



ROTTERDAMS
PHILHARMONISCH
ORKEST

Programme Notes

Commemoration Concert

Thu 11 May 2023 • 20.15

Fri 12 May 2023 • 20.15

Sun 14 May 2023 • 14.15

PROGRAMME

conductor **Lahav Shani**
soprano **Chen Reiss**
alto **Anna Larsson**
chorus **Laurens Symfonisch**

Gustav Mahler 1860-1911
Symphony No. 2 in C minor,
'Resurrection' [1888-94; rev. 1903]
for large orchestra, two solo voices
and mixed choir

- Allegro maestoso
- Andante moderato
- In ruhig fließender Bewegung
- 'Urlicht'. Sehr feierlich, aber schlicht
- Im Tempo des Scherzos: Wild herausfahrend - Langsam - Allegro energico - Langsam

Concert ends at around 22.10 / 16.10

Most recent performances by our orchestra:

May 2015, conductor Manfred Honeck, soprano Christina Landshamer, alto Christianne Stotijn, Netherlands Radio Choir

One hour before the start of the concert, Alexander Klapwijk will give an introduction (in Dutch) to the programme, admission €5. Tickets are available at the hall, payment by debit card. The introduction is free for Vrienden.

Cover: The Destroyed City, sculpture by Ossip Zadkine (1953). Photo Museum Beelden aan Zee.



St. Anthony Preaching to the Fishes. Painting attributed to Francisco de Herrera the Younger (c. 1630), collection Detroit Institute of Arts



Music for remembrance

In our commemoration of significant events music often plays an important role. Slow, romantic pieces, such as Barber's *Adagio* or the *Adagietto* from Mahler's *Fifth* are sometimes especially able to capture the mood. In commemorating the bombardment of Rotterdam, Mahler's *Second Symphony* seems to be claiming an increasingly permanent place.

Reconstruction

In 1990, half a century after the 1940 bombardment, Bernard Haitink conducted the Rotterdam Philharmonic in a shattering performance of Mahler's *Second*. Eight years ago the honour fell to Manfred Honeck, and now, in 2023, 83 years following the bombardment, Lahav Shani takes the baton.

There are various reasons for judging this to be exactly the right work to perform. Firstly, the symphony's adopted name, even if it did not come from the composer himself. 'Auferstehung' - 'resurrection' - can symbolise the manner in which the people of Rotterdam responded to such an intensely devastating moment in their history. Of course, on 14 May of each year our thoughts focus on the destruction and the victims; however, a few days later on Reconstruction Day, we celebrate

how the people rolled up their sleeves to ensure that the city could rise like a phoenix from the ashes. Both these elements are to be found in this symphony, especially in the first and last movements.

The period between these moments of destruction and rebuilding, capitulation and liberty, was a time of oppression during which Mahler's music was banned. The music was 'Jewish', and therefore degenerate art. Against that background, every modern performance of Mahler's work is in some sense a victory over the pernicious ideology of the nazis. Certainly when performed by an orchestra that lost almost its entire library to the conflagration of 1940.

Traumatic experience

In 1888, such a resurrection theme still lay far ahead when Mahler began work on the symphony's first movement. Having just

completed his *First Symphony*, within a few months he was composing a funeral march, for the hero of the *First*, in whom he saw his own reflection. But as successful as the *First* had been, Mahler really struggled with this *Second*, with little idea of how to proceed. The inspiration for a solution was a long time coming and not until 1891 did he publish the score, and even then only as a stand-alone symphonic poem entitled *Totenfeier*. He also took the plunge and played the work to conductor Hans von Bülow, a great proponent of modern music and one of his idols. It would have been better had he not. The conductor responded with horror and recoiled from this overconfident music, even sticking his fingers in his ears. It was a traumatic experience for Mahler which cost him another two years to find the confidence and inspiration to start work on the middle movements.

Inspiration

Inspiration came in the summer of 1893. Mahler is on holiday, and he retreats, together with his brother and sisters, to the idyllic surroundings of Steinbach on the Attersee to compose. He requires absolute stillness. His family helps by chasing off birds and taking away cowbells. But it achieves results. He first orchestrates a previously composed song from the song cycle *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, called 'Des Antonius von Padua fischpredigt', and then creates an instrumental version of the song that serves perfectly as a scherzo, the third movement of his symphony. A lucky find. This immediately inspires him to compose an idyllic Austrian

dance, a Ländler, which finds a place in the second movement. For the finale, he envisages something bigger, with choir and soloists, following the example of Beethoven's *Ninth*. He searches through world literature, and the Bible, in search of a fitting text, but in vain. Ironically, it is the same Hans von Bülow who posthumously offers him the solution. At his funeral a text by eighteenth-century poet Friedrich Klopstock is read out. As Mahler listens to the first line, 'Auferstehn, ja auferstehn wirst du', ('Arise, yes, you shall arise again') he realises that his

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search is over. Two couplets are supplemented by six from his own hand, enabling him to finally shape his last movement. As an introduction to the resurrection he depicts the Last Judgment, adopting the dies irae motif from the Catholic requiem mass, including an earthquake and another funeral march. Anyone

searching for a musical equivalent of Zadkine's *The Destroyed City*, the iconic sculpture representing bomb-flattened Rotterdam, will find it in this section in particular.

Abrupt transition

A final problem for Mahler to solve was the abrupt transition from scherzo to finale. He faced a similar problem at the end of the first movement, the funeral march, with a prescribed pause of at least five minutes: an instruction that is rarely taken literally. In this case he opted to incorporate an additional movement, a new song from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, entitled 'Urlicht', with which he seamlessly linked the two movements. In this way he introduces the human voice into his symphony. And he makes a clear link here with the finale: the first notes are the same as those first sung by the choir, emerging from the silence and from deep within.

It is indeed remarkable that such a cohesive whole ever emerged from such disparate parts. The symphony's premiere in Berlin on 13 December 1893, conducted by Mahler himself, was a sensation and signalled his definitive breakthrough as a composer. It proved to be a work on which he could build his future reputation. Many successful performances at significant moments in his career lay ahead. And all this makes the *Second* a work fit to commemorate the bombardment of Rotterdam.

Elco Beinema

Texts

IV. Urlicht

O Röschen rot!
Der Mensch liegt in größter Not!
Der Mensch liegt in größter Pein!
Je lieber möchte ich im Himmel sein!

Da kam ich auf einen breiten Weg;
Da kam ein Engelein und wollt mich abweisen.
Ach nein! Ich ließ mich nicht abweisen!
Ich bin von Gott und will wieder zu Gott!
Der liebe Gott wird mir ein Lichtchen geben,
Wird leuchten mir bis in das ewig selig Leben!

V.

Aufersteh'n, ja aufersteh'n wirst du,
Mein Staub, nach kurzer Ruh'!
Unsterblich Leben
Wird der dich rief dir geben!
Wieder aufzublüh'n wirst du gesät!
Der Herr der Ernte geht
Und sammelt Garben
Uns ein, die starben!

O glaube, mein Herz, o glaube:
Es geht dir nichts verloren!
Dein ist, ja dein, was du gesehnt!
Dein, was du geliebt, was du gestritten!
O glaube, du wardst nicht umsonst geboren!
Hast nicht umsonst gelebt, gelitten!

Was entstanden ist, das muss vergehen!
Was vergangen, auferstehen!
Hör' auf zu beben!
Bereite dich zu leben!

O Schmerz! Du Alldurchdringer!
Dir bin ich entrunnen!
O Tod! Du Allbezwinger!
Nun bist du bezwungen!

Mit Flügeln, die ich mir errungen,
In heißem Liebesstreben,
Werd' ich entschweben
Zum Licht, zu dem kein Aug' gedrungen!
Sterben werd' ich, um zu leben!

Aufersteh'n, ja aufersteh'n wirst du,
Mein Herz, in einem Nu!
Was du geschlagen
zu Gott wird es dich tragen!

IV. Primal Light

O red rose!
Man lies in greatest need!
Man lies in greatest pain!
How much would I rather be in heaven!

I came upon a wide path;
An angel came and wanted to turn me away.
Ah no! I would not be turned away!
I am from God and will return to God!
The dear Lord will give me a small light,
Will light my way to eternal, blessed life!

V.

Rise again, yes, you will rise again,
My dust, after a short rest!
Immortal life
Will be given to you by Him who called you.
You are sown in order to bloom again!
The Lord of the harvest goes
And gathers the sheaves
Of us who have died.

Oh, believe, my heart, believe:
You have lost nothing!
Yours, yes, yours is what you have longed for,
Yours, what you loved, what you fought for!
Oh, believe: You were not born in vain!
You have not lived and suffered in vain!

What was created must perish.
What has perished must rise again.
Tremble no more!
Prepare yourself to live!

Oh, pain, all-pervading,
From you have I been wrested!
Oh, death, all-conquering,
Now are you conquered!

With wings that I have earned
In fervent, loving aspiration,
Will I soar
To the light that no eye has penetrated!
I shall die, that I may live!

Rise again, yes, you will rise again,
My heart, in an instant!
What you have fought for,
Will carry you to God!

Lahav Shani - Chief conductor

Born: Tel Aviv, Israel

Current position: chief conductor Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra; music director Israel Philharmonic Orchestra

Before: principal guest conductor Vienna Symphony Orchestra from 2017 to 2020

Education: piano at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music Tel Aviv; conducting and piano at the Academy of Music Hanns Eisler Berlin; mentor: Daniel Barenboim

Breakthrough: 2013, after winning the Gustav Mahler International Conducting Competition in Bamberg

Subsequently: Staatskapelle Berlin, Berlin State Opera, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Staatskapelle Dresden, Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra

Debut Rotterdam Philharmonic: 2016



Photo: Eduardus Lee



Photo: Paul Marc Mitchell

Chen Reiss - Soprano

Born: Herzliya, Israël

Education: piano from age five, singing lessons from age fourteen

Debut: as a member of the ensemble of the Bavarian State Opera

Solo appearances: Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Berliner Philharmoniker, Wiener Philharmoniker, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Chicago Symphony, Philharmonia Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris

Opera: Wiener Staatsoper, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Teatro alla Scala, Semperoper Dresden, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Dutch National Opera, Wiener Festwochen, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Israeli Opera

Roles: Sophie/*Rosenkavalier*, Gretel/*Hänsel und Gretel*, Pamina/*Zauberflöte*, Zerlina/*Don Giovanni*, Gilda/*Rigoletto*, Liu/*Turandot*, Ginevra/*Ariodante*

Recitals: with pianists Charles Spencer and Alexander Schmalcz

Debut Rotterdam Philharmonic: 2023

Anna Larsson - Alto

Born: Stockholm, Sweden

Education: Adolf Fredrik's Music School, Opera Studio 67, University College of Opera, Stockholm
Awards: Swedish Court Singer (2011), Royal Medal 'Litteris et Artibus' (2014)

Breakthrough: 1997, as a soloist in Mahler's Symphony No. 2 with the Berliner Philharmoniker conducted by Claudio Abbado

Subsequently: opera (focussing on Wagner) in Berlin (Staatsoper), Vienna (Staatsoper), Munich (Bavarian State Opera), Salzburg (Festival), Aix-en-Provence (Festival), concert appearances with Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Wiener Philharmoniker, London Philharmonic, Concentus Musicus Wien with conductors such as Daniel Barenboim, Gustavo Dudamel, Bernard Haitink, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Lorin Maazel, Zubin Mehta, Sir Simon Rattle and Esa-Pekka Salonen

Debut Rotterdam Philharmonic: 2023



Photo: Anna Thorbjörnsson



Photo: Patrycja Lassocinska

Laurens Symfonisch - Chorus

Founded: 2013, in consultation with de Doelen and the Rotterdam Philharmonic, as an extension of the Laurens Collegium Rotterdam

Conductor: Wiecher Mandemaker

Repertoire: choral symphonic repertoire

Debut: 2013 with Brahms' A German Requiem

Co-operations: Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra (Honegger: Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher), BBC Symphony Orchestra (Howells: Hymnus Paradisi), BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra (Britten: Ballad of Heroes), Residentie Orkest (Verdi: Requiem), Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century (Beethoven: Symphony No. 9, Fidelio)

Debut Rotterdam Philharmonic: 2014

Agenda

Fri 26 May 2023 • 20.15

conductor **Manfred Honeck**
cello **Kian Soltani**

MacMillan Largetto

Schumann Cello Concerto

Vali The Girl from Shiraz

Beethoven Symphony No. 5

Sun 4 June 2023 • 10.30

Music for Breakfast No. 6

with **Charlotte Potgieter** and

Letizia Sciarone (Violin), and

colleagues from the orchestra

Chamber Music by **Borodin**,

Dvořák, and **Martinů**

Fri 9 June 2023 • 17.00

piano **Daniil Trifonov** and **Lahav Shani**

percussion **Danny van de Wal** and
Martijn Boom

Rachmaninov Suite No. 2 for two
pianos

Bartók Sonata for two pianos and
percussion

Fri 9 June 2023 • 20.15

Sun 11 June 2023 • 14.15

conductor **Lahav Shani**

piano **Daniil Trifonov**

Copland Fanfare for the Common
Man

Gershwin Piano Concerto

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 6
'Pathétique'

Fri 8 September 2023 • 20.15

conductor **Manoj Kamps**

soprano **Katherine Dain**

voice **Diamanda La Berge Dramm**

Van Veldhuizen unde imber et
ignes

Debussy Prélude à l'après-midi
d'un faune

Debussy From Nocturnes: Fêtes

Björk Songs

Sondheim Songs

Musicians

Chief Conductor

Lahav Shani

Honorary Conductor

Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Principal Assistant Conductor

Bertie Baigent

First Violin

Marieke Blankestijn,
leader

Quirine Scheffers

Hed Yaron Meyerson

Saskia Otto

Arno Bons

Mireille van der Wart

Cor van der Linden

Rachel Browne

Maria Dingjan

Marie-José Schrijner

Noëmi Bodden

Petra Visser

Sophia Torrenga

Hadewijch Hofland

Annerien Stuker

Alexandra van

Beveren

Koen Stapert

Second Violin

Charlotte Potgieter

Cecilia Ziano

Frank de Groot

Laurens van Vliet

Tomoko Hara

Elina Staphorius

Jun Yi Dou

Bob Bruyn

Letizia Sciarone

Eefje Habraken

Maija Reinikainen

Wim Ruitenbeek

Babette van den Berg

Melanie Broers

Viola

Anne Huser

Roman Spitzer

Galahad Samson

Kerstin Bonk

Lex Prummel

Janine Baller

Francis Saunders

Veronika Lénártová

Rosalinde Kluck

León van den Berg

Olfje van der Klein

Cello

Emanuele Silvestri

Eugene Lifschitz

Joanna Pachucka

Daniel Petrovitsch

Mario Rio

Gé van Leeuwen

Eelco Beinema

Carla Schrijner

Pepijn Meeuws

Yi-Ting Fang

Double Bass

Matthew Midgley

Ying Lai Green

Jonathan Focquaert

Robert Franenberg

Harke Wiersma

Arjen Leendertz

Ricardo Neto

Flute

Juliette Hurel

Joséphine Olech

Désirée Woudenberg

Flute/Piccolo

Beatriz Da Baião

Oboe

Remco de Vries

Karel Schoofs

Anja van der Maten

Oboe/Cor Anglais

Ron Tjhuis

Clarinet

Julien Hervé

Bruno Bonansea

Clarinet/ Bass Clarinet

Romke-Jan Wijmenga

Bassoon

Pieter Nuytten

Lola Descourts

Marianne Prommel

Bassoon/ Contrabassoon

Hans Wisse

Horn

David Fernández

Alonso

Wendy Leliveld

Richard Speetjens

Laurens Otto

Pierre Buizer

Trumpet

Alex Elia

Simon Wierenga

Jos Verspagen

Trombone

Pierre Volders

Alexander Verbeek

Remko de Jager

Bass Trombone

Rommert Groenhof

Tuba

Hendrik-Jan Renes

Timpani

Danny van de Wal

Percussion

Ronald Ent

Martijn Boom

Adriaan Feyaerts

Harp

Charlotte Sprenkels