



STERN CONDUCTS MAHLER'S THIRD

Friday and Saturday, May 17-18, 2019 at 8 p.m.

Sunday, May 19, 2019 at 2 p.m.

Helzberg Hall, Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

MICHAEL STERN, *conductor*

KELLEY O'CONNOR, *mezzo-soprano*

WOMEN OF THE KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY CHORUS

CHARLES BRUFFY, *chorus director*

ALLEGRO CHOIRS OF KANSAS CITY

MAHLER

Symphony No. 3 in D Minor

First Part

I. Kräftig — Entschieden

Second Part

II. Tempo di Menuetto — Sehr mässig

III. Comodo — Scherzando — Ohne Hast

IV. Sehr langsam — Misterioso — Durchaus

KELLEY O'CONNOR, *mezzo-soprano*

V. Lustig im Tempo und keck im Ausdruck

KELLEY O'CONNOR, *mezzo-soprano*

WOMEN of the KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY CHORUS

ALLEGRO CHOIRS of KANSAS CITY

VI. Langsam — Ruhevoll — Empfunden

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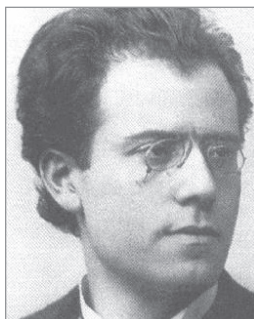
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The composer described the work as “a gigantic musical poem; it includes all the phases of evolution and depicts its gradual rise: it begins at the heart of inanimate nature and progresses to the love of God!”

GUSTAV MAHLER (1860-1911)

Symphony No. 3 in D Minor (1896) 92 minutes

Alto solo, women's chorus, children's chorus, 4 piccolos, 4 flutes, 4 oboes, English horn, 2 E-flat clarinets, 4 clarinets, bass clarinet, 4 bassoons, contrabassoon, 8 horns, 4 trumpets, post horn, 4 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, chimes, cymbals, glockenspiel, rute, snare drum, suspended cymbals, tam-tam, tambourine, triangle, 2 harps and strings.

In the summer of 1894, Gustav Mahler completed his Second Symphony. Known as the “Resurrection” Symphony, Mahler's Second is a massive work in five movements that features two vocal soloists, a large chorus and orchestra. A performance of the “Resurrection” Symphony lasts approximately 80 minutes. It seemed Mahler had stretched the boundaries of symphonic expression to the limits with his “Resurrection.”

But in the summer of 1895, Mahler began working on his Third Symphony — a departure in subject matter from his first two:

The greatest problems of humanity, those which I have evoked and attempted to solve in the Second (why do we exist? do we continue to exist after death?), can no longer touch me here. What, in fact, do they amount to in the face of the All-Powerful, of the Pan in whom everything lives and must live? Can a spirit that, as in this symphony, meditates on the eternal truths of creation and divinity die? Thus one becomes convinced that everything is blissfully created forever, human sorrow and misery have no further place here. Sublime gaiety reigns, an eternally sunny day — for the gods, naturally, not for men — for them all this is terrifying and monstrous, and eternally elusive.

During the summer of 1895, Mahler composed five of the Third Symphony's six movements. The following summer, Mahler worked on the remaining movement to open the Symphony. He completed the score on August 6, 1896, and conducted the premiere on June 9, 1902, in Krefeld, Germany (selected movements from the Symphony had been performed previously).

In 1895, Mahler confided to Natalie Bauer-Lechner, an Austrian violist and close friend:

It is really inadequate for me to call [the Third] a symphony, for in no respect does it retain the traditional form. But to write a symphony means, to me, to construct a world with all the tools of the available technique. The ever-new and ever-changing content determines its own form. In this sense, I must always learn anew to create new means of expression for myself, even though (as I feel I can say myself) I have complete technical mastery...

The following year, however, as Mahler approached the completion of the first movement (and thus, the entire Third Symphony), he discovered:

To my surprise — and likewise to my delight — I see that in this movement, as in the whole work, there is the same structure and the same foundation (without my having wanted it or even thought about it) which is found in Mozart or, in a more highly developed form, in Beethoven, but which was really devised by old Haydn. It must be established according to profound and eternal laws, which Beethoven observed and which I find again in my own work as a kind of affirmation.

In these seemingly paradoxical statements, Mahler encapsulated the singular greatness of his Third Symphony. On the one hand, it is true Mahler's Third is a work that appears to transcend all boundaries established by the masters of the Classical era. The first movement of the Mahler Third alone is longer than most complete symphonies of Haydn and Mozart, as well as some by Beethoven. And the number of musicians required for the Mahler Third far exceeds anything that Haydn, Mozart or Beethoven could have envisioned.

Nevertheless, for all the epic length, profusion of ideas and huge performing forces, Mahler's Third is a work notable for its sense of structural integrity, proportion and inexorable progression. It is also in many ways (perhaps surprisingly) an intimate work, often radiating a depth of expression that makes it one of the truly exalted symphonic experiences.

First Part

I. Kräftig — Entschieden: Mahler provided the following general description of his Third Symphony:

My work is a gigantic musical poem; it includes all the phases of evolution and depicts its gradual rise: it begins at the heart of inanimate nature and progresses to the love of God! Men will take some time to crack these nuts which I have shaken off the tree...

As for the opening movement, originally subtitled "Pan's Awakening, Summer Marches in (procession of Bacchus)," Mahler noted:

It is hardly music anymore, just the voice of nature: one shudders at this motionless, soulless material (I could have called this movement "What the rocks tell me"), from which, little by little, life frees itself and finally conquers, developing and differentiating step by step: flowers, animals, men, right up to the kingdom of the spirit and that of the angels. In the introduction there is the scorched, brooding atmosphere of midday in summer, when all life is suspended and not a breath of wind stirs the vibrant, flamboyant air, drunk with sunshine. Life, the young prisoner of ever-motionless, inanimate nature, cries out in the distance and begs for freedom, until ... this life breaks out victoriously.

Second Part

II. Tempo di Menuetto — Sehr mässig: Mahler described the second movement, "What the flowers of the field tell me," as the most carefree music I have ever written, as carefree as only flowers can be. It all sways and ripples like flowers on

limber stems sway in the wind ... That this innocent flowery cheerfulness does not last but suddenly becomes serious and weighty, you can well imagine. A heavy storm sweeps across the meadow and shakes the flowers and leaves. They groan and whimper, as if pleading for redemption to a higher realm.

III. Comodo — Scherzando — Ohne Hast: The third movement, “What the animals of the forest tell me,” evokes the quiet, undisturbed life of the forest before the appearance of man. Then the animals catch sight of the first human being and, although he walks calmly past them, the terrified [animals] sense that future trouble will come for them.

IV. Sehr langsam — Misterioso — Durchaus: For this movement, “What man tells me,” Mahler employs a setting for alto solo and orchestra of the “Midnight Song” from Friedrich Nietzsche’s “Thus Spake Zarathustra.”

This leads without pause to the Symphony’s penultimate

Alt:

O Mensch! Gib acht!
Was spricht die tiefe Mitternacht?
Ich schlief! Ich schlief!
Aus tiefem Traum bin ich erwacht!
Die Welt ist tief!
Und tiefer, als der Tag gedacht!
Tief ist ihr Weh!
Lust tiefer noch als Herzeleid!
Weh spricht: Vergeh!
Doch alle Lust will Ewigkeit!
Will tiefe, tiefe Ewigkeit.

Alto:

O Man! Give heed!
What does the deep midnight say?
I slept! I slept!
From the deepest dream I awoke!
The world is deep!
And deeper than the day had thought!
Deep is its woe!
Joy deeper than its heartache!
Woe speaks: Begone!
But all joy desires eternity!
Desires deep, deep, eternity.

movement.

V. Lustig im Tempo und keck im Ausdruck: For this movement, originally subtitled “What the angels tell me,” Mahler returns to *The Youth’s Magic Horn*. The children’s chorus imitates the

sound of bells, while the women's chorus sings the *Wunderhorn* text, entitled "Es sungen drei Engel" ("Three angels sang").

Knabenchor:

Bimm, bamm, bimm, bamm.

Frauenchor:

Es sungen drei Engel einen süßen Gesang;
Mit Freuden es selig in dem Himmel klang.
Sie jauchzten fröhlich auch dabei,
Dass Petrus sei von Sünden frei.
Und als der Herr Jesus zu Tische sass,
Mit seinen zwölf Jüngern das Abendmahl ass:
Da sprach der Herr Jesus: Was stehst du denn hier?
Wenn ich dich anseh', so weinst du mir!

Alt:

Und sollt' ich nicht weinen, du gütiger Gott?

Frauenchor:

Du sollst ja nicht weinen!

Alt:

Ich hab' übertreten die Zehn Gebot;
Ich gehe und weine ja bitterlich.
Ach komm und erbarme dich über mich!

Frauenchor:

Hast du denn übertreten die Zehn Gebot,
So fall auf die Knie und bete zu Gott!
Liebe nur Gott in alle Zeit!
So wirst du erlangen die himmlische Freud'.
Die himmlische Freud', ist eine selige Stadt

Children's Chorus:

Ding, dong, ding, dong.

Women's Chorus:

Three angels sang a sweet song;
It sounded joyfully through Heaven.
They shouted joyfully all the while,
That St. Peter was free of sin.
And as the Lord Jesus sat at the table,
Sharing the evening meal with his twelve disciples:
The Lord Jesus spoke: What are you doing here?
When I look at you, you weep!

Alto:

And should I not weep, you merciful God?

Women's Chorus:

You shall not weep!

Alto:

I have broken the Ten Commandments;
I go and weep bitterly.
Ah, come and have mercy upon me!

Women's Chorus:

If you have broken the Ten Commandments,
Then fall on your knees and pray to God!
Love God always!
Then you will know heavenly joy.
The heavenly joy, the happy state

Die himmlische Freud' die kein Ende mehr hat. The heavenly joy that will never end.
Die himmlische Freude war Petro bereit't The heavenly joy was made ready for Peter
Durch Jesum und Allen zur Seligkeit. Through Jesus and for the happiness of all.

Knabenchor:

Liebe nur Gott!

Die himmlische Freud' ist eine selige Stadt,

Die himmlische Freud', die kein Ende mehr hat! The heavenly joy that has no end!

Once again, the ensuing movement follows without pause.

Children's Chorus:

Love only God alone!

The heavenly joy is a happy state,

The heavenly joy that has no end!

Once again, the ensuing movement follows without pause.

VI. Langsam — Ruhevoll — Empfinden: Mahler entitled this movement, "What love tells me." Here, it is appropriate to recall Mahler acknowledged he was referring to "the love of God." For the depiction of this subject, Mahler chose to conclude his symphony not with a traditional quick-tempo finale, but with an extended and serene movement.

The finale is based on two themes, both introduced by the strings. The finale presents metamorphoses of the themes, delivering a majestic high point as the work concludes.

Translation by Ken Meltzer.

RECOMMENDED RECORDING

MAHLER Symphony No. 3

Vienna Philharmonic / Claudio Abbado, *conductor*

Label: Deutsche Grammophon Catalog # 002154602

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POSSESSING A VOICE OF UNCOMMON ALLURE, MUSICAL

sophistication far beyond her years, and intuitive and innate dramatic artistry, the Grammy® Award-winning mezzo-soprano Kelley O'Connor has emerged as one of the most compelling performers of her generation.



During the 2018/19 season, O'Connor's impressive symphonic calendar features Mahler's Second Symphony with Andrés Orozco-Estrada and the Houston Symphony; his Third Symphony with Donald Runnicles and the Grand Teton Music Festival Orchestra, Michael Stern and the Kansas City Symphony, and Andrés Orozco-Estrada and

the Chicago Symphony Orchestra; and *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. O'Connor gives the world premiere of Joby Talbot's *A Sheen of Dew on Flowers* with the Britten Sinfonia at the Victoria & Albert Museum to celebrate the opening of the institution's new jewelry wing. She debuts with the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in the title role of John Adams' *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* under the baton of the composer. She presents the West Coast premiere of Bryce Dessner's *Voy a Dormir* with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra led by Jaime Martín, and she brings Peter Lieberman's *Neruda Songs* to life in performances with Stéphane Dénéve and the St. Louis Symphony. Bernstein's *Songfest* marks her Boston Symphony Orchestra debut conducted by Bramwell Tovey, and she is heard in performances of this work with Thomas Dausgaard leading the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. O'Connor joins the Los Angeles Philharmonic for a Stravinsky Festival under the direction of Esa-Pekka Salonen and assays the title role of Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* presented by Boston Lyric Opera.

For her debut with the Atlanta Symphony in *Ainadamar*, she joined Robert Spano for performances and a Grammy® Award-winning Deutsche Grammophon recording. Her discography also includes Mahler's Third Symphony with Jaap van Zweden and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Lieberman's *Neruda Songs* with Robert Spano and the Atlanta Symphony, Adams' *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* with Gustavo Dudamel and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Franz Welser-Möst and the Cleveland Orchestra. ■



THE KANSAS CITY SYMPHONY CHORUS, LED BY GRAMMY®

Award-winning Chorus Director Charles Bruffy, is a 160-voice ensemble that continues its long tradition of excellence serving as “the choral voice of the Kansas City Symphony.”

The Symphony Chorus has been offering quality choral music to the greater Kansas City metropolitan area since the early 1960s, first as the Mendelssohn Choir and then as the Civic Chorus. After the creation of the Kansas City Symphony, the Symphony Chorus assumed its current name and role in 1988. Before the appointment of Chorus Director Charles Bruffy in 2008, the Symphony Chorus worked under the direction of choral conductors Eph Ehly and Arnold Epley.

The Symphony Chorus has represented Kansas City in five concert tours, including performances in New York City, Boston, the Berkshires, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Mexico where it performed with the Mexico City Symphony. The Symphony Chorus women recorded Holst’s *The Planets* with the Kansas City Symphony in January 2015.

The Kansas City Symphony Chorus musicians are all volunteers from the region’s extensive musical community selected through rigorous auditions. Members have rich backgrounds in both music education and performance, and are engaged as soloists and conductors in schools, churches and venues throughout the region. ■

CHARLES BRUFFY, *chorus director*

PATRICE SOLLENBERGER, *assistant chorus director*

DAN VELICER, *accompanist*

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ONE OF THE MOST ADMIRED CHORAL CONDUCTORS IN THE

United States, Charles Bruffy began his career as a tenor soloist, performing with the Robert Shaw Festival Singers for recordings and concerts in France and concerts at Carnegie Hall. Shaw encouraged his development as a conductor. He received his undergraduate degree from Missouri Western University in St. Joseph and his master's degree in conducting from the Conservatory of Music and Dance at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.



Bruffy has been artistic director of the Kansas City Chorale since 1988 and chorus director for the Kansas City Symphony since 2008. He is also director of music for Rolling Hills Presbyterian Church.

Respected and renowned for his fresh and passionate interpretations of standards of the choral music repertoire — and for championing new music — he has commissioned and premiered works by composers such as Jean Belmont Ford, Ola Gjeilo, Matthew Harris, Anne Kilstofte, Libby Larsen, Zhou Long, Cecilia McDowall, Michael McGlynn, Stephen Paulus, Steven Sametz, Philip Stopford, Steven Stucky, Eric Whitacre and Chen Yi.

Under Bruffy's supervision, MusicSpoke and the Roger Dean Company, a division of the Lorenz Corporation, publish a choral series specializing in music for professional ensembles and sophisticated high school and college choirs. His eclectic discography includes five albums on the Nimbus label and eight recordings for Chandos Records, three of which have been recognized by the Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences with Grammy® Awards for Best Choral Performance. In 2017, Bruffy was recognized with the Signature Sinfonian award conferred by national fraternal society Phi Mu Alpha, recognizing "alumni members who have achieved a high standard of accomplishment in their field."

In his spare time, Bruffy breeds and raises Arabian and Saddlebred horses on his ranch just south of Kansas City in Cass County, Missouri. ■

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About ALLEGRO CHOIRS of KANSAS CITY

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Allegro Choirs of Kansas City inspire thousands of audience members each year locally, nationally and abroad with varied repertoire and heartfelt singing. Since its creation in 1999, Allegro has grown from one choir of 28 to five choirs with more than 200 singers. This upbeat premier choir program enriches and transforms the lives of young singers as they learn and perform beautiful music of the highest quality with technical and artistic excellence. Allegro serves the Kansas City community by providing numerous free concerts and three major performances to sold-out crowds each season. The choirs also give back to the community with performances for local events and charity functions.

Third through 12th graders from across the Kansas City metro make up the five choirs. The singers represent more than 40 public and private schools in 10 counties as well as home-schooled singers. Vivo Allegro, for youth in grades 5-7, provides introductory vocal and choral training in a fun, loving atmosphere. The choir introduces basic theory, vocal technique and performance skills with an emphasis on kinesthetic awareness.

Allegro Choirs have shared their fresh, energetic sound by invitation at state, regional and national conventions and events. Allegro has toured extensively to countries including Sweden, France, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, England and the Czech Republic. Last year, the choirs were guests of the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. The choirs have performed at Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas, Carnegie Hall, St. Peter’s Basilica, and the White House for former President and First Lady Obama. Allegro is honored to be a frequent guest of the Kansas City Symphony. Auditions are held each April. For more information, visit allegrokc.org.



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