

A portrait of Manfred Honeck, Music Director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, leaning on a dark blue table. He is wearing a dark blue suit and has a red cup and saucer on the table in front of him. The background is a dark blue paneled wall.

TCHAIKOVSKY

SYMPHONY NO. 5

SCHULHOFF

FIVE PIECES



PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
MANFRED HONECK, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Fresh!





TCHAIKOVSKY'S FATE SYMPHONY

Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony has accompanied me since my earliest years as a conductor. Additionally, it took on special significance for me as it was the first major work that I conducted together with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in 2006, unaware that they were looking for a new Music Director at the time. I take pleasure in returning to this symphony and continually discovering new elements in the score and it gives me the greatest joy to record this work with the fantastic musicians of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

In a letter to Russian arts patron Nadezhda von Meck, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky described the encounter when he first performed his Piano Concerto No. 1 for his friend, the pianist Nikolai Rubinstein:

"My Concerto was worthless, completely unplayable. The passages were so fragmentary, disjointed and poorly composed that not even improvements could be made. The composition itself was bad, trivial, vulgar. Here and there I would

have stolen from others. One or two pages, perhaps, were worth saving; the rest had to be destroyed or completely recomposed."

And with this scathing critique based directly on the feedback of Nikolai Rubinstein, Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto was condemned.

Some years later, on December 24, 1888, after a performance of his Fifth Symphony, Tchaikovsky again wrote to Nadezhda von

Meck that he was now “convinced that this symphony has failed. There is something so repulsive in it, such a degree of screwiness and in addition insincerity, artificiality....”

History would prove both assessments entirely incorrect, as both the First Piano Concerto and Fifth Symphony are now regarded as indisputable masterpieces.

But who really was Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky? Tchaikovsky was born on May 7, 1840 in Votkinsk, Russia and died on November 6, 1893, in St. Petersburg. Although his parents recognized his musical talent from an early age, they planned for him a career as a lawyer. From 1850 to 1859, Tchaikovsky attended law school in St. Petersburg and worked for a short time at the Ministry of Justice. In addition, he took music lessons with various teachers. Tchaikovsky was drawn to the world of music which led to his enrollment at the conservatory founded by Anton Rubinstein. While there, he received instruction in both composition and instrumentation. From 1866 to 1871, on Anton Rubinstein's recommendation, Tchaikovsky lived with Rubinstein's

brother, Nikolai, in Moscow and earned his living as a lecturer at the Moscow Conservatory.

Tchaikovsky's personality at the Moscow Conservatory was described by the violinist Alexei Litvinov in 1871 as follows: “He was a nervous, nimble man, not very tall. He rushed into the classroom with his hands behind his back, his head slightly forward, and looked stubbornly straight ahead with a fixed, seemingly stern look in his gray eyes. Pyotr Ilyich immediately sat down at the piano and began to play through our fifth and parallel octave exercises with rapid strokes.”

Leopold Auer, remembered as one of the most important pedagogues of the Russian violin school, described the downright noble appearance of Tchaikovsky in his 1924 memoirs: “There was Tchaikovsky with the personality and the manners of a French marquis from the 18th century, yet extremely reserved, with a restraint that could not be misinterpreted as a pose. He was too clever to ever want to play a role among his fellow artists, towards whom, by the way, he was always very cordial. Tchaikovsky was overly sensitive, modest and unobtrusive in his



dealings with everyone. He was always deeply grateful for any interest that was shown in him or his work.”

The decade of the 1870s was significant for Tchaikovsky with many of his most famous works written during that time, including the First Piano Concerto and the ballet, *Swan Lake*. But it was 1877 that marked an especially important year in Tchaikovsky’s life. On the one hand, this year was the beginning of a unique written correspondence and friendship between Tchaikovsky and Nadezhda von Meck who supported him financially but was never allowed to meet Tchaikovsky in person. On the other hand, 1877 was the same year that Tchaikovsky hastily married his student Antonina Miliukova. Sadly, this marriage lasted only two weeks before dissolving at which time Tchaikovsky suffered a nervous breakdown and even attempted suicide. While it is believed that Tchaikovsky perhaps used the marriage to Antonina to hide his attraction to men so as not to expose himself to the danger of persecution, we actually know very little about his relationship to men.

Tchaikovsky subsequently undertook many trips abroad. Among other things, he was able to witness Wagner’s first performance of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (The Ring of the Nibelung) in Bayreuth, Germany. Also in 1888, Tchaikovsky completed his first major tour as a conductor and met many famous composers including Fauré, Brahms, Grieg and Mahler. Returning from the tour, Tchaikovsky retired to his Frolovskoye estate near the Russian city of Klin and in May 1888 began work on his Fifth Symphony, interestingly 11 years since writing his Fourth Symphony. He would complete the Fifth only three months later. But it was not so easy for Tchaikovsky, as the highly sensitive artist suffered from depression and uncertainty. In a letter to Nadezhda von Meck he wrote, “Doubts often overtake me, and I ask myself: isn’t it time to stop? Have I not overexerted my imagination? Has the source perhaps already dried up?”

The Fifth Symphony was premiered on November 17, 1888 in St. Petersburg and was dedicated to the Hamburg music critic and writer Johann Theodor Friedrich Avé-Lallemant, whom Tchaikovsky had met on



the 1888 concert tour. The premiere was a success, as were subsequent performances on a tour to Prague, Hamburg and Hanover in 1889 which elicited a change in Tchaikovsky's thinking about the Symphony. The enthusiasm of the audience was transferred to him and as he wrote to his brother, Modest, on March 29, 1889, "The most pleasant thing is that the symphony has ceased to seem ugly to me. I have grown fond of it again." The German music critic and musicologist Josef Sittard called the Fifth Symphony one of the "most significant musical phenomena of recent times." And when Tchaikovsky asked his German colleague, Johannes Brahms, to listen to his new Fifth Symphony, Brahms extended his stay in Hamburg by one day in order to hear the rehearsal. Tchaikovsky and Brahms had lunch together and took great pleasure in exchanging ideas. Brahms seemed to like the Fifth Symphony, except for the last movement. While Tchaikovsky had great respect for Brahms' personality, he rejected his music to a large extent. The following excerpt from a letter, though largely unflattering toward Brahms, provides insight into Tchaikovsky's own thoughts on composition and his priorities

as a composer. It was addressed to Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich on October 2, 1888:

"With regard to Brahms, I do not entirely agree with Your Highness. In the music of this master (for his mastery cannot, of course, be denied) there is something dry and cold which repels my heart. He has very little melodic inventiveness; his musical thoughts are never finished; no sooner has one heard a hint of a melodic form that is easy to understand than it is lost in a whirlpool of meaningless harmonic progressions and modulations. It is as if this composer has made it his business to be incomprehensible; what he does is precisely to irritate musical feeling. He does not want to satisfy its needs; he is afraid to speak in a language that reaches the heart... One cannot say that Brahms' music is weak and insignificant. His style is always sublime; he never hunts for external effects, he is never banal; everything about him is serious and noble, but the most important thing is missing – beauty... If Your Highness finds it unpleasant that I have expressed my dislike of Brahms' music in such sharp terms, please forgive me.



Many Brahmsians (among them Bülow) have told me that one day I will see the light and begin to appreciate the beauties of his music that are now beyond my reach, and this is not impossible, for there really have been such instances.”

FIRST MOVEMENT

From the very beginning of the Fifth Symphony, the fate theme is introduced similar to an *idée fixe* (a recurring theme or trait), which comes back in each movement while undergoing various transformations. In his sketches, Tchaikovsky described the opening as “Introduction: complete surrender to fate or, which is the same thing, to the unfathomable counsel of Providence.” This underscores a mood and feeling that Tchaikovsky, who himself often suffered from depression, knew only too well: one of hopelessness, weightiness, gloom and surrender (either voluntarily or involuntarily) to fate and providence. In the low strings, Tchaikovsky asks for *Pesante e tenuto sempre* (heavy and always held) and the music should sound broad, long and stretched. Here, Tchaikovsky scores only the lower instruments including

clarinets and bassoons while the somewhat lighter first violins are kept silent through the introduction and only enter for the first time at the beginning of the *Allegro con anima* (quick with spirit) section. The “complete surrender” can be felt in the descending line in bar 5 (0:20) and after the futile little rebellion (bar 10 or 0:40), the half-steps in the violas which express lament are especially important (bars 11-14 or 0:44-0:59). Interestingly, this is a device that Mozart also uses at the beginning of his *Requiem*.

At the start of the *Allegro con anima* (bar 38 or 2:39), Tchaikovsky notates a triple *ppp* or *pianississimo* (very, very quiet) in the strings. Throughout the symphony, this extreme dynamic marking occurs a total of three times, returning at the end of both the first and second movements. Here in the *Allegro con anima* section, the music begins as if it is far away and suggests a quiet awakening. It is laid out in a dance-like manner. The theme itself, first in the clarinet and bassoon, and later in the violins and violas (bar 58 or 3:04), has two distinct characters with the second part being a shadow of the first. The music develops and grows



stronger. In his sketches, Tchaikovsky described the mood as “grumbling, doubts, lamentations, accusations against +++” that are experienced personally. (The three characters are the secret symbol of Tchaikovsky’s hidden homosexuality, which he concealed for fear of persecution.) An important feature that informs both the structure and emotional intensity is the way that Tchaikovsky consciously builds toward the climaxes, for example bar 116 (4:20) and following. First, after

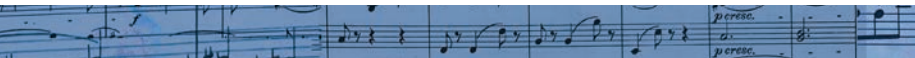
Tchaikovsky allows the music to dissipate organically in long arcs, for example bar 140 (5:00). The transition theme in bar 154 (5:18) is like a wake-up call. It is interesting to note that the horns do not play with the rhythm of the woodwinds, but rather independently in the opposite direction.

The subsequent secondary theme (bar 170 or 5:40) is marked as *Molto piu tranquillo* (much quieter and calmer) and is to be

“INTRODUCTION: COMPLETE SURRENDER TO FATE OR, WHICH IS THE SAME THING, TO THE UNFATHOMABLE COUNSEL OF PROVIDENCE.” - Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

an abrupt *sf* or *sforzando piano* (a direction indicating to perform the note with particular emphasis followed by a sudden decrease in loudness), he begins a *crescendo* (increase in volume) to *forte* (loud), then to *fortissimo* (very loud) and finally *sf* or *sforzato* (an indication to play at the *ff* dynamic marking with a strong accent and at full duration) which then reaches fulfillment in the glorious, deep and rich string sound of bar 128 (4:39). Conversely,

performed *molto cantabile ed espressivo* (very singing and expressively). It is a simple, beautifully flowing melody that changes into a nervous gesture with the entry of the trumpets, trombones and timpani (bar 186 or 6:18). The transitional theme is now overlaid with repetitive, throbbing eighth notes (bar 198 or 6:31). Here, I have taken the liberty of creating a dynamic wave, first dropping the sound level and then immediately growing with a



large *crescendo* to add dramatic emphasis as the music propels forward.

Throughout the symphony, it is important to examine the score carefully as Tchaikovsky notates many specific directions. For example, in bars 259-260 (7:38), there are important differences to observe. In these measures, the first half of the bar is notated with a 16th note followed by 16th note rest whereas the second half of the bar indicates a dotted eighth note (a longer value indicating no rest). In this case, the first half must be played short (16th note) while the second half is rather long (dotted eighth note). Similarly, in bar 301 (8:26), Tchaikovsky notates the dotted eighth note (long) figure in the horns and trombones, but the very following measure indicates the same rhythmic figure with the 16th note rest (short). I find that attention to these distinctions creates an interesting dialogue.

The coda of the first movement begins in bar 487 (12:48), first rising with a conversation between the woodwinds and strings before reaching the climax in bar 503 (13:05). From this point, the main theme is heard in a descending pattern,

taking on the character of an austere march (bar 507 or 13:10). I think of this passage as a relentless march into nothingness and toward death. The trumpets interject brief fanfare-like motives while the low instruments incessantly repeat a descending scale. This death march leads directly back into the darkness that opened the movement, heard here again in the same low register. Of particular interest are the double basses, the instrument with the lowest register, that voice the final lament.

SECOND MOVEMENT

The second movement exemplifies Tchaikovsky's remark, "Shall I throw myself into the arms of faith?" I hear the beginning as emerging out of the silence and darkness of the first movement ending and have often thought that it would make good sense to start this movement *attacca* (without a pause). The opening is again scored in the low strings with first an ascending then descending line conveying both gloom and soulfulness. With the entrance of the famous horn solo (bar 8 or 0:55), Tchaikovsky immediately adds a new, hopeful feeling and intimacy to



the otherwise bleak and empty darkness. In his sketches, Tchaikovsky first writes “Consolation” and then upon the entrance of the horn “Ray of light.” Underneath, however, he writes “No, no hope.” The movement is not only titled *Andante cantabile* (flowing and songlike), but also *con alcuna licenza* (with some freedom). It is therefore not surprising that the music requires a lot of *rubato* (subtle rhythmic push and pull). Many times, Tchaikovsky also writes *animando*, *animato*, or *poco piu animato* (animated). One example is bar 45 (4:18) where he wants the theme first animated, but then more calmly. Based on the specificity of Tchaikovsky’s directions, it is clear that he had a very precise idea of how the music should be performed.

I regard the second movement as amongst the most beautiful movements that Tchaikovsky ever composed. The mastery of the melodic writing has been admired by many, including none other than Igor Stravinsky. The melodies flow from one to another in an exceedingly organic manner, creating a contented and hopeful while still contemplative feeling. On two separate occasions, fate disrupts the mood with

almost brute force. The first occurrence (bar 99 or 7:23) is somewhat foreshadowed by an explosive accent in the trombone and tuba together with the timpani (bar 95 or 7:14). Next, swinging *pizzicati* (plucked) chords in the strings (bar 108 or 7:48) introduce the return of the main theme, now scored in the first violins. I hear these chords almost like ringing bells and ask for them to be played with a big and full sound. The melodic arches that follow call for the greatest fervor and intimacy while expressing an exuberant happiness that is far from the initial somber mood. Whereas Tchaikovsky often uses downward scales which contribute to the dark tone, here the motion is mostly upward (bar 140 or 9:51).

In the *Andante mosso* (walking, but moving) that follows, the theme resounds and again Tchaikovsky has noted both a triple *fff* dynamic, as well as *con anima* (bar 142 or 10:00) before another *animando* continues the momentum forward (bar 144 or 10:06). This time, however, fate vehemently and unexpectedly interrupts the happy mood (bar 158 or 10:56). Again, Tchaikovsky notates a triple *fff* dynamic, but this occurrence demands a completely different



and raw, almost violent sound. The passage culminates in twelve repetitions of chord blocks where interestingly Tchaikovsky only adds accents to the last six (bar 164 or 11:10), thus raising the intensity to the highest degree of despair. I think here of the question that Tchaikovsky raised, whether he should “throw himself into the arms of faith” and see this passage like a crucifixion with each individual chord evoking nail strikes. I have therefore taken the liberty of making a somewhat longer *caesura* (pause) after this dramatic event. In total contrast, the lament that follows (bar 166 or 11:20) is extremely heartfelt. I find the ending, even though it is in an exceptionally beautiful *dolcissimo* (very sweet and soft) mood, somewhat disturbing. It is clear that nothing is as it was, perhaps a reminder of the “No, no hope” message from the early sketches. The clarinet passage that closes the movement (bar 182 or 12:50) is enchanting though somewhat curious, as the movement could well have ended before this line. But with this last clarinet ascent, Tchaikovsky brings the second movement to a close with something sensual and magical.

THIRD MOVEMENT

The third movement is an elegant waltz and is perhaps underrated compared to the surrounding movements. Tchaikovsky, as a composer of famous ballet music, marks the opening theme in the first violins as *dolce con grazia* (sweetly and with grace). But I find it remarkable that he does not limit himself to a simple dance. Rather, like classical composers before him, Tchaikovsky employs tonal and rhythmic features to add interest; for example, the use of “stopped” horns in bar 28 (0:34) creates a somewhat disconcerting sound.

Tchaikovsky also makes great use of hemiolas (a rhythmic alternation in which six equal notes may be heard as two groups of three or three groups of two). Already in bars 9-11 (0:11), he notates accents at the beginning of each hemiola sequence. This is also audible in bars 60 (1:17), 89 (1:51), 98 (2:02), 112 (2:19) and 262 (5:30). The trio (bar 72 or 1:32) is especially virtuosic. In addition to the hemiolas, Tchaikovsky incorporates other rhythmic details including accents on the third beat (bar 104 or 2:10). The recapitulation is largely



identical to the exposition. I therefore think that it is important to make some small interpretive changes. One example is bar 177 (3:37) where I ask the clarinet to play especially softly and with a *ritardando* (decrease in speed). The fate theme appears again in this movement (bar 241 or 5:03), but this time is embedded within the waltz. Here, too, Tchaikovsky makes use of hemiolas in the descending line in the clarinets and bassoons (bar 248 or 5:12).

FOURTH MOVEMENT

The fourth movement is often seen as problematic. Even Tchaikovsky, in the exuberance of his inherent self-doubt after meeting with Johannes Brahms in Hamburg, expresses this in a letter to his brother, Modest, on March 12, 1889:

“I have been here since yesterday evening. Today was the first rehearsal. Brahms stayed a whole day longer to hear the symphony and was very friendly. After the rehearsal we went to lunch together and drank a little. He is very nice, and I like his openness and simplicity. The finale didn’t go down well with him or

the musicians, but the main thing is that I now find it terribly repulsive myself.”

A few weeks later, however, in a letter to Modest on March 29, 1889, from Hanover, Tchaikovsky wrote, “The most pleasant thing is that the symphony has ceased to seem ugly to me. I have grown fond of it again.” Perhaps Tchaikovsky had been reminded of his initial feelings upon composing the final movement.

The fourth movement begins with the fate theme now heard in a radiant E Major. This logically follows the principle of “per aspera ad astra” (from darkness to the stars) which Beethoven used in his Fifth Symphony. If at the beginning of Tchaikovsky’s Fifth Symphony the fate theme is a lament, here in the final movement it is a song of triumph rather than a triumphal march. The hopeful, optimistic singing is in the foreground (bar 9 or 0:28) and only twice is there a hint of wistfulness in the winds and brass (bars 20 or 1:03 and 43 or 2:17) in the half-step taken from bar 12 (0:48) of the first movement’s introduction.



The main body of the movement that now follows, marked *Allegro vivace* (lively and fast) is a dance movement filled with colorful Russian folk music. This would not have appealed to the traditionalist Johannes Brahms who was aligned with the school of German symphonic music. But it is interesting to note that another great Slavic composer, Antonín Dvořák, while working on his Eighth Symphony, attended the Prague premiere of Tchaikovsky's

a sudden *fortissimo*. The eighth note scale in the woodwinds (bar 70 or 3:21) is rarely heard as it is often obscured by the strings who are marked *forte*. Here, I radically reduce the strings in an effort to bring out the woodwind line. Bar 82 (3:32) evokes another type of Russian dance. I therefore keep the tempo moving and danceable without a hint of broadening. Even the lyrical secondary theme (bar 128 or 4:11) is underpinned by fast, dance-like movement.

"THE MOST PLEASANT THING IS THAT THE SYMPHONY HAS CEASED TO SEEM UGLY TO ME. I HAVE GROWN FOND OF IT AGAIN." - Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Fifth Symphony with Tchaikovsky on the podium. It is no surprise that the final movement of Dvořák's Eighth Symphony incorporates Czech folk music throughout, clearly inspired by Tchaikovsky's work.

The *Allegro vivace (alla breve)* (fast and lively) section (bar 58 or 3:10) opens with repeating eighth notes in the strings that could well have been composed for a balalaika orchestra. While Tchaikovsky has marked only *forte* here, just four bars later there is

The subsequent sweeping and euphoric phrase ends with pointed syncopations in bar 156 (4:35). The fate theme (bar 172 or 4:49) is often taken a little slower and more forcefully, likely to provide greater emphasis. However, I believe that Tchaikovsky has integrated the fate theme into the fast Russian dance, just as he did with the waltz in the third movement.

Throughout the final movement, there are moments that are reminiscent of the somber





mood of the first movement. One such example is the beginning of bar 266 (6:16) where Tchaikovsky again makes use of the semitone steps from bar 12 of the first movement. I see this section as an elegiac transition to the recapitulation, for a brief moment lost completely unto itself, before abruptly returning to the fast Russian dance (bar 296 or 6:50). But here, the dance must now be even faster in order to return to the *Tempo I* (first tempo) that Tchaikovsky has indicated at bar 312 (7:01).

The recapitulation is identical to the exposition. Small details are significant, including the prelude to the coda at bar 425 (8:38) where the second and fourth horns together with the first trumpet play a syncopated rhythm. I see this as an important preparation to the broad and impending doom theme of the trombones that leads rather abruptly into an even faster Russian dance (bar 436 or 8:56). As the dance is notated this time in half notes, it is often played a bit more spaciouly while the syncopations are kept rather short. One more time, Tchaikovsky returns to the now familiar melancholy half-note step in bar 452 (9:08). It is almost as if fate is

continuously in conflict with the existing euphoria. In an effort to emphasize this contrast, I have asked for a subtle stretching of the semitone step. The following triumphant march (bar 472 or 9:33) is notated as *Moderato assai e molto maestoso* (very restrained and majestic). In addition, Tchaikovsky includes the additional direction of *largamente* (with slowness and breadth) in the strings. This triumph is not a military one, but a personal triumph of Tchaikovsky the man. I view this passage quite vocally. Even in the greatest climax (bar 490 or 10:27) where Tchaikovsky writes *marziale, energico, con tutta forza* (martial, energetic and with force) above the trumpet parts, the vocal quality must not be lost. Similarly, the ups and downs of Tchaikovsky's emotions as a person are also reflected in the small moments, for example in bar 499 (10:54) where I ask the orchestra to play a little quieter, only to release the dynamics fully in the final euphoric cadenza one bar later. Tchaikovsky now once again takes the *Presto* (extremely fast) (11:10) yet one more notch faster in tempo. The closing bars bristle with dancing syncopations which make this grandiose finale even more lively. 🌈

SCHULHOFF FIVE PIECES

When I heard Erwin Schulhoff's *Five Pieces for String Quartet* in a wonderful concert by the Pittsburgh-based Clarion Quartet a few years ago, I immediately had the idea to arrange these five jewels for large orchestra. Upon listening to them again, it was quite clear to me how to orchestrate this effectively for full orchestra and I knew that I wanted this to be the next in our line of new works performed and recorded for the first time.

Erwin Schulhoff was born on June 8, 1894, in Prague to a Jewish-German wool merchant. None other than Antonín Dvořák recommended the seven-year-old Schulhoff to a piano teacher friend; at the age of 10, Schulhoff was already admitted to the conservatory in Prague. Schulhoff's further studies took him to Vienna,

Leipzig, Freiburg and Cologne, and he later lived in Berlin as a freelance pianist and composer. Among his composition teachers was Max Reger and Schulhoff was also known to be in correspondence with the composer Alban Berg.

Schulhoff returned to Prague in 1924 and it was that same year, on August 8, 1924, that the *Five Pieces for String Quartet* (composed the year before) received their premiere in Salzburg as part of the festival of the International Society for New Music. This was a breakthrough moment for the visionary Schulhoff who desired to provoke and push forward to new ground, thoroughly interested in the modern trends of the time including expressionism, jazz and Dadaism. As his friend, the journalist Erich Steinhard, described him,



"Schulhoff is the contemporary, perhaps the fashionable musician of today. An amusing, amiable, witty, playfully inclined, highly gifted artist. And a wild temperamental musician, a go-getter."

In July 1942, Schulhoff, who increasingly turned to communism, received Soviet citizenship and planned to emigrate to Russia. But shortly after receiving his passport, the pact of Stalin and Hitler ended. As both a Jew and Soviet citizen, Schulhoff was immediately arrested and transferred to a Bavarian concentration camp. Tragically, he died in Wülzburg of tuberculosis on August 18, 1942.

The Five Pieces, dedicated to composer Darius Milhaud, are character pieces, each based on a particular type of dance. What makes each movement especially unique is the way that Schulhoff dramatizes each one distinctly with witty exaggerations. Schulhoff was known to especially love dances. In a letter to Alban Berg on February 2, 1921, Schulhoff penned,

"I have an extraordinary passion for fashionable dances, and there are times when I go dancing night after night [...] solely out of enthusiasm for rhythm and out of subconscious sensuality ... this gives my creative work a phenomenal impulse, for in my consciousness I am incredibly earthbound, almost bestial ..."

The first dance, a Viennese waltz, is already curious in that it does not stay consistently in 3/4 time. Schulhoff adds a footnote, perhaps somewhat sarcastically, that though he is aware that the waltz is sometimes notated in 4/4 time, it still has to sound like a waltz. Of note, there are several high-spirited, almost grotesque *portamenti* (slides from one note to the next), for example in bar 72 (1:22), as well as rather overwrought Viennese waltz rhythms (bar 75 or 1:26) that are a bit more cheeky than one would expect.

The second dance, *Alla Serenata* ('To the Serenade'), is set in 5/8 time and is more haunting than lovely. Right from the start,



the basses and percussion (tamburello and woodblock) color the piece rather darkly with a mostly steady rhythm. The *staccati* (articulation mark indicating sharply detached) are written very differently but pointedly in the woodwinds, the same as in the violins of the original version. The violins, violas, flutes and oboes in bar 12

brings a touch of the exotic Far Eastern sound world before the movement ends ironically and wittily (bar 70 or 3:43).

The third dance is a Czech polka. Here, Schulhoff imitates an imprecise brass band with the addition of an accent on the accompanying eighth notes at the end

"...THERE ARE TIMES WHEN I GO DANCING NIGHT AFTER NIGHT [...] SOLELY OUT OF ENTHUSIASM FOR RHYTHM AND OUT OF SUBCONSCIOUS SENSUALITY ... THIS GIVES MY CREATIVE WORK A PHENOMENAL IMPULSE, FOR IN MY CONSCIOUSNESS I AM INCREDIBLY EARTHBOUND.."
- Erwin Schulhoff

(0:37) float lightly like a cloud of fragrance before, like a shout, the entire orchestra provides great drama with the *subito fortissimo* (suddenly very loudly) marking in bar 20 (1:05). Several additional outbursts of this sort in the *ff* dynamic add to the restless mood that is not at all serenade-like in feeling. Bar 56 (2:58)

of each bar. I see this almost as a funny parody of the culture of music bands. Of special note is bar 26 (0:31) which evokes an exuberant *bevuta* (to have a drink) while bar 45 (0:55) recalls some of the funny scenes from Smetana's *The Bartered Bride*. The movement ends with a written-out *accelerando* (acceleration), moving from *poco*



a poco stringendo (little by little quicker) to finally a *Presto* (extremely fast) for the final three bars that leap off of the tempo.

The fourth dance, *Alla Tango milonga* (tango), showcases the soloistic abilities of several of the instruments including the clarinet, flute and solo violin. Throughout, it is infused with the already mentioned “subconscious sensuality” and reflects Schulhoff’s cosmopolitan vision. Schulhoff notates *Sempre strictissimo* in tempo (always strictly in tempo) in bar 24 (1:50) where the castanets and tamburo piccolo are used in addition to the free-playing solo violin. The movement comes to an especially delicate close with a major-minor cluster chord that is held, while the harp seems to wink a bit with its final arpeggiated run.

The fifth and final movement is a tarantella, a folk dance native to southern Italy that traditionally requires very fast tempos. In this movement, Schulhoff takes this even one step further notating “*Prestissimo con fuoco*” (very quick and with fire). The

tarantella originated as a wild dance played as an antidote for a person bitten by a tarantula. The musicians would come to the home of the patient who was expected to dance to the wild music in the hope that it might expel the poison from the afflicted body. Schulhoff fittingly notates this movement in a very fast 6/8 time that advances in waves. Throughout, there is not a single bar without the kinetic eighth note motion. Restless to the end, Schulhoff leads musically almost to the point of chaos, noting in bar 154 (1:44) *tumultuoso* (tumultuously). Here, it was immediately clear to both our outstanding arranger Tomáš Ille and me that we should use a tam-tam. The movement spins forward before ending furiously with wild *glissandi* (continuous slides) in the trombones and a *fff energico* (very, very loud and with great energy) spirit. ☹



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MANFRED HONECK MUSIC DIRECTOR

Over the last quarter century, Manfred Honeck has firmly established himself as one of the world's leading conductors, renowned for his distinctive interpretations. For 15 seasons, he has served as Music Director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, celebrated for their performances in Pittsburgh and abroad, performing regularly in major music capitals. Together they have continued a legacy of music-making that includes many GRAMMY® nominations and a 2018 GRAMMY® Award for Best Orchestral Performance. Honeck and the Orchestra serve as cultural ambassadors for the city as one of the most frequently toured American orchestras.

Born in Austria, Manfred Honeck received his musical training at the Academy of Music in Vienna. Many years of experience as a member of the Vienna Philharmonic and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra have given his conducting a distinctive stamp. He began his career as assistant to Claudio Abbado and was subsequently engaged by the Zurich

Opera House, where he was bestowed the prestigious European Conductor's award. Following early posts at MDR Symphony Orchestra and at the Oslo Philharmonic, he was appointed music director of the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra. He also served as principal guest conductor of the Czech Philharmonic and was music director of the Staatsoper Stuttgart.

As a guest conductor, Manfred Honeck has worked with such leading orchestras as the Berlin Philharmonic, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, and the Vienna Philharmonic, among others, and is a regular guest with all of the major American orchestras.

Manfred Honeck was awarded the honorary title of Professor by the Austrian Federal President. An international jury of critics selected Honeck as the International Classical Music Awards "Artist of the Year" in 2018.





PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Now in its 127th season, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra is credited with a rich history of engaging the world's finest conductors and musicians and demonstrates a genuine commitment to the Pittsburgh region and its citizens. Known for its artistic excellence for more than a century, the Pittsburgh Symphony has been led by its worldwide acclaimed Music Director Manfred Honeck since 2008; past music directors have included Fritz Reiner

(1938-1948), William Steinberg (1952-1976), André Previn (1976-1984), Lorin Maazel (1984-1996) and Mariss Jansons (1997-2004). The Pittsburgh Symphony is continually at the forefront of championing new American works. The Orchestra premiered Leonard Bernstein's Symphony No. 1 "Jeremiah" in 1944, John Adams' "Short Ride in a Fast Machine" in 1986, and Mason Bates' "Resurrexit" in 2018 to celebrate Manfred Honeck's 60th birthday.



The two-time 2018 GRAMMY® Award-winning orchestra has a long and illustrious history in the areas of recordings and live radio broadcasts. Manfred Honeck and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra have received multiple GRAMMY® nominations for Best Orchestral Performance, taking home the award in 2018 for their recording of Shostakovich: Symphony No. 5; Barber: Adagio. As early as 1936, the Pittsburgh Symphony has been broadcast on the radio. The orchestra has received increased attention since 1982 through national network radio

broadcasts on Public Radio International, produced by Classical WQED-FM 89.3, made possible by the musicians of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Lauded as the Pittsburgh region's international cultural ambassador, the orchestra began regular touring in 1896 and has embarked on scores of domestic and international tours. In the summer of 2022, Music Director Manfred Honeck led the orchestra on an extensive and highly acclaimed tour of Europe, celebrating 75 years of international touring for the Orchestra.



PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Manfred Honeck

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- ☼ PERFORMED ON SCHULHOFF RECORDING
- ☉ PERFORMED ON TCHAIKOVSKY RECORDING

ABSENCE OF SYMBOL INDICATES MEMBER OF THE PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA WHO DID NOT PERFORM ON EITHER RECORDING.

- ☀ PRINCIPAL
- ☼ ACTING PRINCIPAL
- ☼ CO-PRINCIPAL
- ☼ ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL
- ☼ ACTING ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL
- ☼ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
- ☼ ACTING ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
- ☼ EXTRA MUSICIAN

Roster reflects musicians' positions, endowed chairs and participation in recording weekends as of the recording dates.

CREDITS

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Recorded Live:
Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 and
Schulhoff *Five Pieces*
June 17-19, 2022
Heinz Hall for the Performing Arts, Pittsburgh, PA

Soundmirror, Boston:
Recording Producer: Dirk Sobotka
Balance Engineer: Mark Donahue
Editing: Dirk Sobotka
Mixing and Mastering: Mark Donahue

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George Lange
Photo of Manfred Honeck (page 21): Todd
Rosenberg
Photo of Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra:
George Lange

This recording is made possible by support from
Mary Ann Craig.

sound/mirror

We at Soundmirror believe that in a good and successful recording, the sound has to serve the music. While an important goal is to truthfully represent the acoustical event in the hall, another is to capture the composer's intention reflected in the score and its realization by the performer. To achieve these goals, extensive collaboration and communication between the artists and the recording team are of utmost importance. Based on our long experience of recording the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in Heinz Hall, we chose five omnidirectional DPA 4006 microphones as our main microphone array. Supplementing those with "spot mics" to clarify the detail of the orchestration, we worked towards realizing the above goals. Extensive listening sessions with Maestro Honeck and orchestra musicians were crucial in refining the final balance. This recording was recorded in DSD256 and post-produced in DXD 352.8kHz/32 bit to give you, the listener, the highest sound quality possible. We hope you will enjoy listening to this recording as much as we enjoyed making it.

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TCHAIKOVSKY

SYMPHONY NO. 5

- I. Andante — Allegro con anima* 14:09
II. Andante cantabile, con alcuna licenza 13:22
III. Allegro moderato 5:38
IV. Finale: Andante maestoso — Allegro vivace 12:11

SCHULHOFF

FIVE PIECES (ARR HONECK/ILLE)

- I. Alla Valse Viennese: Allegro* 2:01
II. Alla Serenata: Allegro con moto 3:57
III. Alla Czeca: Molto allegro 1:38
IV. Alla Tango Milonga: Andante 4:43
V. Alla Tarantella: Prestissimo con fuoco 2:45



PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
MANFRED HONECK, MUSIC DIRECTOR

REFERENCE
RECORDINGS
FR-7525A CD