

Mahler's Third Symphony

SAT 9/20/25 at 7 PM & SUN 9/21/25 at 2 PM

Performances #308 & #309 Season 11, Concerts 1 & 2

Fisher Center at Bard Sosnoff Theater



Gustav Mahler

Born 7/7/1860 in Kaliště, Bohemia
(now Czech Republic)

Died 5/18/1911 at age 50 in Vienna

Symphony No. 3

Part One

Kräftig. Entschieden. (forceful and
decisive) 35 min

Part Two

Tempo di Menuetto. Sehr mässig. (at the
tempo of a minuet; very moderate) 10 min

Comodo. Scherzando. Ohne Hast.

(comfortably fast; lively; unhurriedly) 17 min

Sehr langsam. Misterioso. (very slow;
mysterious) 10 min

Lustig im Tempo und keck im Ausdruck
(joyous in tempo and jaunty in
expression) 4 min

Langsam. Ruhevoll; Empfundene. (slow; calm;
deeply felt) 25 min

*No pause between the final three
movements*

STEPHANIE BLYTHE *mezzo-soprano*
BARD CONSERVATORY PREPARATORY
DIVISION CHORUS
BARD COLLEGE CHAMBER SINGERS
MEMBERS OF BARD CONSERVATORY'S
GRADUATE VOCAL ARTS PROGRAM
JAMES BAGWELL *choral director*

Written 1893–96, in Mahler's mid 30s;
revised 1906

Premiered 6/9/1902 in Krefeld, Germany;
Allgemeiner Deutscher Musikverein
Festival orchestra and choruses; Mahler
conductor; Luise Geller-Wolter *contralto*

The Music

MAHLER'S SYMPHONY NO. 3

Notes by TÖN cellist Shawn Thoma

When conductor Bruno Walter visited Gustav Mahler in the summer of 1896, he admired the alpine peaks of the Hölleengebirge rising above Mahler's composing hut in Steinbach am Attersee. Mahler said to him, "No need to look up there—I've composed it all away!" He had transmuted the grandeur of the mountains into his symphony he had just completed.

At the turn of the 20th century, Mahler lived in a time of restless ideas. Science and philosophy were challenging familiar ways of thinking, while art was reaching for greater scale, depth, and human expression. His first four symphonies were linked to narratives of heroic struggle, mortality, and spiritual renewal, but he chose not to publish them with these outlines. "No music is worth anything if you first have to tell the listener what experience lies behind it," he said. This belief appears in another of his convictions: "The symphony must be like the world. It must embrace everything."

The Third Symphony traces a hierarchy from the outer to the inner world. The opening movement is raw and primeval, music of the earth itself. Flowers bloom in the second movement, and animals

stir in the third. The fourth movement, setting Nietzsche's poem "Midnight Song", comes halfway through the work and places humanity between inanimate nature and the divine. It speaks of the deep pain and suffering in existence, but also of the profound joy that surpasses sorrow and longs for eternity. The fifth shifts instantly into light as children's voices ring out in a playful folk poem from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, a collection Mahler returned to often, celebrating forgiveness and "heavenly joy." The final movement is a slow, serene adagio often heard as a portrait of divine love and transcendence. Here, Mahler gathers the threads of the preceding movements into music of profound peace and beauty.

As a musician, I feel cared for in this music. Mahler writes with a deep command of orchestration and the character of each instrument, coupled with a rare empathy for the musicians who bring them to life. No other composer's music commands the same respect, and it draws complete commitment from everyone on stage. I have been fortunate to perform his Second and Fourth Symphonies, and each experience has stayed with me.

The Artists

LEON BOTSTEIN *conductor*



Matt Dine

Leon Botstein is founder and music director of The Orchestra Now (TÖN), music director and principal conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra (ASO), artistic codirector of Bard SummerScape and the Bard Music Festival, and conductor laureate and principal guest conductor of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra (JSO), where he served as music director from 2003 to 2011. He has been guest conductor with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Aspen Music Festival, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Mariinsky Theatre, Russian National Orchestra in Moscow, Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden, Taipei Symphony, Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra, and Sinfónica Juvenil de Caracas in Venezuela, among others. In May 2025 he led two concerts with TÖN in Koblenz and Nuremberg, Germany marking 80 years since the surrender of Nazi Germany. With ASO he has revived numerous neglected operas and rare repertoire, such as Schoenberg's massive *Gurre-Lieder*, Richard Strauss's first opera, *Guntram*, and the U.S. premiere of Sergei Taneyev's final work, *At the Reading of a Psalm*.

Albums include *The Lost Generation* and *Exodus*, two 2024 releases with TÖN; Hindemith's *The Long Christmas Dinner* with the ASO; a Grammy-nominated

recording of Popov's First Symphony with the London Symphony Orchestra; and other recordings with TÖN, ASO, the London Philharmonic, NDR Orchestra Hamburg, and JSO, among others. Fall 2025 releases include *Premieres* with violinist Gil Shaham and *Transcription as Translation*, both with TÖN. He is editor of *The Musical Quarterly* and author of numerous articles and books, including *The Compleat Brahms* (Norton), *Jefferson's Children* (Doubleday), *Judentum und Modernität* (Böhlau), and *Von Beethoven zu Berg* (Zsolnay). Honors include Harvard University's prestigious Centennial Award; the American Academy of Arts and Letters award; and Cross of Honor, First Class, from the government of Austria, for his contributions to music. Other distinctions include the Bruckner Society's Julio Kilenyi Medal of Honor for his interpretations of that composer's music, the Leonard Bernstein Award for the Elevation of Music in Society, and Carnegie Foundation's Academic Leadership Award. In 2011, he was inducted into the American Philosophical Society.

STEPHANIE BLYTHE *mezzo-soprano*



Stephanie Blythe

A renowned opera singer and recitalist, mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe is one of the most highly respected and critically

acclaimed artists of her generation. With repertoire that ranges from Handel to Wagner, German lieder to contemporary and classic American song, she feels at home equally on opera, concert, recital, and cabaret stages. She has performed in many world-class venues like Carnegie Hall, the Metropolitan Opera, Covent Garden, Paris National Opera, and the San Francisco, Chicago Lyric, and Seattle Operas, and with orchestras that include the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Opera Orchestra of New York, Minnesota Orchestra, Halle Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Ensemble Orchestre de Paris, and the Concertgebouworkest. She has also appeared at the Tanglewood, Cincinnati May, and Ravinia festivals, and at the BBC Proms.

Ms. Blythe's many operatic roles include title roles in *Carmen*, *Samson et Dalila*, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, *La Grande Duchesse*, *Tancredi*, *Mignon*, and *Giulio Cesare*; Frugola, Principessa, and Zita in *Il Trittico*, Frick in both *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*, Waltraute in *Götterdämmerung*, Azucena in *Il Trovatore*, Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Baba the Turk in *The Rake's Progress*, Ježibaba in *Rusalka*, Madame de Haltiere in *Cendrillon*, Mistress Quickly in *Falstaff*, and Ino/Juno in *Semele*. She also created the role of Gertrude Stein in Ricky Ian Gordon's *27* at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and performed Mrs. Lovett in *Sweeney Todd* at the San Francisco Opera and Nettie Fowler in *Carousel* at the Houston Grand Opera and with the New York Philharmonic. More recently, she has expanded her repertoire to include non-traditional casting as the title role in *Gianni Schicchi* with San Diego Opera, and Don Jose in *Carmen* with Chicago Opera Theater.

Ms. Blythe was named *Musical America's* Vocalist of the Year in 2009, received an *Opera News* Award in 2007, and won the prestigious

Richard Tucker Award in 1999. In 2019, she had the honor of being appointed director of the Graduate Vocal Arts Program at Bard College. Most recently, she was the recipient of the Leonard Bernstein Lifetime Achievement Award by the Longy School of Music of Bard College. She occasionally moonlights as dramatic tenor Blythe Oratônio.

BARD CONSERVATORY PREPARATORY DIVISION CHORUS

The Bard Conservatory Preparatory Division Chorus was founded in 2019 to sing the children's choir part in Mahler's Third Symphony with the Bard College Conservatory Orchestra. Since then, the group has performed on many Bard programs, appearing with the Bard Baroque Ensemble and others, lending their voices to works by such composers as Bach, Britten, Mahler, and Tchaikovsky. Under the direction of Dr. Martha Sullivan, they sing a wide variety of repertoire with dedication and youthful enthusiasm.

BARD COLLEGE CHAMBER SINGERS

Formed in 2002 by music director James Bagwell, Bard College Chamber Singers is an auditioned choir of Bard students and alumni/ae from all programs of the College. The Chamber Singers have performed with the Bard Baroque Ensemble and in concerts of Haydn's Mass in D Minor and works by Mahler, Fauré, Kodály, and Baltaš. In previous holiday seasons they have joined the Bard College Symphonic Chorus and members of TON, Conservatory, and Community orchestras to perform an annual December Winter Songfest.

BARD CONSERVATORY GRADUATE VOCAL ARTS PROGRAM

The Graduate Vocal Arts Program is a unique master of music program in vocal

arts that balances a respect for established repertoire and expressive techniques with the flexibility and curiosity needed to keep abreast of evolving musical ideas. Led by the renowned American mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe, the program prepares young singers to meet the special challenges of pursuing a professional life in music in the 21st century. Students engage with art song, chamber music, contemporary music, and operatic repertoire throughout their course work. Operatic performance includes a fully staged production at the Fisher Center for the Performing Arts. The program includes seminars and classes in Alexander Technique, acting, diction and translation, development of performance opportunities, and a workshop in career skills with guest speakers who are leading figures in arts management and administration.

JAMES BAGWELL *choral director*



Daniel Welch

James Bagwell maintains an active schedule as a conductor of choral, orchestral, and opera repertoire. In 2015 he was named associate conductor of The Orchestra Now (TÖN), and in 2009 he was appointed principal guest conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra (ASO). From 2009–2015 he served as music director of The Collegiate Chorale. Highlights with the Chorale included conducting rarely performed operas at Carnegie Hall, including Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda*, Rossini's *Möise et Pharaon*, and Boito's *Mefistofele*. He conducted the

New York premiere of Philip Glass's *Toltec* Symphony and Osvaldo Golijov's *Oceana* at Carnegie Hall. His performance of Kurt Weill's *Knickerbocker Holiday* at Alice Tully Hall was recorded live for Gaslight Records and is the only complete recording of the work. He prepared the Chorale for numerous concerts at the Verbier Festival in Switzerland and for programs with the Israel Philharmonic in Israel and the Salzburg Festival. He has collaborated since 2011 with singer and composer Natalie Merchant, conducting orchestras across the country, including the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center.

Mr. Bagwell is a regular guest conductor for the Tulsa Symphony (TSO), leading it in performances of Requiems by Mozart, Brahms, and Britten, as well as Mahler's First Symphony. In January 2025 he led a rare performance of Carl Nielsen's symphony *The Inextinguishable*, and in May 2026 he will conduct Mahler's Second Symphony in celebration of the TSO's 25th anniversary season.

Anoted preparer of choruses, Mr. Bagwell has trained choruses for numerous American and international orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, NHK Symphony (Japan), St. Petersburg Symphony, Budapest Festival Orchestra, Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, and Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. As chorus master for the ASO, he has received numerous accolades for his collaborations with Leon Botstein performing rare choral works at Carnegie Hall. Since 2003 he has been director of choruses for the Bard Music Festival, conducting and preparing choral works.

Mr. Bagwell is professor of music at Bard College, director of performance studies in the Bard College Conservatory of Music, and co-director of the Graduate Conducting Program.



THE ORCHESTRA NOW (TÖN)

Founded in 2015 by Bard College, TÖN is a graduate program that is training the next generation of music professionals to become creative ambassadors of classical music. Led by conductor and educator Leon Botstein, TÖN offers accomplished young musicians a full-tuition fellowship toward a master's degree in curatorial, critical, and performance studies or an advanced certificate in orchestra studies. TÖN's innovative curriculum combines rehearsal, performance, recording, and touring with seminars, masterclasses, professional development workshops, teaching, and more. The members of the orchestra are graduates of the world's leading conservatories, and hail from countries across North and South America, Europe, and Asia. Many have gone on to have careers in the Philadelphia, San Francisco, Boston, Vancouver, and National symphony orchestras; Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Colombia; the United States military bands; and many others.

TÖN performs dozens of concerts a year at venues including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Fisher Center at Bard. Specializing in both familiar and rarely heard repertoire, the orchestra has given numerous New York, U.S., and world premieres, and has performed the work of living composers, including Joan Tower, Jessie Montgomery, Jonny Greenwood, and Tania León. In

May 2025, TÖN performed two concerts in Koblenz and Nuremberg, Germany marking 80 years since the surrender of Nazi Germany. In 2023, TÖN appeared with Bradley Cooper in the Academy Award-nominated film *Maestro*, and was featured on the Grammy-winning Deutsche Grammophon soundtrack, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin. The orchestra has performed with many other distinguished guest conductors and soloists, including Leonard Slatkin, Gil Shaham, Neeme Järvi, Stephanie Blythe, Fabio Luisi, Vadim Repin, Joseph Young, Peter Serkin, Naomi Woo, Peter Moore, Tan Dun, and JoAnn Falletta.

TÖN has released several albums on the Hyperion, Sorel Classics, and AVIE labels. Fall 2025 releases include *Premieres* with violinist Gil Shaham and *Transcription as Translation*. Other highlights include 2024's *The Lost Generation* and *Exodus*, and rare recordings of Othmar Schoeck's *Lebendig begraben* and Bristow's *Arcadian* Symphony. Recordings of TÖN's live concerts from the Fisher Center can be heard regularly on Classical WMHT-FM and WWFM The Classical Network, and the orchestra has appeared over 100 times on *Performance Today*, broadcast nationwide.

Visit ton.bard.edu to find out more about TÖN's academic program, concerts, musicians, albums, and broadcasts; sign up for the email list; and support the orchestra with a donation.

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Yuxuan Zhang
Chia-Mei (Lily) Li
Casey Lebkicker
Carla Mendoza Trejo
Keegan Donlon
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Elvira Hoyos Malagon
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Kate Hwang
Alfred Western

Nohyoon Kwak

Dariimaa Batsaikhan
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Gideon Lester

Executive Producer and Chief Operating Officer

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Daia Bromberg *Finance and Administration Associate*
Rebecca Cosenza *Executive Assistant*

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Kayla Leacock *Hiring/Special Projects Manager*

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Carter Edwards *Associate Producer and Partnerships Manager*
Marco Nisticò *Opera Producer*
Madeline Reilly '22 *Assistant Producer and Event Manager*

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Jessica Wolf *Associate Director of Development*
Linda Baldwin *Events Manager*
Emily Cavotti *Events, Assistant Manager*

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Jess Webber *Programs and Festival Operations Manager*

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Drita Gjokaj *Environmental Specialist*

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Ray Stegner *Building Operations Manager*
Hazaiah Tompkins '19 *Building Operations Coordinator*

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Emily Berge-Thielmann *Box Office Supervisor*
Brittany Brouker *Associate Director of Marketing*
Aleksandra Cisneros-Vescio *Senior Assistant House Manager*
Grace Hill '26 *Assistant House Manager*
Michael Hofmann VAP '15 *Audience and Member Services Manager*
Asa Kaplan '23 *Associate House Manager*
Dávid Kéringer IAP '24 TÖN '26 *Assistant House Manager*
Elyse Lichtenthal *House Manager*
Hanna Okalava '27 *Assistant House Manager*
Garrett Sager HRA '23 *Marketing Manager*
Paulina Swierczek VAP '19 *Box Office Manager*
Courtney Williams *Audience and Member Services Coordinator*

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Amy Murray *Videographer*

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Jenna Obrizok *Production Manager*

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Jared Goldstein *Director of Production*
Danelle Morrow *Production Administrator*
Jane Briguglio *Associate Production Manager*
Dávid Bánóczy-Ruof '22 *Production Management Assistant*

Audio

Lex Morton *Audio Supervisor*
Duane Lauginiger *Head Audio Engineer*

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Moe Schell *Costume Supervisor*
Parker Nelson *First Hand*
Sawyer Sa *Assistant Costume Shop Manager*

Lighting

Josh Foreman *Lighting Supervisor*
Walli Daniels *Electrician*
Nick Hawrylko *Head Electrician*

Orchestra

Stephen Dean *Orchestra Production Manager*
Marlan Barry *Head Classical Recording Engineer/Producer*

Liz Cohen *Orchestra Stage Manager*
Nora Rubenstone-Diaz '11
Associate Orchestra Production Manager
Mara Zaki '25 *Assistant Orchestra Stage Manager*

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Rick Reiser *Technical Director*
Zoe Barash *Carpenter*
Sam Dickson '19 *Carpenter*
Maggie McFarland '21 *Props Coordinator*
Mike Murphy *Carpenter*
Hick Renadette *Head Rigger/Flyperson*

Video

Kat Fitzalangan *Video Supervisor*
John Gasper *Video Engineer*
Will Oliva *Video Engineer*
May Pocsy '22 *Assistant Video Engineer*

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Jennifer Lown *Program Administrator*
Sabrina Sa *Artistic and Administrative Assistant*

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Irene Zedlacher

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Leon Botstein
Christopher H. Gibbs

Associate Director

Raissa St. Pierre '87

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Michael Beckerman
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Aleš Březina
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Irene Zedlacher

Director of Choruses

James Bagwell

Vocal Casting

Joshua Winograde

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OCT 11 at 7 pm
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James Bagwell conductor

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NOV 15 at 7 pm
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