



## **Gustav Mahler - Symphony No. 3 in D minor for mezzo-soprano, female chorus, children choir and orchestra**

"My symphony will be something the world has not yet heard. All nature speaks to you and tells so profound secrets that perhaps we can only hear in dreams." These words by Mahler already contain the primary essence of Symphony no. 3 in D minor, the longest work of his production. Composed several times between 1893 and 1896, the colossal Third Symphony marks a median stage between the Second and Fourth with which it shares the same poetic inspiration, for the extra musical references to the world of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, and the same structure, for the alternation of purely instrumental movements to other vowels. Divided into six movements divided into two macro sections - the first of which is entirely occupied by the first movement - the Third is a musical poem that embraces all the evolutionary phases in a progressive and ascending crescendo, from the relationship of man with nature to relationship with God. Also in this symphony Mahler follows an interior program, a central idea from which the entire work develops, preparing a descriptive program of the individual tempos which is then canceled during the publication phase. In the very long first movement the composer portrays the awakening of the telluric forces that break through at a marching pace. Between glimpses of trumpets and horns and delicate wood patterns, the numerous themes used collide with each other in a sonic vortex of gigantic dimensions, where references to military and popular music add bite to the climate of Dionysian exaltation: it is the victorious summer that explodes in all its forms. If the second movement is a graceful portrait of the beauty of flora rendered with chamber tones and a slightly retro taste, the third is an imaginative slice of animal life in which Mahler transforms a *Wunderhorn Lied - Ablösung im Sommer* - into a suggestive page symphonic characterized by the ironic squabbles of a group of birds and the movements of peasant dance. This is followed by the contemplative nocturnal reflection on man, the only living person capable of deeply understanding his existential condition, entrusted to the contralto voice that sings a nostalgic chant on the lines of Nietzsche's *Midnight Song*. The tolling of festive bells of the penultimate movement dissolve the tension accumulated so far and accompany the voices of the angels (children's choir), ready to comfort the soul of the penitent man. But the final landing point of this long journey is even higher: it is the supreme love of God, reached in the last movement, a poignant Adagio articulated in a series of variations on a motif characterized by continuous jumps of fourth ascendant, expression of an ecstatic and superior level from which to contemplate the world.