

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra  
2016-2017 Mellon Grand Classics Season

June 2, 3 and 4, 2017

MANFRED HONECK, CONDUCTOR  
YING FANG, SOPRANO  
GERHILD ROMBERGER, MEZZO-SOPRANO  
MENDELSSOHN CHOIR OF PITTSBURGH  
MATTHEW MEHAFFEY, DIRECTOR

JAMES MacMILLAN      *MISERERE* FOR CHORUS

GUSTAV MAHLER      SYMPHONY NO. 2 FOR SOPRANO, MEZZO-SOPRANO,  
CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA IN C MINOR, "RESURRECTION"  
I.      Allegro maestoso. Mit durchaus ernstem  
         und feierlichem Ausdruck

INTERMISSION

- II.      Andante moderato: Sehr gemächlich
- III.      In ruhig fliessender Bewegung —
- IV.      Urlicht: Sehr feierlich aber schlicht —
- V.      Finale: Im Tempo des Scherzos

**Ms. Fang**  
**Ms. Romberger**  
**MENDELSSOHN CHOIR OF PITTSBURGH**

## PROGRAM NOTES BY DR. RICHARD E. RODDA

### SIR JAMES MACMILLAN

#### *Miserere* (“*Have Mercy Upon Me*”) for Chorus (2009)

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Composer of the Year Sir James MacMillan was born in Kilwinning, Ayshire, Scotland on July 16, 1959. He composed *Miserere* in 2009, and it was premiered in Antwerp, Belgium on August 29, 2009, by Harry Christophers and renowned choral ensemble The Sixteen. These performances by the Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh will mark the Pittsburgh premiere.

**Performance time: approximately 13 minutes**

Scottish composer James MacMillan, born in Kilwinning, Ayshire on July 16, 1959, was educated at the University of Edinburgh (B.Mus., 1981) and University of Durham (Ph.D., 1987), where his principal teacher was John Casken. After working as a lecturer at Manchester University from 1986 to 1988, MacMillan returned to Scotland, where he has since fulfilled numerous important commissions and taught at the University of Edinburgh and Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in Glasgow. He has also served as Artistic Director of the Edinburgh Contemporary Arts Trust, Affiliate Composer of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Composer/Conductor with the BBC Philharmonic, and Visiting Composer of the Philharmonia Orchestra and Artistic Director of its contemporary music series, Music Today; he became Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Chamber Philharmonic in 2010. In 1993, MacMillan won both the Gramophone Contemporary Music Record of the Year Award and Classic CD Award for Contemporary Music; he was made a CBE in 2004, given the 2008 British Composer Award for Liturgical Music, and named an Honorary Patron of the London Chamber Orchestra in 2008. In October 2014, MacMillan inaugurated the Cumnock Tryst, a festival of international scope that he organized in his boyhood home in southern Scotland.

Macmillan's compositions, many of which incorporate traditional Scottish elements and bear some stamp of either his religion (Catholicism) or his politics (socialism), include two operas, a *St. John Passion*, concerted works for piano (*The Berserking*), percussion (*Veni, Veni, Emmanuel*), cello, clarinet, organ and trumpet, orchestral scores, chamber works and pieces for solo voices and chorus. Of his creative personality, MacMillan wrote, “My philosophy of composition looks beyond the introversion of the New Music ‘ghetto’ and seeks a wider communication while in no way promoting a compromising populism.... I respect tradition in many forms, whether cultural, political or historical, and in keeping up a continuous, delicate scrutiny of old forms, ancient traditions, enduring beliefs and lasting values one is strengthened in one's constant, restless search for new avenues of expression. The existence of the influence of the old alongside the experiments of the new should not appear incongruous. Therefore, in ideological terms, my works express the timeless truths of Roman Catholicism alongside a fierce social commitment. And musically one can hopefully sense the depths of times past integrating with attempts at innovation.”

*Tenebrae* — “darkness” — encompasses the most solemn moments of the Christian year. The name is applied to the combined Roman Catholic services of Matins and Lauds, which bracket daybreak on Thursday, Friday and Saturday of Holy Week, during which fifteen candles signifying the ebbing life of Christ are extinguished one-by-one after the singing of the obligatory Psalms. The service closes “*in tenebris*.” The Matins service of *Tenebrae* includes the penitential Psalm 51 — *Miserere mei, Deus* (“*Have Mercy Upon Me, O God*”) — which was set by Josquin, Palestrina, Gesualdo, Lassus, and, most famously, Gregorio Allegri, who composed a work for double choir on the text for the Sistine Chapel around 1638. So profound was the impression of Allegri's *Miserere* (and so great the draw of this unique Roman experience for tourists) that Pope Urban VIII issued an edict forbidding the score to be copied or performed elsewhere upon pain of excommunication. (The decree remained in force until the fourteen-year-old Wolfgang Mozart made a pilgrimage to Rome in 1770 to be made a Knight of the Golden Spur by Pope Clement XIV, and there heard Allegri's *Miserere* and wrote it down from memory.)

In 2009, James MacMillan composed his *Miserere* for the acclaimed London-based a cappella ensemble The Sixteen and its founder and conductor, Harry Christophers, who premiered the work on August 29, 2009 at the 17th-century Carolus-Borromeuskerk in Antwerp. MacMillan's *Miserere* not only plumbs the images and emotions of the individual verses but also traces a slowly swelling optimism, from the recognition and repentance of the opening lines to the hope of forgiveness at the close.

Text: Psalm 51  
Translation: 1662 Book of Common Prayer

Miserere mei, Deus: secundum magnam misericordiam tuam.	Have mercy upon me, O God, after Thy great goodness.
Et secundum multitudinem miserationem tuarum, dele iniquitatem meam.	According to the multitude of Thy mercies do away mine offences.
Amplius lava me ab iniquitate mea: et a peccato meo munda me.	Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness: and cleanse me from my sin.
Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego cognosco: et peccatum meum contra me est semper.	For I acknowledge my faults: and my sin is ever before me.
Tibi soli peccavi, et malum coram te feci: ut justificeris in sermonibus tuis, et vincas cum judicaris.	Against Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that Thou mightest be justified in Thy saying, and clear when Thou art judged.
Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum: et in peccatis concepit me mater mea.	Behold, I was shapen in wickedness: and in sin hath my mother conceived me.
Ecce enim veritatem dilexisti: incerta et occulta sapientiae tuae manifestasti mihi. secretly.	But lo, Thou requirest truth in the inward parts: and shalt make me to understand wisdom
Asperges me hysopo, et mudabor: lavabis me, et super nivem dealbabor.	Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
Auditui meo dabis gaudium et laetitiam: et exultabunt ossa humiliata. rejoice.	Thou shalt make me hear of joy and gladness: that the bones which Thou hast broken may
Averte faciem tuam a peccatis meis: et omnes iniquitates meas dele.	Turn Thy face from my sins: and put out all my misdeeds.
Cor mundum crea in me, Deus: et spiritum rectum innova in visceribus meis.	Make me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me.
Ne proiecias me a facie tua: et spiritum sanctum tuum ne auferas a me.	Cast me not away from Thy presence: and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.
Redde mihi laetitiam salutaris tui: et spiritu principali confirma me.	O give me the comfort of Thy help again: and stablish me with Thy free Spirit.
Docebo iniquos vias tuas: et impii ad te convertentur.	Then shall I teach Thy ways unto the wicked: and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.
Libera me de sanguinibus, Deus, Deus salutis meae: et exultabit lingua mea justitiam tuam.	Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou that art the God of my health: and my tongue shall sing of Thy righteousness.

Domine, labia mea aperies:  
et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam.

Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord:  
and my mouth shall show Thy praise.

Quoniam si voluisses sacrificium,  
dedissem utique:  
holocaustis non delectaberis.

For Thou desirest no sacrifice,  
else would I give it Thee:  
but Thou delightest not in burnt-offerings.

Sacrificium Deo spiritus contribulatus:  
cor contritum, et humiliatum,  
Deus, non despicias.

The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit:  
a broken and contrite heart,  
O God, shalt Thou not despise.

Benigne fac, Domine, in bona voluntate tua Sion:  
ut aedificentur muri Jerusalem.

O be favourable and gracious unto Sion:  
build Thou the walls of Jerusalem.

Tunc acceptabis  
sacrificium iustitiae,  
oblaciones et holocausta:  
tunc imponent super altare tuum vitulos.  
altar.

Then shalt Thou be pleased  
with the sacrifice of righteousness,  
with the burnt-offerings and oblations:  
then shall they offer young calves upon Thine

## GUSTAV MAHLER

Symphony No. 2 for Soprano and Mezzo-Soprano Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra in C minor, "Resurrection" (1888-1894)

Gustav Mahler was born in Kalischt, Bohemia on July 7, 1860, and died in Vienna on May 18, 1911. He composed his Second Symphony between 1888 and 1894, and led the premiere with the Berlin Philharmonic on December 13, 1895. The Pittsburgh Symphony first performed "Resurrection" at Syria Mosque on January 30, 1953, with William Steinberg on the podium. Most recently, the Pittsburgh Symphony performed the symphony in Heinz Hall with Manfred Honeck on October 19, 2012, before performing it on tour in Barcelona, Madrid, and Vienna. The score calls for four piccolos, four flutes, four oboes, two English horns, E-flat clarinet, four B-flat clarinets, bass clarinet, four bassoons, two contrabassoons, six horns, six trumpets, four trombones, tuba (plus trumpets and horns off-stage), two timpani, percussion (on- and off-stage), two harps, organ and strings

**Performance time: approximately 90 minutes**

In August 1886, the distinguished conductor Arthur Nikisch, later music director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, appointed the 26-year-old Gustav Mahler as his assistant at the Leipzig Opera. At Leipzig, Mahler met Carl von Weber, grandson of the composer, and the two worked on a new performing edition of the virtually forgotten Weber opera *Die drei Pintos* ("The Three Pintos," two being impostors of the title character). Following the premiere of *Die Drei Pintos*, on January 20, 1888, Mahler attended a reception in a room filled with flowers. That seemingly beneficent image played on his mind, becoming transmogrified into nightmares and waking visions, almost hallucinations, of himself on a funeral bier surrounded by floral wreaths.

The First Symphony was completed in March 1888, and its successor was begun almost immediately. Mahler, spurred by the startling visions of his own death, conceived the new work as a tone poem entitled *Totenfeier* ("Funeral Rite"). The title was apparently taken from the translation by the composer's friend Siegfried Lipiner, titled *Totenfeier*, of Adam Mickiewicz's Polish epic *Dziady*. Though he inscribed his manuscript, "Symphony in C minor/First Movement," Mahler had no idea at the time what sort of music would follow *Totenfeier*, and he considered allowing the movement to stand as an independent work.

The next five years were ones of intense professional and personal activity for Mahler. He resigned from the Leipzig Opera in May 1888 and applied for posts in Karlsruhe, Budapest, Hamburg and Meiningen. To support his petition for this last position, he wrote to Hans von Bülow, director at Meiningen until 1885, to ask for his recommendation, but the letter was ignored. Richard Strauss, however, the successor to Bülow at Meiningen, took up Mahler's cause on the evidence of his talent furnished by *Die Drei Pintos* and his growing reputation as a conductor of Mozart and Wagner. When Strauss showed Bülow the score for the Weber/Mahler opera, Bülow responded caustically, "Be it *Weberei* or *Mahlerei* [puns in German on 'weaving' and 'painting'], it makes no difference to me. The whole thing is a pastiche, an infamous, out-of-date bagatelle. I am simply nauseated." Mahler, needless to say, did not get the job at Meiningen, but he was awarded the position at Budapest, where his duties began in October 1888.

In 1891, Mahler switched jobs once again, this time leaving Budapest to join the prestigious Hamburg Opera as principal conductor. There he encountered Bülow, who was director of the Hamburg Philharmonic concerts. Bülow had certainly not forgotten his earlier low estimate of Mahler the composer, but after a performance of *Siegfried* he allowed that "Hamburg has now acquired a simply first-rate opera conductor in Mr. Gustav Mahler." Encouraged by Bülow's admiration of his conducting, Mahler asked for his comments on the still-unperformed *Totenfeier*. Mahler described their encounter:

"When I played my *Totenfeier* for Bülow, he fell into a state of extreme nervous tension, clapped his hands over his ears and exclaimed, 'Beside your music, *Tristan* sounds as simple as a Haydn symphony! If that is still music then I do not understand a single thing about music!' We parted from each other in complete friendship, I, however, with the conviction that Bülow considers me an able conductor but absolutely hopeless as a composer."

Mahler, who throughout his career considered his composition more important than his conducting, was deeply wounded by this behavior, but he controlled his anger out of respect for Bülow, who had extended him many kindnesses and become something of a mentor. Bülow did nothing to quell his doubts about the quality of his creative work, however, and Mahler, who had written nothing since *Totenfeier* three years before, was at a crisis in his career as a composer.

The year after Bülow's withering criticisms, Mahler found inspiration to compose again in a collection of German folk poems by Ludwig Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano called *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* ("The Youth's Magic Horn"). He had known these texts since at least 1887, and in 1892 set four of them for voice and piano, thereby renewing some of his creative self-confidence. The following summer, when he was free from the pressures of conducting, he took rustic lodgings in the village of Steinbach on Lake Attersee in the lovely Austrian Salzkammergut, near Salzburg, and it was there that he resumed work on the Second Symphony, five years after the first movement had been completed. Without a clear plan as to how they would fit into the Symphony's overall structure, he used two of the *Wunderhorn* songs from the preceding year as the bases for the internal movements of the piece. On July 16th, he completed the orchestral score of the Scherzo, derived from *Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt*, a cynical poem about St. Anthony preaching a sermon to the fishes, who, like some human congregations, return to their fleshly ways as soon as the holy man finishes his lesson. Only three days later, *Urlicht* ("Primal Light") for mezzo-soprano solo, was completed; by the end of the month, the *Andante*, newly conceived, was finished.

By the end of summer 1893, the first four movements of the Symphony were finished, but Mahler was still unsure about the work's ending. The finality implied by the opening movement's "Funeral Rite" seemed to allow no logical progression to another point of climax. As a response to the questions posed by the first movement, he envisioned a grand choral close for the work, much in the manner of the triumphant ending of Beethoven's last symphony. "My experience with the last movement of my Second Symphony was such that I literally ransacked world literature, even including the Bible, to find the redeeming word." Still, no solution presented itself.

In December 1892, Bülow's health gave out, and he designated Mahler to be his successor as conductor of the Hamburg Philharmonic concerts. A year later Bülow went to Egypt for treatment, but died suddenly at Cairo on February 12, 1894. Mahler was deeply saddened by the news. He met with Josef Förster the same day and played through the *Totenfeier* with such emotion that his friend was convinced it was offered "in memory of Bülow." Förster described the memorial service at Hamburg's St. Michael Church: "Mahler and I were present at the moving farewell.... The strongest impression to remain was that of the singing of the children's voices. The effect was created not just by Klopstock's profound poem [*Auferstehen* — 'Resurrection'] but by the innocence of the pure sounds issuing from the children's throats. The funeral procession started. At the Hamburg Opera, where Bülow had so often delighted the people, he was greeted by the funeral music from Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* [conducted by Mahler].

"Outside the Opera, I could not find Mahler. But that afternoon I hurried to his apartment as if to obey a command. I opened the door and saw him sitting at his writing desk. He turned to me and said: 'Dear friend, I have it!' I understood: '*Auferstehen, ja auferstehen wirst du nach kurzen Schlaf* [*"Rise again, yes you will rise again"*].' I had guessed the secret: Klopstock's poem, which that morning we had heard from the mouths of children, was to be the basis for the finale of the Second Symphony." On June 29, 1894, three months later, Mahler completed his monumental "Resurrection" Symphony, six years after it was begun.

The composer himself wrote of the emotional engines driving this Symphony: "*1st movement*. We stand by the coffin of a well-loved person. His life, struggles, passions and aspirations once more, for the last time, pass before our mind's eye. — And now in this moment of gravity and of emotion which convulses our deepest being, our heart is gripped by a dreadfully serious voice which always passes us by in the deafening bustle of daily life: What now? What is this life — and this death? Do we have an existence beyond it? Is all this only a confused dream, or do life and this death have a meaning? — And we must answer this question if we are to live on.

"*2nd movement — Andante* (in the style of a *Ländler*). You must have attended the funeral of a person dear to you and then, perhaps, the picture of a happy hour long past arises in your mind like a ray of sun undimmed — and you can almost forget what has happened.

"*3rd movement — Scherzo*, based on *Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt*. When you awaken from the nostalgic daydream [of the preceding movement] and you return to the confusion of real life, it can happen that the ceaseless motion, the senseless bustle of daily activity may strike you with horror. Then life can seem meaningless, a gruesome, ghostly spectacle, from which you may recoil with a cry of disgust!

"*4th movement — Urlicht* (mezzo-soprano solo). The moving voice of naïve faith sounds in our ear: *I am of God, and desire to return to God! God will give me a lamp, will light me to eternal bliss!*

"*5th movement*. We again confront all the dreadful questions and the mood of the end of the first movement. The end of all living things has come. The Last Judgment is announced and the ultimate terror of this Day of Days has arrived. The earthquakes, the graves burst open, the dead rise and stride hither in endless procession. Our senses fail us and all consciousness fades away at the approach of the eternal Spirit. The 'Great Summons' resounds: the trumpets of the apocalypse call. Softly there sounds a choir of saints and heavenly creatures: 'Rise again, yes, thou shalt rise again.' And the glory of God appears. All is still and blissful. And behold: there is no judgment; there are no sinners, no righteous ones, no great and no humble — there is no punishment and no reward! An almighty love shines through us with blessed knowing and being."

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## Urlicht

O Röschen rot!  
Der Mensch liegt in grösster Not!  
Der Mensch liegt in grösster Pein!  
Je lieber möcht' ich im Himmel sein!

Da kam ich auf einen breiten Weg:  
Da kam ein Engelein und wollt' mich abweisen!  
Ach nein! Ich liess mich nicht abweisen!  
Ich bin von Gott und will wieder zu Gott!  
Der liebe Gott wird mir ein Lichtchen geben,  
Wird leuchten mir in das ewig selig Leben!

## Primal Light

Oh red rose!  
Man lies in deepest need,  
Man lies in deepest pain.  
Much would I rather be in heaven!

Then I came onto a broad path:  
An angel came and wanted to send me away.  
Ah, no! I would not be sent away.  
I am from God and will return to God!  
Dear God will give me a light,  
Will illumine me to eternal, blessed life!

\* \* \*

## Chorus and Soprano

Aufersteh'n, ja aufersteh'n wirst du,  
mein Staub, nach kurzer Ruh:  
Unsterblich Leben  
wird der dich rief dir geben.

Rise again, yes you will rise again,  
my dust, after a short rest:  
Immortal life  
will He who called you grant to you.

Wieder aufzublüh'n wirst du gesät!  
Der Herr der Ernte geht  
und sammelt Garben  
uns ein, die starben!

To bloom again you are sown!  
The Lord of the harvest goes  
and gathers sheaves,  
even us, who died!

Mezzo-Soprano

O glaube, mein Herz, o glaube,  
es geht dir nichts verloren!  
Dein ist, was du geseht,  
dein was du geliebt,  
was du gestritten!

O believe, my heart, o believe,  
Nothing will be lost to you!  
What you longed for is yours,  
Yours, what you have loved,  
what you have struggled for!

O glaube,  
du warst nicht umsonst geboren!  
Hast nicht umsonst gelebt,  
gelitten!

O believe,  
You were not born in vain!  
You have not lived in vain,  
Suffered in vain!

Chorus

Was entstanden ist,  
das muss vergehen!  
Was vergangen, aufersteh'n!  
Hör auf zu beben!  
Bereite dich zu leben!

What was created  
must pass away!  
What has passed away must rise!  
Cease trembling!  
Prepare yourself to live!

Soprano and Mezzo-Soprano

O Schmerz! Du Alldurchdringer,  
dir bin ich entrungen!  
O Tod! Du Allbezwinger,  
nun bist du bezwungen!  
Mit Flügeln, die ich mir errungen,  
in heissem Liebesstreben,  
werd' ich entschweben  
zum Licht, zu dem kein Aug' gedrungen!

O suffering! You that pierce all things,  
From you have I been wrested!  
O death! You that overcome all things,  
now you are overcome!  
With wings that I have won for myself  
in the fervent struggle of love,  
I shall fly away  
to the light which no eye has pierced.

Chorus

Sterben werd' ich, um zu leben!

I shall die in order to live!

Soloists and Chorus

Aufersteh'n, ja aufersteh'n wirst du,  
mein Herz, in einem Nu!  
Was du geschlagen,  
zu Gott wird es dich tragen!

Rise again, yes you will rise again,  
my heart, in the twinkling of an eye!  
What you have conquered  
will carry you to God!