THE STUART B. MINDLIN MEMORIAL CONCERTS

MAHLER
SYMPHONY NO. 9

FRIDAY, APRIL 25
8 P.M.

SATURDAY, APRIL 26
8 P.M.

RICHARDSON AUDITORIUM
IN ALEXANDER HALL
The
Princeton University Orchestra
Michael Pratt, conductor

The Stuart B. Mindlin Memorial Concerts

Gustav Mahler (1860 - 1911) Symphony No. 9 in D major

I. Allegro con moto
II. In the tempo of a comfortable ländler. Somewhat clumsy and very coarse
IV. Adagio

Stuart Mindlin died twenty years ago this past February. He was a vibrant member of the Princeton University Orchestra and was devoted to the Princeton community and his family. He befriended several generations of Princeton students and the Mindlin family established an endowment bearing his name to provide scholarship support to students in the Orchestra.

Friday, April 25, 2008 at 8 p.m. • Saturday, April 26, 2008 at 8 p.m.
RICHARDSON AUDITORIUM IN ALEXANDER HALL • PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

No audio or video recording or photography is permitted in Richardson Auditorium. No one will be admitted into the auditorium during the performance of a piece.
The Conductor

Michael Pratt, conductor, joined the Princeton faculty in 1977. Over the past 29 seasons, he has helped to engineer a major expansion of performance activities at Princeton, and currently serves as the director of the Program in Musical Performance. Pratt also codirects both the Composers' Ensemble and Richardson Chamber Players, and teaches several performance courses. He has led Princeton performances of some of the most demanding works in the repertory, including symphonies of Mahler and Stravinsky's Le Sacre du Printemps. Other highlights from his Princeton tenure include the United States stage premiere of the original 1805 version of Beethoven's Fidelio, which was subsequently invited to appear at Lincoln Center, and performances of Weber's Der Freischütz and Wagner's Tristan und Isolde, the latter in a concert version. He has conducted numerous new works at Princeton, including music by faculty composers Paul Lansky, Steve Mackey, Barbara White, Dan Trueman, Peter Westergaard, and Milton Babbitt. In recent years he has turned to operas of the early Baroque, leading performances of works of Cavalli and Monteverdi.

Under Pratt, the Princeton University Orchestra also has collaborated with the Princeton Shakespeare Company and the Program in Theater and Dance for productions, respectively, of A Midsummer Night's Dream with Mendelssohn's incidental music, Prokofiev's ballet Le Pas D'Acier, and the world premiere of the Pushkin/Prokofiev Boris Godunov. Pratt and the orchestra also presented Beethoven and Homer: The Heroic Moment in collaboration with Professor (Emeritus) Robert Fagles. The orchestra has toured the U.S., Great Britain, Spain, Portugal, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia.

Pratt is cofounder and was the music director of the Opera Festival of New Jersey from 1984 to 1995. With the Opera Festival, he conducted 18 new productions of works ranging in style from Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro to Verdi's Falstaff to the world premiere of Peter Westergaard's The Tempest.

Pratt also holds the position of music director of the Delaware Valley Philharmonic, having led that ensemble since 1990. He has appeared as a guest conductor with some of the leading ensembles in the United States, including the Concerto Soloists of Philadelphia, the Boston Symphony Chamber Players, the orchestras of Detroit, Rochester, Atlanta, Long Island, and Indianapolis, the Aspen Music Festival, and Opera Delaware. From 1985 to 1990 he also served as associate conductor of the New Jersey Symphony. Pratt was educated at the Eastman School and Tanglewood, and his teachers include Gustav Meier, Gunther Schuller, and Otto Werner Mueller. He lives in Skillman with his wife Martha, a member of Princeton's voice faculty.

Notes on the Program  by Michael Pratt

By the time Mahler began work on his first symphony in 1884, the symphony had become the avenue by which composers made statements on a grand scale, addressing a broad public. More personal and intimate expressions naturally were reserved for solo works, chamber music, and the song, as these genres were still mostly performed for smaller gatherings and not larger public concert halls. The quality of expression therefore still suited the venue, and a composer's more private thoughts were shared with smaller numbers of listeners. Mahler, however, was destined to change this.

Wagner had turned away from the symphony, taking as his point of departure Beethoven's Ninth with its radical fusion of text and symphonic form. To Wagner, this pointed to a path that left the symphony itself behind, and to a new kind of musical poetry. Brahms, who became the symbolic head of the conservative faction, held the line with four magnificent symphonies that mined the tradition of pre-Ninth Beethoven.

Mahler, from his early days at the Vienna Conservatory, was an avowed Wagnerite. Yet he did not take up Wagner's mantle as an opera composer, with the exception of the completion of Weber's unfinished comic opera Die Drei Pintos. But poetic texts were still a powerful stimulus for him. He set over a dozen poems from Des Knaben Wunderhorn (The Youth's Magic Horn), the 1805 collection of German folk poetry, as both songs and symphonic movements. His first
major song cycle, Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen (Songs of a Wayfarer), was a setting of his own poetry, and it was a very intimate revelation of a love affair gone bad. But it was set to the accompaniment of a large and colorful orchestra—hardly the kind of music meant for a small gathering!

The First Symphony followed soon thereafter (it borrows much music from the song cycle), and there are extended passages in it that have the flavor of very personal revelation, in which innermost feelings are shown to the world. Mahler stayed on this path of the symphony as personal expression, sometimes going to some trouble to tell the world that this is what he was doing—the original program for the Third Symphony gave titles to movements—What (various things, like Flowers, Animals, Morning Bells, God) Tell Me.

The Ninth Symphony, along with its close companion, Das Lied von der Erde (The Song of the Earth) was composed in 1908-1909, in the wake of catastrophe for Mahler and his family. The terrible summer of 1907 had brought three blows: Mahler's resignation from the directorship of the Vienna Court Opera, the most prestigious position in the world; the death from scarlet fever and diphtheria of his older daughter Maria; and a diagnosis of his own deficient heart valve which, at least at the time, seemed like a personal death sentence in that his physical activities were severely restricted. (He later resumed a full schedule of activities.)

The often harrowing spiritual journey of Das Lied and the Ninth, however, is much more than a reaction to just these dark events. These works are an expression of the culmination of a lifelong existential struggle that motivated much of his work. Mahler's childhood was soaked with death—the eldest surviving son, he witnessed the deaths of several younger siblings while growing up. Combine this with the terrible tension of the unhappy marriage of his parents, and it is not surprising that a powerful sense of the impermanence and evanescence of life was imprinted early and deeply on his personality. In notes on the first movement of the Second ("Resurrection") Symphony he described it as "the hero of the First Symphony being carried to his grave and whose life I imagine I see reflected in a mirror from a high watchtower. At the same time the big question is being asked; 'Why have you lived? Why have you suffered? Is it all some great fearful joke?" We must answer these questions if we are to go on living..." This was from his early thirties, over a decade and a half before the Ninth.

Mahler went on in the "Resurrection" to try to answer his own terrible questions: the great choral finale paints a picture of the end of time not as Judgment and Armageddon, but as a supreme moment, for all souls, of light, forgiveness and ultimate love. He tried another possible answer in the Third, in which each movement represents a step up in the chain of life. From the savageness of pure Nature, to flowers, animals, night, morning and finally to God and pure love, he seems here to be seeking the answer in this world, not the next.

1907 brought the issue of impermanence to the front of his mind with a terrible immediacy. That very summer he was strongly drawn to the Chinese poetry by 8th and 9th century Zen monks in the little volume of translations "The Chinese Flute"—thousand year old meditations on these very issues which gripped him anew. Their settings in the next year in Das Lied were intensely personal, sometimes with burning vividness. This cycle and the Ninth Symphony together sing two songs simultaneously: one of the bottomless sorrow of life, and the other of the beauty of the earth and the ecstasy of being alive on it.

1. The first movement of the Ninth is one of Mahler's vast landscapes, and it is easy for a newcomer to this music to get swallowed and lost in it. Yet it can be boiled down to the same sonata form that governed Beethoven's opening movements. (Its proportions are not unlike the first movement of the "Eroica"). It is built from a few fragments which are almost all heard in the opening seconds. A halting and uneven rhythm shared between horn and cello opens the work. In the third measure an angular motive sounds, bell-like, in the low harp; in the fourth a more affirming motive sounds in the muted horn, followed two measures later by a simple and heart-breaking melody in the violin. This melody starts with the same unresolved two-note motive that ends Das Lied, that on which the voice sings "Ewig" ("Eternally"), thus establishing a musical and spiritual link to Mahler's last song, "The Farewell". Emotionally the movement is an
alternation of the two states listed above, but more—Mahler is able to musically combine them, make them sound simultaneously. Profound despair and soaring joy, all in the same moment, much as they existed in Mahler's own heart. There is an extended development section, and about fifteen minutes into the movement there is a high point ("Highest Strength" in the score), immediately after which there is a shattering sounding of the opening rhythm in the lower brass. It is now unmistakably heard as Death—or the fear of Death, which destroys all hope. A heavy funeral march follows, with bells sounding. This leads to one of Mahler's most moving passages. It is marked "Anwachsen" ("Rising"), and it rises indeed, after the crushing death blow, to music of soaring rapture. The music takes a couple of more turns, with an extended ensemble cadenza for flute, horn and lower strings, before ending blissfully. The tune at the end is borrowed from a Strauss waltz; "Freut euch des Lebens" ("Take joy in life"). After all the death and violence, love of life gets the last word.

II. The contrast between the deep passion of the first movement and the one that follows is startling. About the character of the second movement Mahler says it all in his instructions in the score: "Somewhat clumsy and very coarse". It is almost as if Mahler is mocking the lofty first movement with this often raucous party, and it calls to mind "The Drunkard in Spring" in Das Lied. Three different dances predominate: two country ländlers, one slow, the next even slower, interrupted by a waltz with dizzying harmonic twists that paint a picture of besotted individuals trying their best to stay upright. The opening ländler is heavy-footed and earnest, and the sweet Austrian flavor of the slow one is unmistakable. But the waltz keeps crashing its way back in. It builds extraordinary energy through its reeling and finally erupts into a thunderous new tune in the lower brass, later taken up and bellowed by the full orchestra. The opening ländler finally wins its way back to the party, with music that blends Haydn-like wit magically with the clumsiness. The top and bottom of the orchestra, piccolo and contrabassoon, end things with a delicious wink.

III. Mahler's instruction for the third movement again speaks volumes: "Very defiant". The manuscript originally carried the dedication "To my brothers in Apollo", which was directed at those critics who assailed Mahler for being all Dionysian (emotion) with no balance from the Apollonian (logic). Mahler's response was to write the greatest contrapuntal tour de force found in a symphony since Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony. Cells of short ideas are tossed around in the orchestra and piled on top of each other in music that roars along breathlessly. Yet the texture is never less than transparent, no matter how thickly and quickly the ideas come, and Mahler's use of the resources of the orchestra to achieve this transparency is virtuosic and breathtaking. The movement's A-B-A shape is apparent, with a cymbal crash and lyrical trumpet announcing the beginning of the middle section. Once again Mahler reaches for a contrast that is startling, for this middle section contains some of the most songful and angelic music he wrote. The main tune carries a four note up and down turn that will dominate the Finale. Towards the end of this section the leering gargoyle masks of the first section begin to intrude, and are at first resisted by the angels. But the fury breaks out again, and a violent coda finishes with some of the most savage music ever composed.

IV. In the spirit of the Third Symphony, Mahler calls on his full lyric power to conclude the Ninth with an adagio of white-hot beauty and poignancy. But the love for life and beauty here is different than twelve years earlier—there is now a feverish intensity, almost a fear that the love can never be expressed emphatically enough. Dark and barren interludes intrude, but they are always swept away by the fervor. An unexpected and haunting echo of "The Farewell" from Das Lied is marked by delicate solos in the woodwinds, and finally the music makes its way toward infinitely gentle resolution. On the last page, Mahler quotes his own earlier cycle Kindertotenlieder (Songs on the Death of Children). The violins play, very high, the phrase that sets the words "(They are up there), in the sunlight. The day is beautiful on the heights!" Mahler's last thoughts in this profound reflection on life and death were obviously with his daughter Maria, whose loss permanently broke his heart. And over the last hushed bars of the score he inscribed "World! Farewell".

© Michael Pratt
The Princeton University Orchestra

The Princeton University Orchestra began with a group of professional musicians from the New York Symphony and Philharmonic Societies who performed a series of concerts at Alexander Hall in 1896, the first on February 13. The proceeds were "devoted to the funds for the establishment of a School for Music of the study of Musical Composition, Theory, and History at Princeton University." In the ensuing century, the orchestra has come to be almost exclusively student organization; some 90 undergraduate and graduate musicians representing a broad spectrum of academic departments come together for concerts in Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall.

Under the direction of Michael Pratt since 1977, the orchestra has in recent years taken an important place in the state's concert calendar. The Newark Star-Ledger had high praise for the orchestra's "passionate performance" of Mahler's "Resurrection" Symphony and called the performance of Mahler's Third Symphony one "that would make any orchestra proud." And at a recent tour concert, the Glasgow Scotland Herald noted "the terrific attack, the alert rhythms and dynamics, the fiercely committed, driving performance which the orchestra gave..."

The Princeton University Orchestra performs some 10 to 15 concerts a year on campus, in addition to international tours. These concerts include both new music and works from the standard repertory. Audience members and critics alike have commented that even the most familiar works take on a new freshness in the enthusiastic, spirited, and precise performances given by the Princeton musicians.

The orchestra also serves an important role in Princeton's music department by both reading and performing new works by graduate composition students. In addition, it also has been invited to give command performances for special University events, such as the installation of President Harold Shapiro, and the celebration of Princeton's 250th Anniversary. In April 2001, it appeared in Lincoln Center for a special performance called Beethoven and Homer: The Human Moment—a program that combined the Fifth Symphony of Beethoven and Professor Robert Eagles's reading from his translation of The Iliad and The Odyssey.

The orchestra has represented Princeton tours on both the U.S. and Europe. Recent tours have seen visits to the London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Madrid, Barcelona, Prague, Budapest, and Vienna. In January 2007, the orchestra's performance in Bratislava was taped for later broadcast on Slovak television.

Participation in the orchestra is voluntary and extracurricular; students commit many hours to rehearsal above and beyond the time required for academic course work. Graduates of the orchestra have gone on to be performers, music teachers, and arts administrators, but the list of professors also includes lawyers, physicians, business executives, government officials, economists, architects, research scientists, and journalists. The Princeton University Orchestra offers an important opportunity for student instrumentalists to pursue musical interests in a way that significantly enhances their overall growth in a strong academic environment.

Members of the Princeton University Orchestra

Violin I

Steven Chen '08, Concertmaster
Dan-Meng Chen '08
Evan Jeng '10
Logan Anderson '10
Ken Schwantz '09
Steven Kim '09
Yuda Chen '10
Vanessa Fokhart '10
Yun-en Liu '09
Tiffany Liu '10
Yoon Won Song '11
Krishnan Mody '11
Alyse Wheelock '11
Brian Zhao '09

Violin II

Kieran Ledwidge '08, Principal
Stan Golobowiczki '08
Joe Kim '10
Sara Kim '10
Karley Meyer '09
Owen Kelley '09
Nikki Leon '11
Meghan Toth '11
Rebecca Pentengel '11
Megan McKee '11
Chris Hipser '11
Celine Satija '11

Viola

Emily Miller '09, Principal
Madeleine Walsh '08
Sarah Vander Hooe '08
Will Sullivan '09
Catherine Yung '11
Nikhil Gupta '09
Katherine Culver '10
Zachary Skopian '11
Russell O'Rourke '11
Marty Piazza '10
John Cappel '11

Cello

Anna Wittstruck '09, Principal
Cecile Hutenhower '08
Rob Day '10
Joe Gotoff '11
Jonathan Atkins '11
Jeremy Amon '09
Andrew Jones '10
Sam Leachman '09
Julia Liu '08
Kenneth Kanter '11
Christina Kim '11

Bass

Andris Zvagulis '08, Principal
Allison Wood '10
Mark Lock '11
Jack Hill
Steve Fillo
Dan Hudson
Robert Peterson

Flute

Jessica Anastasio '11, Principal
Kevin Scales-Joyce '09
Rashmi Trevedi '11
Clare Heecie '11

Piccolo

Sarah Weinstein '08

Oboe

Justin Knutson '11, Principal
Ljilja Trebits '11
Danielle Connelly '11
Bryan Gurewitz '09

English Horn

Bryan Gurewitz '09

Clarinet

Suzanne Westbrock, Principal
April Fried '08
Allison Corey '11

E-flat Clarinet

Leo Kim '10

Bass Clarinet

Raj Mehta '10

Bassoon

Victor Amin '08, Principal
Greg Rewoldt

Ivy Haga
Anthony Carrone
Contra Bassoon
Antony Carrone
Horn
Ian Arnold '11, Principal
Ryan Ebanks '09
Neil Katun '09
Jeff Campbell '10
Bryan Locais '11
Trumpet
Chris Palkotta '08, Principal
Brian Nowakowski '08
Amy Ridgeway '11
Ryan Dohn '11
Trombone
Dan Jaffe '10, Principal
Chris Innis '10
Hannah Parkovich '09

Bass Trombone
Matt Rich '09

Tuba

Sam Shankar '10

Timp

Annamarie Beaver '09
Diane Michaels

Timpani

Paul Vancich '08, Principal
Andrew Schwan '09

Percussion

Andrew Schwan '09
Mike DiStefano '11
Abby Bowman '11
Mark Gray '11

Assistant Conductor
Anna Wittstruck '09
Librarian
Sean Murphy '10
2008 — 2009 Orchestra Committee

Co Chairs:
Rob Day and Sam Leachman

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Social Chairs:
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Tour Chairs:
Logan Anderson, Josh Braid, Brian Zhao, Vanessa Folkerts, Rachel Neshitt

Members at Large:
Tiffany Lu, Lija Treibergs, Jeremy Amon, Andrew Jones

2007–08 Season Schedule

Friday May 31
Reunions Fireworks Concert

Upcoming Department of Music Concerts

Sunday, April 27th
Certificate Program in Musical Performance Student Recital,
Lily Arbésset, voice
Works by Mozart, Schubert, Debussy and others
Taplin Auditorium, 2:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 29th
Composers’ Ensemble of Princeton
Barbara White and Michael Pratt, directors
Featuring works by Judd Greenstein, Jascha Narveson, Andrew Lee,
Samson Young, and Greg Spears
Taplin Auditorium in Fine Hall, 8:00 p.m.

Princeton University Department of Music
Scott Burnham, chair
Marilyn Hain, department manager
Gregory D. Smith, academic programs manager
Kyle Subramaniam, business manager
Cynthia Masterson, office assistant
Ernest Clark, concert coordinator

Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall
Deba Vayanskii, director
Jennifer Harper, assistant director
Kimberly M. Shaw, assistant director
James Allington, audio engineer
Christopher Gorzelnik, production supervisor
John Burton, production technician
Bill Pierce, stage technician
Liz Lamberger, stage technician
Shannon Maselli, ticket manager
Mary Kemler, assistant director of university ticketing