

Notes on the Program

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Symphony No. 5 in B-flat major, D.485

Der Hirt auf dem Felsen (The Shepherd on the Rock), D.965

Franz Schubert

There exist a small handful of symphonies that achieve perfection of balance and expression without coming across as major statements in any way. This select company must include Franz Schubert's sunny **Symphony No. 5**, an exquisite achievement that delights at every turn yet seems comfortable within its unostentatious limits, a work that the distinguished musical commentator Donald Francis Tovey described as "a pearl of great price."

Schubert was 19 years old when he produced this pearl, and Vienna's heady musical world was in no way his oyster. In fact, it could not yet be said that music was his profession, strictly speaking, since he unhappily endured his working hours as an assistant teacher in his father's school. But he had already composed a good deal of music, including several splendid songs and four symphonies, and he was on a roll, producing new compositions hand over fist. Nearly all these pieces exhibited an intimate personality; although he would surely have welcomed more public exposure, he was producing music essentially for private consumption.

Many of his pieces were unveiled in at-home musicales. These had begun, in about 1814, as Sunday afternoon family string-quartet sessions in which the composer's older brothers (Ferdinand and Ignaz) played violins, he played viola, and his father (Franz Theodor) took the cello part. Friends started sitting in on the sessions, and by the autumn of 1815 the group had progressed from a mostly amateur assemblage to include a

IN SHORT

Born: January 31, 1797, in Liechtenthal, then a suburb of Vienna, Austria

Died: November 19, 1828, in Vienna

Works composed and premiered:

Symphony No. 5 composed September to October 3, 1816, in Vienna; premiered autumn of 1816, at the Vienna home of Otto Hatwig, who conducted; the first public performance took place on October 17, 1841, at Vienna's Theater in der Josefstadt, with Michael Leitermayer conducting. *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* composed October 1828, as a song for voice, obbligato clarinet, and piano; premiered in March 1830, in Riga, by the soprano Anna Milder-Hauptmann, pianist and clarinetist unknown; arranged by Carl Reinecke (1824–1910), probably in 1887, for soprano, obbligato clarinet, and orchestra; arrangement premiered on October 6, 1887, in Leipzig, with Reinecke conducting the Gewandhaus Orchestra, soprano Emilie Herzog, and the orchestra's principal clarinetist, Traugott Gentzsch.

New York Philharmonic premieres and

most recent performances: Symphony No. 5 premiered January 3, 1927, with Fritz Busch conducting the New York Symphony (which would merge with the New York Philharmonic in 1928); most recently performed March 25, 2006, Lorin Maazel, conductor. These performances mark the Philharmonic premiere of *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*.

Estimated durations: Symphony No. 5, ca. 30 minutes; *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*, ca. 12 minutes

number of professional players. Its more or less dependable membership had swelled to include seven first violins, six second violins, three violas, three cellos, and two double basses, plus whatever wind instruments could be brought in, and as the group expanded it moved from the Schuberts' living room to larger venues. The ensemble stayed together for about three years, eventually performing for themselves and a small audience at the home of the concertmaster, Otto Hatwig, a Bohemian-born violinist in the Burg Theatre orchestra and a composer of modest talent.

Schubert's Symphony No. 5 is scored for a very small orchestra, a fact that is generally explained away by noting the forces available in this genial ensemble. But Schubert's first four symphonies were also written for these players, and all of them use a richer orchestration. In the Fifth, Schubert limits himself to a single flute (harking back to his First Symphony, and to most of Haydn's and Mozart's), and he dispenses entirely with clarinets, trumpets, and timpani (which were standard orchestral in-

struments by 1816). Schubert seems to be going out of his way to "think small" in this last stand of Viennese Classicism. In certain aspects, this hardly seems a piece that would be written in 1816. It is as if Schubert, in his first five symphonies, were simply picking up where Mozart had left off a quarter of a century earlier, and not grappling with the huge advances that Beethoven had effected in the meantime. One might profitably compare Schubert's Fifth to Beethoven's Eighth, which had been composed mostly in 1812 and premiered in 1814 (that is, two years before Schubert's symphony). Both present a Classical mien, but where Schubert's Fifth wears Classical forms like a comfortable suit, Beethoven's Eighth is busting out all over. In fact, Mozart was the young Schubert's musical idol; only later did he embrace Beethoven's music with as ardent a passion.

Mozart's Symphony No. 40 in G minor may have inspired Schubert here. The second theme in the first movement of Schubert's symphony sports a melody, harmony,

Out of the Shadows

Following its run-through in 1816 at Otto Hatwig's home, Schubert's **Fifth Symphony** went unheard for many years. Schubert started to arrange it for piano duet, but he stopped part way through the first movement. The first public performance was posthumous, given at Vienna's Theater in der Josefstadt on October 17, 1841, with Michael Leitermayer conducting, but even then it remained in the shadows.



Sir George Grove [of *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* fame] said that he traveled to Vienna in 1867 "to obtain some of the great orchestral works of Franz Schubert, which I had reason to believe were lying neglected, or at least unperformed, there." He then arranged for the British premiere of Schubert's Fifth Symphony at the Crystal Palace in London on February 1, 1873. By that time the work had already been issued (in about 1870) in a piano-four-hand version prepared by Hugo Ulrich for the Leipzig publishing firm of C.F. Peters, and in 1885 the orchestral score finally appeared as part of the project to publish all of Schubert's music.

Schubert, in a watercolor by Wilhelm August Rieder, 1825

and bass line very like the corresponding passage in Mozart's. Schubert's second movement recalls late Mozart in its harmonic exploration. Tovey compares that second movement's theme to that of the rondo from Mozart's F-major Violin Sonata (K.377), although the Schubert biographer Brian Newbould calls this "perhaps the sort of theme Haydn might have composed if he had still been alive and writing symphonies." And Schubert's third movement, too, has a similar spirit to the minuet-and-trio in Mozart's symphony — not quite ill-humored, but blustery and no-nonsense.

Of the more than 600 *Lieder* (art songs) penned by Schubert, ***Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* (*The Shepherd on the Rock*)** was the last. In fact, it was the very last piece Schubert completed in any genre. He wrote it expressly

for soprano Anna Milder-Hauptmann, who had created the title role of Beethoven's *Leonore* (in 1805) and its successor version, *Fidelio* (in 1814). Schubert was smitten with her voice and she with his music. Although she was one of the most internationally acclaimed musicians to champion Schubert's *Lieder* during his lifetime, they never met in person, a fact they bemoaned in their correspondence. She repeatedly asked him to write a Goethe setting for her to introduce, but instead she got *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*, the text of which Schubert cobbled together from two disparate poems, "Der Berghirt" and "Liebesgedanken" by Wilhelm Müller (the poet of his song cycles *Die schöne Müllerin* and *Winterreise*), with a middle section ("In tiefem Gram") often attributed to Helmina von Chézy (for whose play *Rosamunde* Schubert had composed incidental music), but also thought to have been

Views and Reviews

The critic Bernhard Vogel filed this report from Leipzig about the premiere performance of Reinecke's orchestral arrangement of Schubert's ***Der Hirt auf dem Felsen***. It was printed in the *Neue Zeitung für Musik* on October 12, 1887:

Instead of the traditional opera aria, she [soprano Emilie Herzog] selected a lesser known *Lied* by Franz Schubert: "Der Hirt auf dem Fels" [sic]. This song was greeted with even greater joy since the accompaniment was arranged by Carl Reinecke. The orchestration may be described as masterfully successful and appropriate; it enhances the *Lied*'s effectiveness and provides a greatly appreciated addition as well as a pleasant enrichment to the concert repertoire. The closing section, "Der Frühling will kommen," is filled with the same fire and lively radiance inherent in many of Weber's vocal and instrumental rondos. The obligato clarinet, which Herr Gentsch played with confident brilliance and the most careful shading, is very appropriate for the composition and bestows a color which is completely suited to the *Lied*'s pastoral imagery.

From top: Schubert wrote *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* for soprano Anna Milder-Hauptmann; Emilie Herzog premiered the Reinecke orchestration



taken from the poem “Nachtlicher Schall” by Karl August Varnhagen von Ense (1785–1858). The lyrics are an anthem to Romantic sensibilities, evoking such central concerns as singing in nature, the vastness of the picturesque landscape (replete with towering rock, distant vale, and echoing chasm), lovers desolate in their separation, and images of forest, night, springtime, and wandering.

If one had to suggest two orchestral instruments that were most in tune with the sound-world that colored the Germanic Romantic movement, they would doubtless be the French horn and the clarinet, both of which include in their arsenal a potential for moodiness and melancholy. As it happens, Schubert wrote precisely two *Lieder* that employ an obbligato instrument. One uses the horn, the other calls for the clarinet. Both date from 1828. Schubert wrote *Auf dem Strom* (with horn) for a concert that March marking the first anniversary of Beethoven’s death, and he followed up with “Der Hirt auf dem Felsen” a month before his own.

Milder-Hauptmann did not receive this song until September 1829 (almost a year after the composer died), when Schubert’s brother Ferdinand copied it out and had it delivered by the composer’s good friend Johann Michael Vogl, an acclaimed baritone who had sung Don Pizarro to her Leonore in the 1814 *Fidelio*. She offered the song’s premiere a year and a half later, in Riga, and also is known to have programmed it in Berlin in December 1830, by which time the piece had appeared in print thanks to the publisher Tobias Haslinger.

Songs with full orchestral accompaniment flourished in the later 19th century — think of Mahler’s contributions, for example — but already in Schubert’s lifetime a few composers were creating symphonic arrangements of

songs originally written for voice and piano. Most of these early arrangers are little known today, but by the 1860s famous names like Berlioz, Liszt, and Brahms were adding to the repertoire. Carl Reinecke, who created this orchestration of *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* in 1887 (probably) and published it the following year, was immensely respected in 19th-century musical circles. He was a pupil of Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Liszt; gave piano lessons to Liszt’s daughter; served as music director of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra from 1860 to 1895; and was long associated with the Leipzig Conservatory, where he was appointed professor in 1860 and was elevated to director in 1897. His pupils there included composers Edvard Grieg, Johan Svendsen, and Arthur Sullivan, as well as figures who would become famous conductors, like Karl Muck and Felix Weingartner.

The Reinecke piece listeners are most likely to encounter today is his *Undine* Sonata, a valued addition to the flute-and-piano repertoire, but his output was generous, including three symphonies, eight concertos (four for piano, and one each for cello, violin, harp, and flute), and a great deal of admirable chamber music. He also penned cadenzas for numerous concertos by Mozart and Beethoven and made arrangements and piano reductions of many works by other composers — including Schubert’s *Unfinished* Symphony, which Reinecke set for piano two-hands and piano four-hands in 1867, two years after the symphony’s posthumous premiere.

Instrumentation: Symphony No. 5 calls for flute, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, and strings. *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* employs two flutes, two oboes, clarinet (in the orchestra), two bassoons, four horns, and strings, in addition to the soprano and clarinet soloists.

Text and Translation

Schubert's *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* ("The Shepherd on the Rock"), D.965

*Wenn auf dem höchsten Fels ich ste',
In's tiefe Thal hernieder seh',
Und singe.*

When on the highest rock I stand,
I look deep down into the valley,
And sing.

*Fern aus dem tiefen dunkeln Thal
Schwingt sich empor der Widerhall
Der Klüfte.*

Far from the deep, dark valley
Echoes rush upward and back to me from
The chasm.

*Je weiter meine Stimme dringt,
Je heller sie mir widerklingt
Von unten.*

The farther my voice resounds,
So much brighter it echoes back to me
From below.

*Mein Liebchen wohnt so weit von mir,
Drum seh'n' ich mich so heiss nach ihr
Hinüber.*

My sweetheart lives so far from me,
I passionately long to be with her
Over there.

*In tiefem Gram verzehr' ich mich!
Mir ist die Freude hin,
Auf Erden mir die Hoffnung wich,
Ich hier so einsam bin.*

I am consumed in misery!
Joy is far from me,
On Earth I've lost all hope,
I am so lonely here.

*So seh'nend klang im
Wald das Lied,
So seh'nend klang es durch die Nacht,
Die Herzen es zum Himmel zieht
Mit wunderbarer Macht.*

So longingly did the song sound through
the forest,
So longingly it sounded through the night,
The heart is pulled to Heaven
With miraculous strength.

*Der Frühling will kommen,
Der Frühling, meine Freud',
Nun mach' ich mich fertig
Zum Wandern bereit.*

The Springtime will come,
The Springtime, my joy,
Now must I make ready
To wander forth.