



The MSM Mahler Project

Gabriel Levy, Conductor and Music Director

Daniel Jansen, Project Manager

Arianna Behrendt, Project Coordinator

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2025 | 7:30 PM
NEIDORFF-KARPATI HALL

This year's performance season has been inspired by a unifying theme: ***Humanity in Harmony: Rituals, Resistance, and Resilience.*** We hope during this election year, the biggest in human history with over half the world's population having the opportunity to vote in 72 countries, that this theme reflects the power of the arts to unite us even in moments of discord and differences. The collective experience of collaboration – creating together – reminds us that even in our differences we can find common ground, stand up to tyranny and oppression, and elevate our work as artists to fulfill the hope and promise of a better tomorrow.

James Gandre, President

Joyce Griggs, Executive Vice President and Provost

Faculty and Administration of the Artistic Planning Committee

The *MSM Mabler Project* would like to thank Dados Pizza for their generous contribution of catering for our rehearsals!



Manhattan School of Music's public programs are made possible in part by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.



Funded in part by a grant from the New York City Tourism Foundation.

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PROGRAM

MARCO CATELLA (BM '26) *Mourn not for Adonais*
(b. 2002)

GUSTAV MAHLER
(1860-1911)

Symphony No. 6 in A Minor, (“Tragic”)
Allegro energico, ma non troppo. Heftig, aber markig
Scherzo: Wuchtig
Andante moderato
Finale: Sostenuto—Allegro moderato—Allegro energico

THE MAHLER PROJECT ORCHESTRA

Gabriel Levy, Conductor and Music Director

VIOLIN I

Tianyou Ma*^
Concertmaster
Shenzhen, China

Valerie Choi
Vaughan, Canada

Cody Conley
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Jingyi Huang
Shanghai, China

Eojin Jung
Jinju, South Korea

Curtis Klipper
Salt Lake City, Utah

Lizzie Klipper^
Provo, Utah

Natsuko Kojima
Tokyo, Japan

Allison Lee
Seoul, South Korea

Cheng-Cian Li
Hsinchu City, Taiwan

Sonia Susi^
Saratoga Springs, New York

Koshiro Takeuchi
Setagaya, Japan

Spencer Ting
Taipei City, Taiwan

Angelina Tozlyan
Rostov-on-Don, Russia

Aubren Villasenor^
Shirley, New York

Zachary Wood^
Montclair, New Jersey

VIOLIN II

Arianna Behrendt*
Redwood City, California

Alvaro Amat
Miami, Florida

Oliver Costello
Denver, Colorado

Tomohiko Hosokawa
Tokyo, Japan

Seoyoung Jang
Jeju Island, South Korea

Ai Xuan Li
Beijing, China

Honghan Lu
Shenzhen, China

Cecilia Martin
Columbus, Ohio

Tinatin Narimanidze
Long Island, New York

Jackson Pope
Arlington, Virginia

Rohil Sabherwal^
Washington, DC

Evan Schoefer^
Mastic, New York

Eliana Valdivieso^
Bronx, New York

Adrian Walker
Salt Lake City, Utah

VIOLA

Isabella Vita Mier*
Los Angeles, California

Isadora Banyai^
San Francisco, California

Yiyun Cao
Shanghai, China

Bi-Wen Chou
Taipei, Taiwan

Katerina Grein^
Middle Island, New York

Anna Huang
Zhubei City, Taiwan

Sathvi Ramaseshan^
San Diego, California

Sage Small
Phoenix, Arizona

Noah Stevens^
Montclair, New Jersey

Ethan Tajalle^
New York, New York

CELLO

August Schwob*
Oak Park, Illinois

Emily Ai
Suzhou, China

Mi Seo Bai
Queens, New York

Nathaniel Bernecker^
West Chester, Pennsylvania

River Ferrand^
Miami, Florida

Brandon Jo
Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey

Ari Jones-Davidis[^]*New York, New York***Suubi Laurent[^]***Boston, Massachusetts***Chaehwan Lee***Seoul, South Korea***Pin-Cen Yeh***Taipei, Taiwan***Yuan Yin[^]***Beijing, China***BASS****Conor Riccomini^{*^}***West Sayville, New York***Lucas Caceras[^]***Mooresville, North Carolina***Nathaniel Grohmann[^]***San Francisco, California***Aiden Johnson***Dacula, Georgia***Jielin Lei***Xiamen, China***Amaree Sanchez***Highland, California***Antonio Suarez[^]***Yonkers, New York***FLUTE****Gammi Eom^{*}***Busan, South Korea***Hyewon Jeong***Seoul, South Korea***Lorien Britt***Fate, Texas***Hyomin Lee***Gyeonggi Province,
South Korea***Katherine Lee***Seoul, South Korea***OBOE****Elizabeth Hebert^{*^}***New York, New York***Zane Lowry***San Diego, California***Emma Braunberger[^]***New York, New York***Janice Wu***Arcadia, California***Megan Strait***Greenwood, Indiana***CLARINET****Emily Geoffroy^{*}***Portland, Oregon***I-Han Chen***Kaohsiung, Taiwan***Lourd Hadweh***Marietta, California***Yat Chun Leung***Hong Kong, Hong Kong***Liora Schlesinger[^]***New York, New York***BASSOON****Matthew So^{*}***Toronto, Canada***Emilija Irvin***Downers Grove, Illinois***Nadia Ingalls***Fredericton, Canada***Adam Underwood***Sinking Spring, Pennsylvania***Han-Yi Huang***Changhua, Taiwan***HORN****Daniel Jansen^{*}***Aspen, Colorado***Keegan McCardell***Ellicott City, Maryland***Engelberth Mejia[^]***Palm Springs, California***Vera Romero***Caracas, Venezuela***Sarah Bell***Winnipeg, Canada***Nicholas Ochoa***Brownsville, Texas***Benjamin Hommowun***Saint Charles, Illinois***Luis Montesdeoca[^]***Duran, Ecuador***Nathan Page***Marietta, Georgia***TRUMPET****Nathan McKinstry^{*}***State College, Pennsylvania***Themba Pieterse***Albany, New York***Chase Domke***Dallas, Texas***Sam Atlas***Westport, Connecticut***Benjamin Hambro***Egg Harbor Township,
New Jersey***Marcus Gonzalez***Southbridge, Massachusetts*

TROMBONE**Nate Wasihun****Lilburn, Georgia***Leor Arbel***Katy, Texas***Ryan Parichuk***Budd Lake, New Jersey***Timothy Grabow***Walnut Creek, California***TUBA****Fumiya Miyata****Osaka, Japan***PERCUSSION****Austin Cantrell****Charlotte, North Carolina***Owen Bloomfield***Clifton Grove, Australia***Josh Conklin***Basking Ridge, New Jersey***Jay Walton***East Lansing, Michigan***Glenn Choe***Cedar Park, Texas***TIMPANI****Duncan Patton*+***New York, New York***Glenn Choe***Cedar Park, Texas***HARP****Shirley Guo****Peakhurst, Australia***Zora Evangeline^***San Antonio, Texas***PIANO****Rebecca Hsiao***Parsippany, New Jersey***PRINCIPALS AND AFFILIATIONS*****MAHLER** Symphony No. 6 in A Minor (*Tragic*)**+MSM FACULTY****^GUEST PERFORMER**

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Gabriel Levy (Conductor and Music Director):

Dubbed a conductor of “poise, passion, and maturity” (MSM’s Dean of Orchestral Studies JT Kane), 21-year-old Gabriel Levy is breaking into the symphonic and opera scene. His recent appearances include serving as the music director of Verdi’s *La Traviata* at Snug Harbor Opera, of Tchaikovsky’s 5th Symphony with the Manhattan Symphony and Song Orchestra, and as assistant conductor of the Toronto Summer Music Festival Orchestra. He is a student of Edmonton Opera Music Director Simon Rivard and spent the last summer as a conducting fellow at the Pierre Monteux School and Music Festival, where he will be an Orchestra Assistant in 2025.

Gabriel is also an avid composer and improviser and has had music premiered by the 3-time Juno Award-winning Gryphon trio, as well as broadcast on National Canadian Radio. As a pianist, he regularly accompanies and coaches singers and instrumentalists. He also enjoys performing as a soloist in retirement homes across his hometown Toronto. Gabriel is currently completing his bachelor’s degree in classical percussion at the Manhattan School of Music, where he is a recipient of both the New York Philharmonic Stamas Scholarship and the Jim Petercsak Annual Scholarship. His teachers there are Christopher Lamb, She-e Wu, Duncan Patton, and Steven White.

Gabriel’s first love was rock music, and he performs regularly as lead guitarist in “The Risky Businessmen”, a band he started with his two brothers.

Daniel Jansen (Project Manager)

Daniel Jansen is a classical horn student and orchestra coordinator who lives in Manhattan as a resident of Morningside Heights. He has performed mainly in New York City since moving there in 2021 but has performed in venues across the country, including Florida’s Mahaffey Theater as well as Harris Hall, Benedict Music Tent, and Wheeler Opera House in Aspen, Colorado.

Daniel is a student of Richard Deane (NY Philharmonic) and currently attends college at the Manhattan School of Music. Here he consistently performs recitals and full orchestra concerts with the various ensembles organized by the institution. While Mahler’s Symphony No. 6 will be the centerpiece of his orchestral endeavors at MSM, he was fortunate enough to perform other large works this season including Bartok’s Concerto for Orchestra, Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 6, Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 11, and more. Daniel was ecstatic

to find his way home this past summer as a performer for the 75th summer season of Aspen Music Festival and School. He performed with 4 of the festival's orchestras, most notably the Aspen Festival Orchestra, studying repertoire by Wagner, Mahler, Sibelius, Beethoven, Bartok, and Mussorgsky, among others. After December 14, 2023, the night of the very successful project *Symphony and Song: A Queer Benefit Concert* (where the team raised \$4,000 for the Trevor Project), Daniel partnered again with Gabriel Levy and welcomed Arianna Behrendt to organize this colossal endeavor, The MSM Mahler Project. The past few months for the Mahler team have been filled with work, recruiting the 100-piece orchestra, promoting the concert, and raising excitement levels for the truly thrilling performance. He wants everyone to know he's so proud and grateful for the orchestra and those involved in navigating these uncharted waters - creating one of, if not the largest, student project in MSM's history!

Arianna Behrendt (Project Coordinator)

Born to a family of musicians, Russian-American violinist Arianna Behrendt (BM Violin Performance '25) is elated to be continuing her musical journey at the Manhattan School of Music where she studies with Professor Isaac Malkin.

Arianna made her Carnegie Hall début as a soloist with the Sunset Youth Orchestra at 10 years of age and was a first-prize winner of the Rising Stars International Competition in Riga, Latvia at the age of 12. Since then, her love for orchestral music has taken over and she has held various principal positions in orchestras such as the Golden State Youth Orchestra, World Youth Symphony Orchestra at the Interlochen Arts Camp, the Village Verein Orchestra, and the Eastern Music Festival's Young Artists Orchestra where she served as concertmaster. She was also a member of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra where she led a holiday sing-along concert alongside conductor Daniel Stewart.

Arianna's excitement and passion for orchestral music have led her to an interest in conducting and she now studies conducting with Juliano Dutra Aniceto. Her involvement in the Mahler Project is a testament to her dedication and love for community building, and she is grateful to Daniel Jansen and Gabriel Levy for supporting and allowing her to take part in the creation of this project.

Marco Catella (Composer)

Marco Catella is a 22-year-old composer from Buenos Aires, Argentina. He began studying composition and theory at 17 with Javier Velardez and, for the past two-and-a-half years, has had the privilege of studying with Dr. J. Mark Stambaugh. With his music, he seeks to evoke universal human emotions, and drama in the broadest sense, employing a style that is deeply rooted in our great musical tradition, while having a place in our contemporary world. During his time at MSM, he has composed chamber music, opera scenes, and other vocal works, including a two-act chamber opera. He has collaborated with Gabriel several times leading up to this occasion.

Morena Galán (Mezzo-Soprano)

Morena Galán is an Argentinian singer, who is currently pursuing her Master's in Classical Voice at Manhattan School of Music. She was part of the Teatro Colón and earned a Bachelor of Music from Mannes School of Music and a Classical Voice Technicature at Manuel de Falla Conservatory in Buenos Aires.

She recently won the Encouragement award at the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition; also the ESU XX Singing Competition; the American Protégé International Competition and national rounds of `Concorso Internazionale per Cantanti Lirici "Città di Alcamo."

During the summer of 2023, she was part of the Lehrer Studio at Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara. Previously, she was also part of the Savannah Voice Experience where she had the honor to work with Sherill Milnes amongst many other professionals.

Recent productions include performing the role of Evita in *Evita*, at the Woodstock Playhouse, Candita in *Manita En el Suelo* with Americas Society, Candelas in *El Amor Brujo* with Opera Hispánica and Teatro Grattacieli, La Natura in *La Calisto* with Mannes Opera, Hänsel in *Hänsel und Gretel* for Manhattan Opera Studio, as well as Der Trommler in *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* and well as Lindsey in *Godspell* at Manhattan School of Music.

Morena also sang at Carnegie Hall as a soloist in an array of opportunities. She has also sung at the Consulate General of Argentina in NY, who also selected her as the one Argentinian to sing and represent them for the Bicentennial Anniversary of Bilateral Relations between Argentina and the United States. She also recently had her Lincoln Center Debut with Manhattan Opera Studio! Morena has sung in various masterclasses including with artists such as Frederica Von Stade, Sasha Cooke, Jamie Burton, and more. She also had the honor to work with conductors Zubin Mehta, Daniela Candillari, and George Manahan as well as many others. She is involved in many genres from Opera, tango and Latin music, Musical theater, and more!

TEXT AND TRANSLATIONS:

Mourn not for Adonais

Marco Catella (BM '26)

He lives, he wakes— 'tis Death is dead, not he;
Mourn not for Adonais. Thou young Dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air,
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
O'er the abandon'd Earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair!

—*Excerpt XLI from “Adonais: An Elegy on the Death of John Keats” by Percy Shelley*

PROGRAM NOTES

Mourn not for Adonais

How does one meaningfully contribute to a program as monumental and complete as Mahler's Sixth Symphony? This was the obvious question when Gabriel asked Marco to compose a piece for this occasion. They quickly agreed that it had to be something small and with enough of a thematic connection to be able to go attacca into the Symphony. To achieve this, a song seemed most effective, and Marco eventually came to Percy Bysshe Shelley's Adonais for the appropriate text. The downfall of the hero, fate, death, and nature were all themes appropriate for the program. It is also written in reference to a dead artist. Most importantly, however, Marco found within it a single, intensely beautiful, self-contained stanza that captured a perfectly appropriate mood to maximize the impact of the opening of the Symphony.

—Marco Catella

Symphony No. 6 in A Minor

Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 6 is music of life and death, and all that comes in between. It reaches to the highest elation and to the lowest suffering. Its fabric is equal parts violent marches, sombre prayers, music of the forest, and music of love. There is a sense of torture in this music; there is also a sense of repose, of wholeness. The symphony was written during the summers of 1903 and 1904, which were in some respects the happiest years of Mahler's life. He had married his beloved Alma the year before, and their first child Maria Anna had come soon after. He was also in the centre of his time as Director of the Vienna State Opera, a position he held for ten years. Naturally, one of the great questions surrounding this symphony is 'why at such a bright time in his life did Mahler write such dark music?'

That the music's surface is dark is undeniable. It has owned the nickname "Tragic" almost since its premiere, especially through its finale which contains the famous hammer blows. They represent three blows of fate which the hero suffers, the third of which "falls him like a tree".

Mahler did however remove the final blow during rehearsal for the work's premiere, and it is since done with only two. Conductor and friend of the composer Bruno Walter even refused to perform the symphony on the basis that it is too dark, ending in "hopelessness, and the dark night of the soul".

Despite all this - or perhaps through this - there is an astounding richness of emotion to the 6th Symphony, a depth to its palette which lives below its turbulent and murky surface, and a sense of healing hiding away between the cracks.

The journey begins with a march; one of determination, rigour, and driving purpose. It leaps, it spins, it erupts, and still it barrels onward. Only the force of the symphony's 'motto' rhythm has the power to halt its advance, which it does with timpani and snare drums in full force, as well as with the 'major/minor seal' - a crushing motif across Mahler's symphonies which plays an especially important role in the 6th. Following this is a ghostly chorale accompanied by pizzicato echoes of the march, and just as it seems to lose steam, the world opens up into an overflowing love theme. Alma claimed this beautiful music was her husband's representation of her.

At the centre of this movement is one of the most striking passages in the symphony - it is as if in an instant the ground has disappeared, and the music is left floating in space. Distant cowbells are heard, which for Mahler represented the highest loneliness, "the last greeting from earth to penetrate the remote solitude of the mountain peaks". With this comes Alma's theme again, but now removed from all its former anguish. Here it is pure, it blooms, and then - as

suddenly as it arrived, the dream is lost, and the march returns with newfound vigour. Through much toil, the movement eventually heads towards a triumphant close, and having given one final cry of anguish, ends as surely as it began.

We now arrive at a central controversy in this symphony: the placement of the middle movements. Mahler originally composed it with the Scherzo followed by the Andante moderato, but prior to the premiere he reversed the order. In the 118 years since then, both ways have been performed and recorded frequently. For this performance Scherzo - Andante has been chosen.

The Scherzo begins similarly to the opening movement, but as it progresses it paints quite a different picture. Despite its wild surface, this movement is at its core a dance. It rotates between a main section which is heavy and grounded, a cute and sometimes scampering trio marked “old-fashioned”, and a codetta which anticipates the “shadow-like” direction from the scherzo of the 7th. In typical Mahler fashion this scherzo has an ever changing liquid quality to it; at every moment the music is at once a repetition and a novelty. The trios are also some of the only passages in any Mahler symphony where constantly changing time signatures is a basis.

What follows is a slow movement built from simple song-like melody. It is a prime example of what Theodor Adorno described as Mahler’s ‘variant technique’ - where in contrast to the traditional method of a fixed theme and subsequent variations, he writes many changing iterations of an abstract theme, where no true original exists. This movement is perhaps the heart of the symphony’s spiritual journey. It moves through moods of serenity, profound sorrow, and childlike delight, culminating in the great emotional catharsis of the work. Cleansed, it comes down and the stage is set for the journey’s final chapter.

The finale begins: deep, fluttering, and mysterious. Violins call out into the void, and receive an immediate, crushing answer. Timpani pound out the ‘motto’ rhythm and a major/minor seal falls; a hint of what is to come for the hero which Mahler spoke of.

This is one of the longest movements Mahler wrote, at over 800 measures of music, and binding it into a unified whole is a chorale deep within the depths of its introduction. This prayer, the likes of which had not been employed by Mahler since the second symphony, is dark but possessing of a certain strength of spirit - it somehow captures all of the music’s hope and suffering in only its sixteen bars. It is in a sense the germ from which the rest of the movement grows.

In view of the chorale as a sort of thesis statement of the finale, any sort of virtuosity in the orchestra can no longer be an integral thematic element. The two are anathema to each other, the former a pure and simple prayer, and the

latter a world of capricious acrobatics. Thus, in this movement virtuosity exists only as a response to, or a struggle against the world of the chorale. From this tension stems the finale's great marches, its sensuous and enveloping love music, and its lonely, moody music which comes in between.

These elements combine, and weave in and out of each other. One gives way suddenly to the next, and tension upon tension rises, leading to the euphoria of the first hammer blow, which inevitably falls. There is then an instant of frozen shock, before the music erupts, seemingly propelled away by the hammer's force. A myriad of fantastical scenes are passed through, before the music gathers strength and builds once more towards the inescapable: the hammer falls a second time. Again the music erupts, now spinning out and running headlong back into the introduction, as if into a wall.

Time seems to come to a halt, but alas only briefly. The hero climbs rapturously back to the final march and beyond, eventually seeing a point where salvation is within reach, and as the ultimate prayer is uttered, fate, in all its cold cruelty strikes one last time. What follows is hollowness. All life is gone from the hero. The trombones chant an elegy, and with a final gasp the work comes to a close. Only dust remains.

-Gabriel Levy, 2025

ABOUT MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Founded as a community music school by Janet Daniels Schenck in 1918, today MSM is recognized for its 1,025 superbly talented undergraduate and graduate students who come from 54 countries and nearly all 50 states; its innovative curricula and world-renowned artist-teacher faculty that includes musicians from the New York Philharmonic, the Met Orchestra, and the top ranks of the jazz and Broadway communities; and a distinguished community of accomplished, award-winning alumni working at the highest levels of the musical, educational, cultural, and professional worlds.

The School is dedicated to the personal, artistic, and intellectual development of aspiring musicians, from its Precollege students through those pursuing doctoral studies. Offering classical, jazz, and musical theatre training, MSM grants a range of undergraduate and graduate degrees. True to MSM's origins as a music school for children, the Precollege Division is a professionally oriented Saturday music program dedicated to the musical and personal growth of talented young musicians ages 5 to 18. The School also serves some 2,000 New York City schoolchildren through its Arts-in-Education Program, and another 2,000 students through its critically acclaimed Distance Learning Program.

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Land Acknowledgment

We want to acknowledge that we gather as Manhattan School of Music on the traditional land of the Lenape and Wappinger past and present, and honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations. This calls us to commit to continuing to learn how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit as well.



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