



2021-22 Hal & Jeanette Segerstrom Family Foundation Sunday Matinee Series

# MAHLER'S SYMPHONY NO. 4

Sunday, June 26, 2022 @ 3 p.m.

Carl St. Clair, conductor  
Cecilia Violetta López, soprano

## PROGRAM

Mahler

### Symphony No. 4 in G Major

*Bedächtig; nicht eilen  
In gemächlicher Bewegung;  
ohne Hast  
Ruhevoll  
Sehr behaglich*

Cecilia Violetta López, soprano

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Performance at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts  
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS




**Christina and Michelle Naughton have captivated audiences throughout the globe with the unity created by their mystical communication.**

As reported by *The Wall Street Journal*, in Christina's own words, "There are times I forget we are two people playing together." A critic for *The Washington Post*

commented, "Indeed, I'm ready to put them on a level with some of the greatest piano duos of our time...They have to be heard to be believed." The Naughtons' work as a duo was recently recognized in 2019 as they became the first piano duo to receive the Avery Fisher Career Grant presented by Lincoln Center.

Christina and Michelle Naughton's career was launched in 2009 with a recital debut at Kennedy Center; and an orchestral debut at the Mann Center with the Philadelphia Orchestra, which led the *Philadelphia Inquirer* to characterize their playing as "paired to perfection." Subsequently, they began their careers in Europe and Asia; at Munich's Herkulesaal and with the Hong Kong Philharmonic, respectively. These appearances were met with much critical acclaim, with the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* proclaiming the Naughtons an "outstanding piano duo" and the *Sing Tao Daily* responding by the description "Joining two hearts and four hands at two grand pianos, the Naughton sisters created an electrifying and moving musical performance."

Christina and Michelle Naughton have also played as soloists with orchestras such as the Philadelphia Orchestra, Atlanta, Baltimore, Detroit, Hawaii, Houston, Milwaukee, Minnesota, Nashville, New Jersey, North Carolina, San Diego, St. Louis and Virginia symphonies; the Buffalo and Naples philharmonics, as well as The Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, St. Petersburg Philharmonic, Royal Flemish Philharmonic (Belgium), l'Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg, the Frankfurter Opern- and Museumsorchester, Hamburg Chorus, Kiel Philharmonic, Norddeutsche Philharmonie Rostock, the Netherlands Philharmonic at the Royal Concertgebouw, The Hong Kong Philharmonic and New Zealand Symphony. Past and future seasons feature collaborations under the batons of conductors such as Stéphane Denève, Edo de Waart, Charles Dutoit, JoAnn Falletta, Giancarlo Guerrero, Emmanuel Krivine, Cristian Macelaru, Andrés Orozco-Estrada and Leonard Slatkin.

Born in Princeton, N.J. to parents of European and Chinese descent, Christina and Michelle are graduates of The Juilliard School and the Curtis Institute of Music, where they were each awarded the Festsorazzi Prize. They are Steinway Artists and currently reside in New York. 




**USA Today** has named Cecilia Violetta López one of "Idaho's Top 10 Most Influential Women of the Century" and has been named one of opera's "25 Rising Stars" by **Opera News**. The singing actress is constantly praised for her "alluring voice and incredible range" (*The Washington Post*). She has received accolades for her signature role of

Violetta in *La Traviata*, which she has performed countless times throughout North America. Critic James Jordan exclaimed "she is a Violetta fully-formed and, I think, ready for the great stages of the world." She has now performed the role with Opera Orlando, Pacific Symphony, Minnesota Opera, Opera Colorado, Opera Tampa, Opera Idaho, Ash Lawn Opera, The Northern Lights Music Festival, Madison Opera and Virginia Opera. López made her European debut as Norina in *Don Pasquale* with Zomeropera in Belgium, for which *Klassiek Centraal* exclaimed: "She turns out to be the revelation of the show and wins over the audience with her funny rendition, irresistible charm, and [she is] natural in the different vocals."

From her performance as Adina in *The Elixir of Love* with Virginia Opera, *The Virginian-Pilot* hailed, "Cecilia Violetta López is showing local audiences why *Opera News* named her one of its '25 Rising Stars.' In the lead role of Adina, she hit the highest notes with ringing clarity, performed the vocal runs with precision and grace and showed a particular charm and humanity in the softest passages and lowest ranges." In her recent performance as Marguerite in *Faust* with Opera Omaha, the *Omaha World-Herald* claimed "...López sang Marguerite's seduction, madness and salvation with an otherworldly wisdom and artistry."

López's 2021-22 season includes several engagements ranging from opera performances to keynote speaking. Appearances include: Hanna Glawari in Opera Idaho's production of *The Merry Widow*; soprano soloist in Opera Idaho's "Opera in the Park" concert and Handel's *Messiah* with the Boise Philharmonic, as well as Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* with Utah Symphony. Cecilia also returns to Opera Orlando, where she reprises Violetta in their production of *La Traviata* and Virginia Opera, where she will debut the role of Beatrice in Jake Heggie's *Three Decembers*. Additionally, López will be an artist in residence at the University of Central Arkansas and will present recitals for Opera Orlando, Sun Valley Opera, Opera Idaho, New Mexico Performing Arts Society, JUMP Center in Boise, Idaho and Chamber Music Silicon Valley. She will also be a keynote speaker for the Migrant Student Leadership Institute as well as the 9th Annual Women and Leadership Conference.

Despite the halting effects of COVID-19 in the opera industry, López' 2020-21 season included both virtual and live recitals with Opera Idaho, Opera Las Vegas, Austin Opera, Opera Southwest, Chatter ABQ, Opera America, Madison Opera and Opera Colorado. López was also a featured soprano soloist in the world premiere of *Mi Camino*, a virtual project with Opera Cultura, and made her company debut with Pacific Symphony singing Violetta in their virtual production of *La Traviata*. 

# PROGRAM NOTES

## Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 10 for Two Pianos in E-flat Major



"Stop me if you've heard this story before..." It's difficult for annotators to keep away from a highbrow version of this barroom raconteur's line when writing about Mozart's piano concertos, which are reliably gorgeous but rarely surprising—at least, not until the higher-numbered examples that he composed

after moving to Vienna in 1781. All were highly personal compositions; Mozart himself was soloist in many of their public performances, and they were also performed by his students. In the case of the Concerto No. 10 for Two Pianos, musicologists tell us that he was composing for himself and his sister Nannerl, who was an accomplished amateur pianist. He later performed it with his pupil Josepha Auernhammer in a private concert. The composition itself is thought to date to 1779, somewhat later than its number 10 might suggest (Mozart was 23 years old at the time). But one forensic study suggests that autographed cadenzas for this concerto (in his father's handwriting—Mozart hardly needed to write out cadenzas) could date as early as 1775 (when he was 19).

Mozart's concertos are elegantly spare in orchestration, but especially so in this case: The scoring was originally limited only to paired oboes, bassoons and horns to go along with the two pianofortes and a complement of strings. Later, when published, the orchestration was expanded (probably by Mozart himself) to include clarinets, trumpets and timpani. This conciseness suits music that reveals itself with a naturalness of flow and spontaneity that make it easy to imagine two siblings in a melodic dialogue. It relies on the energy of give-and-take between soloists rather than the power of unison, and looking at the score, one would be hard-pressed to rank "primo" and "secondo" parts.

The first movement unfolds with an open, lyrical quality that author Steven Ledbetter has described as spacious, "as if Mozart is thoroughly enjoying himself and letting his ideas flow freely"—just the qualities one might expect of

### Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

**Born:** January 27, 1756 in Salzburg, Austria

**Died:** December 5, 1791 in Vienna, Austria

**Piano Concerto No. 10 for Two Pianos in E-flat Major**

**Composed:** 1779

**World Premiere:** unknown

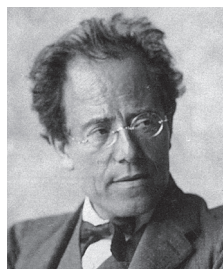
**Most recent Pacific Symphony performance:** Nov. 15, 2015 at Soka Performing Arts Center. Yen Yu Chen and Anne-Marie McDermott were the piano soloists with Carl St.Clair conducting

**Instrumentation:** two oboes, two bassoons, two French horns, strings and two piano soloists

**Estimated duration:** 24 minutes

"in-the-family" music-making. Here and in the stately second movement, an andante in three-quarter time, the orchestral accompaniment is marked by restraint. The third movement is a rondo; here after a central section of lush lyricism, the full orchestral forces join the soloists in an exultant finale. 🌀

## Gustav Mahler: Symphony No. 4 in G Major



Did Mahler's Fourth change how we think about symphonies?

Writing in *The New Yorker* magazine, music critic Alex Ross stunned many concertgoers by describing just how marginalized Mahler's symphonies were as recently as the 1950s—especially since Mahler is now widely considered the most important

symphonist since Beethoven. Through the middle of the last century, listeners and critics who accepted Beethoven's pursuit of heroic ideas in his symphonies seemed put off by Mahler's insistence on cosmological subjects...his contemplation of the eternal...his concern with death and immortality that could seem morbid or, to use *New York Times* music critic Harold C. Schonberg's word, "adolescent."

According to Mahler specialists including the author Jonathan Carr, it was Mahler's Fourth that began to turn the tide of public appreciation in his favor. Often described as "accessible" (though their sheer beauty makes all Mahler symphonies inviting to hear), the Fourth lasts less than an hour in most performances, making it the shortest of Mahler's symphonies. It is more lightly scored than some, with a smaller string section and without the emphatic brass voices of trombone and tuba. And it is full of ingratiating melody.

Nonetheless, the presence of death as the symphony's central theme is undeniable, articulated in the poetic description of conditions in heaven. Mahler also used this poem in his song cycle *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, "The Child's Magic Horn." In the symphony, the child's voice is heard as a radiantly lyrical soprano solo describing "Das himmlische Leben," "the heavenly life," but the child's account of that life is a bizarre, characteristically Teutonic vision combining innocence, gore and a fleeting reference to St. Ursula. Though Mahler also mentioned St. Ursula in correspondence about the symphony, some scholars question whether Mahler really was thinking about her story, which entailed the 12th-century martyrdom of 11,000 virgins under Emperor Diocletian; Mahler's heaven was more the heaven of the Brothers Grimm, and *Max and Moritz*. The "heavenly life" he depicts can be read as an earlier exploration of the subject in the bestselling book and movie *Heaven is for Real* (2014). But was Mahler for real or was he laying on the contradictions?

Mahler composed his Fourth Symphony in 1898 and 1899. With his appointment as the music director of the Vienna Philharmonic Concerts, he was that city's preeminent conductor, but was less esteemed as a composer. Nor did he

enjoy untroubled relations with the orchestra, whose players rankled under his authoritarian management style and his nonstandard musical ideas. It may well be that he sought refuge in composition, and over his summer holiday, his work on the Fourth took on real momentum. Encouraged by his progress, he searched for a new summer home in the early weeks of the 1899 season, eventually selecting a lakeside building site in the Carinthia district in Austria's southern Alps. The symphony's premiere took place in Munich in November 1901, with Mahler conducting.

This symphony's reputation for childlike innocence is confirmed with its opening bars, one of the most cherished openings in the symphonic literature: a gentle sounding of sleigh bells and woodwinds that settle into a lovely melody, like water circling in an eddy. But the movement is far from lightweight; its development includes a reliance on complex counterpoint that Mahler would also employ in later symphonies. The sound is relaxed, but it is built through technical reliance on sonata form, with the second theme foreshadowing the song melody we will hear in the fourth movement. It closes with an accelerating coda, whose sweeping momentum seems to carry us into the rest of the symphony.

In the second movement, we hear a scherzo alternating with a trio; at its center is a dramatic violin solo played on an instrument tuned one tone higher than normal—a technique that results in an eerie sound that Mahler and others used to evoke a deathly effect, heightened here through the use of *col legno* bowing, with the wood of the bow striking the strings. This sound contrasts dramatically with the sound of the trio, which has the quality of the rustic *Ländler* dances that Mahler loved.

In the third movement, considered one of Mahler's finest slow movements, the symphony seems to progress from its earlier, innocent concerns to deep, mature contemplation. Its themes arise in two groupings: first gentle and serene, then melancholy and inward. The movement's detailed, interlocking development culminates in a broad, almost celestial coda whose energy and breadth seem to eclipse the melancholia that precedes it, taking us by surprise. It brings us into the key of E Major, the key of the final movement and the song around which it is built. This movement follows immediately upon the suspended final bars of the slow movement, a dramatic sequence seems to counter any questions we may have about the sincerity of the heavenly verses. Four stanzas of celestial joys are recounted, alternating childlike naivete with sophisticated orchestral development. The song ends with the word "erdacht," "awaken," as the strains of the harp fade from our hearing—removing us from earthly pleasures to those in heaven. 🌙

### Gustav Mahler

**Born:** July 7, 1860 in Kaliště, Bohemia (then part of the Austrian Empire. Now considered the Czech Republic)

**Died:** May 18, 1911 in Vienna, Austria

**Symphony No. 4 in G Major**

**Composed:** 1899-1901

**World Premiere:** Nov. 25, 1901. Soprano Margarete Michalek was soloist with Mahler conducting the Kaim Orchestra of Munich

**Most recent Pacific Symphony performance:** April 3, 2003 at Segerstrom Hall. Soprano Esther Heideman was soloist with Carl St.Clair conducting

**Instrumentation:** four flutes including two piccolos, three oboes including English horn, three clarinets including bass clarinet and e-flat clarinet, three bassoons including contrabassoon, four French horns, three trumpets, timpani, percussion, harp, strings and solo soprano

**Estimated duration:** 54 minutes

### The Heavenly Life

We enjoy heavenly pleasures  
and therefore avoid earthly ones.

No worldly tumult  
is to be heard in heaven.

All live in greatest peace.

We lead angelic lives,  
yet have a merry time of it besides.

We dance and we leap,

We skip and we sing.

Saint Peter in heaven looks on.

John lets the young lamb out,  
and Herod the Butcher lies in wait for it.

We lead a patient,

an innocent, patient,

dear little lamb to its death.

Saint Luke slaughters the ox  
without any thought or concern.

Wine doesn't cost a penny

in the heavenly cellars;

The angels bake the bread.

Good greens of every sort  
grow in the heavenly vegetable patch,  
good asparagus, string beans,  
and whatever we want.

Whole dishfuls are set for us!

Good apples, good pears and good grapes,  
and gardeners who allow everything!

If you want roebuck or hare,  
on the public streets  
they come running right up.

Should a fast day come along,  
all the fishes at once come swimming with joy.

There goes Saint Peter running

with his net and his bait

to the heavenly pond.

Saint Martha must be the cook.

There is just no music on earth  
that can compare to ours.

Even the eleven thousand virgins  
venture to dance,

and Saint Ursula herself has to laugh.

There is just no music on earth  
that can compare to ours.

Cecilia and all her relations  
make excellent court musicians.

The angelic voices

gladden our senses,

so that all awaken for joy. 🌙