

GRANT PARK ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS

Carlos Kalmar Artistic Director and Principal Conductor

Christopher Bell Chorus Director

Friday, August 16, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, August 17, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

Jay Pritzker Pavilion



MAHLER SYMPHONY NO. 2

Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus

Carlos Kalmar Conductor

Christopher Bell Chorus Director

Amanda Majeski Soprano

J'Nai Bridges Mezzo-Soprano

Gustav Mahler

Symphony No. 2 in C minor, "Resurrection"

Allegro maestoso

Andante moderato

In ruhig fließender Bewegung —

"Urlicht"

Im tempo des scherzos

AMANDA MAJESKI

J'NAI BRIDGES

This evening's concert is performed without intermission.

This concert is presented with generous support from
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Organ provided by Triune Music/S.B. Smith & Associates

The Friday concert is being broadcast live on 98.7WFMT
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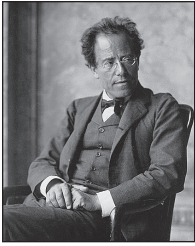
American soprano **Amanda Majeski** makes her Royal Opera House, Covent Garden debut in the title role in *Káťa Kabanová* during the 2018-2019 season and also appears at the Stuttgart Opera in *Iphigénie en Tauride* and Santa Fe Opera in *Così fan tutte*. In concert, she is heard with the Sydney Symphony, Music of the Baroque, and Colorado Symphony. Ms. Majeski made her Metropolitan Opera debut on opening night of the 2014-2015 season as Countess Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, which was broadcast in HD internationally and on PBS across the United States. She

has returned to the Met for revivals of *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Don Giovanni* and a new production of *Così fan tutte*, featured in the 2017-2018 HD broadcast season. An alumna of the Lyric Opera of Chicago's The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center, Ms. Majeski made her mainstage Lyric debut as Countess Almaviva, and was named "Best Breakout Star" by *Chicago Magazine*. She has since appeared at Lyric in *La Clemenza di Tito*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Der Rosenkavalier* and *The Passenger*. Additional engagements include the Oper Frankfurt, Semperoper Dresden, Glyndebourne Festival, Paris Opéra, Teatro Real, National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, Teatro Colón and Washington National Opera. In concert, Ms. Majeski made her debut with the Hong Kong Philharmonic in Richard Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*, which will be released on Naxos as the final installment of their *Ring Cycle*. She has also appeared with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Sinfonieorchester Aachen, Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Richmond Symphony at the Kennedy Center, and Bard Music Festival. She made her New York recital debut at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall under the auspices of the Marilyn Horne Foundation and returned for her solo recital debut at Carnegie Hall in 2014. Ms. Majeski holds degrees from the Curtis and Northwestern. She was a member of San Francisco Opera's Merola Program, Gerdine Young Artist Program at Opera Theatre of St. Louis, and Steans Institute at Ravinia. Her honors include the George London Foundation Award, First Prize of the Palm Beach Opera Vocal Competition, and a Sara Tucker Study Grant from the Richard Tucker Foundation.



American mezzo-soprano **J'Nai Bridges** makes both her role and house debuts in the current season as Preziosilla in *La Forza del Destino* with Opernhaus Zürich under the baton of Fabio Luisi. In a return to San Francisco Opera, she creates the role of Josefa Segovia in the world premiere of John Adams' *Girls of the Golden West*, directed by Peter Sellars. On the concert stage, Ms. Bridges performs as soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Gustavo Dudamel in works by Mozart at Walt Disney Hall, with the Philadelphia Orchestra in a holiday concert, and in Bernstein

centennial celebrations with both the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra. Last season, J'Nai Bridges made debuts with San Francisco Opera and Bavarian State Opera in *Andrea Chénier*, with Los Angeles Opera in Philip Glass's *Akhmaten*, with Vancouver Opera in Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*, and at Carnegie Hall as a soloist at the Marilyn Horne Song Celebration. She performed as soloist with the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra, in Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with Gustavo Dudamel at the Hollywood Bowl, and with the National Symphony Orchestra at Kennedy Center in the "Farewell to Christoph Eschenbach" concert. J'Nai Bridges was also heard in songs by Gershwin with the New York Philharmonic at the Bravo! Vail Festival led by Bramwell Tovey and in Mahler's Symphony No. 2 "Resurrection" with the Louisville Orchestra and Ft. Wayne Symphony Orchestras.



GUSTAV MAHLER (1860-1911)

SYMPHONY NO. 2 IN C MINOR, "RESURRECTION" (1888-1894)

Scored for: four flutes (all doubling on piccolo), three oboes, English horn, E-flat clarinet, three clarinets, bass clarinet, three bassoons, contrabassoon, ten horns, eight trumpets, four trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, two harps, organ, strings and chorus

Performance time: 80 minutes

First Grant Park Orchestra performance: June 25, 1988, Zdeněk Mácal, conductor, Roberta Alexander, Catherin Robbin, soloists

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*. Following that production's premiere, on January 20, 1888, Mahler attended a reception in a room filled with flowers. This 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"). Though he inscribed his manuscript, "Symphony in C minor/First Movement," he 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.



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The next five years were ones of intense professional and personal activity for Mahler. He resigned from the Leipzig Opera in May 1888 to take a new post in Budapest. In 1891, he switched jobs once again, leaving Budapest to join the prestigious Hamburg Opera as principal conductor. There he encountered Hans von Bülow, who was director of the Hamburg Philharmonic concerts. 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*, Bülow 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!' We parted in complete friendship, I, however, convinced 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 Second 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's friend Josef 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 their singing of Klopstock's profound poem [*Auferstehen* — 'Resurrection'] but by the innocence of the pure sounds issuing from the children's throats. Later I could not find Mahler, so that afternoon I hurried to his apartment. 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: 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.

Mahler wrote of the expressive arc of the Second 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 dear person and then, perhaps, the picture of a happy hour long past arises in your mind — 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 earth quakes, 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 with blessed knowing and being."

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Mezzo-Soprano

Urlicht ("Primal Light")

O Röschen rot!	Oh red rose!
Der Mensch liegt in grösster Not!	Man lies in deepest need,
Der Mensch liegt in grösster Pein!	Man lies in deepest pain.
Je lieber möcht' ich im Himmel sein!	Much would I rather be in heaven!
Da kam ich auf einen breiten Weg:	Then I came onto a broad path:
Da kam ein Engelein und wollt' mich abweisen!	An angel came and wanted to send me away.
Ach nein! Ich liess mich nicht abweisen!	Ah, no! I would not be sent away.
Ich bin von Gott und will wieder zu Gott!	I am from God and will return to God!
Der liebe Gott wird mir ein Lichtchen geben,	Dear God will give me a light,
Wird leuchten mir in das ewig selig Leben!	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.
 Wieder aufzublüh'n wirst du gesät!
 Der Herr der Ernte geht
 und sammelt Garben
 uns ein, die starben!

Rise again, yes you will rise again,
 my dust, after a short rest:
 Immortal life
 will He who called you grant to you.
 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 gesehnt,
 dein was du geliebt,
 was du gestritten!
 O glaube,
 du warst nicht umsonst geboren!
 Hast nicht umsonst gelebt,
 gelitten!

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 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 entrunnen!
 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' gedrunnen!

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!