

GUSTAV MAHLER

SYMPHONY NO. 10

completed and arranged for ensemble

by MICHELLE CASTELLETTI

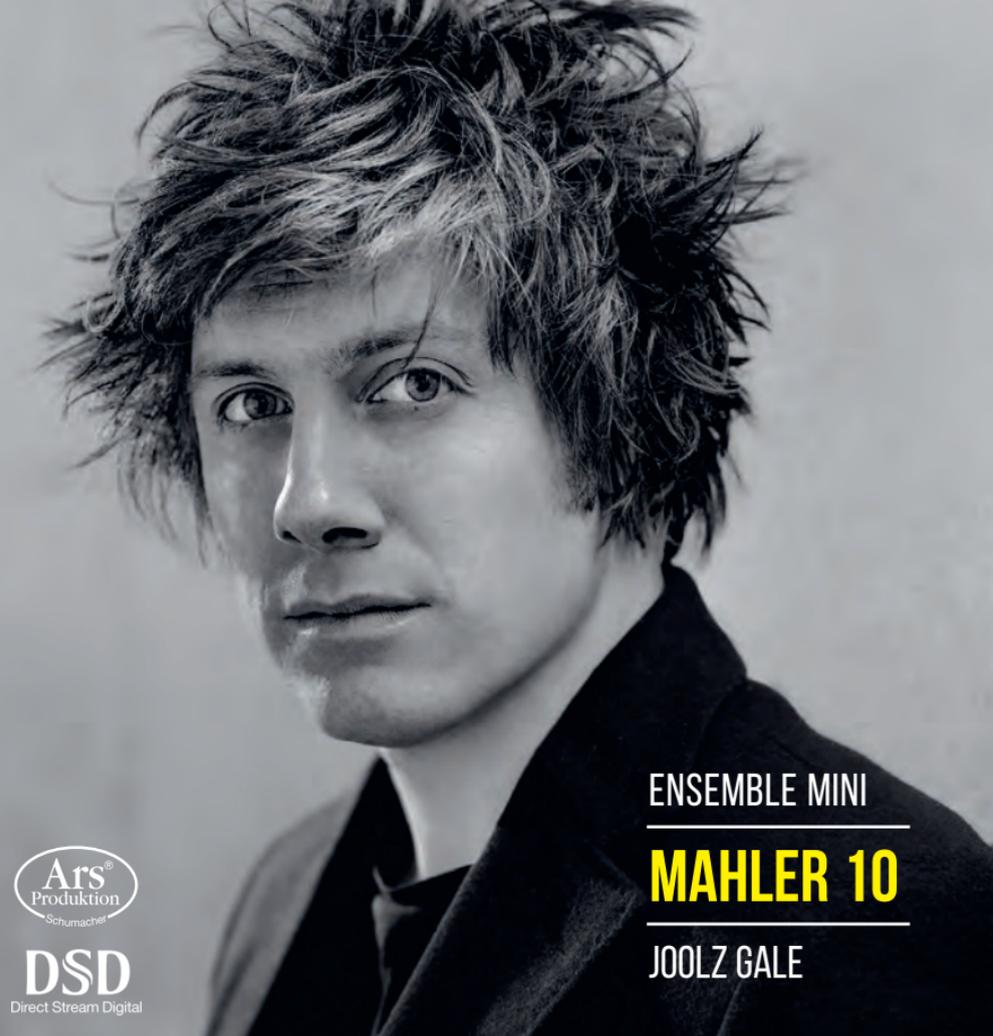
- I. Adagio 24:08
- II. Scherzo 11:49
- III. Purgatorio 03:52
- IV. (Scherzo) 13:26
- V. Finale 23:25

Total duration: 76:50

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Christina Calvelo (assistant to Jaolz Gale)
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This is the world premiere recording of Michelle Castelletti's version for ensemble of Mahler's 10th Symphony, made possible by the generous support and kind permission of Universal Edition, Vienna.

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GUSTAV MAHLER (1860-1911)

SYMPHONY NO. 10 (1911)

completed and arranged for ensemble by MICHELLE CASTELLETTI

- I. Adagio | 24:08
- II. Scherzo | 11:49
- III. Purgatorio | 03:52
- IV. (Scherzo) | 13:26
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During this very difficult period in so many people's lives, Ensemble Mini's unique interpretation of Mahler's 10th Symphony is a powerful statement of humanity and hope, from which we can all draw inspiration. We would like to thank these wonderful soloists for this incredible gift.

Maxim Neretin
CEO, Aurora Group
Nikolai Golubev & Andrei Rudenko
Managing Partners, Anker Industrial Group

ISOLATION AS CONSOLATION

'Number 10 is a symphony that transcends thoughts of death and ends with a gloriously affirmative and positive assertion of man's spiritual victory.'

Michael Kennedy

Upon his death in 1911, Mahler's "unfinished" 10th Symphony was left only in a draft of sketches and reduced voices. He began writing it in July 1910 in the mountain village of Toblach in South Tyrol but paused in September of that year to revise his 9th Symphony. Although he did not live to complete or perform the 10th, he did finish the entire outline of the work, with the first two movements and part of the third drafted in orchestral score and the rest of the work drafted in short score, usually with 4 staves (approx. 8 instrumental lines) but sometimes with passages left only as a melody. The overall storyline of the symphony, however, with all of its complexities, emotions, memories and ideas, were sketched from beginning to end.

It is this "mini-score" that gives Michelle Castelletti's reconstruction for mini-orchestra a certain authenticity. This isn't just a regular transcription. It's a genuine and meaningful attempt to get to the heart of Mahler's score, in which its many colours and sentiments are left powerfully exposed. The size of Castelletti's ensemble is similar to that for which Schoenberg composed his Chamber Symphony No. 1 just a few years before the 10th. Mahler was a great supporter of Schoenberg, who increasingly believed in a more concise and transparent symphonic model of fluctuating tonality, which we see in Mahler's 10th more than any work before. This symphony is thus the unequivocal inspiration and precursor to the 2nd Viennese School, the post-tonal period immediately following Mahler's death that led to Schoenberg's Society for Private Musical Performances (Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen) in Vienna. Although short-lived (1918-21), this was an important platform for symphonic works of contemporary composers (including Berg, Webern and the late Mahler) to be heard within the intimate setting of the chamber ensemble.

Of course, we should not pretend that Mahler intended this symphony to be performed by anything other than a full-scale orchestra. The purpose of this recording is not to simulate Mahler's desired orchestration but rather to reach its essence and offer a new perspective. Perhaps the many more challenges faced by the soloists of a chamber ensemble can portray Mahler's message in a more direct and personal way, for example.

We hear the clear turmoil of Mahler's life in this symphony. He already knew that his heart was ailing. But he had also found out in the months before that his wife, Alma, was having an affair with the architect Walter Gropius. The many scrawls and cries written out on the manuscript of the 10th Symphony are clearly a testament to his great pain.

However, the idea (amongst some) that this symphony was written only as a result of a marital crisis is a grave misunderstanding. This is a symphony that, if it had been heard at the time, would have changed music forever, including that of Schoenberg and the 2nd Viennese School. Mahler was on a completely different level to all those around him, including his wife, Alma. Perhaps their marital crisis was rather rooted in the significance of Mahler's artistry, which was undeniably at its height. He was composing transcendental music of a transcendental human being; this is someone with a deep life-long understanding for the human soul and all its complexities.

We have to remember what came before. The 1909 works *Das Lied von der Erde* and 9th Symphony (which Ensemble Mini also performed before making this recording) are both farewells of a human, to the body and spirit. Whilst we see in them both the constant battle between life and death and a clear reflection of Mahler's humanity, the 10th Symphony is a more spiritual testament that transcends the human soul and seeks to embolden a quest to live in defiance of the human struggle.

In that sense, it is his purest work, one of honesty that searches for a higher beauty. It takes us on a holy quest to reach for the subliminal magic of another world, in the same way that the human soul demands constant nourishment.

Rather than a farewell, this is a symphony of acceptance, as though death has already come. Already in the very first note of the symphony, we find ourselves in no man's land, a complete void where everything has disappeared, be it tonality, harmony, gravity, momentum, fear, courage, people or society. Mahler conveys complete desolation.

This recording is being released in the middle of the 2020-21 COVID-19 pandemic, the most terrible crisis to face the world since the Second World War. Billions of people are alone and isolated, many of them left in absolute poverty and without jobs. If there is ever a piece of music for this moment in history, it is Mahler's 10th Symphony. As well as convincingly portraying society's loneliness, it proposes that out of a crisis comes acceptance. And, more significantly, out of acceptance comes love, the embodiment of humanity. Indeed, sometimes we are at our kindest when we are alone.

We have the opportunity to reflect, dream, forgive, change and grow. Many of you reading this will understand (and have perhaps recently experienced) how light can come from darkness, if only we ignite the right flame within the right mind-set. Mahler understood this very well. For all of its trials and tribulations, isolation can be consolation.

1. ADAGIO

The Adagio is structured by three starkly contrasting worlds. The first is nothing more than a solo viola. The second is a hymn of passion, sung mostly in the strings. The third is a folkloric dance, more prominent in the winds. All three worlds repeatedly return to us in newly morphed ways to take us on a strange and ambiguous tonal journey.

The first world opens the symphony with the aforementioned solitarily voice. Never before has a composer been so bold as to leave an instrument alone for so long. This is certainly no cadenza. It is a carefully crafted narration. We are sucked in immediately and there is nowhere to hide; our only option is to listen.

Perhaps this is a call to prayer, such as when the cantor sings plainchant before the choir begins to sing mass. Or perhaps it is rather like the chorus of a Shakespearean or Aeschylean tragedy in which the narrator not only speaks directly to the audience but is also an omniscient and reliable witness.



Perhaps this narrator is our spiritual guide, too. Could it be an oracle like Tiresias or Cassandra, prophesising to non-believers? This could explain the outright isolation of the viola's impassioned pleas.

Ensemble Mini's viola protagonist, Itamar Ringel, told me during rehearsals how he wanted to reach a higher level of authority, one of wisdom that is both direct and intimate, yet still reveals the vulnerabilities of the messenger. The ego should be completely detached from the playing so that he is free enough to narrate with truth. In this sense, we see the benefit of a soloist rather than the usual symphonic interpretation of a full viola section.

If we view the violist as the narrator, then the rest of the ensemble's musicians are the actors. The next world comes as a huge surprise — as though we are finally able to relate to the tonality — and so begins the theatre of the symphony. The ensemble sings a heart-wrenching hymn of both pain and jubilation. The huge interval leaps in the violins enjoy glissandos of passion. The melody is dominated by some of the most intense harmony ever written, the chromaticism of which suggests a delicate sensuality.

Soon we come to the third world, which seems at first like a very charming — almost noble — dance in this slow tempo. But the increasing interjections of Jewish-like trills remind us of Mahler's village roots. They sometimes feel so cheeky as to be almost capricious, perhaps a foretaste of the devil's dance that comes later in the symphony. On the other hand, the playful nature of the weaving accents and ornaments sound more like children's games.

Suddenly, the solo viola of the first world interrupts and all is silent, as though all in the playground immediately sit to listen. The wandering tonality of the protagonist gives a feeling of renewed reflection, but now with more frustration and emphasis. Perhaps this is our chorus sending a stern reminder. With each variation on this theme comes a different lesson.

The second world's hymn of love now reappears with more warmth. The wondering 2nd violin soaring above the 1st increases the intensity. The trumpet drifts into a much fuller, more affectionate and fervent repeat of the first theme in the strings, which is then repeated with even more joy. The enormous ardour of the lower strings soon disintegrates into the isolation of the symphony's beginning, again with the viola. But instead of a new monologue, the story immediately continues with the third world. The music darkens and the winds lead with sarcastic trills to enter into another devil dance that is too charming to trust. The cello brings a swift end to this game to handover again to the viola.

This time, our narrator speaks with more force. We can feel his plea for our attention, perhaps realising that his premonition is not being heard. The pain and frustration is evident by the melody's increased tension and lack of patience. Tellingly, even though not yet halfway through the movement, this is the last we hear of our chorus.

The devil — on clarinet — rudely jumps in. Maybe this is the takeover the narrator feared. The second world is unexpectedly absent here. The 1st violin plays with the winds a scherzo-like theme of the third world. All is very mischievous and generally good-humoured, as though the children simply just want to have fun and care little for the concerns of others.

But then a great struggle takes place. Fortunately, from darkness to light, the horn brings us back to the tranquillity of the second world with a most glorious rendition of its celebratory hymn. Here, the love strengthens and transforms into playful flirtation between instruments, taking us again into the third world and then once more to the second world. But, just when we thought the horn comes to join us in jubilation, the music disintegrates again into the absolute anguish of the first world. This time, rather than the viola, we have just two violins — painfully exposed — melting into the wilderness. Could this be the mourning — or dissolution — of our lost chorus?

In reading all this, we might feel somewhat lost in the constant mood changes. But Mahler's mastery of tonality and harmony somehow never loses the attention of the listener. We always feel like we know where we are because the direction of travel is always so clear. That is, until now.

Silence is hit with a huge unforeseen tsunami. After the initial shock, we become deeply immersed in terrifying arpeggiated ocean currents. This is Mahler submerged in near-death. But an enticing dance emerges out of the water, like a Hollywood hero, dictated by resilient pizzicatos and a James-Bond-like theme in the strings. This is Mahler's victory. Or so we think.

The tsunami has also brought Mahler a great loss, which is slowly realised in the tortuous build-up of one of the most iconic chords in western music (which includes all but just three notes of the scale). Led by the piercing high A of the trumpet (which some say is Mahler's tinnitus), all of humanity is suddenly left in complete paralysis. It is a moment in which we have no control nor can we think or move. There is just pain. This is surely one of Mahler's most definitive moments.



Like in the aftermath of all tsunamis, there is a sudden calm that beautifully merges into a coda of friendship. After so much tragedy, this is the only answer now. As so often with Mahler, the movement ends with great affection and hope. A solitary violin has heeded the lessons of our viola priest. We are now comforted and consoled by the simple harmonies of those we love and trust.

2. SCHERZO

The 2nd movement was originally conceived as the symphony's finale, such is its weight. It is defined by a highly original concoction of unpredictable and irregular rhythms mixed with the typical Mahlerian dance character of staccati and marcati. An immediate precursor to Stravinsky's Rite of Spring of 1913, this movement has surely been a catalyst for many more new works during that time by the likes of Bartok, Sibelius, Prokofiev, Berg and Zemlinsky.

This is mature Mahler, in the sense that the music is both extremely clean and dramatically dangerous. Like a manic schizophrenic, it constantly tries to throw us off course in a far more sophisticated way than any scherzo that has come before. Such is the glue with which the phrases are formed; we are lured into a false sense of security. For the musicians, it is all too easy to miscalculate: exceptional stamina and concentration is paramount for playing this, especially in such a small ensemble where there is no one to follow or hide behind.

The disorder of this scherzo reflects a dystopian folk music in which nothing is ever the same. Perhaps it represents the re-appearance of the devil, disrupting everything we do. On the other hand, maybe the music's busy nature simply reflects the complexity of Mahler's impression of society, such as the hustle and bustle of early 1900s Vienna or New York.

In stark contrast, the trio brings us back to Mahler's rural roots. With typical Austrian flare, a world of innocence and bliss seduces us. However, such is the devil's grip, the charming country Ländler later becomes debauched (switching between minor to major). But the trio soon returns to its heavenly delights.

The movement then ensues a tug of war between scherzo and trio. The dance intensifies in the third and fourth rounds until the sudden appearance of a dream-like world in which the 1st violin plays a beautiful lament with the horn, viola and cello. This reappears briefly again to prepare us for the final, fifth round: the scherzo finale played with all the dizziness and sparkly lights of the city circus.

3. PURGATORIO (ALLEGRETTO MODERATO)

Although only lasting a few minutes (and therefore easily dismissed), the 3rd movement is an essential component of Mahler's 10th because it is the bridge between the first and second part of symphony. This explains the title: purgatory is Mahler's temporary chamber of purification to prepare us for the next stage in his journey.

At the same time, it is also a place of reflection — even punishment — for what has come before. Originally, Mahler wrote "inferno" as the title but it was later crossed out. He clearly thinks that this should be a moment to suffer for one's sins. But he also knows that those in purgatory will soon go to heaven, which perhaps explains the change of heart.

The idea of purgatory as an intermediate state after death embodies the overall transcendental theme of the symphony. It also explains the many jottings on his manuscript such as "Erbarmen!!" (Have pity!!), "O Gott! O Gott! Warum hast du mich verlassen?" (O God! O God! Why have you forsaken Me?) and "Dein Wille geschehe!" (Thy will be done). This is not only a moment of atonement but also one of prayer.

Having said this, the simplicity — almost naivety — of the opening theme is far from spiritual. It is more like a village folk song. Then come three other themes, also not particularly holy in character. Indeed, they seem remarkably full of life, as though the four themes give us a quick overview of the villagers' day.

What Mahler makes very clear, though, is the sense of insecurity. The opening theme's minor key feels eerie and the repeated attempts to change to the major during the movement never really succeed. Mahler's purgatory is a perilous place, yet we are not always aware. The superficial nature of the music mocks our superficial tendencies as humans. As he writes on the last page of the movement, when we fall into this trap, only "Tod! Verk!" (Death! Annunciation!) await us. The bassoon finally carries us into the abyss.

4. (SCHERZO)

From this moment on, Mahler is now in a new state of mind. The music is on the absolute limit of a musician's physical possibilities. With so many mood changes, from depression to elation, its stop-start character rarely allows us even a moment to breathe. The structure is so dense that it is almost impossible to keep track of the destination, which perhaps explains why the movement doesn't even have a title (although the assigned one is certainly appropriate). This is Mahler overkill.

The strings take on Mahler's marathon with unceasing commitment. The Hollywood nature of the movement's opening already gives the sense of struggle and gladiatorial heroism. The difficult but deliberate journey that we are taken on challenges the very meaning of the Viennese waltz. Just like in the 2nd movement, the idea of "scherzo" is taken to new schizophrenic heights.

There are many similarities to (and quotations from) *Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde* (Drinking Song of the Earth's Sorrow) from Mahler's earlier *Das Lied von der Erde*. The song's pessimism about the way that humans treat the earth and, therefore, humanity's ultimate downfall, explains better the connection to the symphony's 3rd movement.

Mahler's scribbles across the score of this 4th movement clearly show a man suffering great desperation and affliction: "vernichte mich" (Destroy me), "dass ich vergesse, dass ich bin!" (Let me forget that I exist!), "das ich aufhore zu

sein" (So that I cease to be) and "Wahnsinn, fasse mich an, Verluchten!" (Madness, seize me, the accursed!).

Yet throughout the movement, there are moments of utter magic, often in the form of mini interludes, as though to fuel Mahler's unrelenting energy. The fragmentary character of the movement also gives space for several mini-triumphs over Mahler's adversity.

What focuses our mind, though, is the macabre ending of the movement. "Der Teufel tanzt es mit mir" (The Devil is dancing it with me), Mahler writes. With the tambourine and timpani, there is an almost ritualistic Mediterranean feel to this devil dance. Meanwhile, the harp becomes the devil's knock and a muffled drum hits us with such force that we can understandably assume it to mean one thing: death.

But what kind of death is this? Perhaps Mahler is suggesting that the devil has killed him. But who is the devil, then? "Du allein weisst was es bedeutet ... Ach! Ach! Ach! ... Leb' wol mein Seitenspiel!" (You alone know what it means ... Oh, oh, oh! ... Fare well, my Lyre). Is this cryptic message for the person he believes has killed him?

5. FINALE

The opening of the 5th movement begins in the abyss. Reminiscent of a military funeral procession, the recurring bang of the bass drum represents the agonisingly blunt hit to both Mahler's head and heart. His death has certainly arrived.

The music is lost in the wilderness of the underworld, where demons and gremlins spook us at every turn. The bassoon and horn lead the haunts whilst the contrabass slowly moves the procession along.

But this is only an introduction. What makes this movement so special is Mahler's emotional resolution. The horn slowly brings us back to the very first notes of the symphony, so that Mahler himself takes on the neutral voice of the narrator. In other words, he has finally accepted his fate.

The symphony now enters a new existence. In a moment of blissful purity and simplicity, the flute regenerates the narrator's theme of the horn and viola into one of the most exquisite melodies ever written, transporting us to a heavenly



tranquillity far above earth. The violin then takes over and delicately entwines a stunning love song, as though two lovers are suspended in the air in complete physical harmony without a worry in the world. Only these two souls exist: there are no distractions, only contentment and absolute acceptance.

The increasing intensity of the two violins and the later arrival of the trumpet take us on an ecstatic ride to an unknown destination. But the innocence of the lovers lands them in trouble. The big bang of the drum and rising scale of the funeral procession leads us back to the frightening world of pain and loneliness. It seems as though Mahler must be tested again before finding true redemption.

An allegro suddenly turns the theme of Mahler's tragedy into a sports game, which Mahler must win. The towering trumpet of the 2nd theme melody gives us the sense that Mahler is finding victory, but it is a long match and anything can happen. Mahler eventually breaks down and the victorious trumpet theme mutates into a yearning canticle. The horn then brings us back to the angelic dream of the two lovers. The winding chromaticism of the theme takes us back to the allegro, but that soon disintegrates too.

The piercing A of the trumpet in the 1st movement returns in an even more brutal fashion. Once again, Mahler is in total paralysis. It is only thanks to the narrator — the saviour of the symphony — that the pain is relieved. The trumpet then joins the horn — entirely bare at a perilously high pitch — to find a new way. Perhaps this is a final plea from the narrator,

or maybe it is Mahler reminding himself of the narrator's wisdom. The oboe and clarinet are left trying to hang on, perhaps in reverence but also in pain.

No matter how we interpret this, Mahler's 10th has come full circle. This 5th movement proves to be the heart of the symphony, connecting together thematic material from the previous movements. For the listener, everything now makes sense.

Whilst the oboe and clarinet melt into an opposite world, the violins serenely develop the flute melody from the beginning of the movement. This is the moment of peace for Mahler. The struggle is over. Mahler is now a man of patience and has nothing to hide from. He stands alone empowered by trust, forgiveness and acceptance.

The strings interlace each other in a beautiful ballad of love. Guiding us to the final goodbye, Mahler's epilogue to life, the core message of the symphony arrives weightily with a drone-like entrance in the cello. Here comes Mahler's moment of deepest sincerity: the violins duet in the most rapturous melodic dissonance ever written, for which the musicians must give everything that they have (indeed, no composer demands so much emotional commitment from a musician). Our two lovers entangle their bodies around each other knowing that this will be their very last time together.

In feeling both pain and celebration, their passion turns into tenderness. The glockenspiel and horn lead their gentle goodbye and a descending bassoon solo then comes to a final conversation with the winds. It is as though all the characters of the story want to say their last goodbye. The repeated motif — the need to say everything — makes us realise that this really is the last time.

Tears might be flowing from us all but not for Mahler. He has made his peace. Above the last phrase of the score, Mahler writes "Für dich leben!" (To live for you), "Für dich sterben" (To die for you!) — "Almschi!" (Alma). He still loves Alma, but in the only way that is true — unconditionally.

A last passionate embrace by the strings brings us to Mahler's departure, a gentle fading away to another world.

Joolz Gale

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MAHLER IN MINI

The challenges of playing symphonic music as a chamber ensemble are as much exciting as they are daunting. For an exceptionally difficult work like Mahler's 10th, intonation requires a level of perfection from the individual soloists that musicians in a symphony orchestra can perhaps avoid. The re-balancing between working with a conductor and playing one's own role in leading the ensemble is equally important. The question of what sounds and colours we create relies more on an innate understanding of one's fellow soloists rather than taking instructions from the conductor or engaging in hours of inefficient discussions. But this is only possible, of course, with the very best musicians, whom I feel so lucky and grateful to work with. What makes the experience of mini so special is to make unexpected chamber music out of such gigantic symphonic works within a newly intimate, exposed, risky, highly concentrated and spontaneous environment, where we have no choice but to constantly listen and react.

The instrumentation used for this project was determined, of course, by Michelle Castelletti's wonderful arrangement, namely single winds, single strings, piano, harmonium and percussion. But the arranger also kindly allowed me to replace the harmonium with an accordion. As authentic as the former would have been in early 1900s Vienna, it sometimes lacks dynamic power and colour contrast compared to the later. In my opinion, the flexibility of accordion adds a very interesting dynamic to the ensemble's sound.

Joolz Gale



THE RE-CREATION OF MAHLER'S UNFINISHED

'It should be one's sole endeavour to see everything afresh and create it anew.'

Gustav Mahler

The re-creation of Mahler's 10th Symphony with this new performing edition of mine was made in the contemporaneous tradition of Arnold Schoenberg's Verein für Musikalische Privataufführungen, Vienna (1918-21), upon which Ensemble Mini's concept is based.

Possibly one of Mahler's most passionate, emotional outbursts and autobiographical creations, this symphony is a fascinating journey not only for performance aspects but also for musicalological and analytical ones. It provides a deep psychological pathway into the genius that was Mahler and a mesmerising voyage for the performer and listener.

The issue of re-orchestration has long been a discussion of debate amongst music scholars and musicians. My work relates to — and complements — existing musicalological studies, as well as several reconstructions for symphony orchestra that have been made of Mahler's last symphony.

Although there are many versions, I focused my investigation on the following: Derek Cooke (in collaboration with Berthold Goldschmidt, Colin Matthews and David Matthews); Rudolf Barshai; Alexander von Zemlinsky's completion of movements 1 [&] 3 (with Alban Berg, Ernst Krenek and Franz Schalk); Clinton Carpenter; Remo Mazzetti and Joseph Wheeler.

While the basic material remains intact, there are very significant differences in each of these orchestrations. Deryck Cooke's version is arguably the most 'faithful' one, primarily representing Mahler's own notes, to make the symphony performable. The edited score also contains a copy of most of Mahler's annotations and sketches, together with the corresponding short-score in smaller print on every page, where it exists; and thus, I found this version particularly helpful, especially with regard to thematic continuity.

My intention was to re-create this symphony for chamber orchestra, retaining the authenticity found in the Mahler manuscripts, combining it with the fuller orchestral palette achieved by Rudolph Barshai, rather than the thinner textures

realised in the Cooke version. This approach allowed for the various contrapuntal and timbral lines and colours to form one coherent structure, imbued within Mahler's voice. Whether fully orchestrated in specific passages, or a sole melody in others, there is one continuous line throughout all of the surviving manuscript pages.

The original manuscripts were published in two separate facsimiles (Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 1924: 116 pages) and a more complete version in 1967 (160 pages) published by Walter Ricke under the aegis of the International Mahler Society, edited by Erwin Ratz. This edition included the Adagio and the Scherzo in full draft score, short score and sketch (with completion of varying degrees), 30 bars of full score of the Purgatorio, together with a short score and sketch; and short scores and sketches for the final two movements. Other pages were published in the 1976 score of Deryck Cooke's performing version.

Through the collection of various facsimiles and scores of previous symphonies, I became very familiar with Mahler's calligraphy, *modus operandi*, level of detail, instruction and intention. I also acquired the extant sketches of his 'unfinished' symphony, including the orchestral draft, the preliminary short score, Ricke's and Zsolnay's facsimiles of Mahler's manuscript, a separate, solitary sketch-page, the surviving short score by Mahler, and, thanks to the National Library of Austria in Vienna, all existing Mahler's sketches (including previously 'lost' pages) found at the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

Colour and instrumentation, including Mahler's use of unusual percussion instruments in symphonic literature to date; his use of *con legno*, mutes, *gestopft* and *portamento*; the culture of vibrato around the fin-de-siècle period; weight, balance, register, texture, and dynamic proportions, had to be meticulously analysed. My compositional decisions were made in order to capture the essence of what was intended by Mahler within a chamber instrumentation.

The architecture and over-arching form and shape of the symphony, as well as the complexity of emotion this work carries, helped inform my interpretation. These fundamental factors also influenced the reconstruction and orchestration, and, perhaps above all, what I believe Mahler was attempting to say through this music, which is, in my opinion, overwhelmingly autobiographical, excitingly bipolar and plainly futuristic.



I have taken the decision that this edition will be treated as a performing score specifically for chamber orchestra. This is why there are no dotted lines, square brackets or small notes. In fact, there are no editorial markings whatsoever. The doctoral thesis upon which this score is based contains all the explanations, footnotes, annotations etc. The fact that this score is already not what Mahler intended – in terms of instrumentation – would make the exercise of distinguishing between what was and what was not in the score almost futile (and impossible to read).

In her forward to the 1924 facsimile edition of the Symphony No. 10, Alma Mahler (Gustav's wife) wrote:

'While I initially considered it my absolute right to keep the treasure of the Tenth Symphony hidden, I now know it is my duty to reveal to the world the last thoughts of the master. [...] It proclaims not only the last music of the master, but it shows in the impassioned strokes of his handwriting, the enigmatic self-image of the person with perpetuating effect. Some will read in these pages as if in a book of magic, while others will find themselves faced with magic symbols to which they lack the key; none will escape the power which continues to emanate from this handwritten music and scribbled verbal ecstasies.'

There is endless debate about the 'ethical' issues that surround this. Some might say that we do not have the right to do this. However, when one considers that this was already being done in Mahler's Vienna through Schoenberg's Verein — and the great admiration Schoenberg had for Mahler — as well as how Mahler encouraged 'creating anew', I think that, while such discussion is legitimate, there is enough evidence to support this endeavour. One needs to only turn to works like Mozart's Requiem, Elgar's Symphony No. 3, Bruckner's Symphony No. 9, Puccini's Turandot or even Mahler's own completion of Carl Maria von Weber's Die drei Pintos; as well as the very many works arranged for chamber ensemble by the Verein itself (which gave 353 performances of 154 works in a total of 117 concerts during its short existence).

Even Sir Georg Solti, who never claimed to be a composer, wanted to (but sadly didn't) attempt to reconstruct Mahler's Symphony No. 10, saying:

'My performances of the opening movement of the Tenth Symphony made me want to attempt to conduct a reconstructed version of the whole work. [...] The melodic invention [...] is heartbreakingly beautiful. [...] The English musicologist Deryck Cooke made the first reconstruction of the symphony, but I have not used it as I think it lacks the contrapuntal element in Mahler's writing. Three further versions of the Tenth Symphony exist or are in preparation and in the summer of 1999 I would like to work on a solution to the symphony, putting together the different reconstructions that are available and adding points of my own.'

There are many 'mistakes' or 'oversights' in the orchestral draft: pitch, rhythm, omission of clef changes, confusing key signatures and lack of time signatures etc., as well as unclear instructions and opposing (or contradictory) passages in

the different sketches. There are also instances of contrapuntal vacuums that needed attention, for which the study of the different performing editions proved essential.

In places, some performing versions have made decisions to change what Mahler wrote in the orchestral draft, assuming that these were mistakes. My version tries to remain as faithful as possible to the orchestral draft, short score and extra sketches, especially harmonically, even when the language used is not conventional. I believe that Mahler was stretching the harmonic palette as far as he possibly could.

Furthermore, the stark contrast of an idyllic Toblach in South Tyrol, shattered by the discovery of Alma Mahler's affair with the architect Walter Gropius, is fully represented in Mahler's language, colour, texture and form in this symphony. It is the epitome of the pain/beauty paradox that is so well described by Immanuel Kant in the Critique of Pure Reason. This is a work of excruciating beauty; a constant search for the sublime (found in the final movement).

Mahler is evidently distraught, as seen and heard through the pages of his manuscript. His 'scribbled verbal ecstasies' are almost as powerful as his music — maybe to be read by the one who has caused him so much pain — his 'immortal beloved'? It feels like we are reading Mahler's personal diary, invading his privacy and witnessing his innermost emotions being exposed to the world. The symphony's autobiographical content of this most passionate cry haunts me as much as the work itself.

What I have attempted to give in my work is a faithful and stylistic re-creation of Mahler's Symphony No. 10; a correct representation of a large-scale work, retaining its profundity, impact and magnificence; creating clarity of lines but revealing the intimacy of the work.

To delve as deep as this, not only re-orchestrating but also rebuilding an unfinished — yet completely structured — work, has given me an extraordinary insight into the process of interpreting a composer's work (even one as complex as Mahler's) as a conductor. I have been able to explore the symphony's inner workings, not just practically and physically, but — especially in this work — psychologically.

Even in his most impassioned and symbolic 10th Symphony, Mahler — the man of contrasts — remains unfaltering ...

the cruelty of the situation, the hurt, the anger, the tenderness, the anguish and torment ... and the clinging to hope, the longing for beauty to re-emerge, and the acceptance of what is.

Norman Lebrecht's book 'Why Mahler' says it well: 'It is absurd for any conductor in the twenty-first century to proclaim the Tenth un-performable [...] The Tenth exists as Mahler's last word. It reveals Mahler, in his favoured metaphor, wrestling with his angel, refusing to let go without a blessing. If the symphony reveals nothing else, it is that Mahler did not surrender to fate, nor to depression at his wife's betrayal, nor to health fears, nor to any other force except his mission to compose. In these final pages he surmounted the fickleness of love and life in a way that only Mahler could, with a never-say-die symphony that offers in its last unfinished page a glimmer of hope. No knowledge of Mahler is complete without the live experience of his Tenth Symphony.'

Michelle Castelletti (ed. George Roberts)
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ENSEMBLE MINI

Ensemble Mini is a courageous collective of supersonic soloists from German symphony orchestras that repackages super symphonic music for new audiences. Often commissioning world premiere arrangements for innovative late-night projects, its mission is to revolutionise the style, sound and setting of classical concerts. This began in 2010 with "mini-Mahler" at Philharmonie Berlin, followed by "Strauss 150: New Perspectives" at STATTBAD Berlin, "From Russia with Soul" at Griessmühle Berlin and "Bartók Beyond Borders" at Musikbrauerei Berlin, from where this recording of Mahler's 10th Symphony is also taken.

Artistic collaborations have included Regula Mühlemann, Marlis Petersen, Ferhan & Ferzan Önder, Gerhild Romberger, Tanja Tetzlaff, Ruth Ziesak and Elisa Carrillo Cabrera. Recent guest performances have included Konzerthaus Berlin (Debussy), Budapest Palace of Arts (Bartók), Auditorio Nacional Madrid, Essener Philharmonie (Mahler), Mozarteum Salzburg (Prokofiev) and Zaryadye Hall Moscow (Shostakovich).

Celebrating its 10th anniversary 2020-21 season as the "ultimate corona orchestra", Ensemble Mini has been reviewed and featured often in German media (such as 3sat Kulturzeit, ZDF Aspekte, RBB, NDR and WDR television) and has recently recorded live radio concerts for Deutschlandfunk Kultur, SWR Classic and NDR Kultur. This recording of Mahler's 10th Symphony is a follow-up to the ensemble's debut disc of Mahler's 9th Symphony from 2014, also on the ARS Produktion label.

FLUTE Diego Aceña Moreno

OBOE Sandra Schumacher

CLARINET Shelly Ezra

BASSOON Balint Mohai

HORN Juliane Grepling

TRUMPET Bassam Mussad

ACCORDION Franka Herwig

PIANO Naaman Wagner

PERCUSSION Henning Börgel, Clemens Bütje

HARP Nathalie Amstutz

VIOLIN 1 Kana Sugimura

VIOLIN 2 Chiharu Taki

VIOLA Itamar Ringel

CELLO Davit Melkonyan

CONTRABASS Servaas Jessen

CONDUCTOR Joolz Gale



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JOOLZ GALE

Joolz Gale's passion for special projects has made him one of the world's leading arrangers of symphonic music and foremost advocate for new concert formats. Born in England, he initially studied as a violinist and read Music at the University of Oxford before furthering his studies at London's Royal College of Music as a singer. Graduating in 2007, he became an inaugural apprentice to the Monteverdi Choir under Sir John Eliot Gardiner, at which time he began to develop his skills as a conductor.

In the same year, he took part in the Gustav Mahler Conducting Competition, after which he made his début radio recording with Bayerischer Rundfunk and the Bamberger Symphoniker. He has since gone on to make conducting debuts with choirs and orchestras throughout Europe, Asia and Latin America. He has meanwhile assisted and studied with Paavo Järvi and Sir Roger Norrington.

As founder and artistic director of Ensemble Mini, Joolz Gale has arranged over 30 works for chamber orchestra including Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben*, Suite from *Der Rosenkavalier*, Bartók's *Dance Suite*, Debussy's *La Mer*, Bruckner's 9th, Prokofiev's 5th and Shostakovich's 9th & 10th Symphonies, many of which he has received exclusive rights. He is represented and published by Schott, Sikorski and Boosey & Hawkes.

MICHELLE CASTELLETTI

Dr. Michelle Castelletti is a Maltese conductor, composer and interdisciplinary artist with a passion for site-specific curation. She is currently Artistic Director of the Royal Northern College of Music, Director of the Oxford Festival of the Arts and Artistic Director of the Three Palaces Festival, Malta and was formerly Artistic Director of the Malta International Arts Festival and Sounds New Contemporary Festival, Canterbury. Highlights in those roles include several collaborations with Arvo Pärt and Krzysztof Penderecki as well as many other contemporary composers. She has also led important education projects such as the International Composer Pyramid and The Universe of Sound with Philharmonia Orchestra, London.

Michelle Castelletti has been invited as a speaker at several national and international conferences, as well as an adjudicator for numerous competitions and awards including the Ivor Novello British Composer Awards and Venice Biennale.

Her performances, projects and festivals regularly receive 5-star reviews and she has been the recipient of numerous awards, most recently the Times Higher Education Award for Excellence and Innovation in the Arts.

Michelle Castelletti is currently on the board of directors of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and a trustee of the ISM Trust and ORA Singers.

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Film and further information available at
www.mahler10.ensemblemini.com

