



Leipzig Mahler Festival

A celebration of Mahler's orchestral works

18–29 May 2023 (MJ 729)

12 days • £5,980

(including tickets to 13 performances)

Lecturer: Dr Paul Max Edlin

Mahler's monumental symphonies in the city where he composed his first.

First-class international orchestras and star conductors.

Guided walks with local guides to explore the architecture and museums of this historic and lively city.

Day excursions to Dessau and Dresden.

Daily talks on the music by composer, artistic director and lecturer, Dr Paul Max Edlin.

A festival dedicated to Mahler's music would have struck the composer as odd. During his lifetime, he frequently experienced adverse reactions to his songs and symphonies. Contemporaries were shocked by the heterogeneity of the compositions, which drew inspiration from military marches and the natural sounds of the Alps as much as from the symphonic legacy of Beethoven, Brahms and Bruckner. Yet it is Mahler's breadth of vision that makes his work so pertinent today; as the composer claimed, 'my time will come'.

Mahler's place in the repertoire continues to be guaranteed by the sheer number of singers, orchestras and conductors who mark their own standing through performances of his challenging and rewarding works. It is a journey that often begins with Mahler's bucolic First Symphony, steeped in the 19th-century folkloric collection *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. Continuing through the composer's often wilful extensions of symphonic form and expression in his middle symphonies, including the gargantuan Eighth, it ends with the more fractured soundscapes of Mahler's final works, written on the brink of modernism.

The apprenticeship of such a wide-ranging symphonist was nurtured through numerous conducting posts around Europe, but one of the most crucial was in Leipzig. Between 1886 and 1888 Mahler lived in the city of Bach, Mendelssohn, the Schumanns and Wagner, a tradition to which he responded with alacrity. He conducted at the Gewandhaus and at the neighbouring opera house. And it was in Leipzig that he completed his First Symphony.

As well as experiencing a range of Mahler's works in performances by today's leading



Leipzig, Altes Rathaus, wood engraving from 'The Illustrated London News', 1866

orchestras and interpreters, this Festival tour offers an opportunity to appreciate the music in a broader cultural context. It takes in Leipzig's excellent museums and surveys some of the visual arts to which Mahler and his contemporaries responded, as well as those movements that came to mark the end of the composer's twilight Romanticism.

Itinerary

Day 1. Fly at c. 10.45am from London Heathrow to Berlin Brandenburg (British Airways). Drive to Leipzig with time to settle into the hotel before dinner.

Day 2. The first of a series of morning lectures is followed by a guided walk around the city centre, including the Marketplace and Old City Hall, Stock Exchange and the churches of St Nicholas and St Thomas (where J.S. Bach was choir master). The tour ends at the Bach Museum. Free afternoon. The Fine Arts Museum has a good collection of European Old Masters in a striking new building. *Evening concert at the Gewandhaus with the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, Tugan Sokhiev (cond.), Christiane Karg (soprano), Ekaterina Gubanova (alto), Andreas Schager (tenor): Mahler, Symphony No.4; Das Lied von der Erde.*

Day 3. The morning is free. *Afternoon chamber concert with Frank-Michael Erben (violin), Luke*

Turrell (viola), Valentino Worlitzsch (cello), Yulianna Avdeeva (piano): Works by Mahler, Schnittke & Brahms. Dinner is followed by an evening concert with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Myung-Whun Chung (cond.): Mahler, Symphony No.5.

Day 4. *Morning concert with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and MDR Leipzig Radio Choir, Andris Nelsons (cond.), Ying Fang (soprano), Gerhild Romberger (mezzo-soprano): Mahler, Symphony No.2. Free afternoon. Evening concert with City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla (cond.): Mahler, Symphony No.10 (completed by Deryck Cooke).*

Day 5: Dessau. Drive to Dessau and visit the restored Bauhaus Building (1926), designed by Walter Gropius, the movement's founder and Alma Mahler's second husband. View other Bauhaus buildings in Dessau, among them the Master's Houses (Gropius). Return to Leipzig for some free time before an *evening concert with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Daniel Harding (cond.): Mahler, Symphony No.7.*

Day 6. A second walk concentrating on Leipzig's musical heritage includes Mahler's house, and finishes at the Bach Archive which has a good public display. The afternoon is free. *Evening concert with the Budapest*

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continued

Festival Orchestra, Iván Fischer (cond.): Mahler, Symphony No.9.

Day 7: Dresden. Drive to Dresden and visit the Zwinger: a unique Baroque confection, part pleasure palace, part arena for festivities and part museum for cherished collections. Visit the fabulously rich Old Masters Gallery, particularly strong on Italian and Netherlandish painting. The Green Vault of the Residenzschloss displays one of the world's finest princely treasuries. Return to Leipzig for an included dinner followed by an *evening concert with Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra, Daniele Gatti (cond.): Mahler, Symphony No.1.*

Day 8. The day is free until an *evening concert with the Staatskapelle Dresden, Women of the Sächsischer Staatsoperchor Dresden, Children's Choir of the Semperoper Dresden, Christian Thielemann (cond.), Christa Mayer (alto): Mahler, Symphony No.3.*

Day 9. Morning visit to the Mendelssohn House Museum – the composer's last private address, and the only one of his residences that can still be visited. In the afternoon visit the Grassi Museum for a guided tour of the collection of musical instruments, one of the most important of its kind in the world. *Evening concert with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Andris Nelsons (cond.), Emily Magee (soprano; Magna Peccatrix), Jacquelyn Wagner (soprano, Una Poenitentium), Ying Fang (soprano; Mater Gloriosa), Lioba Braun (mezzo-soprano; Mulier Samaritana), Gerhild Romberger (mezzo-soprano; Maria Aegyptiaca), Benjamin Bruns (tenor; Doctor Marianus), Adrian Eröd (baritone; Pater Ecstaticus), Georg Zeppenfeld (bass; Pater Profundus): Mahler, Symphony No.8.*

Day 10. *Morning concert with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Octet and Torsten Kerl (tenor), Katija Dragojevic (alto): Mahler, Das Lied von der Erde.* Free afternoon. *Evening concert with the MDR Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra and MDR Leipzig Radio Choir, Dennis Russell Davies (cond.), Chen Reiss (soprano), Sophie Harmsen (alto), Attilio Glaser (tenor): Mahler, Todtenfeier, Des Knaben Wunderhorn, Das klagende Lied.*

Day 11. *Morning and final concert with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Semyon Bychkov (cond.): Mahler, Symphony No.6.* The afternoon is free. Final dinner in the excellent restaurant in the Gewandhaus concert hall.

Day 12. Fly from Berlin Brandenburg to London Heathrow, arriving c. 3.45pm.

Lecturer

Dr Paul Max Edlin. Paul Max Edlin's career encompasses academia, artistic direction, performance and composition. He has worked in universities for 39 years, most recently as a professor and then as Director of Music at Queen Mary University of London. He has been Artistic Director of both Sounds New Contemporary Music Festival and Deal Music and Arts, bringing some exceptional cultural opportunities to the UK. As a composer his works encompass opera to ballet, orchestral to chamber and instrumental to electronic. In 2022 he and his Italian wife moved permanently to Tuscany in Italy so he could concentrate on his work as a composer.

Practicalities

Price, per person. Two sharing: £5,980 or £5,750 without flights. **Single occupancy:** £6,850 or £6,620 without flights.

Included: air travel (Euro Traveller) with British Airways (Airbus A319); accommodation as described below; private coach for the airport transfers and excursions; breakfasts, 2 lunches and 6 dinners with wine; all admissions to museums; all tips for waiters, drivers and local guides; all taxes; the services of the lecturer and a tour manager.

Music: 13 concert tickets (all first category) are included.

Accommodation. Leipzig Marriott Hotel (leipzigmarriott.de): Conforming to its brand, the Marriott is a smart 4-star hotel with lots of marble, pillars, wood, brass and comfortable easy chairs. It is located on a pedestrian street just inside the north-eastern section of the ring road that runs around the city centre, and is a 15-minute walk from the Gewandhaus. Rooms are spacious, with cosy neoclassical furnishings and are equipped to a high standard. *Single rooms are doubles for sole use.*

How strenuous? Vehicular access is restricted in the city centre and participants are expected to walk to the concert hall. Average distance by coach per day: 38 miles (but only four of the 12 days involve significant coach travel – getting to and from Berlin airport, and the excursions to Dresden and Dessau).

Group size: between 10 and 22 participants.