



**EUROPEAN  
ORCHESTRA WEEK  
BRESSANONE**

**SOLIDARITY CONCERTS  
for the Chernivtsi  
Philharmonic Orchestra  
(Ukraine)**

01.–02.09.2023

**Friday, September 1, 2023, 7:00 p.m.**

Parzival Hall Vinzentinum Bressanone/Brixen  
Via Brennero 37 - 39042 Bressanone/Brixen

**Saturday, September 2, 2023, 7:00 p.m.**

Open Air Theater NOI Techpark Bolzano/Bozen  
Via A. Volta 13 - 39100 Bolzano/Bozen

**Free admission!**

Donations go to the Chernivtsi  
Philharmonic Orchestra/Černivzi (Ukraine)

The historically and culturally important city of Chernivtsi is located in the West of Ukraine. Currently it is home to many Ukrainians who have fled from the war in their country, including numerous musicians. The Chernivtsi Philharmonic is providing humanitarian aid, welcoming musicians to work in their orchestra, providing accommodation and assuring their integration.

We at European Classics feel obliged to help our orchestra colleagues with a small contribution. Both our concerts are free of charge. Your free donations support the Chernivtsi Philharmonic Orchestra. Thank you!

**PROGRAM**

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**EMILIE MAYER**

(1812-1883)

**Overture to "Faust" op. 46 (1880)**

Adagio - Allegro

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**ERICH ZEISL**

(1905-1959)

**November - 6 Sketches for  
Orchestra op. 22 (1937/38)**

- I. All Souls
- II. Souvenir
- III. Rainy Day
- IV. Dance of the Fallen Leaves
- V. Shepherd's Melody
- VI. Victory of Winter

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**PAUSE**

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**FRANZ SCHUBERT**

(1797-1828)

**Symphony No. 8 in C major D 944  
("Great Symphony")**

- I. Andante - Allegro ma non troppo - Più moto
  - II. Andante con moto
  - III. Scherzo. Allegro vivace
  - IV. Finale. Allegro vivace
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**EUROPEAN CLASSICS ORCHESTRA**

**CONDUCTOR  
PROF. PETER SCHMELZER (GRAZ)**

EUROPEAN CLASSICS  
would like to thank Mr.  
Randol Schoenberg, USA,  
as well as the organization  
„ComposHer“, France  
(www.composher.com)  
for the free provision of  
performance materials.

# WORK INTRODUCTIONS

## The Faust Overture: Wagner, Schumann, Liszt, Berlioz - or Mayer?

The highly gifted Royal Saxon Kapellmeister in Dresden, Richard Wagner, was intensively occupied with the subject of Goethe's Faust in the years 1839/40. No opera was planned, instead Wagner was considering a symphony, of which, however, only the first movement was composed, known today as the Faust Overture. Or maybe only to a very few, since the movement fell into oblivion before it could be performed.

At that time, the subject and its orchestral arrangement haunted many musicians': Robert Schumann composed some music for different scenes of the play. After a few years (!) he provided an overture to this "loose collection" of Faust I and II parts. But never finished the project.

Franz Liszt, who was aware of these two failed projects, also became infected with the Faust virus and created a three-movement, full-size orchestra symphony with a final tenor solo including a closing apotheotic male chorus. He not only completed it, but he also offers two variants at the end. Liszt had in mind a counterpart to Beethoven's 9th Symphony. With no great success: His gigantomanic work was too difficult to perform and not successful in its vocal version. The purely orchestral version is no longer known...

Hector Berlioz created his own drama oscillating between cantata and opera from the very freely interpreted French translation of Faust, known as "The Damnation of Faust". Berlioz had to face a major failure with this approach.

And now Emilie Mayer?! A pharmacist's daughter from Friedland in Mecklenburg-Strelitz, one year older than the above-mentioned Richard Wagner. In 1840, her father commits suicide and leaves her a considerable fortune. She has her independent - as long as she does not marry. "Friedland was not the place to perfect herself in musicology." She goes to Stettin, for private lessons with Carl Loewe, the creator of great ballads - including some based on texts by Goethe, with whom he was also acquainted. Early songs by Mayer based on texts by Goethe have survived, including from the Faust drama.

She moves to Berlin, the emerging Prussian metropolis, and her most important subject becomes the large orchestral symphony in four movements, which had fallen into oblivion after Beethoven's death. Her teacher in Berlin is Adolph Marx, whose theoretical works were also explored by a young organist from Upper Austria named Anton Bruckner. Franz Schubert has long since died, and Emilie Mayer is not yet familiar with his two greatest symphonies ("Unfinished", "The Great"). Perhaps she then heard about Robert Schumann's discovery in Vienna and read his description of the premiere of "The Great" by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy in Leipzig (1841), who knows.



In 40 years, she composes eight symphonies (cf. Franz Schubert!), a series of overtures plus a lot of chamber music. One thing stands out: Emilie Mayer does not limit herself to small-scale formats but develops large musical arcs and increasingly prefers a powerful orchestral sound. She takes on Mendelssohn and Schumann. Mind you: Felix and Robert - not Fanny or Clara. She slowly becomes aware of Schubert's late works, and you can feel his influence in her music. "What women - second class humans - are capable of - Emilie Mayer has achieved it..." (Neue Berliner Musikzeitung, 1850).

She stays away from opera and program music - Wagner and Liszt remain untouched. She ends her creative career with a 10-minute Faust Overture, which is premiered in Berlin in 1881. As already mentioned, her work is not program music, but a movement designed in sonata form with a slow introduction and three themes, including a quiet brass chorale with tuba that is first and unique for Emilie Mayer.

And this was the reaction of critics at the time: "Emilie Mayer (Miss or Mrs.?) comes up with a Faust overture that is not all that bad." The piece made a "rather bare impression." The "instrumental scoring can be approved as far as it goes, and in part even praised." The composer "did not experiment, and that was the right decision." As so often, this says less about Emilie Mayer's music than it does about her critics: conservative, condescending, degrading, and supercilious.

Shortly after her death her work disappears into oblivion. Her grave site is levelled off. The Berlin cemetery where her grave was located is well known: the "Dreifaltigkeitsfriedhof" at "Hallesches Tor". There she rests near her contemporaries Adolph Menzel, Theodor Mommsen and Friedrich Schinkel.

Only recently have her pieces, which don't seem to be "all that bad", reappeared in our concert programs. Let us surprise you....

**Hans Hubert Gerards**  
European Classics

## **Erich Zeisl: November – 6 Sketches for Orchestra op. 22**

Erich Zeisl is one of the countless artists of the early 20th century who were denied a major career due to Nazi persecution and expulsion. Born in Vienna in 1905, Zeisl started his career as a musician and studied composition at the Vienna Music Academy, despite initial resistance from his parents. Early on, he turned to vocal genres, which became the focus of his work: over the course of his life, Zeisl composed more than 100 piano songs, choruses, and stage performances with vocals.

In the bustling Vienna of the 1930s, he became a well-known composer and even made it to the stage of the renowned Vienna Volksoper in 1934 with his fairy tale play "Die Fahrt ins Wunderland." But life in Austria became difficult for Zeisl, who came from a Jewish family, at the latest after the annexation of Austria into Nazi Germany in March 1938, when he was no longer allowed to perform his works on stage. On November 10, 1938, one day after the riots of the "Night of Broken Glass", the Nazi pogrom that foreshadowed upcoming catastrophe, Zeisl left Austria and emigrated with parts of his family via Paris (where he spent 10 months) to the United States.

In this extremely oppressive and existence-threatening time, Erich Zeisl composed three short piano pieces in November 1937, to which he added five more pieces by May 1938. From this collection, appropriately titled "November" - a musical diary - he subsequently selected six pieces and arranged them for small orchestra, whose almost chamber-music instrumentation preserves the intimate character of the original piano version. Zeisl himself gave some programmatic notes on these short mood pictures - hardly any of them comprises more than 50 bars or lasts longer than 3 minutes (quoted here from Malcolm S. Cole/Gábor Lukin, Preface to the new edition of the orchestral score of November, published in 2012):

- I. All Souls—2nd of November is in Austria a catholic holiday in remembrance of the dead. On this day everybody visits the family graves. The day is a symbol of the vanity of human life.
- II. Souvenir—Now is the time to sit in one's room and to go over old papers and letters. Memories stand up of old love and forgotten happiness and fill the heart with sadness and longing.
- III. Rainy Day—The raindrops knock slowly and constantly against the window, and the melancholy atmosphere reflects itself in the human soul.
- IV. Dance of the Fallen Leaves—The autumn storm rages outside; he whirls the dead leaves and leads them in a wild, fantastic round-dance.
- V. Shepherd's Melody—Somewhere on the lonely, barren hills the shepherd blows his pipe and longingly thinks himself away from the cold, dreary time to sunshine and warm spring days.
- VI. Victory of Winter—Victoriously Winter draws forth and establishes his stern regimen. Light and warmth die away from the world.

The six miniatures have a melancholic-resignative basic tone in common, which is only rarely interrupted by short dramatic outbursts (for example in No. 4 and No. 6). The images evoked by Zeisl with their recurring motifs of nostalgia and farewell can easily be interpreted biographically, as allegories of his own forced exile.

Whether Zeisl ever met the most revolutionary innovator of New Music, Arnold Schoenberg, 30 years his senior, during his Viennese period is not certain. Musically, they didn't have much in common either - the stylistic influences in "November" are rather reminiscent of Ravel or Rachmaninoff and contain elements of jazz. A curious twist of history nevertheless brought the two composers into contact, at least on a family level: Zeisl's daughter Barbara (born 1940) married Schoenberg's son Ronald (born 1937) in 1965. Their son, Eric Randol Schoenberg (note the anagrammatic first names!), is thus the grandson of two composers at once and has been very committed to the musical heritage of his grandfathers. Randol Schoenberg was extremely helpful in preparing today's concert and provided us with the performance material free of charge.

We the EUROPEAN CLASSICS are honored and thankful to bring Zeisl's work back to the "Old World". By the way, it is quite possible that this is the Italian premiere of "November"!

**Dominik Rahmer**  
European Classics



## Franz Schubert: Symphony No. 8 in C major D 944

### *Prehistory*

Beethoven's 9th Symphony, with its legendary final chorus to Schiller's Ode to Joy, was premiered in Vienna in 1824. Franz Schubert was among the audience. This overwhelming event probably triggered in him the desire to compose a broadly expansive symphonic work. Until then, he had written six symphonies, each 30 minutes long, in a conventional style, conceived for the local amateur and student orchestras. He had left a far more ambitious project, known as the "Unfinished" in 1822 - after the first bars of the third movement, the score suddenly breaks off.

Symphony No. 7, No. 8 or No. 9?

The chronology of Franz Schubert's last, longest and probably most important symphony can be reconstructed as follows: the work was written and largely completed as early as 1825, as evidenced by paper and ink analyses. This makes it his seventh complete symphony. Johannes Brahms also called it No. 7, and it is still known as No. 7 in North America. Since 1826, the score together with the complete set of parts are kept in the archives of the "Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde" in Vienna. Robert Schumann found it there during his visit to Vienna in 1839, and Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy performed it for the first time in Leipzig in 1841, unabridged and with all (!) repetitions.

After the discovery and premiere of the unfinished Symphony in B minor with its two complete movements in Vienna in 1865 by Johann Herbeck, it was added to the catalog of works as No. 8. Thus, the earlier composed work had slipped one rank forward in the count.

Schubert himself caused confusion posthumously. On the handwritten score of the great C major symphony, there is the unmistakable note "March 1828". In 1828, he presented the work to Schott Verlag in Mainz for printing. This was the opportunity for a later generation to turn Symphony No. 7 into No. 9! From then on, there was no longer a Symphony No. 7. This is how the idea of a presumably lost "Gastein Symphony" by Schubert was born.

The great C major symphony, however, from then on led a life as Symphony No. 9.

Ironically Schubert herewith joined the series of composers who have succumbed to the curse of the Symphony No. 9: Beethoven, Dvorak, Bruckner and Mahler.

The most recent version of the "Deutsch Verzeichnis" (the standard catalogue of Schubert's works) lists the two-movement Symphony in B minor of 1822 as No. 7 (formerly No. 8). The great C major symphony as No. 8 (formerly No. 7 and/or No. 9). While most English-speaking scholars list the great as No. 9. Unfortunately, Schubert never composed a No. 9.

Tonight, we are hence playing Schubert's Symphony No. 8 in C major, German Directory 944.

### **Why actually "The Great"?**

In the archives of the "Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde" there were two symphonies by Schubert, both in C major. The shorter of the two (No. 6) was given the suffix "The Little" while the considerably longer symphony was designated "The Great" (No. 8). "Great" stands for "long."

### **Classification of the Great C Major Symphony**

Today, in the German-speaking area, it is considered the "missing link" between Beethoven's No. 9 (1824) and Robert Schumann's Spring Symphony (premiered in Leipzig in 1841), a period of nearly 17 years during which no significant symphony was supposedly written. From today's perspective, the genre was in crisis. The shadow of Beethoven was too overpowering! A single performance of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy's Italian Symphony in London in 1833 should be mentioned here, but it had no consequences as the composer did not publish the work. The revolutionary Frenchman Hector Berlioz with his "Fantastic Symphony" was an eccentric outsider, a bourgeois terror, and had the reputation of being completely unperformable.

In the succession of Beethoven, a whole series of composers, among them the pianist Carl Czerny and the composer Emilie Mayer, created new works in the bourgeois framework. Almost unnoticed until today. "The Great" did not have immediate successor symphonies until two decades later: Robert Schumann's Symphony No. 2 in C major and Anton Bruckner's Symphony No. 2 in C minor. Schumann's refers to it with the careful construction of a slow introduction in the brass, Bruckner's with its wild triplet figurations across all movements.

The great C major symphony itself is directly influenced by Beethoven's No. 9 and follows its radical principles in length, technique, and instrumentation. All this even goes as far as an almost note-for-note quotation in the finale: Starting at measure 385, "Freude schöner Götterfunken" is heard, but no one sings. In contrast to Beethoven's No. 9, Schubert's "The Great" focuses on the opening movement. The first two movements essentially determine statement and character. Scherzo and finale fly by much faster in "The Great" and, if one does not play all the repetitions, the playing time of the movements shortens steadily towards the end.

One of the new principles: All four movements are now more extended; the thematic groups are played out in detail and on an equal footing. Including all repetitions, the symphony - at moderate tempi - is almost 60 minutes long. Except for Beethoven's No. 9, nobody had ever done this before. Contemporaries, accustomed to richly entertaining



programs, reacted accordingly with disapproval. Hardly a performance took place at the beginning without cuts.

The instrumentation is striking: There are now three equal groups in the orchestra: strings, woodwinds, and brass plus timpani. The horns move closer to the trumpets and trombones, creating a compact and dry sound. Schubert is the first composer to write independent passages for trombones in his symphonies. It's a continuation of what he had already fully developed in the unfinished symphony: He leads the three trombones in forte-unisono through large tutti-passages, which creates this impression of great power. But we must keep in mind that Schubert never heard his work, neither in rehearsals nor in performances. Had he done so, would he have left everything as it was?

In the woodwinds, Schubert, the songwriter, unfolds to unimagined melodic heights. The rhythmic moment, a typical feature of Beethoven's woodwinds, recedes into the background. The symphony favours more muted, soft colours, led by the clarinets and bassoons.

The strings enter new technical territory. To this day, the symphony is still rather unpopular or feared for this reason. Especially in the outer movements, there are enormous difficulties with articulation and bowing technique, even at moderate tempi. Much too long (first movement), much too fast (scherzo and finale), in other words: much too difficult, was the verdict. As early as 1828, Viennese musicians rejected the symphony outright, opting instead for the conventional Little Symphony No. 6 in C major.

*First movement: Andante - Allegro ma non troppo (684 bars, without repetitions).*

A slow introduction with its famous opening horn sets the essential thematic elements of the symphony. The sequence of notes C-D-E, for example, will appear in all further movements and thus dominate the work. After 78 measures, a joyful, Allegro moderato based on triplets follows. The exposition is repeated (measure 254). This repetition stretches the movement to over 800 measures, making it Schubert's longest compositional movement to date. And we have not reached the finale, yet.



*Second movement: Andante con moto (380 bars, without repetitions).*

This movement follows the classical scheme ABABA. The A section, with its cheerful oboe melody, is reminiscent of a march, while the B section captivates with its soft sonority, led by bassoons and clarinets. At the first recurrence of the A section, short military signals creep in and emphasize the march character. The climax is unique: an ultimately circular situation culminates in a musical catastrophe (bar 248) - the entire orchestra plays a dissonant chord on *fff* - which is followed by a surprising silence and leads into a hesitant new beginning.

*Third movement: Scherzo, Allegro vivace (2 x 238 bars = 476 bars, without repetitions) and Trio (166 bars, without repetitions).*

In this movement Schubert releases us into the uncontrolled. Now the proportions play out! Whoever plays all repetitions in the Scherzo and Trio, stretches this wonderfully compact and concise movement (Beethoven: "by the Scherzi you shall recognize them") into the sheer infinite. Less is more!

*Fourth movement: Finale Allegro vivace (1153 bars, without repetitions).*

World record: the longest Schubert movement in terms of bars. The record just set by himself in the first movement is equalled. And: Schubert never wrote faster music! Wild triplet gallops in the high strings chase each other with long, "cool" relays of plucked basses, so called "walking basses", a typical characteristic of Swing one hundred years later. For the first time in symphonic music, trumpets can use the blaring triple tongue known from the military. If they are allowed!

**Hans Hubert Gerards**  
European Classics

## VITA PROF. PETER SCHMELZER



Born in Austria, he studied violin, trumpet, organ, conducting and piano at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Graz. He completed his studies with a teaching degree in piano and a Kapellmeister and conductor's diploma. He is a graduate of the master class of Prof. Arvid Jansons, the former chief conductor of the St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra.

Peter Schmelzer's studies with Maestro Leonard Bernstein are of great importance to him and have had a lasting influence on the personal style of interpretation of the conductor Peter Schmelzer with the remarkably extensive repertoire. With guest contracts at renowned theaters and orchestras, such as - Royal Opera Stockholm, Volksoper Vienna, Kammeroper Vienna, Munich Symphony Orchestra, Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra, Vituosi di Praga, State Operetta Dresden, Janacek Philharmonic Orchestra, Opera House Graz, Russkaya Philharmonia Moscow, State Opera Tirana, Opera Festival St. Margarethen, Orquesta Sinfónica de Bilbao, Festival de Música Contemporánea de Alicante, Orquesta de cámara Reina Sofía /Madrid) - Peter Schmelzer has gained international reputation.

In 2004, the Federal President of the Republic of Austria, Dr. Thomas Klestil, awarded Peter Schmelzer the professional title of Professor in recognition of his

artistic services to the Republic of Austria. In addition to the traditional opera and concert repertoire, Maestro Peter Schmelzer also turned to the composers of the twentieth century. His engagement with contemporary works has led to numerous world premieres under his direction. His CD recordings cover the classical as well as contemporary repertoire.

From 2017 until 2022, he was permanent guest conductor of the Bavarian Classics Orchestra. Since 2023, he holds the position of chief conductor of the EUROPEAN CLASSICS Orchestra. In addition to his conducting activities, he teaches opera and song interpretation, as well as music-dramatic performance in collaboration with the TOHO University of Music, Tokyo

As part of the guest performance tour of the "Stagione d'Opera Italiana" he conducted the opera Nabucco at various theaters in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. Master classes for opera and song interpretation, as well as music-dramatic performance led him, among others, to the Vanke Liangzhu International Arts Academy in Hangzhou (China) where he was awarded the title "Guest Professor".

Further information about the conductor Peter Schmelzer can be found at [www.schmelzer-dirigent.at](http://www.schmelzer-dirigent.at).



## ABOUT US

Originating from the association "Bavarian Classics" founded in 1992, comes the initiative EUROPEAN CLASSICS - EUROPEAN ORCHESTRA WEEK BRIXEN enabling since 2022 international music encounters. The initiative gathers passionate and semi-professional instrumentalists, talented music students and their teachers, as well as (aspiring) professional musicians for an annual orchestral project in Bressanone/Brixen (Italy). In the symbiosis of different generations, experiences, and artistic intentions we develop symphonic programs of high artistic standard.

Led by the internationally renowned conductor Prof. Peter Schmelzer from Graz, the EUROPEAN CLASSICS orchestra performs outstanding European and international works from orchestral literature, at times by focussing on specific countries. But we also like to present

forgotten composers who were persecuted or even murdered, especially by the Nazi regime, and who are largely unknown to the public. And finally we like to introduce the work of female composers, whose oeuvre is still often denied the recognition it deserves.

The EUROPEAN ORCHESTRA WEEK BRIXEN takes place every year in Bressanone/Brixen (Italy) in late summer or early autumn. The participants gather there for a week for daily intensive rehearsals and conclude with two concerts: In 2023 we play in the Parzival Hall of the Vinzentinum in Bressanone/Brixen, and in the Open Air Theater of the NOI Techpark in Bolzano/Bozen.

If you are interested in playing in our orchestra, or if you simply want to get more information about our project, please visit our website **[euro-orchester-brixen.eu](http://euro-orchester-brixen.eu)**.



## MUSICIANS

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<b>Violin 1</b>	Christel Köpke (concertmaster), Albert Flügel, Astrid Flury, Heide Gliesche, Barbara Helck, Michael Jeremias, Gabi Klingenstein, Lieselotte Krammer, Susanne Reimann, Angela Stanzel
<b>Violin 2</b>	Veronika Diekmann (principal), Larissa Dogan, Bernadette Fischl, Dieter Götzl, Iris Ibel, Bernward Oepen, Marina Oepen, Lea Scherer, Margit Stabinger
<b>Viola</b>	Hans Gutmeyr (principal), Marlene Bachhuber, Wolfgang Gliesche, Georgia Holzapfel, Julika Hosenfeld-Tripp, Heike Schauer
<b>Violoncello</b>	Andrea Huss (principal), Anita Beikircher, Alicja Dzidek, Dorothea Flügel, Gertrud Hammel, Klaus Reiter
<b>Double bass</b>	Helmut Wagner (principal), Kurt-Detlef Bock, Helmut Scherer
<b>Flute</b>	Angela Sondermann, Stephanie Immertreu
<b>Oboe</b>	Wolfgang Röckl, Walter Egli
<b>Clarinet</b>	Andrea Boos, Andreas Schmohl
<b>Bassoon</b>	Bettina Keilhofer, Maria Prellwitz
<b>Horn</b>	Thomas Beikircher, Dominik Rahmer
<b>Trumpet</b>	Hans Hubert Gerards, Stefanie Heck
<b>Trombone</b>	Wolfgang Windschmitt, Petra Wolf, Matthias Schmitt, Julian Canzi
<b>Harp</b>	Sonia Ortlinghaus
<b>Timpani</b>	Thomas Hämmerlein

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## Info & Contact

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