



BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONDUCTOR - ADRIAN BROWN

LEADER - BERNARD BROOK

PROGRAMME

SATURDAY 21ST MARCH 2009

THE GREAT HALL, RAVENSBOURNE SCHOOL, BROMLEY

£1.00

www.bromleysymphony.org

Box office: 020 8464 5869

PROGRAMME

MAHLER SYMPHONY No.9

Our next concert is on May 16th
Schumann Symphony No.3, **Mozart** Flute Concerto No.1
(soloist: Philip Rowson), **Strauss** Till Eulenspiegel.

ADRIAN BROWN – CONDUCTOR



John Carmichael

Adrian comes from a distinguished line of pupils of Sir Adrian Boult, with whom he worked for some years after graduating from the Royal Academy of Music in London. He remains the only British conductor to have reached the finals of the Karajan Conductors' Competition and the Berlin Philharmonic was the first professional orchestra he conducted.

In 1992 he was engaged to conduct the world-renowned St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, and was immediately invited to return. In 1998 he was invited to work with one of Europe's foremost chamber orchestras, the Camerata Salzburg. Adrian has worked regularly with many leading British orchestras including the City of Birmingham Symphony, the BBC Symphony and the London Sinfonietta. He is a great proponent of contemporary music and has several first performances to his credit.

Working with young musicians has been an area where Adrian Brown has made a singular contribution to the musical life not only of Britain, but also in Europe, Japan and the Philippines. He has been a frequent visitor to conduct the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, working closely with Sir Colin Davis and Sir Roger Norrington. In 1996 he went to Japan to work with the Toyama Toho Academy Orchestra, a visit that was received with much acclaim.

He has been a regular chairman of the jury for the National Association of Youth Orchestras' Conducting Competition, also serving on the panel of jury members for Music for Youth and the Making Music Awards.

Adrian Brown was one of 100 musicians presented with a prestigious Classic FM Award at their Tenth Birthday Honours Celebration in June 2002.

MAHLER — SYMPHONY NO.9

1. Andante comodo
2. Im Tempo eines gemächlichen Ländlers
3. Rondo-Burleske: Allegro assai.
4. Adagio.

It is music coming from another world; it is coming from eternity.

Herbert von Karajan (on Mahler's Ninth Symphony)

Mahler's final symphony was composed at perhaps the most critical time of his life. He had just suffered three hammer blows: he had lost his four-year-old daughter to scarlet fever and diphtheria; he had learned of his beloved wife's infidelity; and he had been shaken to his foundations by his own diagnosis—though still only 47—of terminal heart disease.

The diagnosis—a wrong diagnosis, as it transpired—coincided with huge upheaval in his professional life, as he left the directorship of the Vienna Opera and took up a new post with the Metropolitan Opera in New York. This move may have been financially attractive, but it did little to spare him from the anti-Semitism he suffered in Vienna, despite his official conversion to Catholicism. As he once wrote: *'I am thrice homeless, as a native of Bohemia in Austria, as an Austrian among Germans, and as a Jew throughout all the world. Everywhere an intruder, never welcomed.'*

He feverishly concentrated his creative energies on achieving as much as he could under what he referred to as his 'death sentence'. In her memoirs, many years later, his wife Alma would describe 1907 as a year *'so blackly underlined in the calendar of our life'*, and the summer of 1908 as *'the saddest we ever spent together. Every excursion, every attempt at distraction, was a failure. Grief and anxiety pursued us wherever we went. Work was his one resource. He slaved at Das Lied von der Erde and the first drafts of the Ninth [symphony].'*

It would be easier to sympathize with Alma Mahler had she not taken the opportunity to up-end Mahler's life by starting a passionate affair with one of her later husbands, the architect Walter Gropius: the discovery of which sent Mahler to consult no less an expert than Freud. Yet the marriage had always been troubled: by the nineteen-year age gap, by Mahler's dismissal of Alma's own ambitions, and—most of all—by the loss of their elder daughter. (After Mahler's death, Alma married Gropius and bore him a daughter, whose own early death a decade later was to inspire Berg's Violin Concerto.)

Mahler clearly had his own psychological issues. To quote Ernest Jones, one of Freud's most important biographers:

Mahler suddenly said that now he understood why his music had always been prevented from achieving the highest rank through the noblest passages ... being spoilt by the intrusion of some commonplace melody. His father, apparently a brutal

person, treated his wife very badly, and when Mahler was a young boy there was an especially painful scene between them. It became quite unbearable to the boy, who rushed away from the house. At that moment, however, a hurdy-gurdy in the street was grinding out the popular Viennese air 'Ach, du lieber Augustin'. In Mahler's opinion the conjunction of high tragedy and light amusement was from then on inextricably fixed in his mind, and the one mood inevitably brought the other with it.

Yet Mahler's Ninth must also be considered within the context of his superstition (by no means limited to Mahler) that a ninth symphony was in itself a death knell, as neither Beethoven nor Bruckner had lived to compose a tenth. According to Alma's memoirs, it was for that reason alone that he decided, upon completing *Das Lied von der Erde* in 1908, not to call that work 'Symphony No. 9' as he had originally intended.

And Schoenberg wrote, '*It seems that the Ninth is a limit ... as if something might be imparted to us in the Tenth which we ought not yet know, for which we are not ready. Those who have written a Ninth stood too close to the hereafter.*'

But that was still to come. By the end of the spring of 1908, Alma had rented two floors in a delightful house in the Austrian Tyrol and also had a wooden Komponierhäuschen built for Mahler in the woods. In this space Mahler once again began to recover himself—and his ambition. He had always combined depressive tendencies with a powerful courage. When his friend and favoured conductor Bruno Walter suggested he might be suffering from a psychosomatic disorder, Mahler replied:

...it is certainly not that hypochondriac fear of death, I'll just tell you that at a blow I have simply lost all the clarity and quietude I ever achieved ... I cannot work at my desk. My mental activity must be complemented by physical activity ... An ordinary, moderate walk gives me such a rapid pulse and such palpitations that I never achieve the purpose of walking—to forget my body.

Mahler appears to have considered the Ninth his farewell symphony. Most explicitly, he quotes from Beethoven's Op.81a Piano Sonata, *Les Adieux*, in which Beethoven scribbled the word '*lebewohl*' (farewell) over the exact theme Mahler elected to quote. To drive the point home, on one page in his own manuscript score, Mahler wrote '*Lebewohl, Lebewohl!*', and each of the Ninth's four movements has at least one central theme beginning with that Beethovenian motif of farewell.

And yet Mahler's was a strong and resilient spirit, and he met (what he believed to be) his 'death sentence'—coupled with Alma's betrayal—with something more than courage: with sarcasm, humour, determination and power. His passion for nature—whether human or impersonal—never failed him; while the bitter sarcasm fuelling some sections of his Ninth Symphony is itself undermined by the affirmative quality of its finale.

Derek Cooke wrote: '*It is given to very few to face fate as boldly and go down fighting as courageously as Mahler.*' Cooke also called the 9th Symphony Mahler's '*dark night of the soul*' (a perfect description of the first movement especially)

while Bruno Walter, who conducted the posthumous premiere of the Ninth, wrote that the Ninth Symphony: *'is inspired by an intense spiritual agitation: the sense of departure ... nearer to the earlier symphonies in its deeply subjective and emotional mood.'*

I: The first movement opens with a hesitant, syncopated motif in which some have seen a depiction of Mahler's irregular heartbeat, others 'the voice of fate'—though it also features a march-like rhythm, which can become neurotic and swift, and even swirl up into an outburst—only to return to its preoccupation with renewed certainty. The opening motif of Beethoven's sonata *'Les Adieux'* occurs, and returns at the height of the development as a sudden intrusion of 'death in the midst of life'—here annotated *'with utmost force'*. Yet, unlike with Beethoven, this two-note motif (F \sharp –E) fails to resolve, leaving an element of uncertainty, wistfulness or other-worldliness. A duet for flute and horn sets the tone for the final section.

Alban Berg summed up thus: *'The entire movement is based on a premonition of death, which constantly recurs. All earthly dreams lead to it; that is why the tenderest passages are followed by tremendous climaxes, like new eruptions of a volcano. ... In the most profound and anguished love of life, death announces itself with utmost power ... Against that, there is no more resistance to be offered, and I see what follows as a sort of resignation.'*

II: Of all Mahler's Scherzos, the Ninth must surely be the most ironic. It derives a good deal of its character from its orchestration, from the very first bars where rapid scalar motifs are entrusted to the gruffly comic voices of bassoons and violas. Three subjects take their turns, each at their own pace: a deliberately awkward Ländler (marked 'somewhat ungainly and very coarse'); a waltz that neurotically accelerates; and an exaggeratedly slow Ländler. At the end there is a final grotesque suggestion of the original Ländler phrase on piccolo and contrabassoon, projecting emptiness: as Bruno Walter wrote, *'the dance is over'*—just as it was for the young Mahler listening to the hurdy-gurdy in the street, playing popular dances while his parents tore themselves to pieces inside.

III: The Rondo-Burleske (dedicated sarcastically to his pedantic critics) takes the form of a brilliant double fugue ('So you think I can't write a fugue? Listen to this!'). Here Mahler flaunts his scintillating honed compositional skills, trampling upon those academics who had openly doubted his abilities and choice of career. There are two intervals in the pulsating clamour of this movement: a song-like section of great charm—and (later) a foreshadowing of the final movement's principal motif. There is a good deal of boisterousness in the Rondo-Burleske, as well as a self-mocking sense of near-parody. It is extremely difficult technically for every single orchestral section, but huge fun to play.

IV: The final movement is annotated with the word *zurückhaltend* ('reserved'). It is related to the third movement's most mocking section, yet—with powerful

persuasiveness—here it is transformed into an elegy. One of the most astonishing movements in all of classical music, it rises, only to falter several times, before ending on a note of powerful hope – an exalted vision of eternity.

The broad descending violin music introducing the Finale outlines two essential motifs, the more important of which was already hinted at in the slow section of the Rondo. It has the feel of unease before the storm. The first bassoon begins the second motive, which is almost painfully emaciated and hollowed-out. There are four powerful sections, and yet, in its closing pages, Mahler echoes his own *Kindertotenlieder*, ‘*The day is fine on yonder heights*’—or, in other words, the ultimate destination is beyond life.

As Gerald S. Fox wrote:

The reconciliation between these two worlds—man and Nature—is one that Mahler may well have wanted to suggest in the two main episodes of this final movement and is achieved at the very end of the work, with its sense of acceptance, silence and peace ... Audiences are not mistaken when they feel an exceptional emotional charge as the music fragments and grows ever more rarefied ... Mahler's extraordinary finale, which in its own right is quite without precedent, is not mournful, but exalted: in this valedictory utterance ‘the majesty of death’ is illumined by a glow of serenity and confident affirmation.

While for Richard Freed:

Here Mahler serenely accepts the actuality of transfiguration, even as motifs from the earlier movements are subtly transfigured in passing. In the one grand climax ... the clouds roll back, the heavens open, and for a blinding instant the pilgrim stares into the radiant fulfillment of his spiritual journey. The aftermath of this stunning episode is a gradual dying-away interrupted by a second fortissimo; the violins climb higher and higher, ever more softly, until only they and the cellos are left playing. The coda, assigned to the strings alone, is made up of fragmented echoes and poignant silences.

Leonard Bernstein declared:

It is terrifying, and paralyzing, as the strands of sound disintegrate ... in ceasing, we lose it all. But in letting go, we have gained everything.

But the last word must be left to Mahler himself, who once declared ‘*all music since Beethoven has been programme music.*’

He said of his own Ninth Symphony, ‘*there is no more irony, no sarcasm, no resentment whatever; there is only the majesty of death.*’

BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

VIOLINS

*Bernard Brook (Leader)
 Clare Turner (lead 2nd)
 Valerie Breeze
 * Ruth Brook
 Anita Laybourne
 Rachel Cheetham
 Amanda Clare
 Andrew Condon
 Mark Cousins
 Rosie Cousins
 Elizabeth Cromb
 Claire Dillon
 Diana Dunk, Sarah Eede
 Ruth Elliott
 Jane Ferdinando
 Kathryn Hayman
 Mark Holmes
 Mike Ibbott
 Rachel Johnson
 Gerard Kelly
 * Phil McKerracher
 Anne Miles
 Richard Miscampbell
 Alan Mitchell
 Judith Montague
 Veronica Parry
 Jane Rackham
 Tracey Renwick
 Sheila Robertson
 * David Rodker
 Philip Starr
 Marian Steadman
 Isabel Sturdy
 Audrey Summers
 * Michael Thompson
 Rachel Walmsley
 * Ann Wibberley

VIOLAS

David Griffiths (Principal)
 Julius Bannister
 Angela Bartlett
 Maria Beale
 Rachel Burgess
 John Davis
 Jenny Forbes
 Alan Magrath
 Chris Newbould
 Georgina Oliver
 Nicola Oliver
 Liz Tarrant
 Vanessa Townsend

CELLOS

*Alice McVeigh (Principal)
 Helen Griffiths
 Marion Hitchcock
 Helen McDonald
 Sarah Bartlett
 Mandy Selby
 Andrew Garton
 Anne Curry
 Mary Fall
 Samantha Carter
 Jane Broadbent

DOUBLE BASSES

Kenneth Knussen
 David Johnson
 Roger Linley
 Catherine Ricketts

PICCOLO

Amanda Butler

FLUTES

Jane Crawford
 Carol Eastwood
 Marc Esmond
 Dave Sullivan

OBOES

* Caroline Marwood
 Jennifer Crees
 Andrew Mackay

COR ANGLAIS

Philip Knight

CLARINETS

Massimo Roman
 David Floyd (Eb)
 Elaine Booth
 Tara Stuckey

BASS CLARINET

Elliot Devivo

BASSOONS & CONTRA

Stephen Fuller
 Julian Farrel
 David Thorpe
 Chris Richardson

HORNS

*Roy Banks
 Frank Cottee
 Mary Banks
 Brian Newman
 Oliver Tunstall

TRUMPETS & CORNETS

Matthew Hart Dyke
 *Derek Cozens
 Tim Collett
 Clive Griffin

TROMBONES

*Peter Bruce
 *John Carmichael
 Alan Tomlinson

TUBA

Russell Kennedy

TIMPANI

David Coronel

PERCUSSION

Catherine Herriot
 Gerard Rundell
 Elizabeth Thompson

HARP

Louisa Duggan

TICKET MANAGER

Riet Carmichael

* denotes a member of the organising committee

BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Bromley Symphony Orchestra was formed in 1918 by Miss Beatrice Fowle and Miss Gwynne Kimpton, teachers at Bromley High School for Girls. Over the years, it has earned a high reputation for concerts of professional standard and has worked with many famous soloists and conductors. Sir Adrian Boult conducted regularly in the 1940s and in 1952 Norman Del Mar took over. Internationally renowned soloists who have performed with the orchestra include Paul Tortelier, John Lill, Dennis Brain, Ralph Holmes, Hugh Bean, Emma Johnson, Leslie Howard and Sir Donald McIntyre.

PRESIDENT	Anthony Payne
VICE-PRESIDENTS	Barbara Strudwick ARAM
CHAIRMAN	Roy Banks

PATRONS

Mrs J Adams	Shirley & Geoff Griffiths	Mr & Mrs D G Page
Mr & Mrs I G Brodie	Miss H L Haase	Mr W F Page
John & Riet Carmichael	Richard and Maureen Holden	Mr Keith & Mrs Helen Pope
Mr & Mrs B W Davis	Mr Alan Howes	Pauline & Tim Rogers
Mr James Denton	D A Ladd Esq & Mrs A Ladd MBE	Mr J G Ross-Martyn
Mr & Mrs T J Dillon	Mrs B M Lawson	Penny Steer
Mr B J Dolan	Mrs Daphne Leach	Barbara Strudwick ARAM
Mr David Elvin	Yvonne and David Lowe	Mr G H Taylor & Mrs V Nowroz
Mr & Mrs J Farrel	Mrs June Norton	Mr & Mrs R G Wilder

The BSO gratefully acknowledges the generosity of its Patrons, who provide the orchestra with an important and much valued source of funding. If you are able to support the orchestra in this way, please send your donation (we suggest a minimum of £15 for individuals and £20 for couples) to the Treasurer, Mr P McKerracher, 50 Blakehall Road, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 3EZ.

You are reminded that a bequest in your will, as well as being a "painless" form of giving, is particularly valuable since, being a gift to a charity, it does not form part of your estate, thus reducing your Inheritance Tax liability.

The Orchestra is most appreciative of the help kindly given by many other individuals in the provision of such services as stewards, interval refreshments, ticket and programme sales, stage management and publicity.

MAHLER AND FREUD

During the summer of 1910, Freud was on holiday in the Netherlands when Mahler asked to consult him, though he stood the psychoanalyst up on three occasions before actually arriving for a four-hour long session, as they walked beside the canals of Leyden. In a letter to Theodor Reik, Freud noted Mahler's '*mother fixation*' for his wife Alma and his '*brilliant faculty of comprehension*'. '*If I can believe what I have heard, I have done good work.*' Mahler telegraphed Alma the day after the meeting, '*I'm filled with joy. Interesting conversation.*' However, Mahler died on May 18, 1911, only nine months later, whereupon Alma was infuriated to receive a bill '*for services rendered*' from Freud.