



VANGUARD
CLASSICS 

GUSTAV
MAHLER
DES KNABEN
WUNDERHORN

MAUREEN
FORRESTER

HEINZ
REHFUSS

VIENNA SYMPHONY
FELIX PROHASKA

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

The orchestral songs *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (The Youth's Magic Horn), by Gustav Mahler (1860-1911), bear an intimate relation to his symphonies. The common ground often is not only shared thematic material, but also shared compositional method. The breath—indeed, the breadth—of the symphonist is felt throughout these songs. As Deryck Cooke observed, the voice, in these songs, "is just one more instrument (a highly expressive one) in the motivic texture."

Five of the *Wunderhorn* songs were completed in Hamburg (where Mahler was chief conductor at the Opera) on 26 April 1892: *Der Schildwache Nachtlied*, *Verlor'ne Müh*, *Trost im Unglück*, *Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht?* and *Das himmlische Leben* (Life in Heaven), which became the final movement of Symphony No. 4 and was not included either here or in the first publication of *Wunderhorn* songs, being replaced by *Das irdische Leben*, written probably either in 1893 or in 1895-96.

Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt bears the date August 1, 1893. Nine days later came the enchanting *Rheinlegendchen*. Probably *Urlicht* also was composed in 1893, as both it and *Fischpredigt* figure in Symphony No. 2—the third movement scherzo is based on *Fischpredigt* and, like the song, was certainly

written in 1893, and the fourth movement is a symphonic version of *Urlicht*.

In 1895-96 Mahler once more turned to *Wunderhorn* songs, completing *Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen* and *Lob des hohen Verstandes* in the summer of 1896. *Lied des Verfolgten im Turm* was also possibly completed during this time.

The two remaining songs in this collection, *Revelge* and *Der Tamboursg'ssell* were written somewhat later, in 1899-1900 and August 1901, respectively. In these two songs, the commonly assumed influence is reversed: it was Mahler's symphonies which fertilized these unforgettable songs which were composed when Mahler was busy with Symphonies Nos. 4 and 6 (completed 1900 and 1902 respectively). A shared compositional method between *Der Tamboursg'ssell* and the first movement of Symphony No. 4, and between *Revelge* and the opening march of Symphony No. 6 is clear; the unusual scale and weight of the songs unmistakably betray the hand of Mahler the symphonist. Both songs are funeral marches (*Revelge* is a march of a peculiarly spectral and dramatic kind).

Even this quick survey allows us to draw two important conclusions. Certain songs could function as symphonic movements in their own right, e.g. *Urlicht* and *Das himmlische Leben*. Other songs contained, as

it were, unfulfilled symphonic potentialities which could be carried over into a symphony and developed there on a legitimately symphonic scale.

The texts are all taken from the anthology of old German folk poems collected by Ludwig Archim von Arnim and Klemens Brentano, published in the first decade of the 19th century under the title of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. Mahler first announced his absorption in the *Wunderhorn* poems with Vols. II and III of the *Lieder and Gesänge*, songs for voice and piano, composed sometime between 1888 and 1892. The individual character of each song is very much bound up with the individuality of its orchestration. Notable is *Der Tamboursg'ssell* for its wind-band instrumentation, and *Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen* for the contrast of expressive strings for the lyrical sections and the winds for the fanfares.

It is possible to divide the songs gathered on this disc roughly into three contrasted groups: songs which are marches or contain military imagery; songs primarily lyrical in tone, often love songs; and humorous songs. *Urlicht*, which is mystical and religious in spirit, belongs to a group on its own. In the first category, the military imagery songs are charged with the musical memories of Mahler's childhood, growing up near a barracks within earshot of drums and marching feet. Within this group fall *Revelge*, *Der Tam-*

boursg'ssell, *Der Schildwache Nachtlied* with its magical and unexpected dissolution on the dominant, and *Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen*. In the second category are the teasing *Verlor'ne Müh*, the dramatic *Trost im Unglück*, the plaintive *Das irdische Leben*, the impetuous *Lied des Verfolgten im Turm*, and *Rheinlegendchen*, with its lilting geniality. *Lied des Verfolgten im Turm* is a miniature dramatic dialogue, a form that occurs more than once. In the third category are juxtaposed the good humor of *Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht?*, the rough wit of *Lob des hohen Verstandes* and the subtle irony of the *Fischpredigt*.

-Adapted from notes by Donald Mitchell

Producer: Seymour Solomon
Engineer: Mario Mizzaro
Recorded at: Grosse Saal, Konzerthaus, Vienna
Digital Remastering: David Baker
Cover Art: G. Kimt: *Portrait of Mahler*, detail from the Beethoven frieze
Design & Art Direction: Fred Holtz

Originally recorded May 27, 28, 31 and June 1, 1963. Initially released as VSD-2154. Subsequently released on CD as OVC-4045.

(P) & © 1991, 2012 eOne Music - All rights reserved. Unauthorized duplication is a violation of applicable laws. Manufactured and marketed under license to Passionato, LLC.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Maureen Forrester is Canada's outstanding musical luminary and one of the greatest contralto voices of the century. Born in Montreal, she made her Carnegie Hall debut in 1957 under Bruno Walter. Since then, she has been heard on five continents as soloist with virtually every major orchestra, with many of the world's greatest conductors, and in the most prestigious opera houses. She is represented on over 130 recordings on various labels, including many for *VANGUARD CLASSICS*, such as several Handel oratorios as well as albums of solo arias by Bach and Handel.

Heinz Rehfuss (1917-1988), born in Frankfurt-am-Main, studied in his native Switzerland, where he was recognized as one of the country's outstanding vocal artists, musical thinkers and pedagogues. He not only sang leading roles with the foremost opera companies of Europe but also was internationally renowned for his performances of art songs.

Felix Prohaska (1912-1987), son of Austrian composer Carl Prohaska, made many celebrated Vanguard recordings of Bach, Mozart, Schubert, and Mahler. His early work conducting the Strassburg Opera led to his being called upon to rehabilitate the Salzburg Festivals and conduct at the Vienna State Opera. He was Principal Conductor of the Frankfurt Opera from 1955-1961 before his appointment as director of the Frankfurt Hochschule für Musik.

A Technical Note:

All recordings originally made with Ampex 300 series vacuum tube (valve) master recorders have been transferred using carefully restored Ampexes. The unique analogue "golden glow" sound characteristic of these Ampexes is thus retained. No artificial equalization has been used.

AKG C-12 microphones were employed at the original sessions.

—Seymour Solomon
Producer, Vanguard Classics



"The songs are all superb and they are lovingly performed
here by Miss Forrester and Mr. Rehfuss." —THE NEW YORK TIMES

GUSTAV MAHLER Des Knaben Wunderhorn

Maureen Forrester, *contralto* · **Heinz Rehfuss**, *bass-baritone*

Orchestra of the Vienna Festival

Felix Prohaska, *conductor*

- | | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1 | Revelge (<i>Reveille</i>) <i>bass</i> | 6:20 |
| 2 | Das irdische Leben (<i>Life on Earth</i>) <i>contralto</i> | 3:00 |
| 3 | Lob des hohen Verstandes (<i>Praise of Intellect</i>) <i>bass</i> | 2:22 |
| 4 | Rheinlegendchen (<i>Rhine legend</i>) <i>contralto</i> | 3:11 |
| 5 | Der Schildwache Nachtlied (<i>Sentinel's Night Song</i>) <i>bass</i> | 5:29 |
| 6 | Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht? (<i>Who thought up this song?</i>) <i>bass</i> | 2:07 |
| 7 | Verlor'ne Müh (<i>Labor Lost</i>) <i>contralto</i> | 2:28 |
| 8 | Der Tambourg'sell (<i>The Drummer Boy</i>) <i>bass</i> | 5:08 |
| 9 | Trost im Unglück (<i>Comfort in Sorrow</i>) <i>bass</i> | 2:23 |
| 10 | Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen
(<i>Where the Shining Trumpets Blow</i>) <i>contralto</i> | 5:53 |
| 11 | Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt
(<i>St. Anthony and the Fishes</i>) <i>contralto</i> | 4:07 |
| 12 | Lied des Verfolgten im Turm (<i>Song of the Prisoner in the Tower</i>) <i>bass</i> | 3:49 |
| 13 | Urlicht (<i>Primeval Light</i>) <i>contralto</i> | 5:06 |

FULL TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS ENCLOSED

TT: 52:25



© & © 1991, 2012 eOne Music - All rights reserved.
Unauthorized duplication is a violation of applicable laws.



7 23918-4045-2 3

OVC 4045 MAHLER: DES KNABEN WUNDERHORN VANGUARD CLASSICS

OVC 4045 MAHLER: DES KNABEN WUNDERHORN VANGUARD CLASSICS