

Eternal Love

Maestro Series

8PM, FRIDAY MAY 21, 2010

QPAC Concert Hall

Conductor

Johannes Fritzsch

Soloist

Lilli Paasikivi, Mezzo soprano

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Symphony No.8 in B minor, D.759 *Unfinished*

Allegro moderato

Andante con moto

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

***Rückertlieder* (five songs to poems of Friedrich Rückert)**

Ich atmet' einen linden Duft

Liebst du um Schönheit

Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder

Um Mitternacht

Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen

Lilli Paasikivi Mezzo soprano

INTERVAL

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Symphony No.2 in D, Op.73

Allegro non troppo

Adagio non troppo

Allegretto grazioso (Quasi andantino)

Allegro con spirito

Concert Hall Etiquette

To ensure an enjoyable concert experience for all, please remember to turn off your mobile phone (and other electronic devices) before entering the concert hall. If you need to cough or sneeze, please muffle the sound with a handkerchief or scarf, or excuse yourself from the auditorium to recover. Thank you, and enjoy the performance.

Program Notes

Why is **Schubert's** 'Unfinished' Symphony so much admired? Because of its lyrical outpouring of one melody after another? Because romantically-minded people are attracted to the idea of the incomplete masterpiece? Or because of the sentimental legend that Schubert was unable to finish his symphony through illness and lack of public appreciation?

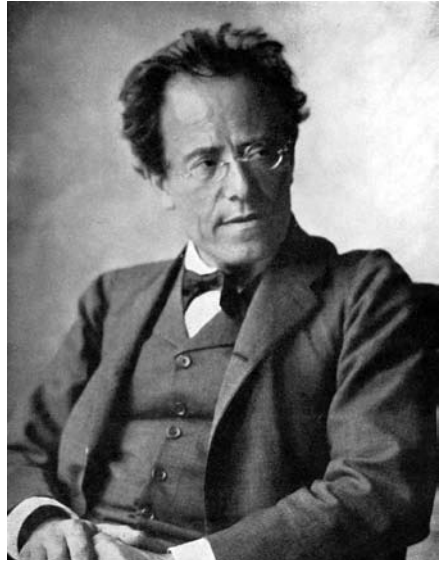
That idea can be banished by noting that Schubert composed the music in 1822. Still to come was the grandly affirmative 'Great' C major Symphony. In the remaining six years of his life Schubert could have returned to the Unfinished and completed it. Instead, two movements survive, and an incomplete sketch of a third.

There have been attempts to finish the symphony, most of them completing Schubert's sketches for the *Scherzo*, and using as finale one of the Entr'actes from Schubert's incidental music for *Rosamunde*. Musicologists these days, however, agree that the symphony should be left as it stands. The scherzo sketches are an anti-climax after the originality, power and skill of the first two movements.

How do you make a symphony out of such long musical paragraphs? No-one had done it before. Schubert does it superbly, for two movements – then he breaks down.



Schubert



Mahler

The explanation lies partly in a crisis in Schubert's search for a new symphonic form and expression. The Unfinished was one of four attempts at a symphony between the Sixth of 1818 and the 'Great' C major (No.9) of 1825. Unlike the Unfinished, of which two movements are fully scored, the other three remained more or less in sketch form.

The two movements which constitute the Unfinished Symphony seem, on first hearing, like two slow movements, one after another. Schubert's musical thinking is extraordinarily broad, but this was necessary (as Harold Truscott has pointed out) to accommodate musical thought 'so dramatically quick that any faster tempo would make it impossible to comprehend.' This is Schubert's new musical language, a new kind of long-range harmonic movement: amazing modulations, but all making sense in the whole.

Adapted from a note by David Garrett © 1998

Mahler produced two sets of songs to Rückert's verse. The *Kindertotenlieder* (Songs on the death of children) has been described as Mahler's greatest song-cycle. He also worked on a further five Rückert poems, publishing them as separate works (for voice and piano initially). After his death a publisher grouped them together with two songs from

Des Knaben Wunderhorn (the collection of folk-poetry which so inspired the composer) and named them 'Seven last songs'. The five *Rückertlieder* do not constitute a song-cycle. There is no overarching narrative or central theme. The songs can therefore be sung in whatever order the soloist decides. There are, however, some recurrent poetic ideas. In *Ich atmet' einen linden Duft* Mahler is always sensitive to the beauties of the natural environment. The delicacy of the orchestration and the seemingly rhapsodic form of the song beautifully represent the subtlety of the scent of the linden tree and the fragility of emotion.

Liebst du um Schönheit offers sets of short stanzas, matched by Mahler's strophic musical form, in which the poet admits he can't offer beauty or treasure to the beloved but will love for love's sake, faithfully and forever. *Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder* dramatises the conviction of many artists that a poem or song should not be seen until it is finished, and that the work itself should happen in secrecy, as bees make honey in the privacy of their hive. Mahler, of course, can't resist the gentle evocation of bees in the song's accompaniment.

Arguably Mahler's greatest single song, *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen* is also about the artist's withdrawal from the world in order to make art; the reward for creation is to live alone 'in my heaven...my love... my song'. The melody of this song is used in heavily modified form in the famous *adagietto* of the Fifth Symphony. *Um Mitternacht* dramatises the soul's experience of existential despair in imagery of an empty universe and eternally suffering humanity. Mahler eschews any orchestral warmth by omitting the string sections from this song. The climax of the song (and the reason it is frequently placed last in performance) arrives as the poet commends all things into the hand of God.

Gordon Kerry © 2007

After the 15 year struggle of the First Symphony, **Brahms'** Second Symphony emerged with comparative rapidity during the summer and autumn of 1877, the year after



Brahms

the First's premiere. Brahms worked on the Second Symphony while staying at Pörtlach on the Wörthersee. It was an idyllic setting and Brahms took daily walks in the surrounding countryside. Perhaps these biographical facts, together with the genial character of the symphony's opening themes, led to this being dubbed Brahms' *Pastoral* Symphony.

The pastoral references are misleading, however. While there is no doubting the change of mood from the First Symphony, Brahms was not the sort of composer who simply depicted cloudless skies and rural bliss. He referred to those who dubbed it his *Pastoral* as 'asses'! Yet the Viennese audience who attended the premiere on 30 December 1877 under Hans Richter immediately recognised another masterpiece. As always in his symphonies, Brahms contains his Romantic impulses within a firm but freely-developing Classical structure. It opens with three notes on the cellos and double basses and from this simple motto device a host of structural landmarks emerge throughout the first movement, including the justly-famous principal *Allegro* theme.

Cellos and bassoons present the main material of the slow movement in a kind of statement and counter-statement effect. Rather than a Scherzo proper the third movement is an *Allegretto grazioso* in a rondo-like arrangement. Effectively, this lightly-scored movement serves as a kind of spirited intermezzo, linking the drama of the slow movement with the lighter finale, which, when it arrives, is almost Haydnesque in its buoyant spirits.

Adapted from Martin Buzacott, *Symphony Australia* © 1997

Rückertlieder Text

ICH ATMET' EINEN LINDEN DUFT

Ich atmet' einen linden Duft.
Im Zimmer stand
Ein Zweig der Linde,
Ein Angebinde
Von lieber Hand.
Wie lieblich war der Lindenduft!
Wie lieblich ist der Lindenduft!
Das Lindenreis
Brachst du gelinde;
Ich atme leis
Im Duft der Linde
Der Liebe linden Duft.

LIEBST DU UM SCHÖNHEIT

Liebst du um Schönheit, o nicht mich liebe!
Liebe die Sonne, sie trägt ein gold'nes Haar!
Liebst du um Jugend, o nicht mich liebe!
Liebe den Frühling, der jung ist jedes Jahr!
Liebst du um Schätze, o nicht mich liebe!
Liebe die Meerfrau, sie hat viel Perlen klar!
Liebst du um Liebe, o ja – mich liebe!
Liebe mich immer, dich lieb ich immerdar!

BLICHE MIR NICHT IN DIE LIEDER

Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder!
Meine Augen schlag' ich nieder,
Wie ertappt auf böser Tat.
Selber darf ich nicht getrauen,
Ihrem Wachsen zuzuschauen.
Deine Neugier ist Verrat!
Bienen, wenn sie Zellen bauen,
Lassen auch nicht zu sich schauen,
Schauen selbst auch nicht zu.
Wenn die reichen Honigwaben
Sie zu Tag gefördert haben,
Dann vor allen nasche du!

UM MITTERNACHT

Um Mitternacht
Hab' ich gewacht
Und aufgeblickt zum Himmel;

I breathed a gentle fragrance.
In the room stood
a branch of a lime tree,
a gift
from a dear hand.
How lovely was the lime fragrance!
How lovely is the lime fragrance!
The sprig
from the lime tree
you plucked so gently;
softly I breathed
Love's delicate fragrance.

If you love for beauty, do not love me!
Love the sun, with its golden hair!
If you love for youth, do not love me!
Love the Spring, which is young every year!
If you love for treasure, then do not love me!
Love the mermaid, who has many bright pearls!
If you love for love, oh yes, then love me!
Love me always, as I will always love you!

Do not look at my songs!
My eyes are lowered as if
caught in a malicious act.
Even I do not dare
to watch them as they grow:
your inquisitiveness is treason!
Bees too, when building their cells
let no-one behold them,
neither do they perceive themselves.
When the rich honeycomb
is hauled into the light of day
then you shall be the first to taste the sweetness.

At midnight
I awoke
and looked up to the Heavens;

Kein Stern vom Sterngewimmel
Hat mir gelacht
Um Mitternacht.
Um Mitternacht
Hab' ich gedacht
Hinaus in dunkel Schranken.
Es hat kein Lichtgedanken
Mir Trost gebracht
Um Mitternacht.
Um Mitternacht
Nahm ich in acht
Die Schläge meines Herzens;
Ein einz'ger Puls des Schmerzens
War angefacht
Um Mitternacht.
Um Mitternacht
Kämpft' ich die Schlacht,
O Menschheit, deiner Leiden;
Nicht konnt' ich sie entscheiden
Mit meiner Macht
Um Mitternacht.
Um Mitternacht
Hab' ich die Macht
In Deiner Hand gegeben
Herr über Tod und Leben,
Du hältst die Wacht
Um Mitternacht!

ICH BIN DER WELT ABHANDEN GEKOMMEN

Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen
Mit der ich sonst viele Zeit verdorben;
Sie hat so lange nicht von mir vernommen,
Sie mag wohl glauben, ich sei gestorben!
Es ist mir auch gar nichts daran gelegen,
Ob sie mich für gestorben hält.
Ich kann auch gar nichts sagen dagegen,
Denn wirklich bin ich gestorben der Welt.
Ich bin gestorben dem Weltgetümmel
Und ruh' in einem stillen Gebiet.
Ich leb' allein in meinem Himmel,
In meinem Lieben, in meinem Lied.

no star in the busy firmament
smiled on me
at midnight.
At midnight
my thoughts
stretched out beyond the darkness
and no friendly light
brought consolation to me
at midnight.
At midnight
I heeded
the beating of my heart;
a single pulse of pain
was roused
at midnight.
At midnight
I fought the battle,
O humanity, of your suffering,
but could not resolve it
with my strength
at midnight.
At midnight
I gave up all my strength
into your hand;
Lord over death and life,
You keep watch
at midnight!

I have lost touch with the world
where once too much time I wasted.
For so long has nothing been heard of me
that those who think of me imagine me dead.
It is nothing to me
that they think me dead.
I cannot say that they are wrong,
for truly I am dead to the world.
I am dead to the world's tumult
and rest in calm domains.
I live alone in my Heaven
in my devotion, in my song.

Biographies



Johannes Fritsch

Johannes Fritsch, Chief Conductor

Johannes Fritsch is currently the Chief Conductor of the Queensland Symphony Orchestra and the Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Grazer Philharmonisches Orchester and Grazer Oper, Austria. He recently held the position of Chief Conductor of Staatsoper Nürnberg.

Maestro Fritsch was born in Meissen, Germany; his higher education was received at the Carl Maria von Weber Music Academy in Dresden, majoring in conducting and piano.

After a period in Rostock, Mo. Fritsch accepted the position of Kapellmeister with the



Lilli Paasikivi

Staatsoper Dresden, Semperoper, where he conducted more than 350 opera and ballet performances within five years.

The German reunification enabled Mo. Fritsch to accept engagements outside of Eastern Europe; he has led many orchestras in Germany and internationally including: Hamburger Sinfoniker, Düsseldorfer Sinfoniker, Philharmonie Essen, Nationaltheater-Orchester Mannheim, Staatskapelle Schwerin, Berliner Sinfonie Orchester, Staatskapelle Dresden, Norddeutsche Philharmonie Rostock, Staatsorchester Halle, the Swedish Radio Orchestra, the Norwegian Radio Orchestra, the Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra, the

Orchestre Philharmonique Strassbourg, the Orchestra National de Montpellier, the Orchestra National du Capitole de Toulouse, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Victoria, the Tasmanian, Adelaide and West Australian Symphony Orchestras.

Opera Companies with which he has worked include: Sächsische Staatsoper Dresden, Opernhaus Köln, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Komische Oper Berlin, Opera Bastille Paris, Grazer Oper, the Royal Opera Stockholm, Malmö Operan and Opera Australia in Sydney and Melbourne (including *Wozzeck*, *Don Giovanni*, *Carmen*, *Tosca*, *Rigoletto*, *Salome*, *Der Rosenkavalier*).

Johannes Fritzsich is married to the Australian violinist, Susan Collins – with their three daughters, they divide their time between Europe and Australia.

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Lilli Paasikivi, Mezzo soprano

Finnish mezzo Lilli Paasikivi appears at the world's most prestigious performing venues and music festivals. From Los Angeles to Salzburg, such is the quality of her singing that she is now sought after by many of the world's foremost conductors and leading orchestras. Since making her debut with Sir Simon Rattle and the Berliner Philharmoniker, as Fricka in the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence's production of *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, the Wagner roles have become central to her work on stage. House debuts have included La Monnaie, as Brangäne, Hamburgerische Staatsoper, as Fricka, and this season will see her house and role debut as Kundry for Oper Frankfurt under Sebastian Weigle.

Central to Lilli Paasikivi's concert repertoire are the Mahler song-cycles and Symphonies and notable appearances have included both *Das Lied von der Erde* and *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Esa-Pekka Salonen, Symphony No.3 for her debut with the

London Symphony Orchestra under Paavo Järvi, and *Kindertotenlieder* with the New World Symphony Orchestra under Michael Tilson Thomas. She has also recorded Symphony No.3 with the Philharmonia Orchestra under Benjamin Zander for Telarc, and Symphony No.8 with the London Symphony Orchestra under Valery Gergiev for LSO Live. Lilli Paasikivi made her debut with The New York Philharmonic in the world-premiere performances of Rodion Shchedrin's mystical opera *The Enchanted Wanderer*; and at the BBC Proms with Osmo Vänskä and the Lahti Symphony Orchestra in a rare performance of Sibelius's incidental music for *The Tempest*.

At home in Finland Lilli Paasikivi is a valued member of Finnish National Opera where her roles have included Carmen, Marina in *Boris Godunov*, and Octavian; and future plans will include her debut in the role of Amneris. Other international operatic appearances have included her debut at Opéra National de Lyon as Richard Strauss' *Der Komponist*; and the world-premiere of Toshio Hosokawa's opera *Hanjo* based on the novel by Yukio Mishima at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence.

Lilli Paasikivi's other recordings include: Beethoven's Symphony No.9 with Gewandhausorchester Leipzig under Riccardo Chailly; Sibelius' Kullervo Symphony under Vänskä for BIS; Sibelius' *Maiden in the Tower* under Paavo Järvi for Virgin; Alma Mahler's Complete Songs with Jorma Panula for Ondine; and Stravinsky's *Mavra* with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra under Peter Eötvös.

Further highlights this season include the performance of *Das Lied von der Erde* with Ensemble Intercontemporain under the baton of Susanna Mälkki and with Sydney Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Ashkenazy; and *Faust Szenen* with Gewandhausorchester Leipzig under Christopher Hogwood.

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