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The "Orchestra of Soloists"
in Mahler's *Nachtmusik*

Abstract. Gustav Mahler's *Seventh Symphony* is one of the most enigmatic symphonic compositions of the twentieth century. Adorno, Floros, La Grange, Hefling, Knecht, and Sollertinsky, among others, analyzed its tonal structure, musical form, and the composer's orchestral inventiveness, formal, dramaturgical, and semantic functions of the instrumental solo in the Mahlerian orchestra and Mahler's original approach to the orchestra in general has not been examined in detail yet.

This paper argues that *Nachtmusik* (movements II and IV) have become an anthropomorphized musical portrayal, engendered primarily by the exceptional role of an in-the-orchestra solo (a solo of an instrument that is part of the orchestra). By analyzing textural, formal, and semantic functions of a solo, I maintain that an in-the-orchestra solo promotes an impression of a concerto performance. A concerto within the symphony becomes a central feature of Mahler's symphonic thinking, counteracting the monolithic nature of the orchestra and thus transforming it into the "orchestra of soloists" as Mahler's original concept of the collective. Moreover, "in-orchestra ensembles," created by temporary unions of the soloists, become a semantically and dramaturgically significant element of musical performance.

The *Nachtmusik*'s musical worlds are rendered more vividly through the process of "solo analysis". This original methodology of the orchestra's research allows us to examine the change in the relationships between the in-the-orchestra soloists, sections, and *tutti* in order to determine technical and aesthetic purposes of the use of a solo. The birdsong and cowbells, forestage and backstage groups of characters appear in *Nachtmusik I* as the operatic characters embodied by means of continuous solos, duos, and a trio of soloists. Hence come different instruments to play solo. The serenade-like mood of the *Nachtmusik II* performs a few permanent characters and thus requires a more constant list of soloists to perform a story.

Close analysis of the orchestra of soloists offers a new perspective on Mahler's symphonic thinking, suggesting that the solo becomes a quintessential core of his later practice. The concerto-like character within this symphony surely references the style of the *sinfonia concertante,* while opening a musical door for the landmarks of the twentieth-century concert hall. The chamber symphonies, particularly the concerto for orchestra, are undoubtedly indebted to Mahlerian practice.

Keywords: the orchestra of soloists, Mahler's *Seventh symphony*, *Nachtmusiken*, orchestration.

Introduction

Gustav Mahler's symphonies summarize symphonic explorations of the nineteenth century and anticipate approaches to the orchestra in the twentieth century. Very few composers have escaped Mahler's influence, as he "continued to be appropriated as a prophet of modernism and model of progressive innovation" (Botstein 2002: 4). I believe such a statement can be applied to Mahler's musical forms, the use of a number of specific features in the orchestration, as well as the relationships between the vertical and the horizontal in his orchestral structures.

The latter is often considered as an important feature of symphonic music at the turn of the twentieth century. Karen Painter considers the interaction between the two structures through the lens of the interaction of dissonance and counterpoint noting that "developments in counterpoint incited more wrath than developments in harmonic language" (Painter 2001: 201). It should also be noted that the active interaction of vertical (i.e. modern or "new") dissonant structures and horizontal (i.e. traditional or "old") linear writing takes place among many composers of the early twentieth century. But it is in precisely in Mahler's symphonic compositions that the interpenetration of the two opposite vectors occurred with particular persistence; each line in the orchestra was performed independently and clearly and had a maximum differentiation due to dissimilar timbral colours.[1] Coexistence of melodic and timbral counterpoint creates this distinctive transparence of Mahler's scores despite a number of instruments playing simultaneously.

This combination of contrapuntal and harmonic thinking is the manifestation of the synergy of different styles and even epochs in the Mahlerian orchestra. Peter Davison suggests that in Mahler's music, "there is nostalgia for an idyll represented as the golden age of Viennese music; the 'classical' symphony, the 'innocent' romanticism of Schubert and even the insouciant hedonism of the waltz" (Davison 1997: 23–24). In fact, this idea shows that Davison interprets Mahler as a composer who synthesizes different stylistic origins and, thus, clearly augurs the importance of this particular trait for twentieth century art as a whole: fusions in painting, cinema, theatre, design, etc., became a principal tendency in twentieth-century culture. Late-nineteenth and

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[1]   "Every note, line, instrument, colour, plink, twitter, thud, grunt, swoosh, and screech is meant to be heard" (Hurwitz 2004: 179).

early-twentieth century orchestration practices (such as the different approaches to the orchestra and their coexistence, the use of rare or old instruments in the scores, etc.) strongly influenced late twentieth-century orchestral practices. This includes traditional and experimental approaches to the orchestra: inter-stylistic (a combination of different styles as in Gershwin's *Concerto in F,* where a jazzy melody is played by violins and flutes) and inter-temporal fusions (a juxtaposition of the eighteenth-century *concerto grosso* and the twentieth-century prepared piano as in Schnittke's works) in orchestration.

I think that it was Mahler's orchestration, with its inclusion of old plucked instruments, countless solos from each and every orchestral section, the synergy of multi-voiced counterpoint (complicated, as noted above, with dissonant harmony) with a completely romantic approach to the timbre, melody, and harmony that manifests this tendency toward synthesis is especially clear. Nevertheless, despite the existing consensus regarding Mahler's unique role in the development of the twentieth-century art, and considering the influence of the composer's work through the prism of the synthesis of words and music, or searching for new symphonic forms, the innovativeness of Mahler's interpretation of the orchestra is one of the most rarely mentioned and studied problems.

Mahler's *Seventh Symphony* (1907), despite its continuous "status as 'Cinderella' in the Mahlerian canon" (Knecht 2019: 2), may be connected to mainstream symphonic composition while also being one of the most enigmatic symphonic compositions of the twentieth century. Thanks to frequent performances since the 1960s when a number of conductors have offered their interpretations of the work, professional musicians as well as the audience have got to know this composition well, and during the last few decades, various researchers attempted to examine it in depth. Nevertheless, arguably, the inexplicable magnetism of this composition's mysterious world has not been yet solved, and many questions still remain.[2] This allows us to consider the symphony as "one of the most provocative symphonic statements of the early twentieth century" (Knecht 2019: 1) with "a most unusual attitude for a Mahler symphony" (Cooke 1988: 88), and as Mahler's "most perplexing work" (Hefling 2007: 127).

In this paper, I would like to concentrate on Mahler's particular approach to the orchestra in the movements entitled *Nachtmusik* because, as I mentioned earlier, this issue is the least studied in Mahler scholarship. In each section of the orchestra, a variety of performers receive soloist treatments in concerto style that breach the confines of their sectional role – an approach which undoubtedly opens the door to further twentieth-century innovations. Thus, I examine the role of the soloists in the construction of the musical form of each movement, and discuss how this new concept of the orchestra allowed Mahler to embody the programme (hidden or declared[3]) with such realism, and how Mahler's original approach to the orchestra has impacted twentieth-century composers.

Literature Review

The two *Nachtmusik* movements (second and fourth) of the *Seventh Symphony* traditionally attract most attention. Criticism of the first movement and especially of the Finale, combined with the admiration of the middle movements, is quite common. Deryck Cooke writes that the symphony, as a whole, is "the least well known, and of those who know it well, hardly anyone is prepared to praise it wholeheartedly – though there is general agreement as to the unique fascination of the three central movements" (Cooke 1988: 88–89). Hence, Peter Franklin's note about the *Seventh Symphony* as "mysteriously canny about its cumulative meaning" (Franklin 1997: 158–159). Peter Revers calls these movements "the most outstanding phenomena in Mahler's symphonic output" (Revers 1999: 384) and Igor Sollertinsky describes them as [the] "lyric veiled by grotesque" (Sollertinsky 1956: 307).

A prominent Mahler's specialist, Constantin Floros, emphasizes the history of its writing, the structure of the symphony, and major/minor juxtapositions found in the work, comparing them to "light-dark effects" (Floros 1993: 199). He writes about the "call-like motif" in the orchestration of the first *Nachtmusik*

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[2] One could find an almost a full list of "unsolved questions" on Mahler in a recent essay of famous Mahler's researcher, James Zychowicz. His list includes the problem of order of the movements in a few symphonies, coexistence of quite different editions of Mahler's scores, a number of issues concerning performing practices of Mahler's music. He also mentions Mahler's musical structures, programmatic implications, and "the intertextuality that emerges from Mahler's use of quotation and allusion" (Zychowicz 2011: 476). Mahlerian orchestration (but not Mahler's approach to the orchestra in general) is mentioned in Zychowicz's list as well.

[3] See Niall O'Loughlin's intriguing interpretation of the *Seventh Symphony* as a Faust-novel.

(Ibid.: 199) and emphasizes the reduced "like chamber music" orchestra in the second one (Ibid.: 203). However, it should be noted that the role of orchestration in the construction of original musical forms of each *Nachtmusik* as well as the role of the soloists from within the orchestra on the structure of each movement are hardly considered. Referring to Mahler's original indications of tempo, Floros stresses that the imitations of nature (i.e. birds, cowbells tinkling,[4] etc.) were used "to resemble a nocturnal bird concert because at the final return of the introduction, measures 319–320, he [Mahler – V. R.] indicated *wie Vogelstimmen* (like bird calls) in the score" (Ibid.: 199).

One can hear "birdsongs" in Mahler's earlier symphonies as well. Christian Goubault refers to the birdsong in Mahler's *Second Symphony*, in the fifth movement, in the flute after the call between a horn and the trumpets (Goubault 2017: 179). Thomas Peattie recalls even earlier Mahler symphony, the *First*: "Many have heard the introduction to the First symphony as an untroubled representation of Nature" (Peattie 2002: 186), although he considers the "Nature's sounds" more philosophically. Interrelations between the Mahler's indications in the scores and the means of orchestral expression that he applies to present a musical idea within certain context ("the calls of the winds surrounded by utter silence give the effect of someone calling out loudly in the still of the night" (Ibid.: 200)) might allow us to better understand "the fact that Mahler's music offers challenges that require sensitivity to the content" (Zychowicz 2011: 468). I would add, even "a particular kind of sensitivity".

At first glance, perhaps, a special emphasis on the exceptional role of soloists in the orchestra may seem optional: their activity is obvious. But it is a constant use of soloists, a variety of forms of combinations of instruments, and the role of soloists in marking sections of the musical forms that reveal the interdependence between necessity for different (as in the first *Nachtmusik*) or recurring soloists (as in the second *Nachtmusik*). Such an approach to the solo in the orchestra, its importance in actualizing the musical material, and the interdependence between a number of solos and their types, on the one hand, and the content of the music, on the other hand that are the quintessence of Mahler's orchestral thinking in this composition and in general. It also should be stressed that quite often the composer includes some atypical instruments for the symphonic orchestra, such as a guitar or a mandolin. However, Mahler is not focused merely on a colour or picturesque effect. As Schoenberg emphasized (Schoenberg 1977: 362), the movement is conceived based on particular timbres. Thus, the rare timbre (the post horn in the *Third Symphony* or the mandolin in the *Seventh*) becomes not only the starting point, but the very core of the musical concept in each case.

Anna Stoll Knecht compares Mahler's own description of his *Seventh Symphony,* the "three-night pieces; bright finale" to a "passage from 'Johannisnacht' to 'Johannistag' in *Meistersinger*" (Knecht 2017: 119): "Wagner's day in *Meistersingers* resolves the conflict between tradition and innovation … But Mahler's ordinary day – marked Allegro ordinario – leaves the listener with a feeling that certain expectations … are not to be satisfied" (Ibid.). The comparison of Mahler's *Seventh Symphony* and Wagner's *Meistersingers* is very promising because it reveals strong links between the two masters of German/Austrian school of orchestration. The latter is characterized by heavy sounds, thick textures diluted by chamber-like music (also typical of Richard Strauss – recall his *Till Eulenspiegel* or *Ein Heldenleben*), the use of a large orchestra with a full brass section. These instruments can be treated as either highly powerful or extremely quiet. It is worth emphasizing that in the latter case the brass section *pianissimo* is potentially even scarier than *fortissimo*, because a listener may sense an exceptional, but hidden, power in those dynamics (recall Wagner's leitmotiv of *Destiny* performed by the brass). Thus, this *pianissimo* is just a starting point for a strong and mighty wave that is completely ready to strike one's consciousness.

The connection between Mahler's symphony and Wagner's opera becomes even more evident because of the use of the mandolin in both of these compositions. One recalls the lute in the hands of Beckmesser and the sound of the mandolin in the second *Nachtmusik*, although they convey different semantics. Wagner used it ironically to express Beckmesser's extreme irritation, while in the second *Nachtmusik*, Mahler treated the

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[4]   Peattie notes that "in most accounts of the Sixth Symphony the cowbells have been understood both as a symbol of solitude and contemplation and as a sonority that is suggestive a specifically alpine setting" (Peattie 2011: 69). I think that this statement, which becomes another confirmation of the synthesis of different principles in Mahler's symphonic worlds, could be applied to the *Seventh Symphony* as well. The first *Nachtmusik* represents a kaleidoscope of nocturnal events, and amidst these turbulences, perhaps, there is a place for pleasant memories, nostalgia, and loneliness.

mandolin as a creator of a particular "atmosphere."[5] These comparisons can be helpful to better understand Mahler's particular approach to the orchestra. Unfortunately, Knecht, as Floros earlier, just points out "chamber-like orchestration of the second *Nachtmusik*" (Ibid.: 120) and limits herself by the analogies between these two compositions, even taking into consideration the fact that they represent two different worlds – operatic and symphonic, respectively.

In the context of the links between Mahler and Wagner, it is worth recalling the ideas of Hans Redlich. He suggested that "only the synthesis of strict polyphony and operatic processes which becomes operative in Eight Symphony enabled contemporary audiences to get a first inkling of Mahler's creative mission" (Redlich 1960: 418). Redlich indicated that "the discrepancy between the simplicity of the melodies and the complexity of the orchestration seemed to suggest that their creator had tried to repeat the subtle compositional game of the Vienna classics with impoverished substance" (Ibid.). I understand such a combination of simplicity and complexity as a marker of Mahler's inclination to textural, structural, formal synthesis of diverse origins at all levels of his compositions. For example, there is a unique combination of the horizontal and vertical lines in the orchestral textures, enormous power and dynamics of *tutti* and the subtlest solo without accompaniment reflect an approach of a contrapuntal composer with an obsession with clarity of each sound in the orchestra. Or, there is a synergy of Lied and symphony traced back to Schubert and, perhaps, Berlioz. Or, one might suggest a concerto origin of some aspects of the symphony (for instance, in the Scherzo of Mahler's *Ninth Symphony*). It is not possible to overstate the importance of orchestration in all types of synthesis in Mahler's works.

In her newly published monograph – the first work completely dedicated to Mahler's *Seventh Symphony* – Knecht considers links between this work and a larger group of compositions that might have inspired Mahler. She writes about a number of allusions in the Symphony to Wagner's operas, Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, and Offenbach's operettas, and agrees with Adorno's acknowledgment of Mahler's affinities with opera (Knecht 2019: 3). It seems obvious that *Nachtmusik*'s theatricality in general, and the parade of the soloists as different "like-in-the-opera" characters in particular, might be considered as Mahler's homage to the operatic genre.

Stephen Hefling pays more attention to the orchestra and, in particular, to the semantics-embodied by the orchestra in the first *Nachtmusik*. He remarks, "indeed, the abundance of sonic symbols is bewildering: distant horn calls and responses, chipper military fanfares, wind band music, and birdsong all come and go" (Hefling 2007: 125). Hefling refers to the works of Theodor Adorno, specifically, Adorno's comparison of semantics of Mahler's Sixth and Seventh symphonies and his special attention to the character of three middle movements of the latter. Adorno considered the shadow of the Sixth Symphony over the Seventh Symphony: "The shadow of the Sixth, in which the movement exists, then becomes the realm of shadows of the three middle movements. Vanished is the tragic aspiration of the Sixth" (Adorno 1995: 101). Drawing on this statement, Hefling treats the *Nachtmusik* in a slightly more positive light. He argues that, "tragic aspiration has vanished, replaced by retrospective romanticism gently tinged with irony" (Hefling 2007: 124). This idea is close to Sollertinsky's treatment, when he heard "'parfums de la nuit' – the nocturnal aromas in both nocturnes – catch" in *Nachtmusik* and valued them as highly as Debussy's or Ravel's symphonic works (Sollertinsky 1956: 297). Helfliger describes the atmosphere of the *Nachtmusik* and emphasizes a few unusual instruments included in the score – guitar and mandolin. However, the author does not even mention Mahler's unique approach to the orchestra as a whole, although it would be logical to get deeper into his ideas of "sonic symbols" and "a real guitar and mandolin" (Hefling 2007: 125). It seems that Helfiger's observations should have included, at least, a remark about the soloists, and the significance of their appearance in the *Nachtmusik*.

Even this brief literature review evidences a wide palette of observations, assessments, and ideas that reveal different aspects of the Seventh Symphony. Nevertheless, the orchestra itself, and the particulars of Mahler's approach to the orchestra have yet not been considered in detail by Mahler's scholars. Musicologists note the perfection of orchestration, masterful techniques of presentation, the increased size of the orchestra, and Mahler's interest in pure timbres. In my opinion, a general conclusion regarding why Mahler approach to the orchestra is innovative has been still lacking.

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[5]   The mandolin in the "Farewell" from Mahler's *Lied von der Erde* fulfills an important function of creating an "atmosphere" as well, although the mood in this movement is far from being romantic. In fact, the instrument's timbre intimates nostalgia for an ideal past, which, alas, will never return.

Discussion

From the middle of the eighteenth to the end of the nineteenth century, the standard orchestral texture was based on and supported by the sound of the string sections (or strings and horns). However, at the turn of the twentieth century, another model of the orchestra emerged, drawing on the importance of in-the-orchestra solos. This approach to solos, although not systematic, was used before Mahler by other composers, such as Wagner, Debussy, and Tchaikovsky. One could recall the English horn's solo in the third act of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*, the flute's solo at the beginning of Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, or the story of Francesca, evoked by the clarinet solo in Tchaikovsky's *Francesca da Rimini*. But it was the Mahlerian orchestra, in which a real *system of solos* was formed. A concerto principle appears in the framework of a symphony with a new approach to each performer and including different forms of soloists' ensembles as a manifestation of what I suggest might be called an "orchestra of soloists."

Using this definition, I emphasize a conceptually different interpretation of Mahler's orchestra, in comparison to other composers (not only his classical predecessors, but also his contemporaries). The "orchestra of soloists" presupposes that the collective is not conceived as a whole from which the composer singles out soloists from time to time. Such an approach to the orchestra is typical for classical and romantic composers. In this orchestra, a composer relies mostly on the string section. The solos are mostly played by the wind instruments, while the string section is thought of as a whole with a possibility of *divisi*. In Mahler's approach to the orchestra, the collective appears as a very large ensemble, in which there is practically a classification of leading and secondary instruments, and there is no predominance of soloing in winds, strings, or percussions. Thus, the Mahlerian orchestra of soloists is a team of performers on different instruments, each of whom reveals, as much as possible, its own personality during the performance. In such an orchestra, the role of a feeling, an emotion, and a subjective approach to the performance increases significantly, since the solo-play is quite different to the play within a section. In such an orchestra, improvisation is enhanced, as each performer, playing solo, strives for a unique interpretation. In this kind of orchestra, the semantics of timbres grows significantly, because each tone is connected by our hearing mechanism not with a sectional (i.e. with a more objective and generalized colour), but with the solo (i.e. with a more subjective and personified colour) and, thus, with a specific performer and his/her individuality.

In this essay, I examine the second and fourth movements (*Nachtmusik*) of the Seventh Symphony in order to demonstrate Mahler's new approach to the orchestra with concerto-like solos, the formation of ensembles-in-orchestra, and their formative, dramaturgical, semantic and expressive functions. The combination of different functions in a solo is common, in general, but it is particularly noticeable in Mahler's scores. For example, the horn combines formative, sound-painting, and expressive functions when it appears on the edge of the sections in the first *Nachtmusik*, embodying the calls of a night watchman and representing different moods of each of the calls through dissimilar quality of sounds.

Let's start with the formative function. The horn call duet opens the first *Nachtmusik* and appears between its multiple sections, as if marking their boundaries. The manifestation of the concerto is found in the dynamics, timbre, and contrasting mood. The two soloists demonstrate a clear ordinary sound and its obscured reflection (a stopped sound), intimating the light and the shadow, or real and imaginary worlds. Juxtaposition of major and minor mode-inflections are significant from the first measure. The contrast of the two modes had been symbolic of Mahler since the Sixth Symphony's fate motives, when a bright major chord dissolves into the minor. The physically tangible juxtaposition of the two worlds embodies the extraordinary expressiveness of each performance. In subsequent repetitions, it is the horns and other soloists which perform the calls, e.g., the viola and the bassoon solos. Thus, the mood becomes gloomier and the contrast between the actors (soloists) and the whole world (orchestra) is much deeper: "Mahler seemed to speak for everyone by articulating the experience of unjustly marginalized" (Botstein 2002: 10), as if the dissimilar timbres and dynamics of the soloists symbolize different personalities and reflect their very individual traits.

The soloists play an important dramaturgical function, interrupting the progression of musical material or changing its course. Their attempt may be futile, as expressed by a sudden timpani stroke in the first *Nachtmusik*. In this instance, the negative force of a single sound is countered by the strings (full section), and the soloist, despite a few attempts to proceed, steps back. Probably, it could be explained by mostly mysterious character of the movement's beginning. It seems that the composer simply did not need such a straightforward clash between the soloist and the orchestra. Perhaps, it would be too dramatic and could destroy a

"shadowy" mood, when the characters are mostly not evident, touchable or visible, but rather obscure, elusive, and fantastic.

There is an example of a successful attempt to change a course of musical development: a "Mandolin[6] ensemble" in the second *Nachtmusik* acts as a time machine. In the B-flat major episode (*Nachtmusik II*, figures 197–200), the cello solo (doubled in unison by the horn solo in Fig. 197), with the orchestra's accompaniment, plays a melody saturated with different rhythmical formulas. The accompaniment engages different timbres with a few rhythmic formulas, thus creating a contrast to the melody. The accompaniment is produced by several instruments, but the texture is transparent because of the timbral contrasts and different functions of the instruments. The bassoon and the violas produce long notes to create a depth of the scene. The harp repeats the regular crochets as if to calm down the motion. The two clarinets develop the ostinato formula borrowed from the very beginning of the movement. The dialogue between the clarinets is the most particular element in the accompaniment. Until Figure 197, clarinet's formulas and the remnants of the torn melody were heard in a single instrument (mostly, clarinet). Starting with Figure 197, this musical material becomes more complicated, due to the endless alternations between the two instruments. This adds undertones of irony to the cello's melody. Hence comes a touch of excitement in the form of a broad and calm melody performed by the strings which becomes more illusory and not quite real. The viola's pedal offers stability, while the cellos' pizzicato gives a touch of coquetry. Thus, the scene is not so serene as it might be seen at first glance. With the G-flat major, there are several string sections that "sing" the melody, and a number of instruments without clarinets allow the melody to sound absolutely clear and free. This is like a scene from real life and in present time.

Suddenly, the ensemble-in-orchestra (two flutes, horn, mandolin, harp and violin solo) breaks everything down: a rich melody is replaced by a simple descending scale, intricate rhythmic patterns are replaced by the repetition of the crochets, and a well-balanced and full strings' tone is changed to a multi-coloured, mosaic-like, and transparent chamber ensemble. For the second time, the ensemble creates even a brighter contrast to previous music material due to a sudden key shift (F minor of the whole orchestra and a remote key of A major appeared in the mandolin's ensemble without any transition). In addition to the evident dramaturgical function (interrupting a calm flow of music), this mandolin ensemble of soloists has an important semantic function: it is a parody of a real life. It is created by the sharpness of timbre and dynamic, textural, and tonal contrasts, and an emphasized mechanistic nature of articulation. The time machine of the mandolin ensemble affects the orchestra's performance: a deliberate *appoggiatura* "a la ancient music", a sweet *ritenuto*, hung high notes, a *glissando*. A reappearance of the mandolin ensemble (Fig. 200, then Fig. 202) makes the whole orchestra seem as if it is going crazy: the tempo is getting faster, the melody is constantly ascending, a tonal clarity seems to disappear. Now, it is no more a parody, but a chance of the approaching catastrophe. All calmness, all stability, all predictability of further development, which are supported by the whole orchestra, are being destroyed by a small group of soloists. "Plucked accompaniments often merge into and subtly displace the melody punctuated by a real guitar and mandolin" (Hefling 2007: 125), as in figures 180 and 183 that is suddenly being transformed into a rebel, capable of destroying the entire structure from the inside. A mandolin ensemble creates this short but the dramatic climax and evaporates, as if by magic, thus proving its privileged position of a hidden leader: the soloist and the ensemble of the soloists take over the sections and the orchestra as a whole. It is a completely new approach to the role of the soloist from within of the orchestra, and to its relationship with the orchestra in general.

Floros wrote, "guitar and mandolin occur only in this movement [*Nachtmusik* II – V. R.], which is orchestrated like chamber music" (Floros 1993: 203). Although I agree with this statement, it seems that it should be further clarified. In this episode (figures 201–206) – and probably in the *Nachtmusik* in general – "like chamber music orchestration" has completely changed its meaning. While it is "chamber" according to a formal description (a small ensemble of soloists), but it is not more a "chamber" in its importance compared to the entire orchestra.

The analysis of this episode from *Nachtmusik II* points to significant changes in the approach to the in-the-orchestra soloists implemented by Mahler and, therefore, to a principal transformation of the orchestra as a whole. This orchestra of soloists is characterized by numerous and diverse chamber ensembles (from

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6   I suggest to call it so because the mandolin acts like a head of this instrumental ensemble. It seems that it is this instrument that instigates the others.

two to ten participants). They create a timbre and texture relief, emphasize the value of each timbre, form a multi-layered depth of sounds, and add a particular vibrancy. All these features of solos engender a specific character and reinforce a narrative origin. Thomas Peattie emphasizes "a fundamental and largely unacknowledged tension between the music's episodic structure and its often-noted narrative impulse" (Peattie 2015: 7). It seems to me that both of these factors may explain the variety of soloists in Mahler's orchestra.

To add more examples, in the first *Nachtmusik*, there are two duets with the instruments playing in thirds. The third becomes the "leit"-interval of the entire middle section. Mahler is constantly re-orchestrating it, as if drawing new faces and then transforming them. The first duo is played by oboes, amplified in the odd measures by the flutes' unison doubling. The play of thirds and sixths adds spaciousness to the sound and creates a special vibration of overtones. The second duet is performed by two cellos with the unison doubling of the oboe and English horn. The concerto-like episode is enriched by the secondary horizontal layer of French horns and trumpets in thirds. This episode offers an interesting presentation of music material: both duos (two woodwind instruments and two cellos soli) possess identical force. As a result, the sound sort of rolls between the two timbral groups, although, the cello's warmer timbre with its vibration subtly dominates.

Undoubtedly, ensembles play an important role in this work. They temporary and very flexibly depend on the mood of a particular moment. The trio at the beginning of the first *Nachtmusik* (oboe, clarinet and horn) intimates real-life-like characters, embodied by contrasting timbres and rhythmic patterns that narrate the first-person stories. A concerto-based essence of this section is emphasized by means of the improvisatory character of the music. This trait is characteristic of a solo, not an instrumental section writing. The quartet, and with the appearance of the French horn, the quintet, begins the second *Nachtmusik*. The ensemble is playing a nocturnal serenade. Plucked guitar and harp create a romantic atmosphere, but somewhat heavy timbre of the horn adds a touch of parody and highlights the grotesque property of this so-called serenade.

Ensembles, such as the ensembles of woodwinds at the beginning of the first *Nachtmusik*, can emphasize contrasts: textural (ensemble and sections), timbral (winds and strings), rhythmic (dotted and not dotted rhythm), and melodic (repetition/slowing down and development/motion). The effect is similar to a live broadcast of a big public event, when, from time to time, the camera focuses on only a few individuals standing, as if positioning them apart from the crowd. Thus, the ensemble puts an accent on the multifaceted nature of the event, adding a touch of theatricality.

Comparing the soloists in the first and second *Nachtmusik*, I would point out two differences. Firstly, the first *Nachtmusik* is dominated by ensembles of wind instruments, while in the second one, Mahler prefers mixed ensembles. The reason for that may be a more transparent texture of the second *Nachtmusik* with a careful attention to each timbre and a peculiar compensation for the smaller orchestra, when the ensemble itself is treated as an orchestra in a miniature. Secondly, there is a difference in the choice of soloists: almost all instruments have a solo in the first *Nachtmusik*. However, violin, mandolin, guitar, clarinet, oboe, and French horn are the only soloists in the second *Nachtmusik*. While, I suggest, the plucked instruments symbolize ancient times and create the atmosphere of *Andante amoroso*, such immersion in the past is absent in the first *Nachtmusik*, resulting in Mahler's assigning solos to different timbres.

Conclusions

This analysis allows me to make the following principal conclusion: Mahler transforms traditional approach to the orchestra by modifying the structure of the orchestra through the system of solos. It is achieved through the following means:

1) Practically all scored instruments have solo episodes. In the two movements I have analyzed, there are solos of almost every orchestral instrument with the exception of, perhaps, a double bass;

2) Mahler uses a variety of the solo types in both *Nachtmusik*: unaccompanied (I call it *absolute*), accompanied by an ensemble, section, or orchestra;

3) Ensembles-in-the-orchestra perform sonorous, semantic, expressive, formal, dramaturgical, and textural functions in the piece. This allows the composer to achieve unprecedented flexibility in the use of all the resources of the orchestra. Every melodic, contrapuntal, and timbral effect can be heard very clearly; clarity above everything else became Mahler's obsession.

This approach engenders a concept of a concerto within a symphony, due to the following compositional strategies:

A) Mahler creates a kaleidoscope of "pure" instrumental timbres to infuse particular traits of each and every musical character.

B) Concerto-like solos of different instruments reflect the relationship between a particular type of solo (absolute, with accompaniment, an ensemble of soloists, etc.) and the character that this solo embodies.

C) Spatial and dynamic explorations of the instrument immersion emphasize the expressiveness of each register.

D) The dialogues between soloists, as well as between soloists and the rest of the orchestra produce effect of a live communication and reinforce narrativity in the music.

E) A solo-play is characterized by a touch of improvisation, in comparison with the performance of a material by a section or *tutti.*

A solo becomes the essence of Mahler's orchestral thinking and the embodiment of his innovative approach to the orchestra. The orchestra is interpreted as a union of soloists and not as a monolithic whole. This creates an absolute equality of each orchestral section in both value and functions. This approach, in turn, forms a flexible and multifunctional union, between a *tutti* created by dozens of musicians and a fragile, and sometimes a "lonely" solo. The in-the-orchestra soloists in Mahler's orchestra have paved the way for a new understanding of the orchestra, and to the equality of instrumental sections within the contrapuntal framework.

The use of a solo in a concerto-like manner in the symphony produces expressive and sonorous accents. This is how the glockenspiel, cowbells in the first, and the guitar and mandolin in the second *Nachtmusik* work. Even a three-note ornamentation in glockenspiel acts as a short concerto performance because our perceptive mechanisms react immediately to an intriguing and unexpected colour. Mahler's orchestral texture is incredibly flexible because "the Mahlerian orchestra gives the impression of overwhelm, of a tension that stretches to the point of shattering and collapsing to be reborn immediately in unprecedented instrumental assemblages and complex doublings" (Goubault 2017: 181). It is evident that, due to continuous switching, a sudden shift from a solo to *tutti* or a combination of *tutti* and instrumental section, on the one hand, and ensembles-in-the-orchestra and soloists (with less contrast juxtapositions), on the other hand, emphasize textural and timbral oppositions. An unusually close attention to combining contrapuntal layers with harmonic verticality distinguishes Mahler's orchestral style and determines a significant role of soloing in his orchestra.

Referring to Ernst T.W. Hoffmann, Revers described a "dual aspect of night as being of calmness and inner peace, as well as belonging to the power of darkness and supernatural forces" (Revers 1999: 384). I believe that it is Mahler's "feelings" of the night, particularly of such a "perfumed" night (after Sollertinsky), as in *Nachtmusik II*, where this ambiguity reveals itself clearly. In fact, as Niekerk Carl pointed out, Mahler "reconstructed German culture history in ways very different from those of the composers before him in whose tradition he worked (Wagner, Bruckner) as well as those of his contemporaries (Hugo Wolf, Richard Strauss)" (Niekerk 2010: 212). It is precisely this idea that acquires a new meaning in the context of the present solo-analysis of the *Nachtmusik*. Drawing on established German symphonic traditions (including the concept of the orchestra as an institution and the ways to organize music material), Mahler rethinks the possibilities of this collective. Interior structure of the orchestra (as one whole with a possibility of division into sections, and sometimes with solos, mostly of winds), and a number of techniques to express his musical ideas (particularly in-the-orchestra solo). The composer rethought counterpoint that was "quintessential to German musical identity and the historical starting point for Western art music" (Painter 2001: 201). This leads to a completely different understanding of the orchestra: it continues to reflect "traditional" German dualism in artistic depictions of the night and the treatment of "old" counterpoint in new historical circumstances. And while Mahler's approach to the orchestra maintains their importance, the composer significantly enhanced the orchestra's semantic potential. The number of solos and ensembles in the orchestra embody an anthropomorphized musical portraiture, engendered primarily by Mahler's concerto-like treatment of the orchestra. Through Mahler, the concept of the "orchestra of soloist" had acquired strong grounding by the beginning of the twentieth century.

The unprecedented flexibility of the Mahlerian orchestra becomes the basis for the emergence of chamber orchestras of the twentieth century, and the impetus for the appearance of new forms of interaction inside the orchestra (for example, as in Ligeti's *Mysteries of the Macabre* with Sir Simon Rattle and Barbara Hannigan). A new approach to the orchestra has prepared the appearance of the "concerto for orchestra" genre, and further conceptualization of concerto within symphony led to the several transformations of the genre of symphony, including the chamber symphony (Schoenberg, Webern, Schreker), symphony-concerto (Prokofiev, Szymanowski), among others. Thus, Mahler's concept of the "orchestra of soloists" became the basis for further interpretations of the orchestra in the twentieth century and had a significant impact on the entire evolution of the orchestra.

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„Solistų orkestras" Mahlerio *Nakties muzikoje*

Santrauka

Gustavo Mahlerio Septintoji simfonija (1907), nepaisant tebegaliojančio jos „*Pelenės* pavadinimo mėriškajame kanone" (Knecht), priklauso vyraujančiam simfoniniam repertuarui, tačiau ji yra ir viena paslaptingiausių XX a. simfoninių kompozicijų. Muzikos tyrėjai (Adorno, Floros, La Grange, Heflingas, Knechtas, Sollertinsky ir kt.) analizavo jos tonalią struktūrą ir muzikos formą. Kompozitoriaus orkestruotės išradingumas taip pat buvo aptariamas. Vis dėlto teoretikai mažai dėmesio skyrė originaliam Mahlerio požiūriui į orkestrą – jo traktavimo transformacijai bei muzikinės medžiagos realizavimo pokyčiams, ypač solo vaidmeniui. Šios ypatybės dar nebuvo detaliai nagrinėtos.

Straipsnyje teigiama, kad *Nakties muzika* (antra ir ketvirta dalys) tapo antropomorfizuotu muzikiniu atvaizdu, sąlygotu, visų pirma, naujų solo atlikimo funkcijų, o dėl to – ir orkestro traktavimo kaip koncerto apskritai. Analizuodamas faktūrines, formodaros ir semantines solo funkcijas, autorius laikosi požiūrio, kad „solo orkestre" (instrumento solo, kuris yra orkestro dalis) sukelia koncerto tipo įspūdį. Nors daug kompozitorių (ypač XIX a. pabaigos) periodiškai naudojo „solo orkestre" principą (prisiminkime Wagnerį, Čaikovskį, Debussy ir kt.), būtent Mahleris pavertė solo ypatingu orkestrinio garso bruožu. Jo požiūriui į „solo orkestre", kuris pabrėžia kiekvieno tembro vertę, daugiasluoksnį garsų gylį ir specifinę muzikinę vibraciją, būdinga charakterių personifikacija, esmingai pakeitusi orkestro traktavimą.

Koncerto pobūdis simfonijoje tampa centriniu Mahlerio simfoninio mąstymo bruožu, kuris priešpriešinamas monolitiniam orkestro pobūdžiui ir transformuojamas į solistų orkestrą. Šios ypatybės akivaizdžiausios kompozicijoje *Nakties muzika*, kurios muzikiniai pasauliai ryškiau atsiskleidžia „solo analizių" procese. *Nakties muzikos I* paukščio giesmė ir varpeliai tampa fantastinėmis operos tipo istorijomis, o personažai įkūnijami įvairiomis solo priemonėmis, duetais ar tercetais. Jų kaita įneša „atsitiktinių šviesos blyksnių" (Peattie) į keistą nerimastingų naktų pasaulį, kol serenadų tipo *Nakties muzikos II* nuotaikai prireikia pastovesnio solistų sąrašo „prikvėpintų naktų" (Sollertinsky) istorijai išpažinti. Laikinų solistų junginių „ansambliai orkestre" tampa semantiškai ir dramaturgiškai svarbiu muzikinio atlikimo elementu.

Autorius pritaria Zychowicz idėjai, kad „modernizmas, kurį jis [Mahleris – *V. R.*] įgyvendino savo muzikinėse struktūrose, reikalavo naujų priemonių" (Zychowicz 2011: 474), ir mano, kad šis teiginys galėtų būti pritaikomas Mahlerio orkestrinėms technikoms, skirtoms įgyvendinti jo muzikines idėjas. Solo tampa puikia priemone kiekvieną tembrą klausytojams pristatyti jo gryniausia forma ir sutapatinti su personažu tarsi teatro scenoje. Mahlerio požiūris į tembrą ir būtinybė sustiprinti jo dramaturgines, semantines ir formalias funkcijas pasitelkus solo skatino permąstyti paties orkestro konceptą – visa tai lėmė solistų orkestro koncepcijos atsiradimą.

Išsami „solistų orkestro" analizė siūlo naują Mahlerio simfoninio mąstymo perspektyvą – solo tapimą jo vėlyvosios praktikos branduoliu. Koncerto pobūdis šioje simfonijoje, žinoma, turi sąsajų su *sinfonia concertante* stiliumi, tačiau kartu yra XX a. koncertinės muzikos orientyras. Mahlerio praktikos įtaka neabejotina kamerinės simfonijos ir ypač koncerto žanro evoliucijai.