

Friday, December 12, 2025
7.00 PM - 9.00 PM,
Milton Court Concert Hall,
1 Milton Street, London,
England (UK), EC2Y 9BH

Der Fidelio Post

Circle £25 | Rear stalls £30 |
Front stalls £35. Wine, drinks
and snacks will be available
to purchase on the evening
from the bar at the venue.

12.12.25

EUROPEAN CIVILISATION IS DEAD

G. Mahler, *Symphony No. 2 in C minor*

Fidelio Orchestra | London Oriana Choir | Lotte
Betts-Dean | Betty Makharinsky | Raffaello Morales

The facts: After centuries of work to build a long-lasting legacy for future generations, European civilisation has begun its decline and is now succumbing. Its derelict state is visible all around. We have been unable to draw inspiration from the achievements of our past to set the world on a course of improvement. Rather than giving the example to develop a more sustainable course of existence, we are wasting away in a senseless renunciation of our own values. We have initiated a self-deprecating campaign of apology for our past, which has resulted in a weakening of our assets in the eyes of preying competitors. We have deceived our citizens, making them believe we are the good ones, always pointing the finger at the foreign enemy to justify our murderous actions. Most importantly, we have been unable to convince the rest of the world, through peaceful action, that knowledge and love are the only weapons for a durable, sustainable world order. European civilisation has died in our inability to learn from our own mistakes. It has died in our arguments over terminology while wars



of partisanship backed by us continue to make thousands of innocent victims. It has died in our inability to accept the fact that leadership comes with responsibility. It has died in leaders dumping the dirty work on their underlings but taking credit for tough decisions. It has died

in instalment payments for the iPhone 17. It has died in the proliferation of the mortgage market, giving people the illusion of welfare when in fact they are indebted for life. It has died in yet another television series aimed at maximising airtime. It has died in cheap clothes

from Vietnam, made at the expense of people rich only in the experience of physical and emotional abuse. We first killed God; then we killed morality, lost as we were in its pursuit without belief; finally, we killed tradition, making our lives a repetitive succession of pointless days filled with consumerism and basic aspirations. We believe, nonetheless, that not everything is lost, and that there can be a way forward—one that can inspire us all to believe in a sustainable course for humanity, incorporating those values from European civilisation that we believe are worth preserving and, yes, jettisoning those we feel are not worth promoting. This can only happen with pride and conviction, though. And it needs to happen through an act of resurrection of values. We have therefore decided to take a journey together that will lead us from the burial of European civilisation in its current state to its yearned-for resurrection. To do that, we are all gathered here tonight to go from death to resurrection, walking through memories of the world we have built, in its beauty and its ugliness.

Death and Resurrection

In commemorating this great passing, we will walk together through some exceptional moments of European history, not strictly associated with historical happenings, but rather moments that will help us all recollect what European civilisation was and what it sounded like through music. You are all invited to recollect your best and worst memories and to ponder this odd inversion of our earthly experience: from death to the past, from heaven to the future. Whether this is earthly or not is left for you to decide.



Step 1: Totenfeier—dealing with death and its immediate consequences. This music is funeral, clearly speaks of death, but also drops in memories of a previous life. The great contradiction is how alive the orchestra needs to be, despite its handling of death.

Step 2: Memories from the beauty of our past. Here we enter vivid visions of candid comfort, cushioned by social status and carefreeness. This is almost music to get lost in, with closed eyes and open heart. But the ghosts of death are still present, and they appear through a figuration which reminds us of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, another ghost from the past.

Step 3: Petty life and the triumph of nothing. The world of Western civilisation cranks up in its mundanity and pettiness, where kitsch is often passed off as art and where shallowness blatantly supplants depth. And yet we are all somehow resigned to the compromises we need to make. Profoundly anti-

libertarian systems like corporate employment are sold to us as democratic and true expressions of freedom.

Step 4: Urlicht—the only salvation is in the heavens. The role of religions in the West has been that of shifting the goal of life to the hereafter in order to avoid having to face the pressing question of what to do in this life. But some more ancient religions, Judaism to take an example, placed much more emphasis on earthly life, leaving the afterlife to a mere spiritual continuation of the earthly experience.

Step 5: Auferstehung—rise again. Death is not the end of it, though. With wings forged by our own craft and technique, we will rise to overcome the limitations that lack of love forces upon us. This is the only true way to God, a God who knows no religion; a God who hates nobody and who loves unconditionally. A God who springs from knowledge, love, and wisdom. This is a light that no eye before has penetrated. It might be dazzling.

Ulrich

O Röschen rot!
Der Mensch liegt in größter Not!
Der Mensch liegt in größter Pein!
Je lieber möchte ich im Himmel sein.

Da kam ich auf einen breiten Weg:
Da kam ein Engelein und wollt' mich abweisen.
Ach nein! Ich ließ mich nicht abweisen!
Ich bin von Gott und will wieder zu Gott!
Der liebe Gott wird mir ein Lichtchen geben,
wird leuchten mir bis in das ewig selig Leben!

Auferstehen

Aufersteh'n, ja aufersteh'n wirst du,
mein Staub, nach kurzer Ruh'!
Unsterblich Leben! Unsterblich Leben
will der dich rief dir geben!

Wieder aufzublüh'n wirst du gesät!
Der Herr der Ernte geht
und sammelt Garben
uns ein, die starben!

O glaube, mein Herz, o glaube:
es geht dir nichts verloren!
Dein ist, ja dein, was du gesehnt,
dein, was du geliebt,
was du gestritten!

O glaube,
du warst nicht umsonst geboren!
Hast nicht umsonst gelebt,
gelitten!

Was entstanden ist,
das muss vergehen!
Was vergangen, aufersteh'n!
Hör' auf zu beben!
Bereite dich zu leben!

O Schmerz! Du Alldurchdringer!
Dir bin ich entrungen!
O Tod! Du Allbezwinger!
Nun bist du bezwungen!

Mit Flügeln, die ich mir errungen,
in heißem Liebesstreben,
werd' ich entschweben
zum Licht, zu dem kein Aug' gedrungen!

Sterben werd' ich, um zu leben!

Aufersteh'n, ja aufersteh'n wirst du
mein Herz, in einem Nu!
Was du geschlagen
zu Gott wird es dich tragen!

O little red rose!
Man lies in greatest need!
Man lies in greatest pain!
How I would rather be in heaven.

There came I upon a broad path
when came a little angel and wanted to turn me away.
Ah no! I would not let myself be turned away!
I am from God and shall return to God!
The loving God will grant me a little light,
Which will light me into that eternal blissful life!

Rise again, yes, rise again,
Will you, my dust, after a brief rest!
Immortal life! Immortal life
Will he who called you, give you.

You are sown to bloom again!
The Lord of the harvest goes
And gathers sheaves,
Us, who have died.

O believe, my heart, O believe:
Nothing is lost to you!
Yours, yes yours, is what you desired
Yours, what you have loved
What you have fought for!

O believe,
You were not born for nothing!
Have not lived for nothing,
Nor suffered!

What was created
Must perish;
What perished, rise again!
Cease from trembling!
Prepare yourself to live!

O Pain, you piercer of all things,
From you, I have been wrested!
O Death, you conqueror of all things,
Now, are you conquered!

With wings which I have won for myself,
In love's fierce striving,
I shall soar upwards
To the light which no eye has penetrated!

I shall die in order to live.

Rise again, yes, rise again,
Will you, my heart, in an instant!
What you have conquered,
To God shall it carry you!



Dramatis

The instigator

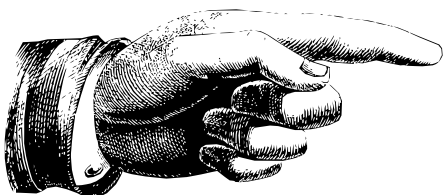
GUSTAV

The nineteenth century threw the philosophical foundations of the Western world into chaos. It presented it with a dilemma that is, to this day, yet to be solved. This dilemma is how to reconcile passions and reason in a coherent way that might be both meaningful and sustainable. Gustav Mahler represents a key figure in this context. He was obviously aware of the difficulty that his generation was facing, and he desperately tried to find a solution through his music and his practice. He was a man of contrasts, the last figure who tried to reconcile passions and rationalism, romanticism and classicism, creation and interpretation. Most of what happened after him had to be one or the other: classicism evolved into intellectualism, romanticism into unbridled individualism, which eventually led to authoritarianism. The intellectuals became the custodians of high culture; normal people instead fought for a common language. The modern left was born. The right had always been there. What we keep calling classical music is the legacy of the attempt, arguably pointless, to establish as unassailable a practice which, at least since Beethoven, has been in fact constantly developing.

Such was the progress of science as the century was approaching its end that few were the ones who seriously believed that the future could look like anything different from a triumphal showcase of technological prowess. Technology was the practical consequence of the Enlightenment. How can a rational being not refuse religion and all that nonsense and cherish the phenomenal improvements to life that progress brings about? Excitement soon evolved into intoxication. Then, in 1905 – Mahler was at the peak of his fame – Albert Einstein, applying geometrical discoveries made by some eminent predecessors, showed the world that the truth of classical physics was only really true the moment we agreed to look at it from a specific angle. Panic ensued. The discovery of an inherent relativism in the most unassailable of truths, that supported by mathematics, caused a jolt from which the positivistic mind hasn't yet recovered. After the short parenthesis of the eighteenth century, the apotheosis of Apollonian rationality, also known as classicism, the Artist, frustrated with the stylish and formally immaculate constraints of classicism, took a sharp turn to go back two thousand years to a pre-Socratic Dionysian approach to creativity. The romantic generation nosedived into this mission, completely oblivious to the fact that nihilism



Mahler's 2: A listening guide for all



Some of the tunes heard in the first movement will stay with us until the end of the piece. Death and resurrection share certain features. Already in the luminous second tune of the first movement, barely a few

minutes into the music, we hear the ascending yearning towards something higher, something unearthly. In the last movement, the ascending scales will end up coming back down, a testimony to the fact that the resurrection

Personae

extraordinaire

MAHLER



was the natural end to their journey, particularly since the assets of rationality were gaining ground at a formidable pace. Just not in the arts.

Mahler was Jewish, but like most Jews who are celebrated for their contribution to humanity and civilisation, he achieved greatness having escaped from the Jewish religious and intellectual tradition. He is joined by an eminent group of people: Spinoza, Heine, Mendelssohn, Kafka, Freud, Trotsky, Wittgenstein, Proust—the list is too long. Perhaps most originally, though, Mahler decided to do something even more daring: he converted to Christianity. He did it in order to be accepted by a community that was broadly opposed to Jewish emancipation. And the Jews were indeed emancipating. The diaspora was more and more providing a contribution to the health of fin-de-siècle societies, not because of their Jewishness, but rather for their desire to overcome it, to dissipate it into the community. What could not be predicted, though, was that as emancipation gained ground, the very society these Jews wanted to be part of was quickly disintegrating. The Jews became the eminent victims of the destruction of European civilisation precisely because of their fateful attempt to join it at the wrong time. If up to the twentieth century the Jews were united by the common belief in their faith, since the tragedy of the Holocaust they can only find unity in anti-Semitism, in the hatred shown by others towards them for reasons that the very haters cannot logically articulate. It is a pretty messy matter.

Mahler did something which should really inspire us all, though. He looked beyond religion, beyond rationality, and beyond the passions. He took the very common human experience of death and showed that salvation in Heaven, the crucial tenet of Christianity, cannot dispel the fears that we all humans are bound to experience until we live. Life is not just about thought; it is about passions as well. The real resurrection is in this world, as his Jewish roots suggested to him. The real resurrection the human spirit needs is one of values. We need to go beyond the Western attempt which, since the time of Socrates, wants us to submit the passions to an agenda that, under the banner of rational progress, is only estranging man from himself. With the wings that we have conquered for ourselves, we must soar above our traditions and our prejudices; we must have the courage to look God straight in the eyes and perhaps to realise that we were really looking only for ourselves.

is definitely earthbound. The chorus tune “Auferstehen, ja auferstehen” is heard for the first time in the brass, in the minor key, as a development of the funeral *Dies Irae* heard also in the first movement. When we hear it in the

chorus, its quality is otherworldly, distant, and sacred. It comes down to earth as the symphony grows to its final climax. The last movement is the most difficult to follow because of its many sections, seemingly disconnected

and inconsequential upon first listening. Think about this movement as if you were part of a ritualistic service, in which you are going through a life-changing experience that will show you the real essence of your soul.

NEXT UP, THE GLORIOUS



Lotte Betts-Dean is an Australian mezzo-soprano praised by *The Guardian* for her “irrepressible sense of drama and unmissable, urgent musicality”. Known for her versatility and passion for thoughtful programming, she performs a wide-ranging repertoire spanning contemporary music, art song, chamber music, early music, opera, and innovative cross-genre collaborations. An Associate of the Royal Academy of Music and Ambassador for Donne – Women in Music, Lotte has premiered over 30 new works and performed internationally at major venues and festivals, including debuts with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra under Sir Andrew Davis, the State Opera of South Australia, and the Grand Théâtre de Genève. Highlights include *Pierrot Lunaire* with Manchester Collective, *Dido and Aeneas* at the International Bach Festival Gran Canaria, and recitals at Wigmore Hall, Aldeburgh Festival, and the Australian Festival of Chamber Music. A regular collaborator with pianist Joseph Havlat and ensembles such as EXAUDI, Explore Ensemble, and the Ligeti Quartet, Lotte is featured on several acclaimed recordings. Winner of the Musician’s Company New Elizabethan Award and the Royal Over-Seas League Overseas Prize, she is also dedicated to education and advocacy, having led composition workshops and co-organised the Australian Bushfire Benefit London, which successfully raised over £40,000 for relief efforts.



Betty Makharinsky is a critically acclaimed soprano praised for her “exquisite” and “expressive” performances (*Planet Hugill*, *Seen and Heard International*). Betty’s 2025 highlights include Orff’s *Carmina Burana* with the Whitehall Orchestra, Bach’s cantatas BWV 23 and BWV 127 with I Barocchisti Orchestra, “Soprano I Solos” in Handel’s *Dixit Dominus* with the Covent Garden Chorus, and a Vache Baroque programme inspired by Oscar Wilde’s *De Profundis* letter. Betty made her Buxton International Festival debut as Euridice in Marc-Antoine Charpentier’s *La descente d’Orphée aux enfers* earlier this year, and will make her highly anticipated debut at Teatro Petruzzelli in 2026 as Annina in *La Traviata*. Recent milestones include Betty’s Italian opera debut in Leo Nucci’s *Madama Butterfly*, her appearance as a soprano soloist in Mahler’s *4th Symphony* at Chelsea Old Town Hall, and a nomination for an Off West End Award for her role in Purcell’s *The Fairy Queen*. A versatile artist, Betty has sung leading roles by Purcell, Britten, and Gluck, appeared with Utopia Choir at the Salzburg Festival, and given acclaimed recitals across Europe with pianists Timofeyevsky and Powell. A graduate of the University of Oxford and Guildhall School of Music & Drama, she co-founded Vache Baroque and Philomel Creative Circle, and continues her studies and artistic development in Italy with tenor Antonio Lemmo.



Raffaello Morales is an Italian conductor, pianist, and entrepreneur praised for his visionary leadership and artistic versatility. Born in Rome in 1987, Raffaello studied piano and composition in Italy, Austria, and the UK, and completed a MSc in Theoretical Physics and a PhD in Applied Mathematics in London. After a five-year career in investment banking, he dedicated himself fully to music, founding the Fidelio Orchestra and Fidelio Cafe in 2019 to provide a platform for young musicians and intimate world-class performances. Under his baton, the Fidelio Orchestra unites professionals, students, and talented amateurs, performing works including Strauss’s *Ein Heldenleben*, Mendelssohn’s violin concerto, and Mahler’s *Symphony No. 9* alongside soloists Angela Hewitt and Samson Tsoy. Fidelio Cafe offers a unique concert experience where audiences can dine and meet performers, while celebrated artists such as Nicola Benedetti, Imogen Cooper, and Paul Lewis have appeared under Morales’s direction. A passionate humanist and educator, he champions accessibility and innovation in classical music, combining his scientific, musical, and philosophical interests. Raffaello is also the author of the historical-fiction novel *The Earth to the Skies* (published earlier this year), a sweeping tale that blends music, psychoanalysis, and twentieth-century history to explore whether one man’s fate can change the course of music forever.

RESURRECTION BRIGADE



London Oriana Choir is one of Britain's leading non-professional choirs. Founded in 1973 and led by Dominic Ellis-Peckham since 2013, the choir performs a broad repertoire from early music and great choral works to contemporary commissions, jazz, folk, and popular music, often in multiple languages. Its members have sung at

venues including the O2 Arena and the Royal Albert Hall, with broadcasts on BBC Radio 3, Radio 4, and Classic FM, often accompanied by orchestras such as the Royal Philharmonic and the BBC Concert Orchestra. The choir has collaborated with artists including Sir Thomas Allen, Robert Plant, Barbra Streisand, and Madonna. Key highlights

include premiering Pete Townshend's *Classic Quadrophonia*, launching the five15 programme promoting female composers, performing at the BAFTA Games Awards, and celebrating their 15th anniversary with special concerts in 2023/24. The choir continues to inspire audiences with creative programming and superb artistry.



Founded in 2019, the **Fidelio Orchestra** has quickly become a vibrant and dynamic presence in London's classical music scene. Led by founder Morales, the orchestra brings together professional musicians, emerging talents, and skilled amateurs, united by a shared commitment to performing music at the highest

standard in an atmosphere both joyful and unpretentious. Run as a charity, it provides musicians with valuable orchestral experience and opportunities to collaborate with exceptional soloists, fostering a creative space where historical repertoire connects classical music with broader society. Named after Beethoven's operatic heroine,

Fidelio champions artistic freedom and inclusivity, performing in iconic venues such as Milton Court, LSO St Luke's and St John the Evangelist in Waterloo. Highlights include outstanding performances of Felix Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto* and Johann Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben*, combining creative programming, accuracy, and passion.

— Last but not least —



The Fidelio CIO Board of Trustees wishes to thank its supporters for donating generously to its charitable purpose. Your generosity allows us to go from strength to strength and to support a large network of grassroots musicians in London and beyond.



Continuing the collaboration between Tarisio and Fidelio, tonight we are delighted to feature two remarkable instruments that bring history to life in the hands of concertmaster Jaga Klimaszewska and principal violist Sirma Baranova.



Jaga Klimaszewska performs on a **violin by Lorenzo Storioni**, crafted in Cremona around 1790. Storioni is often regarded as the most important Cremonese maker of the late eighteenth century. Working at a time when Cremona was seeking its identity after the great masters had passed, his bold ideas helped carry the classical tradition into its early nineteenth-century revival. Inspired by the individuality of Giuseppe Guarneri 'del Gesù', his instruments are praised for their brilliant, powerful sound. Often described as the last great figure of the classic Cremonese school, Storioni helped sustain the legacy of Stradivari, Guarneri, and the Amati family during a period of transition.



Sirma Baranova performs on a **viola by Pietro Giovanni Mantegazza**, made in Milan around 1780. Mantegazza stands at a fascinating crossroads between the golden age of classical violin making and the beginnings of the modern violin trade. Trained in the circle of Carlo Ferdinando Landolfi, he later became a trusted collaborator of Count Cozio di Salabue, caring for and adapting many of the greatest Amati, Stradivari, and Guarneri instruments. Mantegazza's own violas from the 1780s and 1790s are especially admired for their depth, power, and warmth—qualities that make them favorites among today's performers.

About Tarisio

Tarisio is the leading name in the world of fine string instruments, known for its expertise, its trusted private sales, and its renowned online auctions. Its historical research is anchored by the Cozio Archive, the most comprehensive reference of its kind. With offices in New York, London, and Berlin, Tarisio brings together deep scholarship, global reach, and a commitment to connecting exceptional instruments with exceptional musicians.

Here's a snippet of next year's events

14 March, LSO St Luke's

Dethroning Emperors

On the antagonism between the artist and any form of authority: let's bury the conventional conqueror and celebrate the real hero through creative development. With music from Beethoven's *Third Symphony*, *Fifth Piano Concerto*, and *Eroica Variations*, featuring Fidelio and Gabriele Carcano.

23 May, LSO St Luke's

Popular Music

Why is classical music so unpopular? Why do some composers, well into the twentieth century, continue to refer to themselves as classical? Can it ever be popular? We will explore this topic with music by Philip Glass, George Gershwin, and Maurice Ravel, featuring violinist Roberts Balanas.

For tickets and further information, simply scan the QR code on the right. You can also visit www.fideliorchestra.org, where you'll be able to join our newsletter for the latest updates on upcoming gigs and concerts, learn more



about our history and mission, explore our donation programmes, and browse the full programme of our orchestral events for the season. Next season promises to be even more exciting, so be sure to book your tickets early before they sell out!