

GUSTAV MAHLER (1860–1911)

Symphony No.2 'Resurrection'

CD1 25:02

01 25:02 I. Allegro maestoso. *Mit durchaus ernstem und feierlichem Ausdruck.*

CD2 67:48

01 12:10 II. Andante Moderato. *Sehr gemächlich. Nie eilen.*  
02 11:24 III. Scherzo. *In ruhig fliessender Bewegung.*  
03 6:14 IV. 'Urlicht'. *Sehr feierlich, aber schlicht.*  
04 21:18 V. Finale. *Im Tempo des Scherzo. Wild herausfahrend.*  
05 7:51 'Aufersteh'n.' *Langsam Mysterioso.*  
06 8:51 'O Glaube, mein Herz.' *Etwas bewegter.*

KLAUS TENNSTEDT *conductor*

YVONNE KENNY *soprano*

JARD VAN NES *mezzo soprano*

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA *and CHOIR*

David Nolan *leader*

Malcolm Hicks *off-stage conductor*

Richard Cooke *chorus master*

Recorded live at Southbank Centre's ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL London

# London Philharmonic Orchestra

## MAHLER SYMPHONY NO.2 'RESURRECTION'

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### Introduction: Tennstedt, Mahler and Morrison

It took Mahler five years to conceive, sculpt and finally release the work that would make his career and arguably prove to be his most longstanding and resonant. But even before it was finally presented in public in December 1894, the impact of the *Resurrection* Symphony was telling: the conductor Hans von Bülow, granted a private piano play-through of just one section of the first movement, struggled to reconcile what he heard with his definition of 'music' as he held his hands to his ears.

In its final incarnation, the *Resurrection* Symphony is huge: 90 minutes, five movements, two soloists, a large chorus and an orchestra that includes ten horns, eight trumpets and a raft of percussion. Its narrative is itself obvious and uplifting: the realisation of mortality, the fear of death and the implications of faith in resurrection – told in part through Friedrich Klopstock's verse *Resurrection Ode*. Add Mahler's penetrating music and a conductor like Klaus Tennstedt, and you have a recipe for living art of the most acute profundity.

Describing the 'Tennstedt effect' in words is a compromised business. In one sense, you can't explain or formulate the extraordinary qualities of this particular conductor's

on-stage realisation of Mahler's printed scores. For those who were present at his concerts there are vivid memories: the lolling, clumsy podium physique; the intense passion and exhaustion; the human contexts of illness and exile. For those who weren't, there are the sonic hallmarks of a handful of recordings: extraordinary orchestral depth; an unerring sense of direction; a palpable emotional thrust and a strange meeting of the fresh and the 'lived-in'.

In fact, Tennstedt's performances prompted some of the most eloquent critical journalism committed to paper in recent history. At his performances, critics seemed reborn as naïve and excited concertgoers, joining audiences and even Royal Festival Hall ushers in rapturous standing ovations. Richard Morrison was one of them. In the 1990 article from the journal *Musical Life* reprinted here he offers a rare analysis of just what Tennstedt did to the music he conducted in live performance.

The very fact that the archive recording Morrison heard is now available here represents something of a Mahlerian struggle in itself. No matter what our reaction to this performance, the recording should be cherished as a record of an extraordinary

night in London's musical history that is still talked about two decades on. Jon Tolansky, co-founder of the Music Performance Research Centre (MPRC), the organisation responsible for hanging the microphones, explains below how it came to pass that the performance on 20 February 1989 was allowed to be taped and why the resulting recording has finally entered the public domain.

As for Klaus Tennstedt, he remains a phenomenon even today, despite his death in 1998 after a long battle with cancer. For a while that battle joined him on the podium; it was partly this, particularly in respect to the performance of Mahler's *Resurrection Symphony* recorded here, that lent his concerts such intensity and atmosphere. At the time of this recording, Tennstedt's illness had already forced him to stand down as the London Philharmonic Orchestra's Principal Conductor, which he did in 1987 after seven years with the ensemble, the first three as Principal Guest Conductor.

Though he officially retired altogether from conducting in 1994, Tennstedt's late career was always in the shadow of the great things he achieved with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. While he brought something sonically very special from the ensemble,

its players and audiences gave him a happiness and fulfilment he never experienced elsewhere. Precious few know the reasons for that, but the nearest we can get to experiencing the results of it today are captured with piercing strength on this release.

Andrew Mellor (2009)

## Richard Morrison: Tennstedt Taped

For me, listening to the Music Performance Research Centre's recording of Klaus Tennstedt's live Royal Festival Hall performance of Mahler's Second Symphony was nothing short of revelatory. But first let me explain how I came to it. I had, of course, long admired Tennstedt's remarkable EMI recording of the *Resurrection* Symphony, dating from 1982. Even in the recording studio, with all the artificial creation of "performance ambience" which that implies, Tennstedt manages to bring an emotional weight to Mahler that no other living conductor, with the possible exception of Leonard Bernstein, can rival. And the *Resurrection* does seem to have a special significance for Tennstedt. Its theme, of the indomitable human spirit overcoming mortal fear, clearly carries special meaning for a conductor who has himself lived with, and overcome, serious illness.

Last year (1989), Tennstedt came to London to give two performances of Mahler's Second Symphony with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, whose Principal Conductor he was until his illness forced him to relinquish the post. I attended the first of these which, by any standards, was an extraordinary occasion. It was loaded with more palpable tension than a Wimbledon men's singles final: the orchestra playing was not quite immaculate (how could it be in such highly-charged circumstances?),

but the sheer emotional charge that Tennstedt brought to each phrase was astonishing.

That in itself confirmed to me one essential difference between concert-hall and recording-studio interpretation. A conductor working in the studio is thinking primarily of communication with posterity – whether that posterity is the person who hears the records six months later or sixty years later. In the concert hall, however, the great conductor is most interested in the Here and Now. Subjective mood can, and perhaps should, outweigh cold calculation. Excitement and risk should take precedence over technical perfection; the heart should rule the head.

When I came to the Barbican Library to hear the MPRC's live recording of the second Festival Hall concert (the one I had not attended), I was amazed yet again. For here was an interpretation quite different – not only in small details but in general atmosphere – from the first concert, which had, after all, taken place only a couple of days earlier. In "repeat" performances the orchestra and conductor might be forgiven for relaxing into a path already trodden and tested. Not so here. The risk element is, if anything, heightened. It is one of the most startling interpretations I have ever heard, not just in obvious matters – such as its emphatic breadth and its superb emphasis on inner orchestral detail – but in its

refusal to accept any previous "norms" as binding. And if it were not for the presence of the MPRC microphones, the interpretation would never have been preserved!

The first movement is slower, more tragic in countenance, than anything that Tennstedt might have dared in the recording studio. Woodwind entries are accented on their first notes like nails being driven into a coffin; string tremolando have a shuddering, macabre quality. The orchestral sound is stabbed but at the same time thick and brooding – yet the rising string phrases are milked for every consolation they can offer.

From this huge, lumbering funeral procession, Tennstedt gradually releases the development section – an accelerando into a false dawn of joy and hope, blaring with unnaturally strident jubilation. It is a masterstroke because it makes the subsequent collapse into catastrophe, where the music swirls furiously like a great sea-storm round a shipwreck, all the more powerful.

At the end of this opening movement, even a listener feels drained of emotion. What the players must have felt like is hard to imagine. Yet this apocalyptic symphonic journey has barely begun.

We may pass quickly over the third and fourth movements, not because they are

unremarkably performed – the macabre, relentless momentum of the third is superbly sustained, and the beautifully tranquil oasis of "Urlicht" is marvellously conjured – but because Tennstedt's approach to the second movement and the *finale* is so much more unusual.

The second movement is one of those Mahlerian creations whose irony is ambiguous enough to be read in many different ways. That gentle, deceptively simple triple-time dance, like some distant memory of an ancient minuet, is presented too idiosyncratically to be regarded as pastiche, yet too straight to fit into the usual theory of how Mahler distorts folk material to reflect the distortions within his own personality. Conductors are consequently left with a major dilemma.

For Tennstedt, however, there is no dilemma. His unrelentingly tragic view of the symphony admits no respite. So instead, he takes his cue in this movement from the remarkable orchestration of the opening theme – thick with lower strings – and presents it with deliberate solemnity and grave emotion. Then, when the upper strings enter, the articulation is again stabbing, pugnacious and sharply projected. Later, the interplay between upper and lower strings is wonderfully characterful, the pizzicato grotesque yet strangely dignified; and there is one audacious and breathtaking rallentando and glissando.

It is in the *finale*, though, that the full urgency, terror and hard-won exultation of Tennstedt's interpretation is revealed. From the colossal beginning, like the foundations of the whole earth opening up, through the tremendous drum-rolls which Tennstedt extends boldly, to the beseeching violin phrases, there is a sense of desperation, of matters coming to the point of final reckoning.

Then comes the soprano's first magical entry, the hushed arrival of the choir, the growth of certainty, and the final glorious bars, played with enormous breadth and grandeur. The orchestral playing throughout is very high in quality. Equally, the electricity of this performance, its sense of immediate communication, would be gained nowhere except in a hall packed with an expectant audience.

Richard Morrison, *Musical Life* (1990)

*At the time of writing this article in 1990, Richard Morrison was Deputy Arts Editor of The Times, of which he is now a columnist and Chief Music Critic.*

### **The origins of this recording**

When the London Philharmonic Orchestra presented two performances of Mahler's *Resurrection Symphony* at the Royal Festival Hall in February 1989, the Music Performance Research Centre – now Music Preserved – was a recently constituted facility that provided the sole opportunity to record the concerts. Before the creation of the MPRC, unless a live performance in a concert hall or opera house was being broadcast or recorded by a commercial company, complex copyright issues prevented any official recording being made for archival purposes.

Those issues were resolved with the arrival of the MPRC following many years of broadly based negotiations. From the autumn of 1987, live events that otherwise would be lost to posterity could be preserved. The recordings could only be made subject to strict contractual agreements stipulating that they could be only be heard at the listening studio opened by the MPRC at the Barbican Centre's library. At that time, this condition was essential: without it, the recording that can now, for the first time, officially be issued here could never have been made.

Jon Tolansky (2009)

*Jon Tolansky is co-founder of the Music Performance Research Centre, now known as Music Preserved.*

### **MAHLER SYMPHONY NO.2 'RESURRECTION'**

*Text is taken from Friedrich Klopstock's Resurrection Ode*

#### **03 Urlicht**

##### *Mezzo soprano*

O Röschen rot!  
Der Mensch liegt in grösster Not!  
Der Mensch liegt in grösster Pein!  
Je lieber möcht'ich im Himmel sein!  
Da kam ich auf einen breiten Weg;  
da kam ein Engelein und wollt'mich abweisen.  
Ach nein! Ich liess mich nicht abweisen!  
Ich bin von Gott und will wieder zu Gott!  
Der liebe Gott wird mir ein Lichtchen geben,  
wird leuchten mir bis in das ewig selig Leben!

#### **05 Auferstehung**

##### *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!

#### **Primordial Light**

O red rose!  
Mankind lies in greatest need!  
Mankind lies in greatest pain!  
Far rather would I be in Heaven!  
I came upon a broad pathway;  
a little angel came and wanted to turn me aside.  
Ah no! I would not be turned aside!  
I am from God and would return to God!  
Dear God will give me a little light,  
will light me to the eternal blessed life!

#### **Resurrection**

Rise again, yes you will rise again,  
my dust, after a short rest!  
Immortal life  
He who called you will grant you.

To bloom again you are sown!  
The Lord of the Harvest goes  
and gathers like sheaves  
each of us who died!

## 06 O Glaube, mein Herz

### *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!

### *Soprano*

O glaube,  
du warst nicht umsonst geboren!  
Hast nicht umsonst gelebt,  
gelitten!

### *Chorus and mezzo soprano*

Was entstanden ist  
das muss vergehen!  
Was vergangen, auferstehen!  
Hör' auf zu beben!  
Bereite dich zu leben!

O believe, my heart, o believe,  
nothing is lost to you!  
Yours is what you longed for,  
yours what you loved,  
what you fought over!

O believe,  
you were not born in vain!  
Have not in vain lived,  
suffered!

What has come into being  
must pass away!  
What passed away, rise again!  
Stop trembling!  
Prepare yourself to live!

### *Soprano, mezzo soprano and chorus*

O Schmerz! Du Alldurchdringer!  
Dir bin ich entrungen!  
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' gedrungen!  
Sterben werd' ich, um zu leben!  
Aufersteh'n, ja aufersteh'n wirst du,  
mein Herz, in einem Nu!  
Was du geschlagen  
zu Gott wird es dich tragen!

O pain! You that pierce all things!  
From you I have been wrested!  
O death! You all-conqueror!  
Now you have been conquered!

With wings, which I gained for myself  
in love's hot strife,  
I shall soar away  
to the light, whither no eye has penetrated!  
I shall die so as to live!  
Rise again, yes you will rise again,  
my heart, in an instant!  
What you have beaten  
will bear you to God!

English translation © Eric Mason

## KLAUS TENNSTEDT *conductor*

Born in East Germany, Klaus Tennstedt studied at the Leipzig Conservatory and conducted throughout his native land but it was not until he moved to the West in 1971 that he started to achieve world recognition. He made his American debut with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1974 and his London debut was with the London Symphony Orchestra in 1976, his debut with the London Philharmonic Orchestra following in 1977. He had an instant rapport with the London Philharmonic Orchestra that resulted in return invitations and his appointment as the Orchestra's Principal Conductor and Music Director in 1983. This developed into a unique and remarkable relationship until illness finally brought it to a premature end some ten years later. Klaus Tennstedt died in 1998.

Tennstedt was particularly renowned for his performances of the German repertoire, especially Mahler whose symphonies he conducted regularly with the London Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall and in the recording studio to huge public acclaim. His energy, musicianship and emotional involvement combined with a rare humility endeared him to audiences and musicians alike. Mahler's Symphony No.2 is a work that Tennstedt maintained was the first

expression of Mahler's true self. In addition to regular programming in concerts, many of which were broadcast, he recorded it in the studio in 1981 with the London Philharmonic Orchestra for EMI.



## YVONNE KENNY AM *soprano*

Yvonne Kenny is one of the most distinguished sopranos of her generation. She has performed in most of the world's leading opera houses and concert halls, having built an enviable reputation as a fine Mozartian, a dazzling interpreter of works by Handel and more recently for her performances of the Richard Strauss heroines, most notably as the Marschallin (*Der Rosenkavalier*) and Countess (*Capriccio*).

She appears regularly at major international festivals, at Carnegie Hall and at the BBC Promenade concerts. Australian performances include national tours for Musica Viva, Australian Chamber Orchestra and the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra as well as regular guest appearances with the Australian symphony orchestras.

Her discography includes over 50 releases on international labels as well as the best-selling discs *Simple Gifts*, *Handel Arias*, *Make Believe*, *The Salley Gardens*, *Clair de lune*, and *Vienna City of My Dreams*, all for ABC Classics. Recent appearances include Countess (*Capriccio*, Dresden State Opera), Marschallin (*Der Rosenkavalier*, Vienna State Opera) and for Opera Australia, *The Merry Widow*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *La Voix Humaine* and Blanche in André Previn's opera *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

Yvonne Kenny was made a member of the Order of Australia (1989) and was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Music from the University of Sydney (1999). She is Professor of Voice at London's Guildhall School of Music & Drama. [www.yvonnekenny.com](http://www.yvonnekenny.com)



© Keith Saunders

## JARD VAN NES mezzo soprano

After finishing piano studies, Jard van Nes started vocal studies with Herman Woltman at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague.

Jard van Nes quickly became one of the most sought-after mezzo sopranos of her generation. She worked with the world's great conductors including Pierre Boulez, Riccardo Chailly, Charles Dutoit, Carlo Maria Giulini, Bernard Haitink, Mariss Jansons, Kurt Masur, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Georg Solti, Klaus Tennstedt, and Edo de Waart.

Van Nes's repertoire ranged from the Baroque to pieces specially commissioned. She gained a special reputation with the music of Mahler with worldwide performances of his orchestral song cycles, solos in the symphonies and his songs. In recital van Nes performed in the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Carnegie Hall in New York and the Musikverein in Vienna amongst others with esteemed pianists including Gérard van Blek and Roger Vignoles.

Her discography is extensive, many recordings having received prizes such as an Edison, Diapason d'Or, Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik and a Grammy nomination. Her last recording was *Symphony No.1* by Karl Amadeus Hartmann with the London

Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Leon Botstein.

Jard van Nes retired from the concert stage at the end of 2000 and dedicates her time to coaching and serves on the jury of many different singing competitions. In 2002 Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands appointed her "Ridder in de Orde van de Nederlandse Leeuw" in recognition of her contribution to Dutch cultural life.



## LONDON PHILHARMONIC CHOIR

The London Philharmonic Choir was founded in 1947 as the chorus for the London Philharmonic Orchestra. It is widely acclaimed as one of the nation's finest choirs and consistently meets with critical acclaim. Continuing to perform regularly with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Choir also works with many other orchestras throughout the United Kingdom and makes annual appearances at the BBC Proms. It has performed under some of the world's most eminent conductors – among

them Pierre Boulez, Mark Elder, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Bernard Haitink, Kurt Masur, Sir Roger Norrington, Sir Simon Rattle, Sir Georg Solti and Klaus Tennstedt. The London Philharmonic Choir has participated in more than seventy recordings, including a Gramophone Award winning performance of Mahler's Eighth Symphony under Klaus Tennstedt. The Choir often travels overseas and in recent years it has appeared at the Canary Islands and Lucerne music festivals, and given concerts in Europe, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Australia.



## LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

The London Philharmonic Orchestra is known as one of the world's great orchestras with a reputation secured by its performances in the concert hall and opera house, its many award-winning recordings, its trail-blazing international tours and its pioneering education work. Distinguished conductors who have held positions with the Orchestra since its foundation in 1932 by Sir Thomas Beecham include Sir Adrian Boult, Sir John Pritchard, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti, Klaus Tennstedt, Franz Welser-Möst and Kurt Masur. Vladimir Jurowski was appointed the Orchestra's Principal Guest Conductor in March 2003 and became Principal Conductor in September 2007, succeeding Kurt Masur. The London Philharmonic Orchestra has been resident symphony orchestra at Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall since 1992 and there it presents its main series



of concerts between September and May each year. In summer, the Orchestra moves to Sussex where it has been Resident at Glyndebourne Festival Opera for over 40 years. The Orchestra also performs at venues around the UK and has made numerous tours to America, Europe and Japan, and visited India, Hong Kong, China, South Korea, Australia, South Africa and Abu Dhabi.

The London Philharmonic Orchestra made its first recordings on 10 October 1932, just three days after its first public performance. It has recorded and broadcast regularly ever since, and in 2005 established its own record label. These CDs are unique: amongst them are archive, studio and live concert recordings including world-première performances. These are also available as high quality downloads. [www.lpo.org.uk](http://www.lpo.org.uk)

## Highlights from Klaus Tennstedt and the London Philharmonic Orchestra

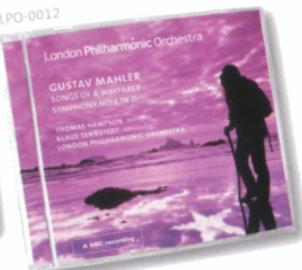
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