NORTHSTAR
RECORDING
by BERT VAN DER WOLF
FRANZ SCHUBERT
Symphony No. 9 D. 944
The Complete Symphonies Vol. 3
Residentie Orkest The Hague
Jan Willem de Vriend conductor
SUPER AUDIO CD

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FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

Symphony No. 9 D. 944 'The Great'

[1]	Andante – Allegro, ma non troppo – Più moto	**14:54**
[2]	Andante con moto	**13:05**
[3]	Scherzo. Allegro vivace – Trio	**14:00**
[4]	Finale. Allegro vivace	**15:08**

Total time 57:10

Franz Schubert
Symphony No. 9 D. 944 'The Great'

For about 150 years it was believed that Schubert composed his Ninth Symphony in 1828, not long before his death, but musical scholarship being a continuous process, this theory was later disproved. It was discovered late in the 20th century that in fact he composed most of this work three years earlier and revised it in 1826 and 1827. Following a period of poor health, 1825 was a better year for Schubert, while his finances were also improved. The music which he composed that year included three piano sonatas, D 840, D 845 and D 850 in C major, A minor and D major respectively, and about thirty songs including the famous Ave Maria. Early in 1825 he moved into a comfortable apartment in Vienna, where he lived alone for only the second time in his life.

Schubert never heard a single performance of many of his works, including this great symphony. When it was rehearsed in 1827 at the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna, the string-players complained that passages in which a rhythmic figure is obsessively repeated, especially in the finale, were unplayable. This was long before the term "repetitive strain injury" came into circulation. Schumann, a fervent admirer of Schubert's music, visited Vienna in 1838, where he made an exciting discovery. He called on Schubert's older brother Ferdinand, who showed him many manuscripts including that of the Ninth Symphony. The following year Mendelssohn conducted a performance of the symphony – in a cut version - in Leipzig. When Mendelssohn subsequently rehearsed the symphony for performance in London (1844), the string-players again ridiculed the rhythmic repetition in the finale, and the work was temporarily withdrawn.

In May 1824 Schubert attended the first performance of *Beethoven's Ninth Symphony*. Beethoven revolutionised symphonic form, expanding its expressive range enormously, his Ninth Symphony in particular being conceived on a much grander scale than any previous symphony. Schubert was just one of many composers influenced by Beethoven's achievements. The older composer's Seventh Symphony in particular is pervaded to an unusual extent by rhythmic insistence, a feature which is unmistakable in Schubert's Ninth Symphony, as little rhythmic figures are repeated hundreds of times consecutively in the quick movements.

The opening *Andante* radically departs from the traditional type of symphonic introduction of that time. Its length and spaciousness are very unusual, while Schubert also gives a new kind of importance to the opening theme by recalling it at the majestic final climax of the following *Allegro* section. This innovation creates an entirely new structural balance within the movement as a whole. Eventually, a thrilling crescendo leads straight into the *Allegro ma non troppo*. Its first theme, in dotted rhythm, is initially scored for the striking combination of strings, trumpets and timpani. After a long paragraph based on this energetic theme and its continuation, the oboes and bassoons introduce

the more relaxed second subject in E minor. In a subsequent digression the trombones softly intone phrases derived from a three-note ascending motif in the introduction. The concise development section begins by moving abruptly from G major to A flat major, before Schubert skilfully combines all his thematic material in various ways. At the climax the phrase from the introduction is played by the trombones *fortissimo*. With a brilliant, surprising masterstroke Schubert begins the recapitulation quietly – similarly the coda, marked *Più moto*, which culminates in a magnificent *fortissimo* recall of the symphony's opening theme on woodwind and horns.

A steady march-like rhythm begins the second movement, while the melodic line in the cellos and basses subtly anticipates the long oboe theme. Beginning in A minor, this melody finally turns to A major, exemplifying a poetic Schubertian fingerprint – the expressive juxtaposition of major and minor. The following vehement *fortissimo* introduces the contrasting element in a lyrical/aggressive duality which constantly recurs throughout the movement. A modulation to F major leads to a serene, hymn-like melody on the second violins, before the oboe melody returns, prepared by a magical passage in which the horns intone a succession of bell-like notes. As Schumann remarked, this passage "seems to have come from another sphere." This kind of episode typifies Schubert's tendency to juxtapose an almost dream-like, idealised beauty with a more earthy, or even painful, reality. The shattering, intensely dramatic climax of this movement is followed by an unnerving silence, before the cellos tenderly play poignant phrases derived from the original oboe melody. In preparation for the final return of this melody the tolling bell notes are

played by the trombones, instruments which Schubert treats with boldness or – more remarkably – with poetic sensitivity, throughout the work.

The vigorous and expansive scherzo is permeated by a recurring rhythmic unit of six quavers to the bar. Derived from the very first bar, this figure subsequently takes on a buoyant, dance-like character when it is treated imitatively in the strings. The waltz-like second subject epitomises Schubert's peerless lyrical invention. Donald Tovey described the broad, unhurried Trio section in A major as "a huge single melody . . . one of the greatest and most exhilarating in the world".

In its superhuman power the finale represents an extraordinary apotheosis. The tremendous leaping energy of the opening theme is immediately arresting, but it is the triplet figure from bar 2 and the four repeated notes which begin the second subject which ultimately prove to be most fruitful. The motif of four repeated minims, initially gentle and lyrical, is subsequently transformed into terrifying hammer-blows. These two elements – the triplet figure and the repeated minims - become the most pervasive features of this finale in its inexorable progress towards one of the most thrilling conclusions in the symphonic repertoire. The great German conductor Felix Weingartner surely expressed a universally shared experience when he described a feeling of intoxication akin to flying while performing this astonishing finale.

Many scholars have suggested the various ways in which Schubert was influenced by Beethoven, but the most extraordinary aspect of Schubert's mature music is its complete individuality. The compositional techniques, the handling of

tonality and structure, and the orchestral sound of these two contemporaries have very little in common. To gain a clearer perspective on the limited extent of Beethoven's influence upon Schubert, one has only to consider Brahms in comparison. Brahms's reverence of Beethoven is obvious in many of his works, sometimes even betraying a surprising degree of dependency. In Schubert's mature compositions generally any evidence of influences, such as Beethoven's, is negligible. His own profound originality is all the more striking for its emergence at a time when Beethoven's impact on the development of the symphony was so revolutionary and far-reaching.

Philip Borg-Wheeler

Jan Willem de Vriend, formerly principal conductor of the Residentie Orkest The Hague (from 2015 to 2019), is now principal guest conductor of the Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona i Nacional de Catalunya, Orchestre National de Lille and Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra. He is also Artist in Residence at the Stavanger Symphony Orchestra and makes regular guest appearances with ensembles such as the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, Konzerthausorchester Berlin, Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra, Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra and Rotterdam Philharmonic.

De Vriend first established an international reputation as artistic director of the Combattimento Consort Amsterdam, which he established in 1982 and led from the violin until 2015. Specialising in music of the 17th and 18th century, and applying historically informed practice on modern instruments, the consort gave new life to many rarely heard works and Gramophone magazine praised its players as "accomplished... with technical finesse and a lively feeling for characterisation". Its collaborative spirit lives on in de Vriend's approach as he explores and energises the symphonic repertoire, in particular the music of Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms and Johann Strauss.

From 2006 to 2018, he was chief conductor of the Netherlands Symphony Orchestra (Het Orkest van het Oosten), based in the city of Enschede. Early in his tenure he made a major impact with Mahler's Symphony No. 1 in the 1893 Hamburg version, subsequently recorded for Challenge Classics. *Gramophone magazine* wrote: "Don't miss this one... The music-making is winningly fresh and vigorous". De Vriend and the orchestra went on to record a substantial Beethoven catalogue for Challenge Classics, embracing the complete symphonies and concertos (with Hannes Minnaar and Liza Ferschtman among the soloists). Classic FM praised the interpretation of Symphony No. 7 for "a bounding flair that does real justice to the composer's capacity for joy". Further landmarks in the Challenge Classics catalogue are the complete Mendelssohn symphonies, again with the Netherlands Symphony Orchestra, and the complete symphonies of Schubert, recorded with the Residentie Orkest, also De Vriend's orchestra for a Decca recording of Mendelssohn's complete works for piano and orchestra. The Konzerthausorchester Berlin was the choice for a Berlin Classics album of Schumann's complete works for piano and orchestra.

From 2008 to 2015 Jan Willem de Vriend was principal guest conductor of the Brabant Orchestra (now the South Netherlands Philharmonic) and he has made guest appearances with, among others, the Belgian National Orchestra, SWR Symphony Orchestra Stuttgart, Royal Flanders Philharmonic Orchestra, Luxembourg Philharmonic Orchestra, Wiener Kammerorchester and Hong Kong Philharmonic. His future plans include engagements with the Rotterdam Philharmonic, MDR Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra and NDR Radiophilharmonie.

In the field of opera, in both Europe and the USA, de Vriend and Combattimento Consort Amsterdam gave performances, of works by Monteverdi, Haydn, Handel, Telemann, and J.S. Bach (the 'Hunting' and

'Coffee' cantatas at the Leipzig Bach Festival), all in stagings by the director Eva Buchmann. Operas by such composers as Mozart, Verdi and Cherubini featured in his seasons with the Netherlands Symphony Orchestra, which included a visit to Switzerland with productions of *Don Giovanni* and Rossini's *La Gazzetta*, again directed by Eva Buchmann. De Vriend has also conducted opera in Amsterdam (Nederlandse Reisopera), Barcelona, Strasbourg, Luzern, Schwetzingen and Bergen.

In the Netherlands he has presented several television series and is well known for his appearances on a variety of other programmes about music. In 2012 he received a prize from the national station NPO Radio 4 for his creative contribution to classical music.

Residentie Orkest The Hague

The Residentie Orkest is the orchestra of, for and from The Hague. It has firm links with the city and its inhabitants. It also plays a strong role in supporting The Hague's wider profile as seat of government, home to the royal family and city of peace and justice as well as a centre of diplomacy, a first-rate place to live, a business hub and a city with a socially committed heart. The orchestra actively uses classical music to connect and stimulate all residents and visitors based on four pillars: symphonic, education, talent development and outreach. It aims to make a valuable contribution towards an inclusive, inspiring, collaborative and multi-faceted city.

The orchestra offers a top-quality musical experience with an adventurous profile and dynamic zeal. It challenges, surprises and provides enjoyment and always looks to approach its music in a fresh, contemporary and youthful way. The current home venue is the Zuiderstrandtheater in Scheveningen, but from 2021 this will shift to the new concert hall Amare in the centre of The Hague. The Residentie Orkest can also be heard frequently at locations such as the Royal Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, TivoliVredenburg in Utrecht and De Doelen in Rotterdam. In addition, special crossover concerts and other innovative productions are performed in The Hague's prominent pop venue Paard.

The Residentie Orkest is also part of many prolific collaborations with a wide range of partners, including Pieterskerk in Leiden, the Dutch National Theatre,

Kunstmuseum Den Haag, NTR Saturday Matinee and the Dutch National Opera. In recent seasons, the orchestra has played in a highly acclaimed production of Messiaen's rarely performed opera *Saint François d'*Asisse as well as in Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites,* Puccini's *La bohème* and *Madama Butterfly* and Verdi's *Nabucco*.

A rich history

Since its first concert in 1904, the Residentie Orkest has developed into one of the most prominent symphony orchestras in the Netherlands. Founded by Dr Henri Viotta, who was also its first chief conductor, it soon attracted composers like Richard Strauss, Igor Stravinsky, Max Reger, Maurice Ravel, Paul Hindemith and Vincent d'Indy. Guest conductors have included Arturo Toscanini, George Szell, Bruno Walter, Leonard Bernstein and Hans Knappertsbusch. After World War II, Willem van Otterloo was appointed chief conductor. He led the orchestra from 1949 to 1973 and built a strong reputation by combining high-quality performances with adventurous programming. Van Otterloo was succeeded by Jean Martinon, Ferdinand Leitner, Hans Vonk, Evgenii Svetlanov, Jaap van Zweden and Neeme Järvi.

The orchestra has built up a rich discography with labels such as BIS, Chandos, Challenge and DGG. The Residentie Orkest can also be heard frequently in many major concert halls across the world. Its various tours have included New York, Boston, Chicago, London and Vienna and the orchestra has also performed in Japan, China, Germany, France and South America.

Conductors

Nicholas Collon is currently chief conductor and artistic advisor of the Residentie Orkest. From summer 2021, Anja Bihlmaier will become the new chief conductor. Richard Egarr will remain principal guest conductor and Jun Märkl has been appointed as principal guest conductor as well. From 2015 till 2019 Jan Willem de Vriend was principal conductor of the Residentie Orkest.

First violin
Lucian-Leonard Raciof
Ilya Warenberg
Orges Caku
Yuki Hayakashi
Agnes Houtsmuller
Momoko Noguchi
Mara Oosterbaan
Jan Paul Tavenier
Pieter Verschuijl
* Vanessa Damanet
* Helena Druwé
* Elinoor van Duijne Strobosch

Second violin
Faïna Makhtina
Justyna Briefjes
Barbara Krimmel
Ben Legebeke
Sergiy Starzhynskiy
Cato Went
David Pablo Bellido Herrero
Abel Rodriguez Garcia
* Miyuki Konoe
* Fiona Robertson

Viola
Hannah Strijbos
Jacomine Punt
Moira Bette
Jan Buizer
Guus Ghijsen
Sevilya Hendrickx
Elisabeth Runge
Tanja Trede

Cello
Roger Regter
Mileva Fialova
Caecilia van Hoof
Miriam Kirby
Sven Weyens
* Giorgos Kotsiolis

Double bass
Frank Dolman
Jos Tieman
Harry Donders
Astrid Schrijner

Flute
Martine van der Loo
Dorine Schade

Oboe
Roger Cramers
Hilje van der Vliet

Clarinet
* Frank van den Brink
Jasper Grijpink

Bassoon
Gretha Tuls
Erik Reinders

French horn
René Pagen
Ron Schaaper
Mariëlle van Pruijssen

Trumpet
Robert-Jan Hoffman
* Marc Busscher

Trombone
Timothy Dowling
Arno Schipdam
* Bart Vroomen

Timpani
Martin Ansink

* Substitute

This High Definition Surround Recording was Produced, Engineered and Edited by Bert van der Wolf of NorthStar Recording Services, using the 'High Quality Musical Surround Mastering' principle. The basis of this recording principle is a realistic and holographic 3 dimensional representation of the musical instruments, voices and recording venue, according to traditional concert practice. For most older music this means a frontal representation of the musical performance, but such that width and depth of the ensemble and acoustic characteristics of the hall do resemble 'real life' as much as possible. Some older compositions, and many contemporary works do specifically ask for placement of musical instruments and voices over the full 360 degrees sound scape, and in these cases the recording is as realistic as possible, within the limits of the 5.1 Surround Sound standard. This requires a very innovative use of all 6 loudspeakers and the use of completely matched, full frequency range loudspeakers for all 5 discrete channels. A complementary sub-woofer, for the ultra low frequencies under 40Hz, is highly recommended to maximally benefit from the sound quality of this recording.

This recording was produced with the use of Sonodore microphones, Avalon Acoustic & Musikelectronic Geithain monitoring, Siltech Mono-Crystal cabling and dCS - & Merging Technologies converters.

NORTHSTAR RECORDING by BERT VAN DER WOLF

A MERGING CLOCK RECORDING

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