS CONCERT

FIRST VIOLINS

Andrew Haveron

Concertmaster

Alexandra Osborne

Associate Concertmaster

Lerida Delbridge

Assistant Concertmaster

Sun Yi

Associate Concertmaster

Emeritus

Jennifer Booth

Sophie Cole

Sercan Danis

Claire Herrick

Georges Lentz

Emily Long

Alexandra Mitchell

Alexander Norton

Robert Smith^o

Benjamin Tjoa^o

Rain Liu[†]

Katherine Lukey^{*}

SECOND VIOLINS

Kirsty Hilton

Principal

Marina Marsden

Principal

Emma Jezek

Assistant Principal

Emma Hayes

Acting Assistant Principal

Alice Bartsch

Victoria Bihun

Shuti Huang

Monique Irik

Wendy Kong

Benjamin Li

Nicole Masters

Emily Qin^o

Riikka Sintonen^o

Dominic Azzi[†]

Lydia Sawires^{*}

VIOLAS

Tobias Breider

Principal

Anne-Louise

Comerford

Associate Principal

Justin Williams

Assistant Principal

Rosemary Curtin

Jane Hazelwood

Stuart Johnson

Felicity Tsai

Leonid Volovelsky

Andrew Jezek^o

Rachel Dyker^{*}

Charlotte Fetherston^{*}

Dana Lee^{*}

James Wannan^{*}

CELLOS

Kaori Yamagami

Principal

Simon Cobcroft

Associate Principal

Leah Lynn

Assistant Principal

Kristy Conrau

Fenella Gill

Timothy Nankervis

Elizabeth Neville

Christopher Pidcock

Adrian Wallis

Eliza Sdraulig^o

DOUBLE BASSES

Kees Boersma

Principal

David Campbell

Dylan Holly

Steven Larson

Richard Lynn

Jaán Pallandi

Alexandra Elvin[†]

Harry Young^{*}

FLUTES

Joshua Batty

Principal

Emma Sholl

Associate Principal

Carolyn Harris

David Silva^{*}

Guest Principal Piccolo

OBOES

Shefali Pryor

Acting Principal

Miriam Cooney[†]

Alexandre Oguey

Principal Cor Anglais

CLARINETS

Francesco Celata

Acting Principal

Christopher Tingay

Clare Fox[†]

Alexander Morris

Principal Bass Clarinet

BASSOONS

Matthew Wilkie

Principal Emeritus

Fiona McNamara

Noriko Shimada

Principal Contrabassoon

HORNS

Samuel Jacobs

Acting Principal

Euan Harvey

Guest Principal

Marnie Sebire

Rachel Silver

Emily Newham^o

Lee Wadenfuhl^{*}

TRUMPETS

David Elton

Principal

Anthony Heinrichs

Alfred Carslake^{*}

TIMPANI

Antoine Siguré

Principal

PERCUSSION

Rebecca Lagos

Principal

Timothy Constable

Gabriel Fischer^{*}

Brian Nixon^{*}

HARP

Louisic Dulbecco

Principal

Natalie Wong^{*}

KEYBOARDS /

EXTRAS

Catherine Davis^{*}

Guest Principal Piano

Bold Principal

^{*} Guest Musician

^o Contract Musician

[†] Sydney Symphony

Fellow

2024 CONCERT SEASON

EMIRATES MASTERS SERIES

Wednesday 25 September, 8pm

Friday 27 September, 8pm

Saturday 28 September, 8pm

EMIRATES THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY

Thursday 26 September, 1.30pm

Concert Hall,
Sydney Opera House

DONALD RUNNICLES CONDUCTS MAHLER'S FOURTH SYMPHONY TRANSFORMING MOMENTS

DONALD RUNNICLES conductor

YING FANG soprano

ANTON WEBERN (1883–1945)

Im Sommerwind (In Summer Wind): Idyll for Large Orchestra
(1904)

RICHARD STRAUSS (1864–1949)

Wiegenlied, Op.41 No.1 (1899)

Morgen!, Op.27 No.4 (1894)

Zueignung, Op.10 No.1 (1885)

Die Nacht, Op.10 No.3 (1885)

Allerseelen, Op.10 No.8 (1885)

Muttertändelei, Op.43 No.2 (1899)

INTERVAL

GUSTAV MAHLER (1860–1911)

Symphony No.4 (1899–1900)

i. *Bedächtig. Nicht eilen* [Deliberately. Not hurrying]

ii. *In gemächlicher Bewegung, ohne Hast* [In a comfortable tempo, without haste]

iii. *Ruhevoll* [Peacefully]

iv. *Sehr behaglich* [Very agreeable]

Pre-concert talk

By Alastair McKean in the
Northern Foyer at 7.15pm
(12.45pm Thursday)

Estimated durations

Webern – 12 minutes

Strauss – 20 minutes

Interval – 20 minutes

Mahler – 54 minutes

The concert will run for
approximately two hours

Cover image

Sir Donald Runnicles

Photo by Craig Abercrombie

Principal Partner



WELCOME

Welcome to **Donald Runnicles Conducts Mahler's Fourth Symphony**, a concert of nuance, delight and power.

Conductor Sir Donald Runnicles is highly regarded throughout the world for his interpretation of the music of Mahler. His lifelong passion for Mahler began from the very first time he heard it as a young usher in an Edinburgh concert hall.

Since then, his love for Mahler has, of course, only deepened. Runnicles describes Mahler's Fourth Symphony as one of innocence and joy, especially its extraordinary moments of song.

Soprano Ying Fang is a sensation – her crystal clear and 'radiant' (*The New York Times*) voice and sophisticated approach dazzle in this pivotal moment in the symphony.

Emirates and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra have enjoyed one of the longest-standing and most significant relationships in Australia's performing arts, one which has fostered some of the most extraordinary experiences known to audiences anywhere in the world.

At Emirates, we know that growing connection and constantly aspiring to excellence go hand in hand with supporting music, arts, and culture around the world.

We, and the communities that both the Orchestra and Emirates serve, are enriched by our continuing partnership, which underpins the radiantly joyful music of this concert, and the international excellence it embodies.

I do hope you enjoy this enthralling music.



Barry Brown
Divisional Vice President for Australasia
Emirates



YOUR CONCERT AT A GLANCE

ANTON WEBERN (1883-1945)

Im Sommerwind (In Summer Wind): Idyll for Large Orchestra (1904)

Webern would write some of the 'purest' and most abstract of the music of the Second Viennese School, but this short work, composed as he began studies with Arnold Schoenberg, is a product of the gorgeous, opulent, emotively-charged Romanticism of Vienna at the run of the 20th century. It sounds a little like turbo-charged Richard Strauss.

It was completed in 1904, the year that saw the Russo-Japanese War; a British 'expedition' invading Tibet; and a Labour government elected, for the first time anywhere, in Australia.

Contemporary music included Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, Sibelius' Violin Concerto, and Ravel's String Quartet.



Anton Webern in 1912.

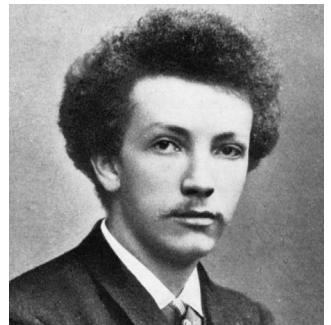
RICHARD STRAUSS (1864-1949)

Selected songs (1885-1899)

Strauss wrote songs throughout his long life time, but this selection concentrates on early works, mainly setting poetry about Romantic love – sometimes reflected in the natural world – the pain of bereavement, and, finally the simple joyful love of mother for her child.

The first set, from which we hear three, was composed in 1885, the year that Leopold II of Belgium established the Congo Free State; Gottlieb Daimler was granted a patent for his water-cooled engine; Richmond Football Club was formed in Melbourne.

Contemporary music included Brahms' Fourth Symphony, Bruckner's Seventh, and *The Mikado*.



Richard Strauss in 1888.

GUSTAV MAHLER (1860-1911)

Symphony No.4 (1899-1900)

One of Mahler's shorter symphonies, the Fourth is in four movements more or less corresponding to the sonata, scherzo, slow movement and finale of the classical model. Mahler tends to the expansive, though, and the finale presents a vocal part, singing of a child's imagining of heaven as a place of abundant food.

It was completed in 1900, the year that the first Zeppelin flew; the first Michelin guide was issued; and Australia's first Governor-General committed the Hopetoun Blunder, commissioning, as interim Prime Minister, NSW Governor William Lyne – who couldn't persuade anyone to join his government.

Contemporary music includes Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*; Sibelius' *Finlandia*; Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tale of Tsar Saltan*.



Gustav Mahler, c. 1900.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

DONALD RUNNICLES conductor

Over the course of a career spanning 45 years, Sir Donald Runnicles has built his reputation on long-lasting relationships with major orchestral and operatic institutions. Focusing on depth over breadth, he has held chief artistic leadership positions at the Deutsche Oper Berlin (since 2009), San Francisco Opera (1992-2008), Grand Teton Music Festival (since 2005), BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra (2009-2016), and Orchestra of St. Luke's (2001-2007). Sir Donald was the Principal Guest Conductor of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra for two decades (2001-2023), and he is the first ever Principal Guest Conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra (since 2019).

Known as a consummate Wagnerian and conductor of German Romantic repertoire, Maestro Runnicles leads Deutsche Oper Berlin this season in productions of *Parsifal* and two full performances of the *Ring Cycle*. He will also conduct a new production of *Il Trittico* by the young German theatre director Pinar Karabulut. For the Metropolitan Opera, he conducts eight performances of the Otto Schenk production of *Tannhäuser*. He appears as guest conductor with the Dresden Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony, Cincinnati Symphony and Utah Symphony, where he will lead the world premiere of a new concerto written and performed by Sir Stephen Hough.

Runnicles tours regularly with Deutsche Oper Berlin to destinations such as the Edinburgh International Festival, the London Proms, Royal Opera Oman, and Dubai. He has joined the Philadelphia Orchestra in tours to China, summer residencies at Bravo! Vail Music Festival in Colorado, and annual Subscription concerts. He is a frequent guest conductor with the Chicago Symphony, with a performance history dating as far back as 1997. He has a long relationship with the Vienna State Opera, conducting

new productions of *Parsifal*, Britten's *Billy Budd* and *Peter Grimes*, as well as other core repertoire pieces.

Mr. Runnicles' extensive discography includes recordings of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*, Mozart's Requiem, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Britten's *Billy Budd*, Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, and Aribert Reimann's *L'invisible*. His recording of Wagner arias with Jonas Kaufmann and the Orchestra of the Deutsche Oper Berlin won the 2013 Gramophone Award for Best Vocal Recording, and his recording of Janáček's *Jenůfa* with the Orchestra and Chorus of the Deutsche Oper Berlin was nominated for a 2016 Grammy Award for Best Opera Recording.

Sir Donald Runnicles was born and raised in Edinburgh, Scotland. He was appointed OBE in 2004, and was made a Knight Bachelor in 2020. He holds honorary degrees from the University of Edinburgh, the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.



Donald Runnicles

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

YING FANG soprano

Chinese soprano Ying Fang has been praised as ‘indispensable at the Met in Mozart’ (*The New York Times*) and for ‘a voice that can stop time, pure and rich and open and consummately expressive’ (*Financial Times*).

In the 2023–2024 season, Fang returns to Opéra national de Paris as Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) conducted by Antonello Manacorda, Dutch National Opera as Poppea (*Agrippina*) and Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*) conducted by Riccardo Minasi, the Metropolitan Opera in her role debut as Euridice (*Orfeo ed Eudidice*), and Santa Fe Opera in her role debut as Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*). On the concert stage, she reunites with conductor Raphaël Pichon in the Mozart Requiem on tour with Ensemble Pygmalion, a project which also features a recording by the Harmonia Mundi label, and joins Pichon for Mozart’s C Minor Mass in her debut with the Munich Philharmonic. She joins Noord Nederlands Orkest (*Ein Deutsches Requiem*), the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (Mahler’s Fourth Symphony with Susanna Malkki), and sings *Carmina Burana* with the St. Louis Symphony under the baton of Stéphane Deneve and with the Orchestra of St Luke’s at Carnegie Hall.

Fang’s previous seasons have included performances with conductors James Levine, Sir Andrew Davis, Carlo Rizzi, Alan Gilbert, William Christie, Emmanuelle Haïm, Jesús López Cobos, Bernard Labadie, Nathalie Stutzmann and Manfred Honeck. She has sung at Opernhaus Zürich, Opéra de Lille, Vancouver Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Washington National Opera, Wolf Trap Opera Company, Aspen Opera Theater Center and The Juilliard School in such varied operas as *Die Zauberflöte* (Pamina), *Le nozze di Figaro* (Susanna), *L’elisir d’amore* (Adina), *Alcina* (Morgana), *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* (Bellezza), *Tannhäuser* (Shepherd), *Falstaff* (Nannetta), *Giulio Cesare* (Cleopatra), *Il Viaggio A Reims* (Contessa di Folleville), *Zaïde* (title role), *The Nose* (Madame Podtochina’s Daughter) and *Don Giovanni* (Zerlina).

Concert engagements have included appearances with the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony, New World Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra, St Luke’s Chamber Ensemble and Music of the Baroque Orchestra in Mahler’s Symphonies 2 and 4, Handel’s *Messiah*, Telemann’s *Der Tag des Gerichts*, Handel’s *Silete Venti*, Bernstein’s *West Side Story* and more. Fang has given performances at Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center and Alice Tully Hall, as well as with the Verbier Festival, Festival d’Aix-en-Provence and Ravinia Festival.

A native of Ningbo, China, Ms. Fang is the recipient of the Martin E Segal Award, the Hildegard Behrens Foundation Award, the Rose Bampton Award of The Sullivan Foundation, The Opera Index Award and First Prize of the Gerda Lissner International Vocal Competition. In 2009, she became one of the youngest singers to win one of China’s most prestigious awards – the China Golden Bell Award for Music. She has been hailed as ‘the most gifted Chinese soprano of her generation’ by *Ningbo Daily*.

Fang holds a Master’s degree and an Artist Diploma in Opera Study from The Juilliard School and a Bachelor’s degree from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. She is a former member of the Metropolitan Opera’s Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.



Ying Fang

ABOUT THE MUSIC

ABOUT ANTON VON WEBERN (1883-1945)

One of the three composers of the so-called Second Viennese School, Webern was born in the imperial capital though spent some of his youth in provincial centres as his father, a minor aristocrat, was also a mine-owner and engineer. He studied music at the University of Vienna so was schooled in the late-Romantic, post-Wagnerian world that had produced Mahler. In one of the great 'what if...?' scenarios of music history, he approached Hans Pfitzner in Berlin for composition lessons in 1904. Pfitzner (best known for his opera *Palestrina* and friendship with some of the Nazi elite) held reactionary views on the music of Richard Strauss and Mahler. This, rather than Pfitzner's politics, gave Webern pause, and he returned to Vienna where he began his association with Arnold Schoenberg, studying formally under Schoenberg until 1908.

Schoenberg was a great lover of the canon and traditions of Western art music – for instance, throughout his life he used, wherever possible, music examples from Beethoven in his composition lectures. But in the first decade of the 20th century he became convinced that the traditional tonal system of Western harmony, based on major and minor chords and scales, was moribund, and that it was inevitable that composers would begin to use all available twelve notes of the chromatic scale more or less equally. In 1908, Schoenberg produced his Second String Quartet which outraged his audience not only because a soprano voice appears in it, but because it gradually loses all sense of key and, as traditionally understood, consonance. Thus was 'atonal' music discovered (though Schoenberg didn't approve of the term); in 1921 Schoenberg attempted to rein in the chaos of atonality by inventing the twelve-note serial method, where each of the twelve notes of the chromatic scale occurs in a predetermined order.

Where Schoenberg's other famous pupil, Alban Berg managed a kind of fusion of Schoenberg's ideas with the music of the past, Anton Webern looked resolutely to the future. After World War II it was Webern whose incredibly crystalline, aphoristic style provided the beginnings of the avant-garde manners pioneered by composers like Boulez and Stockhausen. Sadly the composer did not live to see the influence his music would have: one night in 1945 he went outside to light a cigar, and an occupying American soldier shot at the flame, killing Webern.



Anton von Webern in 1912

ABOUT THE MUSIC

***IM SOMMERWIND* (1904)**

Martin Buzacott takes up the story:

Bruno Wille (1860–1928) was a North German philosopher who occasionally turned his hand to writing novels and lyric poetry. Politically liberal, he edited a periodical, *The Free-Thinker*, and he founded a ‘Free’ Theatre Guild and a ‘Free’ University. Wille’s autobiographical novel *Revelations of a Juniper Tree* (written in 1895) was published in 1901, and read by Anton von Webern a few years after.

At the time, the 20-year-old Webern was researching the music of Renaissance polyphonist Heinrich Isaac, but his real aspirations lay in composition. Besotted with the music of Wagner, Strauss, Bruckner and Mahler, Webern was searching for a composition teacher. He disagreed with Hans Pfitzner, whom he had initially approached, on the merits of Strauss and Mahler. Webern had recently been listening to pieces such as *Transfigured Night* and *Pelleas und Melisande* by the young late-Romantic composer Arnold Schoenberg; soon he approached Schoenberg for lessons.

In the meantime, however, Webern became obsessed with *Im Sommerwind*, an unrhymed, free-verse, fervent late-Romantic paean to the glories of nature that had appeared in Wille’s novel. For all the formal innovations he would later make in music, Webern always held a spiritual and artistic affinity with natural phenomena. And so in 1904, inspired by Wille’s poem and before he’d even begun to assign opus numbers to his music, he set out to write his first purely instrumental work for orchestra (in the previous year he’d completed a rather amateurish work called *Siegfried’s Sword* for solo voice and orchestra).

Webern composed *Im Sommerwind* (In Summer Wind) at his family’s country estate in Carinthia, working on it during his summer holidays and completing the full score on 16 September 1904.

The ‘large’ orchestra of its subtitle includes three flutes, two oboes, cor anglais, four clarinets, two bassoons, six horns, two trumpets, two harps, and various timpani and percussion with strings. But there are no trombones or tuba.

Harmonically and melodically, the work is indebted to the young composer’s musical models – late Wagner and the early Strauss, while the episodic, even fragmentary structure sometimes suggests Mahler. It was not published during Webern’s lifetime, but was to remain the longest single movement that he ever composed for orchestra. It received its premiere in 1962 with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy.

While *Im Sommerwind* clearly derives from the late-Romantic tradition, there are various pointers toward the mature Webern who would achieve such a distinctive and abbreviated compositional style in later years. Phrases tend to be abrupt and elliptical, and despite the ample size of the orchestra, the instruments for the most part are used individually rather than in massed groups. Motives rather than themes are developed and the range of dynamics tends toward the extreme.

But in the end it remains not so much a genuine precursor to the work of the Second Viennese School as a surprisingly beautiful demonstration of late-Romantic nature mysticism and pastoral ecstasy.

Webern’s *Im Sommerwind* is scored for three flutes, two oboes, cor anglais, four clarinets, bass clarinet and two bassoons; six horns and two trumpets; timpani, percussion, two harps and strings.

The piece was never performed in Webern’s lifetime. It did not receive its premiere until 1962, performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy in conjunction with the Seattle World’s Fair and the simultaneous First International Webern Festival.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra gave the Australian premiere of *Im Sommerwind* in July 1983, conducted by our then-Chief Conductor Sir Charles Mackerras. We have only performed it once since, in September 1998 under Marek Janowski.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

ABOUT RICHARD STRAUSS (1864–1949)

In 1945, as the Nazi regime fell, American soldiers began commandeering villas in the Bavarian town of Garmisch.

At one door, an elderly man greeted them with now famous words: 'I am Richard Strauss, composer of *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Salome*'. Fortunately for Strauss, the commanding officer knew him and his work, and the Strauss family was not evicted from its home.

Strauss was born in 1864 – Clara Schumann was still performing, Brahms and Wagner were contemporary composers. His father, Franz, was one of the finest horn players of his day. Richard Wagner regarded the elder Strauss as an 'intolerable blighter, but when he plays his horn one cannot stay cross with him'. Strauss senior loathed most of Wagner's music and said so often, yet regularly went to Bayreuth to play in Wagner's festival orchestra.

Nevertheless, the older Strauss tried to ensure that his gifted son would never be seduced by Wagner's work, and Richard's earliest pieces include a very Mozartean wind Serenade.

At 17, however, young Strauss heard, or as he put it, 'wolfed the score of *Tristan*, as if in a trance'. Wagner's highly expressive chromatic harmony was a decisive influence on Strauss, and one which he put to good use in the series of massive tone-poems such as *A Hero's Life* or *Death and Transfiguration*.

These in turn equipped him with the ability to write opera on something like a Wagnerian scale.



Richard Strauss in 1888

Salome was a turning point. Oscar Wilde's play is a self-consciously 'artificial' piece of work. Strauss, however brings all he had learned from Wagner to make it a gripping document of psycho-pathology. Its companion piece, *Elektra* likewise essays madness in an ancient mythic setting are the extreme points of Strauss at his most post-Wagnerian. As time went on, Strauss turned, or returned, to the example of Mozart, who had been the inspiration for some of his earliest compositions. *Der Rosenkavalier*, the greatest result of Strauss' collaboration with playwright Hugo von Hofmannsthal is set in a highly Romanticised, late eighteenth century Vienna. In works like *Ariadne auf Naxos* or *Capriccio* he moved even closer to a neo-classical manner; at the end of his life, in instrumental works like the Oboe Concerto, Strauss took great solace from the example of Mozart in the face of the horror of World War II.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Strauss, like Mozart, loved the human voice. Strauss and Mozart were married to singers, and some of their greatest works celebrate just that. Strauss was an inveterate composer of song, and even the opulence of the *Four Last Songs* never obscures his intense sensitivity to the beauty of the voice. The apparent differences between *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Salome* are largely superficial.

ABOUT THESE SONGS

In certain arias by Mozart, Strauss once wrote, 'Eros himself sings in Mozart's melody; Love in its most beautiful, purest form speaks to our feelings...'. Both composers married singers for whom they wrote some of their most memorable work; the comparison between the two composers' life-long love for the soprano voice has often been made but is no less valid for that. Like Mozart's, Strauss' writing for the solo voice in opera and song is often more than slightly erotic, and his choice of texts in his 200-odd Lieder bears this out.

Wiegenlied is a setting of words by the sometimes scandalously erotic poet, Richard Dehmel (1863 –1920), The singer who premiered it in its 1899 piano version was Pauline de Ahna, Strauss' much-loved but reputedly difficult wife. The first performance was not long after the influential Viennese critic Eduard Hanslick had savaged Strauss and his tone-poem *Ein Heldenleben*. In his review of the recital Hanslick famously wrote of Frau Strauss: 'We may surely call her his better and more beautiful half.' She never tired of repeating the line, and Strauss later incorporated it into the libretto of the opera *Intermezzo*. Strauss orchestrated the song a few months later in 1900.



Strauss and singer Pauline de Ahna on their wedding day

TEXT & TRANSLATION

Wiegenlied, Op.41 No.1 (1899)

Träume, träume, du mein süßes Leben,
Von dem Himmel, der die Blumen bringt.
Blüten schimmern da, die beben
Von dem Lied, das deine Mutter singt.

Träume, träume, Knospe meiner Sorgen,
Von dem Tage, da die Blume spross;
Von dem hellen Blütenmorgen,
Da dein Seelchen sich der Welt erschloss.

Träume, träume, Blüte meiner Liebe,
Von der stillen, von der heiligen Nacht,
Da die Blume seiner Liebe
Diese Welt zum Himmel mir gemacht.

Richard Dehmel

Perhaps Strauss' single most famous song, **Morgen!** (Tomorrow), sets a text by John Henry Mackay (1864-1933), a Scot who lived in Germany from early childhood and devoted himself to anarchist politics, experimental verse and up-front homosexuality at a time when none was exactly tolerated. *Morgen!* is a fairly conventional lyric dealing with the promise of lovers being reunited. Strauss wrote the Op.27 set in 1894 as a wedding present for his wife Pauline, and orchestrated *Morgen!* in 1897. This early masterpiece begins with the orchestra (or piano) before the singer enters in mid-sentence. The violin solo represents the bliss of the united lovers, but as this is still in the future, Strauss ends the song on a note of erotic expectation.

Lullaby

Dream, O my sweet life,
dream of heaven, that brings flowers.
Blossoms are shimmering there, trembling
at the song your mother is singing.

Dream, bud from which my cares bloom,
dream of the days when the flower sprang up;
of the bright morning of blossoms
when your little soul opened up to the world.

Dream, blossom of my life,
dream of the silent, holy night
when the flower of his love
made this world a heaven for me.

TEXT & TRANSLATION

Morgen!, Op.27 No.4 (1894)

Und morgen wird die Sonne wieder scheinen,
und auf dem Wege, den ich gehen werde,
wird uns, die Glücklichen, sie wieder einen
inmitten dieser sonnenatmenden Erde...

Und zu dem Strand, dem weiten,
wogenblauen,
werden wir still und langsam niedersteigen,
stumm werden wir uns in die Augen schauen,
und auf uns sinkt des Glückes stummes
Schweigen...

John Henry Mackay

Tomorrow!

And tomorrow the sun will shine again,
and on the road I shall travel
it will unite us happy ones again,
in the midst of this sunbreathing earth...

And we shall go down to the wide,
wave-blue shore,
quietly and slowly;
in silence we shall look into each other's eyes
and the hushed silence of happiness will
settle on us...

**Translations: Natalie Shea
Symphony Australia © 2004**

Strauss' first published songs, *Six Songs from Last Leaves*, Op.10, appeared in 1885 with settings of poems by Hermann von Gilm zu Rosenegg (1812–1864). The set included Strauss' early hit **Zueignung** (Dedication). A simple strophic song with a strong rhythm and bright major tonality, it is a hymn of thanks to the beloved for banishing the evils of solitude. Strauss orchestrated it as late as 1940.

The set also includes **Die Nacht**, where Strauss' music echoes the sense of Night emerging stealthily to steal away light and colour, reaching a brief climax as it evokes the gleaming dome of the cathedral and fades with the fear of separation from the beloved. This arrangement, for large ensemble, is one of several made in 2022 by contemporary German composer Eberhard Kloke for a CD of Strauss' vocal works featuring Sabine Devieille and the Camerata RCO.

Allerseelen, the eighth song of Op.10, also depicts separation: All Souls' day falls in the northern autumn, but the poet remembers happier times in spring, the vocal line reaching a yearning climax (as in 'Zueignung', on the word *Herz*, or heart) at the end, as we realise that the beloved whom the poet addresses is among the souls of the dead.

The song was orchestrated in 1932 by conductor Robert Heger, and Strauss was happy to include it in his own concert programs.

TEXT & TRANSLATION

Zueignung, Op.10 No.1 (1885)

Ja, du weißt es, teure Seele,
Daß ich fern von dir mich quäle,
Liebe macht die Herzen krank,
Habe Dank.

Einst hielt ich, der Freiheit Zecher,
Hoch den Amethysten-Becher,
Und du segnetest den Trank,
Habe Dank.

Und beschworst darin die Bösen,
Bis ich, was ich nie gewesen,
heilig, heilig an's Herz dir sank,
Habe Dank.

Die Nacht, Op.10 No.3 (1885)

Aus dem Walde tritt die Nacht,
Aus den Bäumen schleicht sie leise,
Schaut sich um in weitem Kreise,
Nun gib Acht!

Alle Lichter dieser Welt,
Alle Blumen, alle Farben
Löscht sie aus und stiehlt die Garben
Weg vom Feld.

Alles nimmt sie, was nur hold,
Nimmt das Silber weg des Stroms
Nimmt vom Kupferdach des Doms
Weg das Gold.

Ausgeplündert steht der Strauch:
Rücke näher, Seel' an Seele,
O die Nacht, mir bangt, sie stehle
Dich mir auch.

Hermann von Gilm

Allerseelen, Op.10 No.8 (1885)

Stell auf den Tisch die duftenden Reseden,
Die letzten roten Aestern trag herbei,
Und laß uns wieder von der Liebe reden,
Wie einst im Mai.

Gib mir die Hand, daß ich sie heimlich drücke,
Und wenn man's sieht, mir ist es einerlei,
Gib mir nur einen deiner süßen Blicke,
Wie einst im Mai.

Es blüht und duftet heut auf jedem Grabe,
Ein Tag im Jahr ist ja den Toten frei,
Komm am mein Herz, daß ich dich wieder habe,
Wie einst im Mai.

Hermann von Gilm

Dedication

Yes, you know it, dearest soul,
How I suffer far from you,
Love makes the heart sick,
Receive my thanks.

Once I, drinker of freedom,
Held high the amethyst beaker,
And you blessed the drink,
Receive my thanks.

And you exorcised the evils in it,
Until I, as I had never been before,
Blessed, blessed sank upon your breast,
Receive my thanks.

Night

Night tiptoes out of the forest
Softly sneaking from under the trees
casting her glance in a wide circle,
Now beware!

She puts out all the lights of this world,
All flowers, all colour
Stealing even the sheaves
From the fields.

She takes everything: all that is dear –
The silver from the stream,
And from the copper dome of the cathedral
She takes the gold.

The shrub stands plundered:
Draw nearer, soul to soul,
Ah! I fear the night will steal you
From me too.

Place fragrant mignonette flowers on the table
Bring in the last of the red asters
And let us talk again of love
As once in May.

Give me your hand to hold in secret
Though I don't care if anyone sees,
Give me just one more of your sweet glances,
As once in May.

Today scented flowers bloom on every grave
The one day when the dead are free;
Come to my heart, and be with me again,
As once in May.

TEXT & TRANSLATION

Muttertänderlei might be better translated as ‘a mother’s prattle’ or ‘chatter’, the sort of sweet-natured nonsense that one might use to distract or amuse a baby. The good-humoured poem is by Gottfried August Bürger (1747–1794), who is better known for his Gothic ballad of ghosts and grief and passion, *Lenore*. Strauss composed the song as one of *Three Songs of Earlier German Poets* (Op.43) in 1899 – the same year as *Wiegenlied* – and the orchestral version dates from 1911.

Muttertändelei, Op.43 No.2 (1899)

Seht mir doch mein schönes Kind!
Mit den goldnen Zottelöckchen,
Blauen Augen, roten Bäckchen!
Leutchen, habt ihr auch so eins? –
Leutchen, nein, ihr habet keins!

Seht mir doch mein süßes Kind!
Fetter als ein fettes Schneckchen,
Süßer als ein Zuckerweckchen!
Leutchen, habt ihr auch so eins? –
Leutchen, nein, ihr habt keins!

Seht mir doch mein holdes Kind!
Nicht zu mürrisch, nicht zu wählig,
Immer freundlich, immer fröhlich!
Leutchen, habt ihr auch so eins? –
Leutchen, nein, ihr habt keins!

Seht mir doch mein frommes Kind!
Keine bitterböse Sieben
Würd’ ihr Mütterchen so lieben.
Leutchen, möchtet ihr so eins? –
O, ihr kriegt gewiß nicht meins!

Komm’ einmal ein Kaufmann her!
Hunderttausend blanke Taler,
Alles Gold der Erde zahl’ er!
O, er kriegt gewiß nicht meins! –
Kauf’ er sich wo anders eins!

Gottfried August Bürger

Mother’s dalliance

Will you look at my pretty child!
With tousled blonde hair,
Blue eyes, red cheeks!
Hey people – ever seen one like this?
No, people, no you haven’t.

Will you look at my sweet child!
Chubbier than a fat snail
Sweeter than a sugar roll!
Hey people – ever seen one like this?
No, people, no you haven’t.

Will you look at my lovely child!
Not too moody, not too choosy,
Always friendly, always happy!
Hey people – ever seen one like this?
No, people, no you haven’t.

Will you look at my well-behaved child!
No bitter shrew
Would love her mummy so much.
Hey peoples – would you like one like this?
Oh, you sure can’t have mine!

Let some merchant come along
And offer a hundred thousand bucks,
Or even all the gold on earth,
Oh, he sure won’t get my baby –
Let him buy one somewhere else.

Translations © Gordon Kerry 2024

ABOUT THE MUSIC

ABOUT GUSTAV MAHLER (1860–1911)

One day Mahler's violent father was beating his wife, as he did all too often, and the child Gustav raced into the street in terror, to be confronted by an organ grinder playing the folk-song *O, du lieber Augustin*. We have this story thanks to Sigmund Freud, whom Mahler consulted professionally in 1910 and who, in a 1925 letter, retailed it. Freud concluded that 'in Mahler's opinion, the conjunction of high tragedy and light amusement was from then on inextricably fixed in his mind, and the one mood inevitably brought the other with it.'

Mahler was born in 1860 into a Jewish family in Kaliště (Kalischt), Bohemia, which soon moved to Jihlava (Iglau) where Mahler, one of the few of his thirteen siblings to survive childhood, grew up. In 1871 he began studying at the Conservatorium in Prague, and then in 1875 enrolled at the Conservatorium in Vienna.

He was a star student, mentored by Anton Bruckner and others, and while winning prizes for piano and composition was also drawn to conducting. He held conducting posts in Cassel, Prague, Budapest, Hamburg and, from 1897 at the Vienna Court Opera. After ten years during which he was legendary for his high musical and dramatic standards, he was undermined by professional jealousy and anti-Semitism (despite his conversion to Catholicism many years before). In 1907 he left Vienna ultimately to work in the New York with the Metropolitan Opera and the New York Philharmonic.

For much of his life he composed only on summer holidays, usually in some picturesque part of Austria which offered hiking opportunities. He completed his First Symphony in 1887 (the year he befriended Richard Strauss), which, like its three successors, draws on his body of song.



Mahler around the time of the Fourth Symphony

Leonard Bernstein famously said that 'Ours [the 20th] is the century of Death, and Mahler is its prophet', but there's more to Mahler than the Romantic cliché of the death-wish. He once discussed symphonic composition with Sibelius, who argued for internal coherence and abstraction, where Mahler explained that the 'symphony should be like the world, and contain everything.' His work is characterised by a vastness of scale (though great delicacy of orchestration) and often shocking changes of emotional register (as in the 'Augustin' story) and fusion of styles that can evoke shining vistas, popular song and dance, heroic struggle, tragedy and sublimity.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

MAHLER'S FOURTH SYMPHONY

'It is too beautiful: one shouldn't allow oneself such a thing!' exclaimed Mahler one day in 1900. He was standing on the balcony of his newly built summer residence at Maiernigg, surrounded by forest on the shores of the Wörthersee. Mahler's career as a conductor usually left him only the summer months for composition; when he became Director of the Vienna Court Opera in 1897 and conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic in 1898 the intensity of the workload meant that he composed nothing during those years. The house at Maiernigg was a perfect retreat, and the perfect place to complete his Fourth Symphony which he had begun in the summer of 1899.

The symphony is at once the culmination of certain aspects of the previous two and their complete antithesis. The Second Symphony is Mahler's musical dramatisation of nothing less than death and resurrection, while in the Third, as he put it, 'all nature finds a voice'. The fourth, by contrast, is on an altogether more modest scale: it consists of the 'standard' four movements (the first time Mahler adhered to that pattern), plays for a comparatively short 55 minutes or so, and is scored for a much smaller orchestra. What it shares with its two predecessors is a preoccupation with ideas of life and death, and a relationship to the collection of folk poetry, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (The Youth's Magic Horn), which Mahler mined for various song settings. The final movement – which Mahler first set in 1892 and which was originally planned for inclusion in the Third Symphony – is taken from the *Wunderhorn* collection, and describes a child's vision of heaven.

Commentator Paul Bekker has suggested that the whole symphony was germinated by the song, and Michael Kennedy has noted that all the movements are 'thematically interconnected'.

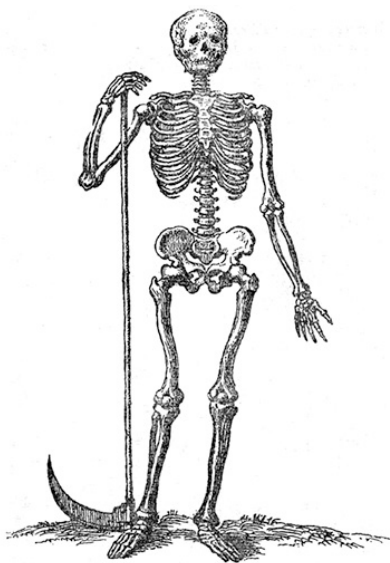
Dramatically, too, the work is unified by a pervasive sense of innocence: Mahler's music is never naïve, and its simplicity is deceptive given the formal sophistication of its structure and elaboration of its counterpoint, but the work is careful to avoid the obtuse, the rhetorical and the monumental. The philosopher Theodor Adorno points out that the whole work's 'image-world is of childhood. The means are reduced, without heavy brass; horns and trumpets are more modest in number. No father figures are admitted to its precincts.'

This first movement quickly establishes the mood of childish innocence with the sound of four flutes and sleigh bells, simple melodies (one derived from Schubert) with pizzicato accompaniment from low strings. Various solo instruments appear like characters in a child's story; the four flutes at one point play low in unison to give the effect of what Adorno calls a 'dream ocarina'. But as the great Mahler scholar Deryck Cooke once put it, the serene surface of the work conceals figures whom he described as 'moving behind a veil which obscures their naked horror and makes them like the bogeymen who appear in illustrations to books of fairy tales'. Neville Cardus compared these musical goblins to the shadows cast by candlelight on a nursery wall. There is perhaps latent danger in the brief eruption of the Fifth Symphony's tempestuous fanfare in the first movement of this work, but the movement ends with a moment of seraphic peace before its good humoured conclusion.

One 'bogeyman' is 'Freund Hain', a personification of Death whom we also meet as a devilish fiddler in Saint-Saëns' *Danse macabre*. In an early sketch for his Scherzo (marked 'in a comfortable tempo, without haste,') Mahler wrote 'Freund Hain spielt auf' (Our friend Hain strikes up). In the final version of this movement with its *Ländler* (a peasant dance in triple time)

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Trio section – there is a prominent solo for a violin which is tuned higher than normal to make it sound like Ein Fiedel’ (a fiddle). Kennedy argues that Hain is ‘picturesque rather than macabre’, but quotes Mahler who compared composing this work with ‘wandering through the flower-scented garden of Elysium and it suddenly changes to a nightmare of finding oneself in a Hades full of horrors.’



An 18th century engraving of Freund Hain

There is no horror in the opening of the work’s central *Adagio* (marked ‘Peacefully’), by far the longest movement in the work. A set of variations, it is unified by the device of the pizzicato double bass which plays a repeated figure or *ostinato*. There is a violent passage towards the end of the movement, where the timpani take over the basses’ figure playing, as Adorno says, ‘as drums once seemed before the age of seven’.

In the final movement the orchestra is joined by the soprano soloist for the *Wunderhorn* song, and it is here that the work’s ambiguities come into clear focus. Ostensibly a cute account of how a child might see heaven, it is actually a cleverly disguised set of variation which allow Mahler to seem simple while constantly spinning new and fascinating sounds.

It characterises various saints carrying on their earthly tasks to produce the gastronomic delights of the afterlife: St Martha cooks, of course; St Peter fishes, Herod (somehow admitted through the pearly gates) is the butcher. As Adorno notes:

These are not only the modest joys of the useful south German vegetable plot...Immortalised in them are blood and violence; oxen are slaughtered, deer and hare run to the feast in full view on the roads. The poem culminates in an absurd Christianity.

After hymning St Cecilia, the work ends quietly. For Cooke it is a ‘peaceful close’, for Adorno this ‘fairy-tale symphony is as sad as the late works...Joy remains unattainable, and no transcendence is left but yearning.’ Like Maiernigg, this work is perhaps ‘too beautiful’ to be true.

Mahler’s Fourth Symphony is scored for four flutes (two doubling piccolo), three oboes (the third doubling cor anglais), three clarinets (the second doubling E flat clarinet and the third doubling contrabassoon); four horns and three trumpets; timpani, percussion, harp, strings and soprano solo.

It was premiered in Munich on 25 November 1901, with Mahler conducting the Kaim Orchestra and soloist Margarete Michalek.

The Sydney Symphony’s first recorded performance of the work was in June 1940, led by Antal Dorati. There have been many notable performances led by other guest conductors since then, including: Walter Susskind with Thea Philips (1940); Henri Krips with Rita Streich (1963); John Hopkins with Molly McGurk (1967); Kurt Sanderling with Elly Ameling (1976); Jose Serebrier with Elaine Blighton (during our 1980 Mahler Festival); Eduardo Mata with Rosamund Illing (1987); Sian Edwards with Gillian Sullivan (as part of the *Mahler, Vienna and the Twentieth Century Festival* in 1990); Vassily Sinaisky with Claire Gormley (1997) and Lothar Koenigs, with Sylvia Schwartz (2016).

Those led by our Chief Conductors include: Moshe Atzmon, with Marilyn Richardson (1969) and again with Pearl Berridge (1977, six years after his tenure); Charles Mackerras, with Joan Patenaude-Yarnell (1981, the year before he became Chief); Louis Frémaux, with Elaine Blighton (1983); Edo de Waart with Inger Dam-Jensen (2000) and Vladimir Ashkenazy, with Emma Matthews (2010, performances which were released on CD).

Our most recent performance of the work was at Sydney Town Hall in May 2021, with Umberto Clerici conducting and Jacqueline Porter as soloist.

TEXT & TRANSLATION

Wir geniessen die himmlischen Freuden
d'rum thun wir das Irdische meiden.
Kein weltlich'Getümmel
hört man nicht im Himmel!
Lebt Alles in sanftester Ruh'!
Wir führen ein englisches Leben!
Sind dennoch ganz lustig daneben!
Wir tanzen und springen wir hüpfen und singen!
Sanct Peter in Himmel sieht zu!

Johannes das Lämmlein auslasset,
der Metzger Herodes drauf passet!
Wir führen ein geduldig's, unschuldig's, geduldig's,
ein liebliches Lämmlein zu Tod!
Sanct Lucas den Ochsen thät schlachten
ohn'einig's Bedenken und Achten,
der Wein kost kein Heller im himmlischen Keller,
die Englein, die backen das Brot.

Gut' Kräuter von allerhand Arten,
die wachsen im himmlischen Garten!
Gut' Spargel, Fisolen,
und was wir nur wollen!
Ganze Schüsseln voll sind uns bereit!
Gut' Äpfel, gut' Birn' und gut' Trauben!
die Gärtner, die Alles erlauben!
Willst Rehbock, willst Hasen,
Auf offener Strassen sie laufen herbei!

Sollt ein Fasttag etwa kommen
alle Fische gleich mit Freuden angeschwommen!
Dort läuft schon Sanct Peter
mit Netz und mit Köder
zum himmlischen Weiher hinein.
Sanct Martha die Köchin muss sein!

Kein Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,
die uns'rer verglichen kann werden.
Elftausend Jungfrauen
zu tanzen sich trauen!
Sanct Ursula selbst dazu lacht!
Kein Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,
die uns'rer verglichen kann werden.
Cäcilia mit ihren Verwandten
sind treffliche Hofmusikanten.
Die englischen Stimmen ermuntern die Sinnen!
dass Alles für Freuden erwacht.

We taste the joys of Heaven
leaving behind all that is earthly.
No worldly strife
is heard in Heaven.
We live here in sweetest peace!
We live an angelic life,
yet we are merry as can be.
We dance and spring and skip and sing
while St Peter in heaven looks on.

St John lets the lamb go running,
the butcher Herod is waiting for it.
We lead the patient, meek, guiltless
little Lambkin to death!
St Luke is slaughtering the oxen
without care or consideration,
The wine is free in the heavenly tavern,
and the angels, they bake the bread.

Fine vegetables of every kind
grow in the gardens of Heaven,
good asparagus and beans,
whatever they fancy,
big bowls are prepared for us!
Good apples and pears and grapes!
The gardeners let us take all!
Do you want a roebuck or hare?
Here in the open streets they run about!

And when there is a fast day
the fish come swarming in merrily!
St Peter, he runs
with net and with bait
to fish in the heavenly pond.
St Martha is the cook, who else?

No music on earth
can compare with ours.
Eleven thousand virgins
come forward to dance!
Even St Ursula laughs to see that!
No music on earth
can compare with ours.
Cecilia and her relations
are excellent court musicians!
The angelic voices lift our spirits
and all things awaken to joy!

Translation by Hedwig Roediger

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