

# SIKORSKI

magazine



On the Death of  
**RUDOLF BARSCHAI**

The Grande Dame of New Music:

**SOFIA GUBAIDULINA TURNS 80**

Two New Operas:

**"KRYOS" and "SNOW WHITE"**



Dear Readers,

It can happen that musical works in their respective adaptations become almost more famous than in their original versions. Dmitri Shostakovich himself once created a truly world-famous hit with his orchestral adaptation "Tahiti-Trot" based on "Tea for Two" by Vincent Youmans. But his own works were also adapted. In November 2010, the Russian composer and violist Rudolf Barschai died; he created congenial orchestrations of selected string quartets of Shostakovich and Beethoven that become world famous. His oeuvre is being honoured in this issue.

The Grande Dame of New Music, Sofia Gubaidulina, is also world renowned; she will be celebrating her 80th birthday in October of this year. We have compiled for you the most important events in the jubilee year as well as information on two brand-new operas by our young composers Jörn Arnecke and Marius Felix Lange. Alongside these two, another highly gifted new up-and-coming composer is Johannes X. Schachtner, whose catalogue of works we are representing as of now.

After last year, which was completely dominated by the 150th birthday of Gustav Mahler, the Mahler Euphoria is continuing without a break in 2011 in memory of the 100th anniversary of his death. We have selected and compiled "Music of Mourning" (works dealing with the subject of death) not for this reason, however, but on the occasion of a highly interesting premiere of a work by Alexander Raskatov.

We wish you many new discoveries and fascinating reading

Dagmar Sikorski  
Dr. Axel Sikorski



## contents

- 02 On the Death of Rudolf Barschai
- 04 The Grande Dame of New Music  
Sofia Gubaidulina Turns 80
- 06 Two New Operas:  
"Kryos" and "Snow White"
- 07 Johannes X. Schachtner  
Young Composer at Sikorski
- 08 100th Anniversary  
of the Death of Gustav Mahler
- 09 Alphabet of Death  
Music of Mourning

# On the Death of **RUDOLF BARSCHAI**

THE RENOWNED RUSSIAN CONDUCTOR  
AND VIOLIST **RUDOLF BARSCHAI** DIED  
ON 2 NOVEMBER 2010 AT THE AGE OF 86.

**B**arschai was born in Russia on 28 September 1924 and studied viola and composition, with Dmitri Shostakovich among others, at the Moscow Conservatory. After first performing in concerts as a violist, forming a string trio with Mstislav Rostropovich and Leonid Kogan and serving as a member of the Borodin Quartet from 1945 until 1953, he founded the Moscow Chamber orchestra in 1955, whose conductor and leader he was until emigrating to Israel in 1977. He then conducted numerous international orchestras including the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, whose music director he was from 1982 until 1986. He lived in Switzerland from the late 1980s onwards.

Barschai's most notable exterior characteristic was his closely cropped black moustache that stood in stark contrast to his white hair at the end of his life. Whoever encountered him was immediately fascinated by his elegance on the one hand and by his incomparable liveliness when narrating. Jan Brachmann remembered such an encounter in his obituary in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*: "(...) A fine smile played around his lips, and in cheerfully colourful German, this Russian from the North Caucasus then told all the gripping stories of the way the pianist of the century, Sviatoslav Richter, was eternally dissatisfied with himself, or of the unexpected spontaneity of the composer Dmitri Shostakovich, his teacher, whom Barschai loved above all others."

Barschai's emigration to Israel in 1977 had many reasons, some of which had to do with his admired Shostakovich. Against the strongest political resistance of the political powers on the time, the conductor Barschai had succeeded in gaining a performance of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 14, Op. 135, written for him and his Moscow Chamber Orchestra. Jan Brachmann added the following in his newspaper article: "If (Barschai's violin teacher) Leo Zeitlin was a member of the 'Society for Jewish Folk Music' founded in 1908 in St. Petersburg during the late Tsarist period, his pupil saw himself warned by a political anti-Semitism, at the latest since the murder of the Jewish actor Solomon Michoels by Stalin's henchmen in 1948. After the death of Shostakovich, Barschai emigrated to Israel, conducting the Israeli Chamber Orchestra there (...) and appearing as a guest conductor all over the world." At the International Shostakovich Days in Gohrisch, newly founded in 2010, the Gohrisch Shostakovich Prize was actually to have been presented to him personally. This was prevented by his sudden death, so that the award was presented posthumously.

Rudolf Barschai became especially famous for his sensitive and authentic **adaptations of chamber music works of Dmitri Shostakovich and Sergei Prokofiev**. His ingenious adaptation of the **8th String Quartet**, Op. 110 of Dmitri Shostakovich is considered to be particularly successful; it attained great worldwide popularity under the name of **Chamber Symphony, Op. 110a**. Shortly before his death, he crowned his life's work with an orchestral adaptation of the "Art of Fugue" by Johann Sebastian Bach. The adaptations of Rudolf Barschai are, with few exceptions, published by Hans Sikorski Music Publishers.

Barschai was closely bound to Shostakovich up until the latter's death in 1975. When Barschai asked the composer for permission to adapt the Eighth String Quartet, Shostakovich immediately declared his consent and finally had the work entered in his catalogue of works as Op. 110a. "Shostakovich was a god to us," Barschai once said. "He was so clever and such a great musician."

## The Art of the Adaptation

Barschai's method of handling original compositions was very subtle indeed. Not with a single note did he falsify the sound of the original, but gained completely new perspectives from it.

Barschai's **Chamber Symphony, Op. 74a** is based on the String Quartet, Op. 74 in E-flat major of Beethoven. In 1809, this work formed temporary conclusion to Beethoven's string quartet production, which he only resumed with the late quartets in the years 1822 to 1825. The E-flat major Quartet also bears the somewhat confusing nickname "Harp Quartet" or, referring to Beethoven's patron Prince Franz Joseph von Lobkowitz, the "Lobkowitz Quartet."

The other **Chamber Symphony, Op. 59, 1a** is based on the String Quartet No. 7 in F major, Op. 59/1. This Quartet was composed during 1806, a very productive phase for the composer, and belongs to the series of so-called Rasumovsky Quartets. The Russian diplomat Andrei Kirillovich Rasumovsky commissioned this series from Beethoven.

Sergei Prokofiev designated a cycle of twenty short piano pieces "**Visions fugitives**". They were composed between 1915 and 1917 and apparently conceived for the composer's own use as a pianist. The title "Fleeting Visions" refers to a work by the symbolist Konstantin Balmont, who wrote the following in a poem: "In each fleeting vision I glimpsed worlds, fulfilled with the interaction of the colours of the rainbow."

The **Suite in 12 Parts** from Prokofiev's ballet music to "**Romeo and Juliet**" was arranged by Rudolf Barschai not for string orchestra like the "Visions fugitives," but for large orchestra. With his famous Shostakovich adaptations, too, Barschai sometimes chose a string orchestra and then again a chamber orchestral combination. The best-known piece of the series is the **Chamber Symphony, Op. 110a** based on the String Quartet No.8, Op. 110 of Shostakovich, that the composer had dedicated to the victims of Fascism and war. The work was composed during the summer of 1960 during a stay at a health resort in Gohrisch near Dresden, which not only gave this town reason to erect a Shostakovich memorial, but also to found an annual Shostakovich Festival.

The **Chamber Symphony, Op. 118a** of Rudolf Barschai is based on Shostakovich's String Quartet No. 10, Op. 118.

For the **Chamber Symphony, Op. 73a** based on the String Quartet No. 3, Op. 73, like the **Chamber Symphony, Op. 83a** based on the String Quartet No. 4, Op. 83, Barschai chose a chamber orchestral combination. 



### Ludwig van Beethoven / Rudolf Barschai

- Chamber Symphony for Chamber Orchestra, Op. 59, 1a
- Chamber Symphony for String Orchestra, Op. 74a

### Sergei Prokofiev / Rudolf Barschai

- Visions fugitives. 15 Pieces for String Orchestra, Op. 22a
- "Romeo and Juliet:" Scenes from the Ballet for Orchestra. Suite in 12 Parts

### Dmitri Shostakovich / Rudolf Barschai

- Chamber Symphony for String Orchestra, Op. 118a based on the String Quartet No. 10, Op. 118
- Chamber Symphony for String Orchestra, Op. 110a based on the String Quartet No. 8, Op. 110
- Chamber Symphony for Chamber Orchestra, Op. 83a
- Chamber Symphony for Chamber Orchestra, Op. 73a based on the String Quartet No. 3, Op. 73
- Chamber Symphony for String Orchestra and Celesta, Op. 49a based on the String Quartet No. 1, Op. 49

### Peter Tchaikovsky / Rudolf Barschai

- Andante cantabile for String Orchestra
- Chamber Symphony for Orchestra Op. 11a

## "Beatitudes" by Alexander Knaifel in Amsterdam

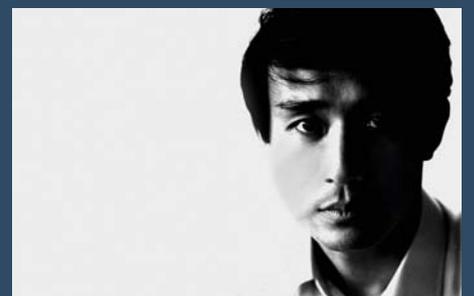
Alexander Knaifel has composed a gripping sacred vocal work - "**Beatitudes**" for soloists, choir and string orchestra. The performers at the Dutch premiere of the work on 14 May 2011 in Amsterdam will be Ilse Eerens (soprano), Henk Neven (baritone), Michael Müller (violoncello), the Cappella Amsterdam and the Radio Chamber Philharmonic under the direction of Ed Spanjaard

## Raskatov's Opera "A Dog's Heart" now also in Russia



The Maryinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg has announced the Russian premiere of Alexander Raskatov's new opera "**A Dog's Heart**" based on Bulgakov in Russian for 27 May 2011. The performance is part of the festival "White Nights" and the St. Petersburg Municipal Festival. Valery Gergiev will direct the Orchestra of the Maryinsky Theatre St. Petersburg, with direction by Simon McBurney, who has already directed the work in Amsterdam and London.

## Important Concerts in China with Music by Xiaoyong Chen



The new Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra by Xiaoyong Chen will receive its world premiere in Taipei on 21 May 2011. A few days later, on 28 May, there will be a major portrait concert for Chen in Beijing with the China National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Stockhammer. The works "**Warp**," "**Floating Colours**" and "**Colours of Dreams**" will be performed. This concert is being co-organised by the Beijing Modern Music Festival.

## *Henryk M. Gorécki Died on 12 November 2010*

The Polish composer Henryk Mikolaj Gorécki died on 12 November 2010 at the age of 76. Alongside Witold Lutoslawski, Krzysztof Meyer and Krzysztof Penderecki, Gorécki was considered one of Poland's most important contemporary composers. In the 1980s he set off a wave of enthusiasm with his 3rd Symphony, commissioned by Southwest Radio and composed in 1976, later to become one of the most widely played classic titles in the emerging cultural waves of private radio. Gorécki hailed from Czernica near Rybnik and grew up in Upper Silesia. From 1951 until 1955 he was a music teacher and later studied at the Kattowitz Music Academy. During the 1960s he was considered a pioneer of the Polish avant-garde, and his works were frequently performed at the festival "Warsaw Autumn."

After receiving Polish Composers' Guild Prize, he studied in 1961 and 1963 in Paris, where he became acquainted with Olivier Messiaen, Pierre Boulez and Karlheinz Stockhausen. In his early years, Gorécki also came to terms with serial music. Important works of Henryk Gorécki, alongside Symphonies Nos. 1 to 3, include the Toccata for two pianos, "Refrain" for orchestra, Miserere for large choir a cappella and Choros I for strings.

## *"Roller Coaster" (Miss Fortune) by Judith Weir in Bregenz*

A new opera by the British composer Judith Weir will be premiered on 21 July 2011 during the course of the Bregenz Festival. In cooperation with the co-commissioner Covent Garden London, the composer of the frequently performed opera "The Blonde Eckbert" this time chose the subject of "Roller Coaster" (Miss Fortune) for her new operatic project. Weir has turned to the Italian folktale "Sfortuna" for her inspiration and basis of "Roller Coaster." It is about a young woman whose well-to-do family suddenly becomes poor. The girl decides to earn her own living with hard work. Each time her life looks like it is going to improve, however, misfortune strikes anew. She later becomes acquainted with her own personified fate and her life indeed takes a turn for the better.

# The Grande Dame of New Music: **SOFIA GUBAIDULINA** **URNS 80**

THE COMPOSER SOFIA GUBAIDULINA, BORN IN RUSSIA AND NOW LIVING NEAR HAMBURG, WILL CELEBRATE HER 80TH BIRTHDAY ON 24 OCTOBER 2011.

She is the Grande Dame of New Music, the most important present-day Russian composer and – a deep-thinking person whose intellectual horizon does not end with music. Perhaps it is this interest in the world, in people and the spiritual element that is the secret of the direct effect her music makes. Her works "shine," are emotional, move people upon the first encounter and are, at the same time, anything but superficial. She is serious and searches for "the spiritual," but has also understood that it is occasionally a joke that leads to enlightenment - perhaps a profoundly Russian character trait. Thus her music is at times also playful, comical, grotesque, but never trendy in the sense of eye-catching self-representation. She is always concerned with "the whole," with the elementary, the power of music that changes human existence. "Religion is the most important thing of all in a person's life," Gubaidulina once said. "I think no one can be creatively active without faith - regardless of whether he/she writes poetry or music. I cannot imagine art that does not turn to heaven, to perfection, to the absolute."

At the presentation of the European Church Music Prize to Sofia Gubaidulina in Schwäbisch Gmünd, the laudator on 21 July 2009 said the following, among other things: "Strengthened by the teachings of the Russian religious philosopher Nikolai Berdyayev, banned in the Soviet Union, art became a religious creative act for Gubaidulina. She understands the word 're-ligio' in its original meaning as the creation of the connection to God. Composing itself, therefore, the creation of music itself, is a religious act for her; not every created work has to be directly intended for the glorification of God or connected with Him. For this reason, Sofia Gubaidulina has hardly ever regarded it as necessary to write church music for use in church services."

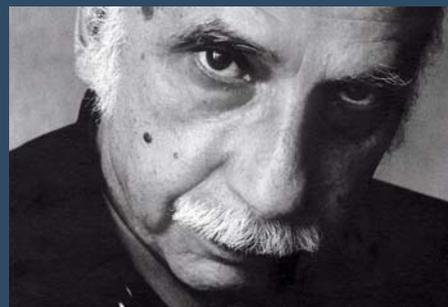
In an essay on Sofia Gubaidulina thoroughly worth reading, the German musicologist Dorothea Redepenning observed that Gubaidulina's long road as a composer, lasting over 50 years, appears very changeable on the surface. It began in the Khrushchev's Soviet Union, leading from early recognition and malevolent repression by official posts to initial international successes up to her present international reputation. Her artistic biography, on the other, the path from the first artistic self-discovery to world-class prize-winning works, has been regular and goal-orientated. "There appear to be no essential differences between the conceptual grasp and the ethos of the early cantata 'Night in Memphis,' for example, and the recently completed violin concerto 'In tempus praesens'"

Above all in her works from the Soviet period, Gubaidulina shows an extra-musical idea with musically immanent means alone, whereby the titles point out the respective ideas. Redepenning sees the following backgrounds in this: "The formal, motivic-thematic and timbral formation are executed in such a way that they can be interpreted as a symbolisation of this idea. Put in another way: the sounding work transcends the idea behind it. This hardly ever, if at all, happens via the musical re-telling of a story, musical anecdotes and the tradition of programme music, but is a process following specifically musical (rather than literary) principles of

### *Cruixent Is Writing for "Mouvement" in Saarbrücken*

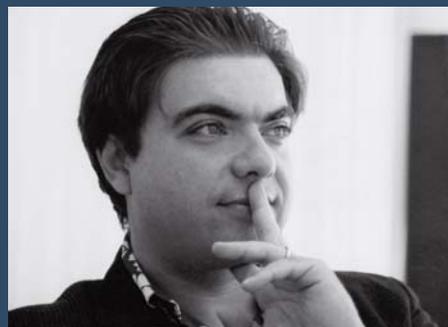
On 15 May 2011 the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie Saarbrücken conducted by Christoph Poppen will premiere the new work "Virtual" for Large Orchestra by Ferran Cruixent in Saarbrücken during the course of the new music festival "Mouvement."

### *News from Giya Kancheli*



The Georgian composer **Giya Kancheli** will be composer in residence at a newly founded festival in July 2011 in Pavia, northern Italy, also giving two master courses. One month before that, Kancheli's commissioned work for the string quartet competition Premio Paolo Borciani "Chiaroscuro" will be premiered in Reggio Emilia. The Raschèr Saxophone Quartet and the Basel Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dennis Russell Davies will give the premiere of the revised version of Giya Kancheli's "Amao omi" in an adaptation for saxophone quartet, string orchestra and piano by Nika Memanishvili on 9 November in Basel. On 12 November, the same work will be given its German premiere in Dresden by the Raschèr Saxophone Quartet, the Dresden Philharmonic and Dennis Russell Davies.

### *A New Orchestral Work by Moritz Eggert*



A new orchestral work by **Moritz Eggert** has been commissioned by the Musical Academy of the National Theatre Orchestra of Mannheim. It will receive its world premiere on 30 May 2011 under the direction of Axel Kober.



formation and that can be described analytically and theoretically. If one lists the works chronologically, it can be seen that the central levels of formation are concentrated on pitches and timbres up until about 1980. After that, the creative centre shifts to rhythms and formal proportions for which the Fibonacci series represents the first and most important reference point."

The enormous importance of Gubaidulina in international musical life can be gathered from the fact that many of her compositions have already become part of the concert repertoire all over the world. Especially with her latest compositions, one notes a remarkable frequency of performances. Thus for 2011 alone, 19 performances of her new bayan concerto "**Fachwerk**" (**Timber Framing**) are scheduled. The second violin concerto written for Anne-Sophie Mutter in 2007, "**In tempus praesens**," will also be offered 13 times round the globe this year.

The bayan player Geir Draugsvoll will be a guest performer in 2011 at numerous concert venues in Europe with "Fachwerk," including the German premiere in Potsdam on 17 September and the British premiere in London on 24 November. In addition, a CD recording will be issued with Draugsvoll as soloist and the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra on the Naxos label.

### **Important Events during the Birthday Year 2011**

From 5 until 12 February 2011, Sofia Gubaidulina will be in Lisbon at the Belém Cultural Centre on the occasion of a festival organised especially for her. Another festival dedicated to her will take place in Los Angeles from 14 until 20 May 2011. At this festival, organised by California Arts and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the American premiere of her percussion concerto "**Glorious Percussion**" will be presented by the Los Angeles Philharmonic under the direction of Gustavo Dudamel.

One month later, on 10 and 11 June 2011, Gubaidulina will be awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Chicago. After that, the composer will be composer in residence in Bastad, Sweden from 27 June until 2 July 2011 at a chamber music festival being organised there.

The central premiere events are a new **Work for the 12 Cellists** of the Berlin Philharmonic during the course of the Lucerne Festival in Lucerne on 30 August 2011 and the premiere of a Concerto for Orchestra with the Concertgebouworkest Amsterdam directed by Mariss Jansons in Amsterdam on 20/21 October. Special birthday concerts will be presented from 22 until 24 October 2011 by the Radio Filharmonisch Orkest in the Netherlands, at which the Dutch premiere of Gubaidulina's violin concerto "In tempus praesens" will be given by the Radio Filharmonisch Orkest and soloist Simonae Lamsma on 22 October. The Asko/Schönberg-Ensemble, closely associated with Gubaidulina and her music for decades, will also perform at this festival.

There will also be a Gubaidulina Festival in Hanover from 9 to 13 November 2011, organised by the NDR and the Hannover Music Academy. 



## Two New Operas: **JÖRN ARNECKE: OPERA "KRYOS"**

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC IS RENEWING ITSELF IN OPERA, THE YOUNG COMPOSER **JÖRN ARNECKE** ONCE SAID, AND IMMEDIATELY WROTE HIS SECOND ONE. **"KRYOS"** WAS COMMISSIONED BY THE BREMEN THEATRE, WITH ITS PREMIERE SCHEDULED THERE FOR 14 MAY 2011. If the title would at first lead one to think of an ancient Greek subject, in this case the story takes place in the remote future. Kryos is an island where desperate people look for refuge in the 23rd century.

A small community of people is living in eternal ice following a climatic catastrophe. They live in harmony here, having overcome both the fear of death and the competitive struggle of the old world. Instead, life on the island is marked by a sense of community and spiritual rituals until, one day, a stranger is washed ashore. He appears to have come from the past. This stranger has no memory of his former life, but hears noises that the inhabitants of Kryos cannot hear. He warns them of a catastrophe, but only a few take him seriously. Distrust arises among the people: who is this man, where does he come from and above all, what does he want?

### Excerpt from the libretto:

"At that time they said: in the 22nd century, water came from the glaciers, it melted from the icy poles of the Earth, roaring into the sea, following the streams outwards ...

Water ran into faraway lands, more and more water flowed over the riverbanks, tearing down dams, flooding the parched soil that broke apart - it was already too porous, tormented for decades by the mounting heat and the increasingly dusty air. Suffocating air! Gassy air was a noose strangling the earth, sweeping entire cities empty, driving people away who were fleeing storms, water and fire! Volcanoes erupted, the earth trembled, forests burned; there was famine, epidemics and panic! Everywhere weeds, rats, animal corpses where flowers had bloomed before. First groups fought each other, then everyone was against everyone. Where to go? And the people sweat, coughed, ran on until the water came and rose, rose, rolling closer, overwhelming them - We are the those remaining. Our elders were lucky, their ship found the outermost pole, the last mountain to prevail ... look up to the mountain: Kryos - your ice was too firm, too far from the sun to vanish. Kryos, cool oasis, earth in the shadow of the faraway mountain, remaining land when all fires burnt out and the old world sank."

Two earlier operatic works of Jörn Arnecke were composed for the Hamburg State Opera: **"Butterfly Blues"** and the fragile drama **"The Festival in the Sea"** about an HIV-infected couple, assembled of scenic fragments. Each kind of emotion - including the most desperate emotions of Ninon, ready to die and forsaking her lover due to her infection - is absorbed into a floating cloud of sound in "The Festival of the Sea." It is atmospheric music that at times persists in a paralysing calm. At the end is the festival, a premature funerary banquet or indeed a living requiem for self-sacrifice.

## **MARIUS FELIX LANGE: THE OPERA "SNOW WHITE"**

The premiere of the new opera **"Snow White"** by Marius Felix Lange is planned for 21 April 2011 at the Cologne Children's Opera. His earlier, prize-winning opera for children and adults **"The Opera Ship, or You Think It's Hot at the South Pole"** to a libretto by Elke Heidenreich thrilled young and old no less than the lovingly composed music to Karla Kuskin's classic children's book **"The Orchestra Gets Dressed"** for speaker and orchestra, the CD recording of which, with the Cologne Gürzenich Orchestra directed by Markus Stenz and the speaker Christian Brückner (issued by Random House Audio), won the special prize of the 2010 Deutscher Vorlesepreis (German Reading-Aloud Prize) .

In the opera **"Snow White,"** Lange (who wrote the libretto himself) tells the famous story with colourful and imaginative means without losing the thread of the Brothers Grimm tale. The story's well-known cast of characters has been expanded to include the sympathetic-bizarre figures of courtiers and forest dwellers. The seven dwarfs, craftsmen in the best dwarf tradition, have been given individual abilities. One of them, as in the Grimm original version, is in fact a miner; the others practice professions such as jeweller, blacksmith, glassblower, carpenter and inventor. With Lange, it is the different skills of the dwarfs that free Snow White from death.

# New with Sikorski: JOHANNES X. SCHACHTNER

WITH JOHANNES X. SCHACHTNER,  
A YOUNG, HIGHLY GIFTED  
COMPOSER IS BEING TAKEN  
UP IN OUR CATALOGUES.



**Marius Felix Lange has supplied the following comments:**

"Snow White's stepmother is beautiful, very beautiful even. The general enthusiasm for her appearance, however, has gone to the queen's head to such an extent that strong signs of a pathological beauty obsession are apparent: no one should be allowed to be more beautiful than her, cost it what it may!

The meaning of beauty is, for me, the central element of this tale. It is a very relevant question, for the importance ascribed to a standardised form of beauty and the youth inseparably bound with it, especially by today's media, often takes on absurd proportions, with traits bordering on religiosity.

The greed of the stepmother queen for beauty attracts some profiteers to the court, including a travelling salesman whose offerings include, alongside beautifying and (surgical) methods, a magic mirror. His nature, actually, is rather comfortable and opportunistic. He suffers from his fate of always having to say the truth; he is the narrator of this tale.

If beauty and admiration for her own person mean everything to the queen, Snow White wants to have nothing to do with any of that. She is beautiful from her inner nature. The mirror recognises that she is thus infinitely more beautiful than the queen and, in panic, already sees itself as a pile of broken fragments. Other characters include a simple-minded, trigger-happy hunter, bourgeois-diligent dwarfs for whom beauty can only be found in perfect craftsmanship, and Prince Adelar, a true prince charming." 

14 May 2011

BREMEN

World premiere:

Jörn Arnecke

"Kryos," opera

Bremen Theatre

21 April 2011

COLOGNE

World premiere:

Marius Felix Lange

"Snow White," opera

Cologne Opera

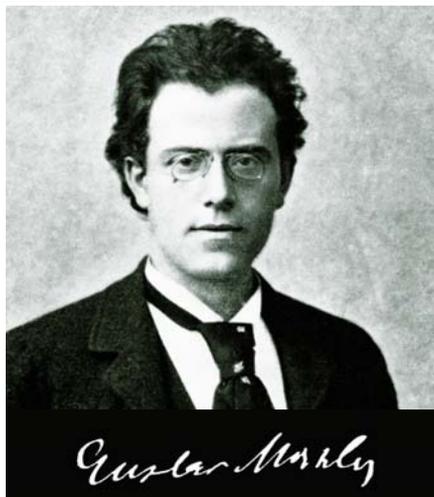
Schachtner was born on 26 June 1985 in Gräfelfing and studied conducting with Bruno Weil and composition with Hans-Jürgen von Bose, Rudi Spring and our own author Jan Müller-Wieland at the Academy of Music and Theatre in Munich. As a conductor, he has already worked with the Bad Reichenhall Philharmonic, the Taschenphilharmonie, the Georgian Chamber Orchestra in Ingolstadt and the Munich Symphony Orchestra, with whom he celebrated his debut in January 2009. In 2007 he made his debut as an opera conductor with Rossini's "Il turco in Italia" and received invitations to the A·DEvantgarde Festival in 2007 and 2009.

Schachtner's compositions have been performed by soloists such as Silke Avenhaus, Julia Fischer, Siegfried Mauser and Peter Schöne, and also by the Munich Symphony, the Bad Reichenhall Philharmonic and by the conductors Michael Sanderling and Ulrich Nicolai. He has also received commissions from the Bavarian State Opera, the Academy of Fine Arts, the Julia Fischer Festival, the provincial capital Munich, the A·DEvantgarde Festival in 2009 and 2011 and from the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra in 2011. His short opera "Hannah und Tim" to a libretto by Norbert Niemann received its premiere at the 2010 Munich Biennale. In 2009 he was given a composer's portrait at the Biennale concert "Klangspuren" (Sound Traces).

Schachtner was a prize winner at the 2nd International Composition Competition of the Düsseldorf Organ Festival and received a residence stipend to work at the international artists' house "Villa Concordia" in Bamberg for 2009/2010. In 2009 he was awarded the Günther Klinge Cultural Prize of his home community of Gauting. In 2010 he was nominated for the GEMA composers' prize. Until the summer of 2010, Johannes X. Schachtner lived in the Cité des Arts in Paris. In 2011 he will be artist in residence with the Bad Reichenhall Philharmonic. In February of this year he was a guest of the International Centre for Composers in Visby, Sweden.

Schachtner, who hails from a highly musical family and plays the trumpet, is always interested in experimentation. "I am very interested in working my way into many areas, but also in staying close to myself at the same time," he once said in conversation with Luise Botta and Lisa Hauke. "I used to play a lot of jazz and also church music. Taking my language as a starting point, I try to enter into these areas. Some pieces have a little bit to do with jazz; others have something to do with church music, for example when I'm looking for a new form of church music or a new way of dealing with spiritual subjects."

Johannes X. Schachtner's catalogue of works comprises orchestral works including the poem "Im Zimmer" (In the Room) and the Organ Concerto "Credo," as well as numerous chamber music compositions for various ensembles. These include the piano piece "Capriccio sopra il dado," the "Miniaturen nach Georg Trakl" for violin and piano, a **String Quartet** as well as "Mezz'agosto" for alto saxophone and organ, also existing in a big-band version. Particularly worthy of mention is the large number of vocal works, including the "Neue Leipziger Liederbuch" for soprano, baritone, violin and violoncello and the "Hohelied der Liebe" for soprano and organ or choir and organ or ensemble. Schachtner explains his great affinity for literature Schachtner by the fact that he receives essential inspiration from it: "When I set a poem, it is solely my own interpretation of the poem. It is a very subjective representation. (...) Then I translate it into music and also bring my own thoughts into play." Schachtner's "Episoden III" received its world premiere in Bamberg on 6 February 2011. For the A·DEvantgarde Festival in June 2011, he wrote a brief scene entitled "Versprochen, Froschkönig, versprochen" (Promised, Frog King, Promised) to a libretto by Birgit Müller-Wieland. On 30 July 2011, he will present his "Vier Betrachtungen im Zirkus" (**Four Observations in the Circus**) for the first time in a version for singer and chamber orchestra for the first time as part of his residency in Bad Reichenhall. Further chamber music premieres are scheduled for autumn of this year in Bamberg and Bad Reichenhall. A complete catalogue of the works of Johannes X. Schachtner can be requested from the publishers. 



## 100th Anniversary of the Death of **GUSTAV MAHLER**

**GUSTAV MAHLER, THE SECOND CHILD OF A FAMILY OF FOURTEEN, WAS BORN IN 1860 IN KALISCHT, BOHEMIA, NEAR THE MORAVIAN BORDER.**

The four-year-old Mahler is said to have undertaken his first attempts at composition on a child's harmonica. In September 1875 he began his studies at the Vienna Conservatory where he assimilated the given material immediately after beginning the subject. He composed the Piano Quartet in A minor during his conservatory period, a work that was to have a special significance for the Russian composer Alfred Schnittke, as well as other chamber works. He then embarked on a chapel master's career which led him from Laibach and Olmütz to Prague, Leipzig and Budapest, and then to Hamburg. Gustav Mahler was far better known as a conductor during his lifetime than as a composer. Mahler's late years as chapel master at the Vienna Court Opera, his marriage to Alma Schindler and his serious illness darkened the composer's final period. His conviction that there must be an inseparable parallelism between life and music grew ever stronger.

The writer and journalist Karl Kraus once designated Mahler's First Symphony "Sinfonia ironica," thus pinpointing the character of the work better than anyone else. Mahler did not wish to illustrate any scenes from a novel in it; for him, the genre of the symphony meant "creating a world with all available technical means." Mahler's conception of this world, however, is negative through and through. Misery is at home everywhere, he soberly states, and it puts on the strangest clothes in order to mock these poor human beings. Until today, Mahler's symphonies, which always have a confessional character, are the symbol of all that is contradictory. His thoroughly complex works reveal an astonishing variety of movement types and expressive characters. It is especially through the alternating arrangement and number of movements, their arrangement into units and the addition of vocal sections that they often differ from

the traditional norm of the symphony. One of the central events in the year 2011, the one hundredth anniversary of the composer's death, will be the world premiere of the ballet "Tenth Symphony of Gustav Mahler" by John Neumeier on 26 June 2011 at the Hamburg State Opera. The musical direction will be in the hands of Simone Young, Music Director of the Hamburg State Opera. Choosing from among four versions, Neumeier and Young selected the unfinished version by the American Deryck Cooke for this production.

The composer, conductor and music manager **Peter Ruzicka** has written a new orchestral work entitled **MAHLER I BILD** to be given its premiere by the Stuttgart State Orchestra directed by Manfred Honeck on 10 July 2011 in Stuttgart.

The NDR Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Christoph Eschenbach gave the premiere of Peter Ruzicka's **EINSCHREIBUNG**: Six Pieces for Large Orchestra on 10 February 2011 in Hamburg. This work, commissioned by the NDR on the occasion of the Mahler Year 2011, is noted for its musical references to the symphonies of Gustav Mahler.

**Daniel Nazareth** chose texts by Gustav Mahler himself which he set in his song cycle "**Mahler-Lieder**" for baritone and orchestra. These are four original texts of Mahler having to do with his wife Alma. Nazareth's music is orientated along the lines of Gustav Mahler's style and uses the same instrumentation found in the latter's "Das Lied von der Erde."

A very special project took place on 4/5 February 2011 at the Jahrhunderthalle in Frankfurt, where the pop-duo 2raumwohnung encountered the **5th Symphony** of Gustav Mahler. This "Music Discovery Project" initiated by the Hessian Broadcasting Company, was arranged by **Moritz Eggert**, who also served as musical mediator. 

### World premieres of works with references to Mahler

**10 February 2011** **Hamburg**  
World premiere: **Peter Ruzicka**  
**EINSCHREIBUNG**: Six Pieces for Large Orchestra  
NDR Symphony Orchestra  
Cond.: Christoph Eschenbach

**26 June 2011** **Hamburg**  
World premiere of the ballet  
„**Tenth Symphony** of Gustav Mahler“  
(based on Mahler/Cooke, Symphony No. 10)  
Choreographer: John Neumeier  
Cond.: Simone Young

**10 July 2011** **Stuttgart**  
World premiere: **Peter Ruzicka**  
**MAHLER I BILD** for Orchestra  
(Stuttgart State Orchestra, Manfred Honeck)

**May 2011** **San José (Costa Rica)**  
World premiere: **Daniel Nazareth**  
National Synchronicorchester Costa Rica  
Mahler-Lieder for Baritone and Orchestra

### Other works of Gustav Mahler in our catalogues:

**Gustav Mahler**:  
Piano Quartet of 1876 (edited by Peter Ruzicka)

**Symphonic Prelude** for Orchestra (edited by Albrecht Gürsching)  
Symphony No. 10  
Versions:  
a. Remo Mazetti  
b. Deryck Cooke  
c. C. Clinton Carpenter  
d. Joseph Wheeler

**Symphony No. 3**: Movements 4-6 for Piano Quartet (Vassily Lobanov)

**Symphony No. 4** for Soprano and Chamber Ensemble (Johannes Harneit: Movements 1 and 2 / Sebastian Gottschick: Movements 3 and 4)

# Music of Mourning: "ALPHABET OF DEATH"

GOLDENISHCHEV-KUTUSOV ALLOWS THE VICTIM IN HIS POEM TO BE CARRIED AWAY BY DEATH IN **MODEST MUSSORGSKY'S SONG CYCLE "SONGS AND DANCES OF DEATH" WITH THE WORDS "YOU ARE SAD, DESPERATE, HAVE NO STRENGTH. LIE DOWN, HAVE A REST, GO TO SLEEP MY DEAR! I WILL COVER YOU WITH WARMING SNOW AND LET THE FLAKES SWIRL AROUND YOU."**

The fact that the doomed person's blanket is made of ice-cold snow is a symbol of the double meaning in death's multiple form. Sometimes it appears as a redeemer, other times as the Grim Reaper who sweeps away the living from the earth in a stormy wind. Comfort and mourning, life and resignation lie close together when the subject is death. And it is hardly surprising that composers of all periods have felt motivated by the many faces of death to undertake musical confrontations, time and time again.

Modest Mussorgsky's "Songs and Dances of Death," completed in the spring of 1875 and consisting of the songs "Lullaby," "Serenade," "Trepak" and "The Commander" are just one such example. In none of these songs does Mussorgsky – unlike many other composers – allow himself any reconciliatory, let alone sentimental tones. As the musicologist Dorothea Redepenning has established, he finds "death merciless, and a swindler (**Dmitri Shostakovich** represented death in a similar fashion in his **Fourteenth Symphony**)." There are three different orchestrations of Mussorgsky's "Songs and Dances of Death" in our catalogues: by **Dmitri Shostakovich, Edison Denissov** and **Alexander Raskatov**.

**Peter Ruzicka** has turned to this subject area in his two-part song cycle "Leben und Tod" for baritone and piano based on poems of Eduard Mörike. This work received its premiere during the course of the Lieder Workshop 2009 at the festival "Kissinger Summer."

The latest contribution to the area of mourning music is also a vocal work. The composer is Alexander Raskatov, the creator of the opera "A Dog's Heart" premiered in London and newly produced in London. The new work will receive its premiere on 15 April 2011 in Amsterdam performed by Nikolai Didenko, bass, and the Hilversum Radio Chamber Philharmonic under the direction of Brad Lubman. In this work, entitled "**The Alphabet of Death**" for bass and orchestra, Raskatov sets poems of Velimir Chlebnikov. 

15.04.2011

AMSTERDAM

World premiere: **Alexander Raskatov**  
**"The Alphabet of Death"** for bass and orchestra based on poems of  
 Velimir Chlebnikov  
 (Nikolai Didenko, bass, Hilversum Radio Chamber Philharmonic, cond.  
 Brad Lubman)

*Peter Ruzicka: Oboe  
 Concerto "Aulodie" for  
 Albrecht Mayer*



**Peter Ruzicka** is currently working on his new **Oboe Concerto "Aulodie,"** which Albrecht Mayer (oboe) and the SHMF Orchestra will premiere on 5 August 2011 in Salza during the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival. "I can only say in advance," Ruzicka commented on the new work, "that it will be entirely tailor-made to the wonderful soloist Albrecht Mayer. As regards the ensemble, I am presently thinking of a string orchestra and three percussionists." After the premiere in Salza, the Oboe Concerto will also be performed on 6 August in Berlin and on 7 August in Hamburg. Peter Ruzicka's operatic project "**HÖLDERLIN – An Expedition**" is one of the subjects in a new book published by the Peter Lang Verlag, Frankfurt am Main entitled "Verdichtung, Komposition, Annäherung" (Compression, Composition, Rapprochement).

*Mieczyslaw Weinberg's  
 Opera "The Portrait" in  
 Great Britain and France*



**Mieczyslaw Weinberg's** opera "**The Portrait**", one of the performance highlights of last summer's Bregenz Festival, was given its British premiere by the Opera North Leeds in English on 2 February 2011. The director was David Pountney. The Opéra nationale de Lorraine will then present the French premiere of the opera in Russian on 8 April 2011 in Nancy.