

8-17
MAY
2020

MAHLER FESTIVAL 2020

Press information



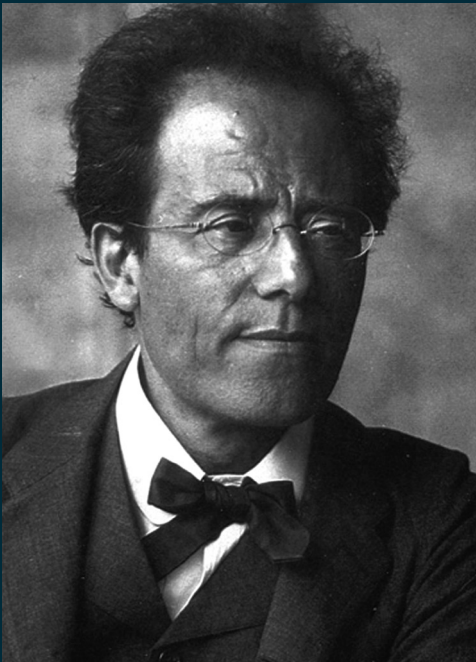
MAHLER
FESTIVAL
2020

Amsterdam



HET
CONCERT
GEBOUW

MAHLER FESTIVAL 2020: WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHO



Gustav Mahler in Vienna, 1907

From 8 through 17 May 2020, a unique festival will take place in and around The Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. For the first time, the Mahler Festival will bring together four of the world's finest orchestras: the New York Philharmonic, the Vienna Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic and our own Concertgebouworkest – all orchestras that Mahler himself conducted. Never before have these four orchestras worked together like this. They will play all ten of his symphonies on ten consecutive evenings, with the Budapest Festival Orchestra and the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra from Austria each performing on one evening as well. Mahler's *Eighth Symphony* requires huge forces, nearly 400 instrumentalists and singers. The assembled performers will include the Netherlands Radio Choir and the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra, as well as several other choirs and vocal soloists. Daniel Harding will conduct two performances of the largest work Mahler ever composed, on Friday evening 15 May and Saturday afternoon 16 May.

Besides the symphonic concerts in the Main Hall, the Recital Hall programme will offer Mahler's vocal works in chamber music settings. Pianist Julius Drake will give talented young singers the opportunity to perform Mahler's song cycles. The final concert will be devoted to seldom-performed works by Alma Mahler and contemporaries. And it goes without saying that the programme will include Mahler's only ensemble piece, his *Piano Quartet*. The Nieuw Amsterdams Klarinet Kwartet will play some remarkable arrangements from the *First, Fourth and Seventh Symphony*.



The Berlin Philharmonic in the Main Hall, 2018 © Ronald Knapp

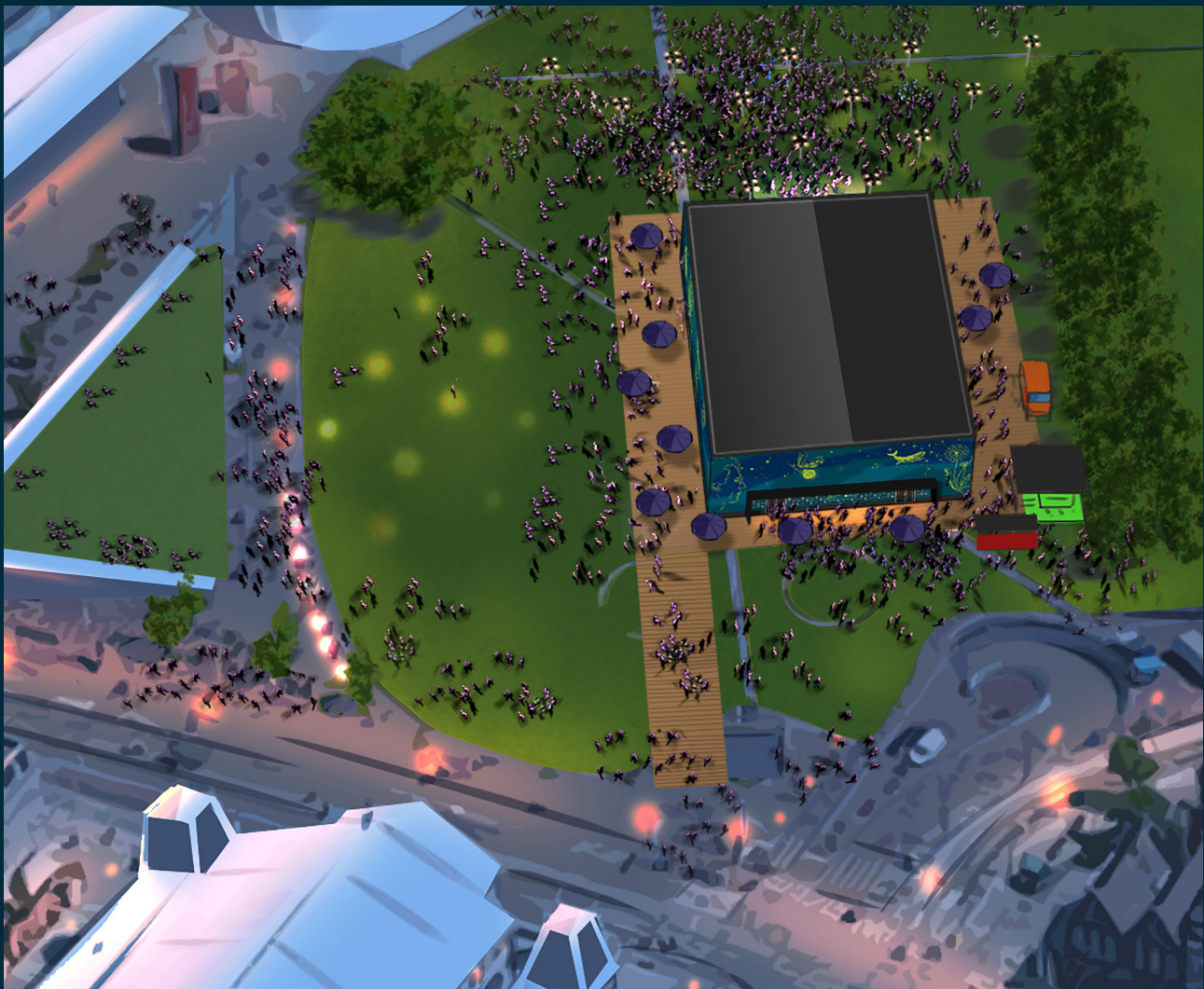
MAHLER PAVILION

So that many more people can experience this once-in-a-lifetime festival, a huge pavilion will be built on the Museumplein with a seating capacity of 650. This will give many more visitors the chance to hear Mahler's music in an informal, festive atmosphere.

There will be events all day in and around the Mahler Pavilion. In addition to the live streams, a variety of events will take place in the Mahler Pavilion, such as pre-concert lectures (Mahler talks), films and documentaries about Mahler (Mahler @ The Movies), lunch concerts, and lectures by authoritative speakers from different disciplines about Mahler's time (Mahlers Zeitgeist). During the first festival weekend there will be a two-day symposium on the texts that Mahler used for his symphonies and songs. Food and drink will be provided by a Mahler Café and food trucks.



Impression of the Mahler Pavilion on Museum Square © Lev - Maurice Hof



Impression of the Mahler Pavilion on Museum Square © Lev - Maurice Hof

LIVESTREAMS

All performances of Mahler's ten symphonies in the Main Hall will be livestreamed to the Mahler Pavilion. Using state of the art technology - including ten different camera angles - the concerts get an extra dimension. Tickets to experience the Mahler Festival inside the pavilion cost € 17.50. Admission includes a short documentary about Mahler prior to the concert of that specific evening.

MAHLER DOCUMENTARIES

To make Mahler's music accessible for new generations, ten inspiring short documentaries are being made commissioned by the Concertgebouw and the Mahler Foundation. One for each symphony, each is about 20 minutes long and will provide background and context. The documentaries will be shown before the concerts in the Main Hall and the live streams in the Mahler Pavilion on the Museumplein.

MAHLER IN THE CITY

Other Amsterdam cultural institutions are participating in the Mahler Festival as well. Paradiso, the Rijksmuseum and Theater Bellevue will host concerts and theatrical performances. The Van Gogh Museum will organise lectures in the Mahler Pavilion about Mahler and his contemporaries, including Gustav Klimt and Oskar Kokoschka. The Rijksmuseum will provide a special exhibit called 'Mahler and his Dutch friends', a cabinet with photos from the estate of composer Alphons Diepenbrock, which will illustrate the depth of the special bond between Mahler, Mengelberg and other friends in the Netherlands.

Please find the most up-to-date programming at mahler-festival.nl.

MAHLER FOR KIDS

The festival is also aiming to get younger listeners acquainted with Mahler's work, and has put together a concert especially for children in Dutch classes 7 and 8 (ages 10-12) entitled *Me, Myself & Mahler*. The digital curriculum 123Zing is offering special Mahler instruction units for all Dutch school grades. There will also be concerts outside in nature organised in conjunction with Staatsbosbeheer (The Netherlands State Forest Service) and De Hoge Veluwe National Park, entitled *Vreemde Vogels* ('Strange Birds').

RUN-UP TO THE MAHLER FESTIVAL

As part of the run-up to the Mahler Festival, *The Echo of Being*, the latest film by Lucas van Woerkum will have its world premiere on 11 February 2020. This film - in which composer Gustav Mahler is the central character - has an international cast. Under the direction of conductor Antony Hermus, the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra plays the impressive music of Mahler. To make the music run synchronously with the film, Van Woerkum sits in the middle of the orchestra, and subtly adjusts the images to the music.



Filmstill from *The Echo of Being* with actors Greg Wise en Dominique van Ginkel

PREVIOUS MAHLER FESTIVALS

In 1920 the first Mahler festival, the 'Mahler Feest', was held in Amsterdam to mark Willem Mengelberg's 25th year as the Concertgebouworkest's chief conductor. With Mengelberg conducting, the Concertgebouworkest performed all of Mahler's symphonies.

The second festival devoted to Mahler was held three-quarters of a century later, in 1995. Besides the Concertgebouworkest, two other world-renowned orchestras, the Berlin Philharmonic and Vienna Philharmonic, came to play Mahler's symphonies. Baritone Thomas Hampson sang Mahler's song repertoire in the Main Hall. A Mahler Tent was put up on the Museumplein where everyone could follow the sold-out Main Hall concerts.

A hundred years after the first Mahler festival, The Concertgebouw is holding the Mahler Festival. Running from 8 through 17 May 2020, it features four of the world's top orchestras – orchestras that Mahler himself conducted – the New York Philharmonic, the Vienna Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic and the Royal Concertgebouworkest. And once again, there will be a Mahler Pavilion on the Museumplein. Something new in 2020 is that the concerts can be followed both inside and outside the Mahler Pavilion, projected on the screen outside the Pavilion as well as inside, where there is room for 650.

Please find the most up-to-date festival programming on the special Mahler website mahler-festival.nl/en. Here you will find the programming in The Concertgebouw, on Museum Square and in the rest of the city. Furthermore, the website offers extensive inspirational content about Mahler's Universe.

'The Concertgebouw proudly presents the third Mahler Festival. In ten days the world's best orchestras and soloists come to Amsterdam to play Mahler's symphonic works. The festival will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience, a celebration for music lovers at home and abroad, for young and old, for Mahler experts and people that have never heard Mahler's music before.'

SIMON REININK, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE CONCERTGEBOUW



Pianist Julius Drake © Simon van Boxtel

WHAT MAKES THIS FESTIVAL UNIQUE?

All ten of Mahler's symphonies can be heard in ten days, played by some of the finest orchestras in the world, in the city and the concert hall where Mahler himself once stood at the podium. He conducted the four participating orchestras himself. Mahler's song repertoire will also be performed by Julius Drake accompanying talented young singers in the Recital Hall.

Interest in the festival is already so overwhelming that all the festival passes (entitling holders to all main hall concerts) were sold out very quickly. However, since The Concertgebouw is aiming to allow many more people to share in the beauty of Mahler's music, they are constructing a huge Mahler Pavilion on the Museumplein. There will be a variety of events during the Festival in and around the pavilion with the central theme 'Mahler's Universe'.

During the Mahler Festival there will be three premieres of new work, namely by David Herzberg (8 May), composer in residence of The Concertgebouw Thomas Larcher (9 May) and Rick van Veldhuizen (16 May).

MAHLER AND AMSTERDAM

The Austrian composer Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) is considered one of the greatest composers in history. His music is famous for its enormous emotional depth. Mahler devoted his heart and soul to his music and dared to take some musical paths that no one had trod before. Mahler became famous in the early twentieth century thanks to the Dutch conductor Willem Mengelberg, who at the time was the conductor of the Concertgebouworkest. Mengelberg was highly influential internationally, and the scores he put on the stand set the tone for the rest of the world. In 1903 Mahler came to Amsterdam, the city he would later call his 'second home', for the first time. Almost all Dutch premieres of his works were in The Concertgebouw. Mahler felt that the Dutch audience understood him, and the feeling was mutual: he has remained a popular figure in the country to this day.

MAHLER: A 'GREEN' COMPOSER

Marina Mahler, Gustav Mahler's granddaughter and founder of the Mahler Foundation:

'In Mahler's time, although industrialisation was in full swing, there was not yet a tangible threat to nature. Nevertheless, Mahler was highly aware of the value of nature. He wrote extensively on the subject, stating that the human spirit is dependent on its environment and that if ecosystems break down, our species will vanish as well. This idea has only become more relevant in the twenty-first century, and makes Mahler's music and ideas more topical than ever.'



Mahler's cartouche on the balcony of The Concertgebouw's Main Hall © Eduardus Lee

A FEW FESTIVAL FACTS

- Ticket sales for the entire Mahler Festival programme will start on 21 January 2020. Tickets can be ordered through the Mahler Festival website mahler-festival.nl/en
- The Concertgebouw is expecting 25,000 audience members for the paid concerts in the building and 30,000 in and around the Pavilion.
- The capacity of the Pavilion is 650.
- The more than 1200 festival passes ('passe-partouts') were sold out within a short time. Priced at € 1,575 and up, the passes were sold to people all over the world. Besides neighbouring countries like Germany, Belgium and the UK, holders will be coming from Canada, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, the US and Australia.
- The Concertgebouw has been planning and preparing the Mahler Festival for seven years.
- During the last Mahler Festival (1995) Jaap van Zweden played Mahler's *Second Symphony* as concert-master of the Concertgebouworkest. In 2020 Van Zweden will bring the same symphony on the same stage during the Mahler Festival, but now as the chief-conductor of the New York Philharmonic.
- Willem Mengelberg lived around the corner from The Concertgebouw, at Van Eeghenstraat 107. When Gustav Mahler was visiting Amsterdam, he stayed with the Mengelberg family there. Mahler wrote to his wife Alma: 'The Mengelbergs were waiting for me at the station and insisted that I come with them, so I'm back here again, just like last year. They are such lovely and unselfish people.'

PROGRAMME MAIN HALL

Prior to all symphonies in the Main Hall a documentary about Mahler and the symphony of that specific evening will be shown. The documentary starts at 7.45pm.

FRIDAY 8 MAY | 8.30PM

New work by Herzberg
Symphony No. 1 & Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen
New York Philharmonic
Jaap van Zweden conductor
Roderick Williams baritone

SATURDAY 9 MAY | 8.30PM

Symphony No. 2
New York Philharmonic
Netherlands Radio Choir
Flemish Radio Choir
Jaap van Zweden conductor
Joëlle Harvey soprano
Sasha Cooke mezzo-soprano

SUNDAY 10 MAY | 8.30PM

Symphony No. 3
Concertgebouworkest
Netherlands Radio Choir
Netherlands National Children's Choir
Myung-Whun Chung conductor
Gerhild Romberger alto

MONDAY 11 MAY | 8.30PM

Symphony No. 4 & Rückert-Lieder
Berlin Philharmonic
Kirill Petrenko conductor
Christiane Karg soprano
Elisabeth Kulman mezzo-soprano

TUESDAY 12 MAY | 8.30PM

Symphony No. 5 & Kindertotenlieder
Wiener Philharmoniker
Daniel Barenboim conductor
Okka von der Damerau mezzo-soprano

WEDNESDAY 13 MAY | 8.30PM

Symphony No. 6
Berliner Philharmoniker
Kirill Petrenko conductor

THURSDAY 14 MAY | 8.30PM

Symphony No. 7
Wiener Philharmoniker
Daniel Barenboim conductor

VRIJDAG 15 MAY | 8.30PM

Symphony No. 8
Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra
Netherlands Radio Choir
Vocaal Ensemble MUSA
Orfeón Donostiarra
Netherlands National Children's Choir
Daniel Harding conductor
Peter Dijkstra choir conductor
vocal soloists

SATURDAY 16 MAY | 2.30PM

Symphony No. 8
Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra
Netherlands Radio Choir
Vocaal Ensemble MUSA
Orfeón Donostiarra
Netherlands National Children's Choir
Daniel Harding conductor
Peter Dijkstra choir conductor
vocal soloists

SATURDAY 16 MAY | 8.30PM

Symphony No. 9
Concertgebouworkest
Myung-Whun Chung conductor

SUNDAY 17 MAY | 8.30PM

Adagio from Symphony No. 10 & Das Lied von der Erde
Budapest Festival Orchestra
Iván Fischer conductor
Gerhild Romberger mezzo-soprano
Andrew Staples tenor

ALSO IN THE MAIN HALL

TUESDAY 11 FEBRUARY | 7.30PM

Symphonic Cinema: The Echo of Being
The Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra
Antony Hermus conductor
Lucas van Woerkum director

SATURDAY 9 MAY | 1.30PM

Des Knaben Wunderhorn and new work by Thomas Larcher
The Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra
Hannu Lintu conductor
Marianne Beate Kielland mezzo-soprano
Markus Werba baritone

SUNDAY 17 MAY | 11AM

Piano Quartet in A Minor and Zemlinsky's Die Seejungfrau
The Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra
Klaus Mäkelä conductor

PROGRAMME RECITAL HALL

SUNDAY 10 MAY | 11AM AND 2.30PM

Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen & Rückert-Lieder

Fleur Barron mezzo-soprano

James Newby baritone

Julius Drake piano

MONDAY 11 MAY | 2.30PM

Piano Quartet in A Minor &

Strauss' Metamorphosen

Amsterdam Sinfonietta Soloists

Severin von Eckardstein piano

TUESDAY 12 MAY | 2.30PM

Des Knaben Wunderhorn

Barbara Kozelj mezzo-soprano

Milan Siljanov bass-baritone

Julius Drake piano

THURSDAY 14 MAY | 2.30PM

Lieder und Gesänge & Kindertotenlieder

Catriona Morison mezzo-soprano

Julien van Mellaerts baritone

Julius Drake piano

FRIDAY 15 MAY | 2.30PM

Mahler another way: on clarinets

Nieuw Amsterdams Klarinet Kwartet

SATURDAY 16 MAY | 2.30PM

Das Lied von der Erde

Feride Büyükdenktas mezzo-soprano

Stuart Jackson tenor

Julius Drake piano

SUNDAY 17 MAY | 2.30PM

Songs by Alma Mahler

Sophie Rennert mezzo-soprano

Ashley Riches baritone

Julius Drake piano

PROGRAMME

MAHLER PAVILION

Please find the most up-to-date programming of the Mahler Pavilion on mahler-festival.nl.

SPONSORS, FUNDS AND PARTNERS

We are grateful to all the many sponsors whose support has made the Mahler Pavilion possible. American Express is the proud Presenting Sponsor of the Mahler Festival. We are delighted with their help in making Mahler's music accessible to many local and global music fans and followers.

The Concertgebouw would also like to thank the following companies for their support: Schiphol, Van Lanschot Kempen, Achmea, Arcadis, BAM, Bisnez, De Brauw Blackstone Westbroek, Deloitte, EDGE, ING, KLM, LeasePlan, Q-Park, Randstad, Stibbe, Universal Edition, Vision Luxury Experiences, VolkerWessels, BeamSystems, Da Capo Orchestral Audio en Van Gogh Museum.

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Media partners of the Mahler Festival 2020 are NPO, NTR en AVROTROS.

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