



*Netherlands Reflections*

# **Lahav SHANI & Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra**

2026.6.12 Fri. 19:30

Weiwuying Concert Hall

Duration is 110 minutes with a 20-minute intermission.



National Kaohsiung  
CENTER FOR THE ARTS

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# Program

## A. SCHOENBERG: *Verklärte Nacht*, Op. 4

----- Intermission -----

## G. MAHLER: *Symphony No. 4 in G Major*

- I. Bedächtig. Nicht eilen.
- II. In gemächlicher Bewegung. Ohne Hast.
- III. Ruhevoll (*Poco adagio*).
- IV. Sehr behaglich.

## Program Notes

Written by CHEN Hsi-ju  
(Professor, Department of Music, National Kaohsiung Normal University)

Translated by Lin HSIEH

### SCHOENBERG: *Verklärte Nacht*, Op. 4

"I carry a child, but it is not yours..." From *Verklärte Nacht* by the German modernist poet Richard DEHMEL, this poem portrays two lovers walking through a cold, dark forest as the woman reveals she is pregnant with another man's child. After a moment of silence, the man chooses love over blame, promising to raise the child as his own.

For conservative Vienna, the poem's themes of premarital pregnancy, sex, guilt, and redemption were a moral bombshell. Yet SCHOENBERG transformed these themes into *Verklärte Nacht*. SCHOENBERG later wrote in a letter to DEHMEL that his poem "had a decisive influence on my music, prompting me to search for a new tone within a lyrical atmosphere." From its 1899 sextet origins to the 1943 orchestral arrangement that is widely performed today, the work remains a monument to his pursuit of modern music.

### Vienna at the Fin de Siècle

Unlike late-19th-century Paris, which rebuilt the future from ruins after waves of revolutions, Vienna remained confined by the Habsburg monarchy. Slow reform and rising nationalism created a sense that "the old world was collapsing, yet the new had not yet formed." Faith in reason faltered: Sigmund FREUD exposed the subconscious; Gustav KLIMT challenged academic tradition with eroticism; DEHMEL shocked conventional morality. Their dissatisfaction laid the foundations of modernism. SCHOENBERG faced a musical dilemma: tonality was exhausted, with melody and harmony reaching the limits of a central key. *Verklärte Nacht* marks the start of his search to break this constraint.

### WAGNER or BRAHMS?

Vienna's musical circles were divided between Richard WAGNER and Johannes BRAHMS, arguing over program music versus absolute music. In *Verklärte Nacht*, SCHOENBERG reconciled the two. Structurally, the work follows BRAHMS's principle of "developing variation," in which subsequent themes grow organically from preceding ones. Simultaneously, it employs WAGNER's late-Romantic chromatic language to convey dramatic tension, using tonal centers such as D minor and D major solely as narrative tools to mark the woman's confession and the man's forgiveness. SCHOENBERG also fused the famous Wagnerian symphonic poem approach with Brahmsian chamber music, merging innovation with tradition.

## **Betrayal or Continuation?**

Compared to SCHOENBERG's later atonal works, *Verklärte Nacht* is more accessible, and it became one of his most beloved pieces. At its 1902 premiere though it provoked protests due to its controversial theme and avant-garde sonority. Though SCHOENBERG saw himself as the heir to the Austro-German tradition, his unstable tonal language prompted unease. Was he extending or betraying tradition? The line was fine.

Critics demonized SCHOENBERG—who lacked a university degree and was of Jewish background—for "destroying music." Championing modernism required immense courage, yet he remained steadfast: "Someday people will understand me." Over a century later, his name still commands awe and distance. That day he foresaw may soon arrive—perhaps starting tonight, with *Verklärte Nacht*.

## **G. MAHLER: Symphony No. 4 in G Major**

"In the garden grow fresh asparagus, tender green beans, everything we could ever wish for, heaped upon plates and waiting to be enjoyed!" Who would imagine such simple, everyday scenes could be the heart of a MAHLER symphony? In Symphony No. 4, the music stops questioning and simply longs. MAHLER's first four symphonies, a decade-long meditation on life and death, progress through stages: the irony of death, the resurrection overcoming fear, the acceptance of death as natural, and finally reconciliation with death, a vision of pure heaven.

### **Let's Start from the Finale**

Completed in 1892, the Finale was in fact the first movement written, the 'later' first three movements leading to this ascension to heaven. MAHLER took its text from the 19th-century German folk poems *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, from which he drew so extensively that scholars call his first four symphonies the "Wunderhorn tetralogy."

The text, written from a child's point of view, describes a pure, unpretentious heaven. It opens joyfully, with saints and biblical figures as vivid, human-like characters. Even the most exalted saints are seen busying themselves with mundane tasks like fishing and shepherding. Heaven is an extension of earthly beauty, a pure realm that offers liberation from suffering and fulfills the longing for 'the other world.'

### **The Movement Arc**

The first movement starts with sleigh bells, a recurring motif and structural marker. Its atmosphere is warm, comfortable, and elegant, even during tense moments. The second movement is scherzo-like and ironic, referencing the German personification of Death, "Freund Hein." MAHLER directs the solo violin to be tuned a whole tone higher, performing a grotesque dance that guides the soul to the afterlife. This is followed by a gentle Adagio; MAHLER once said it reminded him of his mother's smile. Near the close, a sudden E-major eruption blazes forth like heaven's gates opening with radiant light. The finale features a soprano, first describing a lavish celestial feast before shifting focus to art, concluding that no earthly music can compare to the divine. The music gradually grows hushed. After the final words, "Dass alles für Freuden erwacht," the orchestra slowly dissolves: harp plucks shimmer like distant bells, and the double bass sustains a pianississimo E that fades into silent eternity.

## **That Pure Blue of the Sky**

This symphony moves past earlier existential struggles toward a simpler vision. Unlike MAHLER's previous massive scores, it is concise, omits trombones and tuba, and creates a luminous texture of celestial innocence. Use of an "orchestral Lied" as the finale was also innovative.

The 1901 premiere was a disaster. Expecting another epic, audiences were startled by the brevity, delicate orchestration, and "naïve" finale, accusing MAHLER of feigning innocence or playing a joke.

MAHLER though saw the work as "the pure blue of the sky:" a clarity revealed only when all else is set aside. Today that pure blue is finally recognized, and No. 4 has become one of MAHLER'S most beloved masterpieces.

## About the Artists



**Conductor | Lahav SHANI**

Lahav SHANI is the Chief Conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra. He assumed his position in September 2018, becoming the youngest Chief Conductor in the orchestra's history. In the 2020/21 season, SHANI succeeded Zubin MEHTA as Music Director of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra; the Münchner Philharmoniker appointed Lahav SHANI as their new Chief Conductor, starting from September 2026.

Recent and upcoming guest conductor highlights include engagements with Wiener Philharmoniker, Berliner Philharmoniker, Gewandhaus Orchester, Münchner Philharmoniker, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, London Symphony Orchestra, Filarmonica della Scala, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Budapest Festival Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris and Philharmonia Orchestra.

SHANI was born in Tel Aviv in 1989 and started his piano studies aged six with Hannah SHALGI, continuing with Prof. Arie VARDI at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music in Tel Aviv. He went on to complete his studies in conducting with Prof. Christian EHWALD and piano with Prof. Fabio BIDINI, both at the School of Music Hanns Eisler Berlin. Whilst a student he was mentored by Daniel BARENBOIM. In 2013, he won First Prize in the Gustav Mahler International Conducting Competition in Bamberg. June 2016 saw Lahav SHANI's debut with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra as a conductor and as a piano soloist; his appointment as Chief Conductor from 2018 was announced two months later.

As a pianist, SHANI has performed as a soloist with Daniel BARENBOIM, Zubin MEHTA and Gianandrea NOSEDA. He has play-directed piano concerti with many orchestras including the Vienna Philharmonic, Philharmonia Orchestra, Filarmonica della Scala, Staatskapelle Berlin and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. SHANI also has considerable experience performing chamber music and in recital and is a regular performer at the Verbier Festival, and has also appeared at the Aix-en-Provence Easter and Jerusalem Chamber Music Festivals, and in duo recitals with Martha ARGERICH.



**Soprano | HSIAO Han**

Soprano HSIAO Han, Doctor of Performing Arts in Vocal Performance, University of North Texas, USA. She is currently an Assistant Professor of Voice at Tunghai University, as well as a Board Member of the Association of Vocal Artists of R.O.C and a member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), USA.

During her years in the United States, she was awarded the Winspear Opera Scholarship, Academic Achievement Scholarships, and TGS Summer Award. She has been active in opera and musical theatre, and has collaborated with several contemporary American composers, participating in world premiere performances of their works.

Since returning to Taiwan, she has continued her dedication to music education while actively engaging in a wide range of performances. Her recent appearances include BEETHOVEN's *Symphony No. 9* with the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO), MAHLER's *Symphony No. 2 Resurrection* with the Evergreen Symphony Orchestra (ESO), TCHAIKOVSKY's *Eugene Onegin* (role of Tatyana) in the Weiwuying *24 Hours Tchaikovsky* series, *Formosa Blossom* with the Taipei Chinese Orchestra, and productions with the Taipei Philharmonic Opera Studio, including RAVEL's *L'heure espagnole* (role of Concepción) and Johann STRAUSS's *Die Fledermaus* (role of Rosalinde).



## Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra

The Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, founded in 1918, is distinguished by its intensely energetic performances, acclaimed recordings, and innovative audience engagement. Over the decades, it has established a firm position among Europe's leading orchestras.

After its pioneering early years, the orchestra developed into one of the foremost ensembles in the Netherlands under Eduard FLIPSE, principal conductor from 1930. In the 1970s and 1980s, under Jean FOURNET, Edo de WAART, and James CONLON, the orchestra gained growing international recognition. The appointment of Valery GERGIEV marked the beginning of a new and flourishing era, later continued by Yannick NÉZET-SÉGUIN and, from 2018, Lahav SHANI.

The orchestra's home is De Doelen Concert Hall, yet it performs frequently in other venues—from local stages to major international concert halls in Europe and beyond. Since 2010, the Rotterdam Philharmonic has been a resident orchestra of the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris. With its regular concerts, educational performances, and community projects, the orchestra reaches an annual audience of 150,000 to 200,000, including a significant number of young listeners.

Since the pioneering MAHLER recordings with Eduard FLIPSE in the 1950s, the Rotterdam Philharmonic has released numerous critically acclaimed recordings with labels such as Warner Classics, Deutsche Grammophon, Decca, Philips and BIS Records. Its performances are available online through concert streams on medici.tv, as well as video projects such as *From us, for you: Beethoven Symphony No. 9* (2020), which became international news after reaching millions of viewers worldwide within just a few weeks of its release.

# Members of ROTTERDAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

## Chief Conductor

Lahav SHANI

## Honorary Conductor

Yannick NÉZET-SÉGUIN

## Regular Guest Conductor

Tarmo PELTOKOSKI

## First Violin

© Marieke BLANKESTIJN

© Vlad STANCULEASA

Quirine SCHEFFERS

Hed Yaron MAYERSOHN

Saskia OTTO

Rachel BROWNE

Maria DINGJAN

Marie-Jose SCHRIJNER

Noemi BODDEN

Petra VISSER

Sophia TORRENGA

Hadewijch HOFLAND

Annerien STUKER

Alexandra VAN BEVEREN

Marie DUQUESNOY

Sarah DÉCAMPS

## Second Violin

Charlotte POTGIETER

Frank DE GROOT

Laurens VAN VLIET

Elna HIRVILAMMI-STAPHORSIUS

Jun Yi DOU

Bob BRUYN

Eefje HABRAKEN

Maija REINIKAINEN

Babette VAN DEN BERG

Melanie BROERS

Tobias STAUB

## Viola

Anne HUSER

Roman SPITZER

Galahad SAMSON

José MOURA NUNES

Kerstin BONK

Janine BALLER

Veronika LENÁRTOVÁ

Rosalinde KLUCK

Léon VAN DEN BERG

Olffe VAN DER KLEIN

Jan NAVARRO

Jutta DEMUYNCK

## Cello

Emanuele SILVESTRI

Gustaw BAFELTOWSKI

Joanna PACHUCKA

Daniel PETROVITSCH

Mario RIO

Eelco BEINEMA

Carla SCHRIJNER

Pepijn MEEUWS

FANG Yi-ting

Killian WHITE

Paul STAVRIDIS

## Double Bass

Matthew MIDGLEY

Ying Lai GREEN

Jonathan FOCQUAERT

Arjen LEENDERTZ

Ricardo NETO

Javier CLEMÉN MARTÍNEZ

Marta FOSSAS MALLORQUÍ

Mario FERNÁNDEZ

## Flute

Juliette HUREL

Joséphine OLECH

Manon GAYET

## Flute / Piccolo

Beatriz DA SILVA BAIÃO

## Oboe

Karel SCHOOFES

Jesús PINILLOS RIVERA

Anja VAN DER MATEN

## Oboe / Cor Anglais

Ron TIJHUIS

## Clarinet

Julien HERVÉ

Bruno BONANSEA

Alberto SÁNCHEZ GARCIA

## Clarinet / Bass Clarinet

Romke-Jan WIJMENGA

## Bassoon

Pieter NUYTTEN

Lola DESCOURS

Marianne PROMMEL

## Bassoon / Contra-bassoon

Eliás AGSTERIBBE

## Horn

David FERNÁNDEZ ALONSO

Felipe SANTOS FREITAS

Wendy LELIVELD

Richard SPEETJENS

Laurens OTTO

Pierre BUIZER

## Trumpet

Alex ELIA

Adrián MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ

Simon WIERENGA

Giovanni GIARDINELLA

## Trombone

Pierre VOLDERS

Alexander VERBEEK

Remko DE JAGER

## Bass Trombone / Contra-Bass Trombone

Rommert GROENHOF

## Tuba

Martijn VAN RIJSWIJK

## Timpani / Percussion

Danny VAN DE WAL

Ronald ENT

Martijn BOOM

Jesús IBERTI RUBIRA

## Harp

Albane BARON

## Production Team of Weiwuying

Program Coordinator | Vanessa CHEN, Lilianna HO

Technical Coordinator | HUANG Chun-hua

Marketing Coordinator | TSAI Hsiang-jen

With All the Staff of National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts (Weiwuying)

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# 馬勒: G大調第四號交響曲 第四樂章 —〈天國的生活〉(選自《少年魔號》)

## G. Mahler: Symphony No. 4 in G Major, Mov. IV – "Das himmlische Leben"

(from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*)

歌詞	Text	Text
我們享受天上的歡樂， 因此遠離塵世的一切； 天堂裡聽不見 世俗的喧囂， 萬物安然於最溫柔的寧靜之中。	Wir genießen die himmlischen Freuden, Drum tun wir das Irdische meiden, Kein weltlich Getümmel Hört man nicht im Himmel! Lebt alles in sanftester Ruh'!	We enjoy the heavenly pleasures, And therefore avoid all earthly things; No worldly turmoil Is heard in heaven! All lives in gentlest peace.
我們過著天使般的生活， 卻依然充滿歡笑； 我們舞蹈、跳躍， 嬉戲、歌唱， 聖彼得在天堂看顧著。	Wir führen ein englisches Leben, Sind dennoch ganz lustig daneben; Wir tanzen und springen, Wir hüpfen und singen; Sankt Peter im Himmel sieht zu.	We lead an angelic life, Yet are merry all the same; We dance and we leap, We skip and we sing; Saint Peter in heaven looks on.
聖約翰放出小羊， 屠夫希律守候在旁； 我們帶著耐心、 純潔而溫順， 將那可愛的小羊送上祭壇。	Johannes das Lämmlein auslasset, Der Metzger Herodes drauf passet; Wir führen ein geduldig's, Unschuldig's, geduldig's, Ein liebliches Lämmlein zu Tod.	Saint John lets loose the lamb, Herod the butcher lies in wait; We lead a patient, Innocent, patient, Dear little lamb to its death.
聖路加宰殺公牛， 毫無顧慮； 天堂酒窖裡的美酒 不需分文， 天使們烘焙麵包。	Sankt Lukas den Ochsen tät schlachten Ohn' einig's Bedenken und Achten; Der Wein kost' kein Heller Im himmlischen Keller; Die Englein, die backen das Brot.	Saint Luke slaughters the ox Without thought or concern; Wine costs not a penny In heaven's cellar; The angels bake the bread.
各種芬芳的香草 生長於天上的花園； 鮮美的蘆筍、嫩綠的菜豆， 還有我們所渴望的一切， 滿滿地盛放在盤中。	Gut' Kräuter von allerhand Arten, Die wachsen im himmlischen Garten; Gut' Spargel, Fisolen Und was wir nur wollen! Ganze Schüsseln voll sind uns bereit!	Good herbs of every kind Grow in the heavenly garden; Good asparagus, beans, And whatever we wish! Whole dishes are set before us.
鮮美的蘋果、 梨子與葡萄！ 園丁慷慨無限； 若想要鹿肉或野兔， 牠們就在街道上 奔跑而來。	Gut' Äpfel, gut' Birn' und gut' Trauben! Die Gärtner, die alles erlauben! Willst Rehbock, willst Hasen? Auf offenen Straßen Sie laufen herbei!	Good apples, good pears and good grapes! The gardeners allow everything! Would you like venison, or hare? On open streets They run to us!
若遇齋戒之日， 魚群也 欣然游來； 聖彼得帶著 漁網與魚餌， 奔向天上的池塘。 聖瑪大是廚娘。	Sollt' ein Fasttag etwa kommen, Alle Fische gleich mit Freuden angeschwommen! Dort läuft schon Sankt Peter Mit Netz und mit Köder Zum himmlischen Weiher hinein. Sankt Martha die Köchin muß sein!	Should a fast day come, All the fishes swim in gladly! There runs Saint Peter With net and with bait Into heaven's pond. Saint Martha must be the cook!

人間的音樂  
無法與此相比；  
一萬一千名聖女  
翩然起舞；  
聖烏蘇拉也含笑其中。

聖西西莉亞與她的同伴  
是天庭傑出的樂師；  
天使的歌聲  
喚醒心靈，  
萬物因此沉浸在喜悅之中。

Kein Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,  
Die unsrer verglichen kann werden.  
Elftausend Jungfrauen  
Zu tanzen sich trauen!  
Sankt Ursula selbst dazu lacht.

Cäcilia mit ihren Verwandten  
Sind treffliche Hofmusikanten!  
Die englischen Stimmen  
Ermuntern die Sinnen,  
Daß alles für Freuden erwacht.

No music on earth  
Can compare with ours.  
Eleven thousand virgins  
Dare to dance!  
Saint Ursula herself laughs along.

Cecilia with her kin  
Are splendid court musicians!  
The angelic voices  
Awaken the senses,  
So that all awakens to joy.