

The 151st Tokyo Opera City Subscription Concert
Thu. Jan. 26, 2023, 19:00 at Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall

The 978th Suntory Subscription Concert
Fri. Jan. 27, 2023, 19:00 at Suntory Hall

The 979th Orchard Hall Subscription Concert
Sun. Jan. 29, 2023, 15:00 at Bunkamura Orchard Hall

Myung-Whun Chung, conductor

Akihiro Miura, concertmaster

Franz Schubert:
 Symphony No. 7 in B minor, D 759 "Unfinished" (ca. 28 min)

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Andante con moto

— intermission (ca. 15 min) —

Anton Bruckner:
 Symphony No. 7 in E major (Nowak edition) (ca. 65 min)

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Adagio: Sehr feierlich und sehr langsam
- III. Scherzo: Sehr schnell
- IV. Finale: Bewegt, doch nicht schnell

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Presented by Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra
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 Japan Arts Council
 In Association with **Bunkamura** (Jan. 29)



- Exiting during the performance will be tolerated. If you do not feel well, please exit or enter as you need. However, please mind the other listeners so that they will be minimally disturbed.
- If you enter just before the concert, we may escort you to a seat different from the one to which you were originally assigned.
- Please refrain from using your cellphone or other electronic devices during performance.
- Late admittance will be refused during the live performance.

Artist Profile



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Myung-Whun Chung, conductor

Honorary Music Director of
the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra

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Born in Seoul, Myung-Whun Chung won the silver medal at the Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition in 1974. After completing conducting studies at the Juilliard School, he served as assistant and subsequently associate conductor to Carlo Maria Giulini at the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Since his appointment as Music Director of the Paris Opera (L'Opéra Bastille) in 1989, Maestro Chung has conducted many prominent orchestras, including the Vienna Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic, and la Filarmonica della Scala. He served as the Music Director of l'Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France (2000- 2015), the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra (2006-2015) and the Asia Philharmonic Orchestra, which he founded in 1997. Since 2012, he has been Principal Guest Conductor of the Staatskapelle Dresden.

For the TPO, Maestro Chung was Special Artistic Advisor (2001- 2010), its Honorary Conductor Laureate (2010-2016). Starting September 2016, he was appointed as Honorary Music Director. He is active in education for the younger generations and in promotion of peace especially in Asia through a variety of musical activities and serving as UNICEF Ambassador.

Program Notes

Text by Robert Markow

Franz Schubert: Symphony No. 7 in B minor, D 759 "Unfinished"

Despite much scholarly research, we still do not know for certain why Schubert's B-minor Symphony lies unfinished. Numerous stories and theories, many of them romantically-tinged, have been advanced to explain the mystery: that Schubert lost interest, that he forgot about it, that he saw no possibility of performance, that the remaining movements were lost, that the symphony is complete in its two-movement format, and so on. Evidence strongly suggests that Schubert deliberately, though reluctantly, abandoned the project when he realized that he could not write a third and fourth movement on the same exalted level as the first two. Supporting evidence includes the fact that there exists a large number of other unfinished works from the same period of Schubert's life (many of them in minor keys), and that all Schubert's preceding symphonies, as well as the *Great C-Major* that followed, are in four movements. Furthermore, we now know that an almost complete, notably inferior Scherzo for the B-Minor Symphony was sketched out for piano, with nine bars orchestrated. Schubert realized that he was charting a new course at this point in his creative life, and that this new symphony would have to take into account what Beethoven had done in symphonic thought. Uncertain of how to proceed, he abandoned the symphony, unfortunately forever.

Schubert worked on the B-minor Symphony in the fall of 1822, then put it aside to devote his attention to the *Wanderer Fantasy*. When the Styrian Music Society of Graz conferred on him an honorary diploma (a rare public recognition of Schubert's achievements in his lifetime) in April of 1823, Schubert offered the incomplete symphony to the Society as a token of gratitude. In all likelihood he still intended to complete the symphony, but wanted the Society to have a new work of substantial proportions, even if still incomplete. The Symphony then passed into private hands

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and did not resurface until 1860, 32 years after the composer's death. Five more years passed before the symphony received its first performance on December 17, 1865, which Johann Herbeck conducted in the large Redoubtensaal of Vienna's Hofburg.

By this time Schubert was widely revered in Vienna, so it comes as no surprise that the symphony was an immediate hit. Reviewing the first performance, the eminent critic Eduard Hanslick evoked the emotion in the air with these words: "When after the few introductory measures, clarinet and oboe in unison began their gentle *cantilena* above the calm murmur of the violins, every child recognized the composer, and a muffled 'Schubert' was whispered in the auditorium. He had hardly entered, but it seemed that one recognized him by his step, by his way of opening the door. And when, after this nostalgic *cantilena* in the minor, there followed the contrasting G-major theme of the cellos, every heart rejoiced, as if after a long separation, the composer himself were among us in person."

Melancholy, yearning and sadness seem to pervade the music, relieved by periodic episodes of gorgeous melody. The symphony opens in dark mystery with a theme in the low strings. Softly murmuring violins continue, the line decorated by oboe and clarinet. Cellos sing – and that is the only word for it – the lilting, waltz-like second subject. These ideas are later developed and build to a powerful climax. The second movement opens with a theme of angelic sweetness, followed by a plaintive, slowly rising theme in the clarinet. Twice this material builds to stormy emotional heights. The movement closes in a haze of seraphic serenity.

FRANZ PETER SCHUBERT: Born in Vienna, January 31, 1797; died in Vienna, November 19, 1828

Work composed: 1822 **World premiere:** December 17, 1865 in Vienna

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, strings

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Anton Bruckner: Symphony No. 7 in E major (Nowak edition)

Anton Bruckner had long been accepted as a pedagogue and organist, but neither the public nor the critics had much use for his music, which consisted mostly of lengthy symphonies. All this changed with the Seventh Symphony, officially premiered by Arthur Nikisch and the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra on December 30, 1884 when its composer was sixty. (There had been unofficial premiere the year before in Vienna.) This became the symphony, above all others, that finally led to Bruckner's acceptance, both in Vienna where he lived from his forty-fourth year onward, and throughout the entire western world. It was the first to be recorded (back in the 1920s) and it has remained, along with the Fourth, the most popular of Bruckner's eleven symphonies.

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The noble, lofty quality of Bruckner's music stands in eloquent testimony to his profound religious faith. Images of vast spaces within towering cathedrals inevitably come to mind. A special breadth and grandeur infuse his music; time takes on new dimensions and meaning.

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And so it is with the Seventh. It begins, as do many of Bruckner's symphonies, "out of nothingness." A broad, sweeping theme, the longest Bruckner ever wrote, slowly unfolds against a background of shimmering violins. The second subject, announced by the oboe and clarinet, is also lyrical, but moves stepwise rather than in large intervals. A third subject, rather more a bouncy rhythmic figure than a theme, is first heard quietly in the unison strings. Bruckner then proceeds to develop his themes with inversions, modulations and fragmentations, exchanging and combining elements amongst various instrumental groups as in a cosmic mosaic. A grandiose fanfare of the opening theme concludes the movement.

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The deep, solemn sound that strikes the ear in the opening bars of the *Adagio* movement seldom fails to astonish. The unique sonority is produced by a quartet of Wagner tubas (plus the standard contrabass tuba) being used for the first time in any symphony, and quite possibly for the

first time since Wagner himself had introduced them in his *Ring* cycle, completed in the early 1870s. The first subject contains three separate elements that will become material for further development. The spell of solemnity and meditative dignity cast by the opening material eventually opens out onto a radiant new vista with one of Bruckner's most sweetly lyrical and soaring themes in the violins. Bruckner then proceeds to structure his movement on that of the *Adagio* of Beethoven's Ninth, alternating the two large blocks of thematic material in a ABABA pattern.

The use of the Wagner tubas is tangible evidence of Bruckner's reverence for the Master of Bayreuth. After learning of Wagner's death in 1883, Bruckner extended the *Adagio* movement to feature the Wagner tubas in a solemn elegy "in memory of the immortal and dearly beloved Master." Following the coda's outpouring of grief, the movement ends in a spirit of consolation. After Bruckner's death in 1896, this movement was played at memorial services for its own composer.

The Scherzo is based on an incessant rhythmic figure over which the trumpet proclaims the principal theme, with the octave leap and dotted rhythm somewhat reminiscent of the Scherzo in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. The central Trio section is relaxed and genial. Bruckner uses a key that he has all but completely avoided thus far, F major, resulting in the feeling of another fresh start. The English critic Neville Cardus describes it as "a nostalgic memory of little Styrian villages, cozy low-raftered interiors and check table-cloths at noon, birdcalls and hazy distances."

The Finale begins with an energetic theme related to the opening of the first movement. This and further themes are put through various modulations and contrapuntal developments, and the huge symphonic edifice ends majestically with the broad theme that opened the work more than an hour before.

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ANTON BRUCKNER: Born in Ansfelden, Austria, September 4, 1824; died in Vienna, October 11, 1896

Work composed: 1881-83 **World premiere:** December 30, 1884 at the Opernhaus Leipzig by the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchesra conducted by Arthur Nikisch

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, 4 Wagner tubas, tuba, timpani, percussion (triangle, cymbals), strings

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Formerly a horn player in the Montreal Symphony, **Robert Markow** now writes program notes for orchestras as well as for numerous other musical organizations in North America and Asia. He taught at Montreal's McGill University for many years, has led music tours to several countries, and writes for numerous leading classical music journals.