Season Finale: Vänskä Conducts Mahler’s Tenth

**Minnesota Orchestra**

**Osmo Vänskä, conductor**

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<td>Thursday, June 13, 2019</td>
<td>11 am</td>
<td>Orchestra Hall</td>
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<td>Friday, June 14, 2019</td>
<td>8 pm</td>
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<td>Saturday, June 15, 2019</td>
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*We gratefully acknowledge the support of Louise and Douglas Leatherdale in the presentation of these concerts, and their support for the work of Osmo Vänskä.*

**Gustav Mahler**

Symphony No. 10 in F-sharp minor
c. 80’
in the performing version by Deryck Cooke

**Part I:**
Adagio
Scherzo I: Schnelle Vierteln

**Part II:**
Purgatorio: Allegretto moderato
Scherzo II: Allegro pesante
Finale: Lento non troppo – Allegro moderato

**CD Signing:** Join us in the lobby following the June 13 and 15 concerts as Osmo Vänskä will sign the Orchestra’s Mahler symphony CDs.

**OH+**

**Concert Preview** with Phillip Gainsley, Robert Suff and Michelle Miller Burns
Thursday, June 13, 10:15 am, Auditorium
Friday, June 14, 7 pm, Auditorium
Saturday, June 15, 7 pm, Auditorium

Minneapolis Orchestra concerts are broadcast live on Friday evenings on stations of Classical Minnesota Public Radio, including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities.
Mahler’s Symphony No. 5
“If you go out and buy the Minnesota Orchestra’s BIS recording of Mahler’s fifth symphony, rest assured that you need never buy another. It’s resoundingly well played in every department…”
— Norman Lebrecht, Musical Toronto, July 2017

“…the orchestral playing is exceptional throughout.”
— Andrew Clements, The Guardian, July 13, 2017

Mahler’s Symphony No. 6
“The Sixth is a titanic work, placing extreme technical and emotional demands on the players. And the orchestra meets those demands, thrillingly, with this new recording.”
— Terry Blain, Star Tribune, March 30, 2018

“Vänskä and the orchestra are among the finest exponents of Mahler’s music and their performances are competitive with the best recordings, past and present.”
— Blair Sanderson, AllMusic Review

Mahler’s Symphony No. 2, Resurrection
“…the [Mahler] series is shaping up to be a defining achievement of Vänskä’s Minnesota Orchestra tenure.”
— Terry Blain, Star Tribune, January 31, 2019

“When you hear the lower strings opening the symphony so fiercely and at breakneck speed in Vänskä’s Resurrection you know you’re in for a treat. This is true for the whole performance overall….No matter how many recordings of this symphony one has, this is more than a welcome addition to the Mahler discography.”

“The Minnesota Chorale is in fine form, singing with outstanding precision and power. Ruby Hughes’ soprano is a gleaming addition.”
— Matthew Richard Martinez, ConcertoNet, January 5, 2019

“…the BIS engineers outdid themselves. This is one of the better recorded Seconds on record, perhaps one of the best recorded Mahler Symphonies, on SACD or the compatible two channels CD.”
— Tal Agam, The Classic Review, February 7, 2019

Mahler: Symphony No. 10
Mahler’s Tenth, left unfinished at his death but subsequently prepared for performance by Deryck Cooke, follows the composer’s dictum that a symphony “must embrace everything”—from anguish to exuberance and serenity. Of note are a wide-ranging Adagio that builds to a nightmarish dissonance, a brief “Purgatorio” composed after Mahler discovered his wife Alma’s affair, and a tender finale that shows the composer’s undimmed love for Alma.
he number nine seems to have acquired a mystic significance, an almost cabalistic aura, in the history of the symphony since Beethoven. Not only was Beethoven's Ninth held up as one of the towering masterpieces of the 19th century, but most of the great 19th-century symphonists—Schubert, Bruckner and Dvořák among them—died after or in the process of writing a “Ninth.” (Schubert and Bruckner wrote additional symphonies, but we focus here only on the numbered works.) To these names can be added many others of the past two centuries: Louis Spohr, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Roger Sessions, Alfred Schnittke and more, all of whom passed away after writing a Ninth Symphony.

Mahler was more than a bit superstitious about writing his own Ninth. In trying to circumvent Fate, he called his song cycle Das Lied von der Erde a symphony without number, and claimed that his Ninth, which followed Das Lied, was really his Tenth Symphony. Mahler had not even finished his Ninth when he plunged headlong into sketches for a Tenth, firmly convinced that he had bypassed the feared “critical limit.” But alas, of the five projected movements, only one was complete when he died in May 1911, just a year after finishing the Ninth.

from controversy to the Deryck Cooke version

A shroud of mystery, controversy and misunderstanding has surrounded Mahler's Tenth ever since the composer's death. Bruno Walter, the Mahler disciple who conducted the premieres of the Ninth and Das Lied, refused even to look at the Tenth. An early biographer and friend of Mahler, Richard Specht, wrote that the Tenth “will never come to performance...it is quite impossible that anyone could complete a score from his mute symbols.” Mahler's widow refused until 1963 to allow the sketches to be performed. And right down to the present day, there have been numerous Mahler scholars and conductors who do not acknowledge a bona fide complete Tenth.

Yet there is more, much more, to this work than the single Adagio movement that used to stand as proxy for the whole symphony. What we hear tonight is the “revised performing version of the draft” as prepared by the English musicologist Deryck Cooke (1919-1976). The long, involved chronology of events leading to this version offers one of the most fascinating stories in musicology of the 20th century. It can be summarized as follows:

In 1924, Mahler's widow Alma decided to reveal a portion of the symphony to the world. She asked Ernst Krenek to edit the two movements most nearly complete, the long opening Adagio and the curious little “Purgatorio” third movement. These were conducted by Franz Schalk in Vienna on October 14, 1924. The same Richard Specht who had previously claimed the Tenth “will never come to performance” thereupon reversed his position and issued a call for “some musician of high standing who is devoted to Mahler and intimate with his style” to prepare a performing edition of the entire five-movement symphony. Among the famous composers approached were Schoenberg and Shostakovich, but it was destined for musicologists to fulfill the quest. Joe Wheeler and Deryck Cooke in England, Clinton Carpenter and Joseph Mazzetti in the United States, the Russian Rudolf Barshai, and a pair of Italians, Giuseppe Mazzuca and Nicola Samale, all working independently, have prepared six additional performing versions of the symphony.

Cooke first came face to face with the problem of the Tenth in 1959, when he was commissioned by the BBC to write a brochure about Mahler's symphonies as part of the 1960 Mahler centennial year observations. Investigating Mahler's sketches, he found to his surprise that the composer had left the symphony in an advanced state of development. Every bar of each movement had been continuously laid out, from beginning to end. These were no mere fragments. The first movement had been fully orchestrated, the third was nearly complete, and there was a four-staff “open” score with many instrumental cues for nearly everything else. Cooke's fascination and absorption with the Tenth extended to copying out by hand all the sketches Mahler had left, fully orchestrating everything himself and preparing a performance-cum-narration for radio broadcast. On December 19, 1960, the BBC carried a broadcast of the first, third and fifth movements complete, plus substantial portions of the two Scherzo movements introduced by Cooke's lecture. Berthold Goldschmidt conducted the Philharmonia Orchestra.

another discovery

Fired by the success of this venture, Cooke prepared to refine and conclude his cause célèbre when Alma stepped in, refusing permission for any further broadcasts. But she had never even heard the first one, and when finally, three years later, she was persuaded to listen to a copy of it, she was so moved that she immediately retracted her previous stricture. Alma died shortly thereafter, and in her possession were found 44 additional pages of manuscript, hitherto unknown, which enabled Cooke to complete his performing version of the symphony. The first complete
Dante but in reference to a poem by Siegfried Lipiner about betrayal.

**scherzo II: allegro pesante.** The second scherzo combines music of spectral visions and demonic fury with dance-like impulses. “The devil dances it with me,” Mahler wrote in the score. Shriil outcries alternate with ghostly rustlings in some of the most advanced music Mahler ever wrote.

**finale: lento non troppo–allegro moderato.** Mahler preserves the symphony’s symmetrical layout in a long, slow finale. Utter desolation pervades the movement’s opening pages. Eventually a long, arching flute solo of ineffable beauty spreads its consoling message over the gloom. This theme, developed at great length, is interspersed with elements from previous movements, each bringing its message of distress, tension or passion. The final pages open out onto a world of serene resignation and tenderness. “To live for you! To die for you!, Almschi,” Mahler wrote over the last notes. He had passed beyond the pain of betrayal from the woman he still loved.

**Instrumentation:**
- 4 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 4 oboes (1 doubling English horn), 4 clarinets (1 doubling E-flat clarinet), bass clarinet, 4 bassoons (2 doubling contrabassoon), 4 horns, 4 trumpets, 4 trombones, tuba, timpani (2 players), snare drum, large military drum, bass drum, cymbals, rute, tamtam, triangle, xylophone, glockenspiel, harp and strings.

*Program note by Robert Markow.*