



MAHLER
THE SONG OF THE EARTH

“One will be able to give me the title *Singer of Nature*”



Overview

THE SONG OF THE EARTH

**A Mahler Foundation Project
in cooperation with individuals and organizations around the world**

The Idea	An ongoing global campaign to awaken the imagination, raise awareness of the looming fate of our planet and species, and to inspire humanity to act.
The Values	Human solidarity, love of nature, the power of the arts.
The Call-To-Action	Listen to the Earth's Song and join in the chorus to protect her.
The Participants	Mahler Foundation, institutions worldwide, leading artists, the general public.
The Content	New creations and explorations in every media that stir the consciousness of people to act now.



Context

THE SONG OF THE EARTH

Reawakening Mahler's Vision of Our Planet for the 21st Century

The Song of the Earth will invigorate institutions and individuals with Mahler's intense awareness of the preciousness of our planet and our humble place in the unfolding of life, urging us all to listen to the Earth's song and stand up for its protection. Inspiring both the mind and the heart through the arts, these projects will celebrate the human condition and underscore our reliance on a thriving environment.

Rather than organize its own events, The Song of the Earth will act as a collecting point of projects that are inspired by Gustav Mahler's masterpiece The Song of the Earth, whether they be concerts, symposia, books, compositions, lectures, recordings, films, theater, educational programs The relationship to the music is defined loosely as a borrowing of texts, a musical quotation, or a reference to the composer's perspective on nature and humanity. Mahler Foundation will assist in developing ideas and enable broader delivery through its imprimatur and global outreach, thus multiplying the impact of these efforts as they conjoin around the world.

Listening to Earth's song can take on a personal dimension, too, and so The Song of the Earth will ask individuals for their reflections on what they hear, whether in the wind or in their hearts, as they contemplate our relationship to this precious place in the cosmos.



What is The Song of the Earth?

Gustav Mahler believed nature held the key to the profundity of life. In his late masterpiece, *The Song of the Earth*, the composer contemplates the many facets of life – its beauty and hardship – and maps out an inner journey, from a fear of death to a deep acceptance of our mortality, recognizing in its valedictory closing movement that to live is to participate in the never-ending unfolding of existence, that in being, we, too, are a part of eternity. As he once summed it up: “One will be able to give me the title: ‘Singer of Nature,’” an artist tapping into sacred life for inspiration and insight. In the face of the challenges humanity has imposed on nature and that we must all now address – climate change, plastic waste, habitat destruction, to name but a few – Mahler Foundation is standing up for the planet in the name of the great composer.

Why this project now?

- ♦ We have reached a breaking point in the ecological balance of our planet by destroying its habitats, polluting its air and water, and depleting its resources.
- ♦ Extreme weather and the spread of new diseases, such as COVID-19, are just two examples of the consequences we are experiencing right now.
- ♦ At stake is not just quality of life but the continuation of our species and way of living as we know it.
- ♦ The rate of depletion and the worsening of conditions are so dire that only a concerted, worldwide effort can succeed in making the necessary changes.
- ♦ Failure to address the situation is not an option, for it would lead to environmental collapse, mass migration, civil unrest, and much more.

- ♦ The world is waking up to this reality and needs to rally around a united effort.

The Song of the Earth:

- ♦ Embraces Mahler’s music and legacy.
- ♦ Provides a font of creative approaches to spreading this vital message around the world.
- ♦ Promotes solidarity by celebrating through artistic expression what we all have in common as human beings.
- ♦ Invites everyone to participate, both in experiencing the projects as they are presented and in making a personal contribution to the effort.



Call to Action

Listen to The Song of the Earth

For GLOBAL PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

What projects can you organize locally in the name of Mahler's legacy and The Song of the Earth?
Propose and execute a creative enterprise that we can include in our worldwide project.

For THE PUBLIC

What do we hear when the Earth sings?!
Send us your personal creations and reflections in digital form.

For INFLUENCERS

How can you add your voice to The Song of the Earth?
Reach out through your channels to bring attention to the creative projects and encourage everyone to make their own contributions.



Content

IDEA	Global Partners	Individuals	Influencers
TARGET	Arts organizations of all kinds	Everyone	Key individuals
CONTENT	Creative projects	User-generated	Promotional
RESULT	Worldwide network of events and creative work	Online presentation via website and social media	Interviews, videos, social media content



The Song of the Earth

Gustav Mahler believed nature held the key to the profundity of life. In his late masterpiece, *The Song of the Earth*, the composer contemplates the many facets of life – its beauty and hardship – and maps out an inner journey, from a fear of death to a deep acceptance of our mortality, recognizing in its valedictory closing movement that to live is to participate in the never-ending unfolding of existence, that in being, we, too, are a part of eternity. As he once summed it up: “One will be able to give me the title: **‘Singer of Nature,’**” an artist tapping into sacred life for inspiration and insight. In the face of the challenges humanity has imposed on nature and that we must all now address – climate change, plastic waste, habitat destruction, to name but a few – Mahler Foundation is **standing up for the planet in the name of the great composer.**

What can we do? By helping to **create projects that stir the consciousness of people**, we can raise awareness of the looming fate of our planet and inspire humanity to act. These projects can be concerts, symposia, books, compositions, lectures, recordings, films, theater, educational programs ... activities that address today’s audiences with the message of our common fate as inhabitants of this planet and our precarious reliance on its wellbeing. As co-curator of these projects, Mahler Foundation will assist in bringing Mahler, his works, and *Das Lied von der Erde* in particular into the programming, whether it be as a borrowing of texts, as a musical quotation, or a reference to the composer’s perspective on nature and humanity.

“The Song of the Earth” will be offered as **an opportunity for organizations** around the world **to join forces with us** to promote their events in the spirit of this vital endeavor. The execution and completion of these projects is the responsibility of local producers, but Mahler Foundation will assist in developing ideas and in enabling broader impact through its imprimatur and global outreach.

In bringing these disparate elements together, in celebrating creativity in the service of our Earth in projects around the world, we will be conjoining Mahler, music, and a vast concern of our time. **We will inspire and connect. We will take Mahler Beyond.**

If you would like to participate in this worldwide campaign, please submit a profile of your organization along with a short proposal (no more than 500 words) to: earthsong@mahlerfoundation.org.



mahler foundation

The Song of the Earth

“Songs of the Earth”

A project stemming from Mahler Foundation’s initiative, The Song of the Earth, to inspire the talents of young people to create artworks that celebrate the Earth and raise awareness of our reliance on its precious resources. Designed as a template for implementation in countries around the world.

Key elements

1. young people
2. new creations
3. multiple art forms
4. an emphasis on song
5. local and regional organizations
6. outreach to underserved communities
7. topics on protecting our planet
8. a connection to Gustav Mahler

Considerations in Implementation

- Working in the first instance with schools and music schools around the country to promote the campaign for young people to write their own “Songs of the Earth” of 2 to 5 minutes each.
- These institutions could also provide composition workshops, mentoring, and performers to develop ideas and give feedback.
- Participants would be invited to submit their compositions to a competition. A number (5-10?) finalists/winners would attend a workshop on orchestrating their songs, and the final versions would be performed at a leading national venue, with each composer introducing their own piece.
- Where possible performers should be drawn from young musicians’ ensembles.
- Bringing in other art forms would be desirable and could involve visual art, dance, poetry, etc. – everything collectively a “Song to the Earth”. We could also tie this to the creation of the texts used in the songs.
- Local communities must be involved, both in giving participants this creative opportunity and in providing a framework for presenting the artworks inspired by the initiative, perhaps a local exhibit combined with a recital.
- Environmental education has to be integral to the presentation and rollout of these projects; a background must also be given in relation to Gustav Mahler and his work *The Song of the Earth*.
- Funding should come from local sources, with pro bono talent stemming from regional musical (and arts) institutions whenever possible.
- A national project manager must be assigned to coordinate activities, ensure fulfillment of the goals of the initiative, and keep Mahler Foundation informed of the state of progress and any matters that need to be addressed.
- Along with this initiative and coinciding with its conclusion could be performances of music presented by internationally recognized artists committed to the ideals of Mahler Foundation’s overarching initiative, The Song of the Earth.