Missing movement?

The provenance of *Blumine* in Mahler's First Symphony

BY JEFFREY GANTZ

It seemed a Mahler event of the first order: the rediscovery, in 1966, of the First Symphony's discarded Andante, a piece of music that had not been heard since 1894. It had been the second movement of Mahler's "symphoniai költemény két részben" ("symphonic poem in two parts") when the composer gave the work its premiere in Budapest on November 20, 1889. It was still there, now called *Blumine*, when Mahler conducted his "*Titan*, eine Tondichtung in Symphonieform" in Hamburg on October 27, 1893, and the following year, on June 3, in Weimar. But by the time of this work's fourth performance, in Berlin on March 16, 1896, Mahler had removed *Blumine*, along with the name *Titan* and the program, from what was now called a "Symphony in D-dur für großes Orchester." When this symphony was finally published, by Josef Weinberger in 1899, it had just four movements. *Blumine* thus never made it into print and, since the various manuscripts the First went through seemed not to have survived, the movement was considered lost.

In 1959, however, a manuscript of the First was offered to Sotheby's by John C. Perrin, who had got it from his mother, Jenny Feld, whom Mahler had tutored at the Vienna Conservatory in 1878. It was purchased by Mrs. James M. Osborn and donated to the Osborn Collection of Yale University, where it attracted little attention until 1966, when Mahler biographer Donald Mitchell recognized it as a copy of the Hamburg version, complete with *Blumine* Benjamin Britten gave the movement its 20th-century premiere at the Aldeburgh Festival on June 18, 1967. Alan Blyth wrote in the *Daily Express*: "This is an exquisite Andante, and is shot through with the same sense of resignation and regret so dear to the composer. Nowhere else did he capture this feeling more succinctly." William Mann wrote in the *Times*, "It was a strange and touching experience, like a vivid dream in which one meets a long-dead friend. I can see that 'Blumine' contributes positively to the corpus of the First Symphony, and I look forward to a performance which will include it."

Mann did not have long to wait: on April 19, 1968, Frank Brieff and the New Haven Symphony Orchestra performed the 1906 revision with *Blumine* inserted as the second movement (on March 11 of the following year they did the five-movement 1893 Hamburg version), and they made the premiere recording of this hybrid score for Columbia's budget Odyssey label. Shortly afterward, the 1906 version with *Blumine* marked the debut of Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra on RCA. And in 1970, Wyn Morris and the New Philharmonia Orchestra recorded the 1893 Hamburg version for London's Pye label.

But the most-respected Mahler conductors of that time — Jascha Horenstein, Otto Klemperer, John Barbirolli, Leonard Bernstein, Georg Solti, Rafael Kubelik, and Bernard Haitink — declined to perform *Blumine* Mahler had discarded the movement, and they respected his judgment. So did the composer's two most eminent biographers. Henry-Louis de La Grange argued, "There can be no doubt as to the authorship of '*Blumine*,' and yet few other arguments can be stated in its favor. It is the music of a late-nineteenth-century Mendelssohn, pretty, charming, lightweight, urbane, and repetitious, just what Mahler's music never is."[1] And though Donald Mitchell allowed, "I can see no harm in an occasional performance of the symphony with the Andante installed as its second movement: this, more or less, was the shape in which this familiar piece was launched at Budapest in 1889," he continued, "There can be no grounds at all for attempting a *restoration* of the movement, which would be a demonstrably anti-musical act and fly in the face of Mahler's wishes in this matter. Mahler enthusiasts pursuing this course only show that they rate their own opinions higher than the composer's, an evaluation the rest of the world is unlikely to follow."[2]

The rest of the world has not followed. Since Morris in 1970, there have been just three recorded Hamburg Firsts: Hiroshi Wakasugi with the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra (Fontec, 1989); Ole Kristian Ruud with the Norrköping Symphony Orchestra (Simax, 1997); Zsolt Hamar with the Pannon Philharmonic Orchestra (Hungaroton, 2005). A few conductors have included *Blumine* in their recordings of the 1906

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[1] Henry-Louis de La Grange, *Mahler: Volume One* (English edition, New York: Doubleday, 1973), 754.

[2] Donald Mitchell, *Gustav Mahler: The Wunderhorn Years* (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), 224.

version; rather than performing it in sequence, however, most have placed it before or after the now standard four movements.

But is the rest of the world right? Mahler's First Symphony was a love letter prompted by his affection for a blonde singer and a Romantic writer who shared names: Johanna Richter and Johann Paul Friedrich Richter, who wrote as Jean Paul. Jean Paul's *Titan* is a crazy quilt of a novel in which a romantic young man, after a couple of false starts, finds the love of his life. In the last movement of Mahler's symphony, one can hear sentimental Liane (Johanna?) and strident Linda merging triumphantly in Idoine, and in the Funeral March there are hints of Albano's alter ego, Roquairol, whom Bruno Walter remembers discussing with Mahler. ("His giving the name 'Titan' to his First Symphony signalized his love of Jean Paul; we often talked about this great novel, and especially about the character of Roquairol, whose influence is noticeable in the Funeral March."[3]) Jean Paul's novel and Johanna Richter are the seeds from which Mahler's *Titan* grew. In Mahler's subsequent symphonies, moreover, *Blumine* continued to flower.

II

In May of 1883, Gustav Mahler was engaged to be the "music and choral director" at the Royal and Imperial Theater of Cassel, where he became infatuated with the lyric/dramatic soprano Johanna Richter. Henry-Louis de La Grange suggests that she came from East Prussia, and he records that the Cassel critics "praised her 'beauty' more than her performance."[4] In June of 1884, Mahler was charged with composing incidental music for a charity gala to benefit the theater's pension fund; the highlight of the June 23 evening was to be a series of seven tableaux vivants inspired by Joseph Viktor von Steffel's 1853 dramatic poem *Der Trompeter von Säkkingen*. La Grange speculates that *Werners Trompeterlied* was written for the opening tableau, "Ein Ständchen im Rhein"; he continues, "Mahler's *Trompeter* music was based on a single theme, the trumpet serenade, treated in turn as a march, an adagio for the love scene, and spirited battle music."[5] He notes that Mahler wrote to his friend Fritz Löhr, "I completed this opus

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[3] Bruno Walter, *Gustav Mahler*, 119 (London version 1958, from London 1937); cited in Mitchell, *GM:TWY*, 302 n. 109.

[4] La Grange, *M:VO*, 114.

[5] La Grange, *M:VO*, 716.

in two days, and I must tell you that I am very pleased with it. As you will imagine, my work has not much in common with Scheffel's affectation and goes much beyond the poet."[6]

The score of Mahler's *Trompeter* music that was at Cassel was destroyed when the theater was bombed in 1944, and no others have turned up. We do, however, have an indication of what it contained. The music critic Max Steinitzer recalled that "Mahler took with him to Leipzig [in 1886] only this one piece in score, a very appropriate setting of the tableau wherein Werner plays a serenade across the moonlit Rhine toward the castle where Margareta lives. But Mahler found it too sentimental, became annoyed with it, and made me promise that I would destroy the piano score I had made from it."[7] Steinitzer nonetheless was able to quote from memory the first six measures of *Werners Trompeterlied* And when in 1966 Donald Mitchell saw the autograph of the First Symphony in the Osborn Collection at Yale, he found this same theme in the *Blumine* movement. After examining the Yale MS and observing that most of the movement is written on a smaller size of paper than was used for the rest of the work, Mitchell concluded that *Blumine* was "a movement borrowed in its entirety from the incidental music" — in other words, that *Werners Trompeterlied* became *Blumine* with little or no revision.[8] Certainty on this point would require the improbable discovery of a *Trompeter* score, but it's at least evident that the serenade is the basis of *Blumine*.

Was, then, the serenade inspired by Johanna Richter? La Grange believes it was not. Citing Steinitzer's statement that Mahler subsequently decided the *Trompeterlied* was too sentimental, he argues, "This proves that the former owner of the '*Blumine*' score [John C. Perrin] is wrong to claim it was an 'ardent declaration of love' for Johanna Richter. Such declarations are to be found in the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* and other contemporary poems written for the young singer, rather than in the sugary '*Blumine*,' which Mahler later eliminated from the *First Symphony*. . . . "[9] The logic here is not easy to follow. Mahler may have thought *Werners Trompeterlied* too sentimental when he spoke to Steinitzer, but in 1884, when he wrote

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[6] La Grange, *M:VO*, 115.
[7] *Der Anbruch*, April 1920
[8] Mitchell, *GM:TWY*, 219.
[9] La Grange, *M:VO*, 717.

the music, he professed to be very pleased with it, and in 1888, he liked it well enough to make it, or something very like it, part of his First Symphony. In June of 1884, he was infatuated with Johanna Richter, and as a young composer, he was given the opportunity to write incidental music for a romantic poem and hear it performed immediately. Is it plausible that his feelings for her would not have found their way at least into the serenade?

At this time, moreover, as La Grange records, “Mahler’s favorite writer was probably Jean Paul. . . . Mahler considered *Siebenkäs* the ‘most perfect’ work, but his preference went to *Titan*, though he always denied borrowing the title for his first symphonic work. In July 1883, shortly after leaving Olmütz, Mahler took advantage of his first trip to Bayreuth to visit Wunsiedel, the birthplace of Jean Paul, ‘that extraordinary man, so nearly perfect, so accomplished, whom no one now knows any longer.’ ”[10] Mahler can hardly have failed to notice that his sweetheart had the same names as his favorite writer.

At this time, La Grange also tells us, “Mahler wrote two love poems in which for the first time he used the expression ‘*fahrende Gesell*,’ which later became the title of the cycle dedicated to Johanna Richter.”[11] Toward the end of 1884, Mahler wrote a series of poems to Johanna; he set four of these to music, and they became the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*. To Fritz Löhr he confided, “Last night I was at her home alone, and we sat side by side, almost in silence, awaiting the arrival of the New Year. Her thoughts were far away, and when the bells rang, tears came to her eyes. I understood in despair that I could not dry them. She went into the next room, where she stood silently near the window for a moment. When she returned, weeping in silence, that unspeakable sorrow stood between us like an eternal barrier, and I could do nothing but press her hand and leave. . . I spent the whole night weeping in my dreams. My only light in that darkness: I have composed a cycle of lieder, six for the time being, all dedicated to her.”[12] The *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* express Mahler’s feelings for Johanna Richter: he describes seeing her blue eyes when he looks up to Heaven and her blond hair blowing in the wind when he walks through the yellow fields. That the opening trumpet phrase of *Werners Trompeterlied* finds its way into the second

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[10] La Grange, *M:VO*, 102.
[11] La Grange, *M:VO*, 114.
[12] La Grange, *M:VO*, 120.

Gesellen song, “Ging heut’ morgens über’s Feld,” further suggests that the serenade as well as the song was written for her.

In July 1885, Mahler left Cassel to become head kapellmeister at the Prague Theater; he never saw Johanna Richter again. Early in 1888 in Budapest, where he was now director of the Royal Opera, he finished the scoring of his “symphonic poem in two parts” and five movements, the first movement, “Introduction and Allegro comodo,” drawing on “Ging heut’ morgens über’s Feld,” the fourth movement, “À la pompes funèbres: attacca,” drawing on the fourth *Gesellen* song, “Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz.” On November 19, 1889, the day before the work’s premiere, the *Pester Lloyd* published a long article by Kornél Ábrányi. (There were two music critics in Budapest named Kornél Ábrányi, father and son; this was the son.) La Grange summarizes Ábrányi’s description of the symphony as follows: “In the first part, the rosy clouds of youth and the feeling of spring; in the second, happy daydreams, in the third a joyful wedding procession. But these fade away and, in the fourth, tragedy appears without warning. The funeral march represents the burial of all the poet’s illusions, inspired by the well-known ‘Hunter’s Funeral.’ This bold, powerfully conceived movement is made up of two contrasting moods. The final section brings to man redemption and resignation, harmony of life, work and faith. Beaten to the ground, he rises again and wins the final victory.” La Grange concludes, “Clearly all these ideas were suggested to Ábrányi by Mahler himself.”[13]

In the *Pester Lloyd* review that appeared the day after the premiere, August Beer writes, “The first movement is a poetically conceived forest idyll, which catches our interest by the delicate, hazy colours in which it is painted. Hunting horns ring out, the voices of birds, characteristically imitated by flutes and oboes, become louder, and a warm violin melody, breathing delight and good will, enters exultantly. . . The serenade that follows is a heartfelt, rapturous trumpet melody that alternates with melancholy song on the oboe; it is not hard to recognize the lovers exchanging their tender feelings in the stillness of night. . . The third movement takes us into the village inn. It bears the title Scherzo but is a real genuine peasant dance, a piece full of healthy, true-to-life realism with whirring, humming basses,

[13] La Grange, *M:VO*, 203.

screeching violins, and squealing clarinets to which the peasants dance their 'hops.' "[14]

Did Beer as well as Ábrányi *fils* get his information straight from the composer's mouth? Constantin Floros suggests that "the hermeneutic indications August Beer made in his review of the Budapest premiere probably refer to oral explanations given by Mahler."[15] If La Grange and Floros are correct, then Mahler had a program in mind when he wrote his symphonic poem. If not, it would seem that the program as described by Ábrányi and Beer — a program to which the second movement is integral — was inherent in the music. In either case, a program was there in 1889.

It was not to surface for four years, however. Audience and critical reception in Budapest was lukewarm, largely because of the extravagances of the last two movements. Mahler put the work back in the drawer. In 1891, he left Budapest to become first conductor at the Hamburg Opera. In January 1893, with a second performance in prospect, he took it out and started revising it; at that time, the Andante was deleted. In August 1893, it was restored, and on October 27, he conducted *Titan* in the Hamburg Konzerthaus. It was at this point that a written program appeared. Part one, comprising the first three movements, was now called " 'Aus den Tagen der Jugend,' Blumen-, Frucht- und Dornstücke"; *Blumen-, Frucht- und Dornenstücke* is part of the subtitle of Jean Paul's *Siebenkäs*. And the Andante was now called *Blumine*, after Jean Paul's essay collection *Herbst-Blumine*. By connecting his "Tondichtung" — including *Blumine* — with Jean Paul, Mahler was also connecting it with Johanna Richter.

Not that he was ever explicit about the relationship between his *Titan* and Jean Paul's. In November 1900, when the First Symphony was finally presented in Vienna, Natalie Bauer-Lechner sent a long note on his behalf to *Neues Wiener Tageblatt* critic Ludwig Karpath that stated, "The titles appeared to relate Mahler's '*Titan*' to Jean Paul's novel, though he did not have this in mind but imagined rather a strong heroic man, his life and sufferings, his battles and defeat at the hands of Fate."[16] This disclaimer notwithstanding, Mahler had Jean

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[14] *Pester Lloyd*, November 21, 1889.

[15] *Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies* (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993), 31.

[16] La Grange, *M:VO*, 749.

Paul's *Titan* in mind when he drew up the 1893 program. As Donald Mitchell points out, "If the subsidiary titles establish a pretty clear link with the world — and titles — of Jean Paul, then it seems more than likely to me that 'Titan' too, the overall title, must owe at least something of its origins to the same source. It would be positively outlandish if such were not the case. Would Mahler himself, who must have been aware of the trains of association involved in his scheme of titles, deliberately have perpetrated such an arbitrary and indeed somewhat meaningless confusion?"[17]

Mahler had put his finger on the problem back in 1883 when he described Jean Paul as "that extraordinary man . . . whom no one now knows any longer." Following the 1894 performance of the symphonic poem at Weimar (where in the program *Blumine* became *Bluminenkapitel* — "Chapter of Flowers"), his friend the Czech composer J.B. Foerster recorded, "Among the audiences at the Hamburg and Weimar performances there were probably very few readers of Jean Paul (at one time a favorite of the young Schumann), which was not to be wondered at; and so it appeared that, led astray by the title, 'Titan,' they expected a new 'Eroica,' instead of which Mahler presented them with the music of a young heart full of hope and despair with here and there satirical touches of parody and an ironical overlay of 'folk comedy.' "[18]

At Weimar, moreover, as Constantin Floros records, both the program and *Blumine* came under attack from "Ernst Otto Nodnagel, a critic and composer from Königsberg who later became an enthusiastic Mahler fan. As he himself wrote, he had subjected the symphony to 'an emphatically negative discussion' in reviews for the *Berliner Tageblatt* and the *Magazin für Litteratur* and 'condemned it' because it appeared under the guise of program music. Nodnagel considered the printed program, which indirectly referred to Jean Paul's *Titan* and *Siebenkäs*, as 'in itself confused and unintelligible.' He could not recognize any relationship between the program and the music, and he rejected the 'Blumine' movement as 'trivial.' "[19] When the symphony was next presented, in Berlin in 1896, the *Titan* name and the program were gone, and so was *Blumine*. Mahler conducted the First on numerous occasions thereafter (the last being in New

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[17] Mitchell, *GM:TWY*, 226
[18] Mitchell, *GM:TWY*, 301 n. 108.
[19] Floros, *GM:TS, 28.*

York in 1909), and though he had ample opportunity to restore title, program, and/or movement then, or on the occasion of the revised Universal Edition in 1906, he never did. We have no evidence that he ever considered doing so.

III

Titan and the program disappeared from what became the First Symphony because they failed to make the work more acceptable to the public — Mitchell, after citing Foerster's remarks, concludes, "Doubtless, it was just this kind of grotesque misunderstanding that encouraged Mahler to get rid of the whole programmatic apparatus."[20] But why did Mahler delete *Blumine*? On the Odyssey liner notes for the 1968 Frank Brieff recording, Jack Diether, citing John C. Perrin, tells us, "The publisher in 1899, however, considered the symphony too long, so that 'after a hard fight, Mahler gave in very reluctantly and, full of anger, suppressed the Andante, which expressed his innermost feeling for Johanna [Richter].' " As both Henry-Louis de La Grange and Donald Mitchell observe, this poignant account can't be true. La Grange argues, "If Weinberger had recommended any deletion at all, it would probably have been that of the 'shocking' and 'scandalous' 'Funeral March' rather than the innocuous eight-minute Andante."[21] In any case, Mahler had dropped the movement by 1896, and there's no evidence that he ever thought to put it back, so Josef Weinberger can hardly have been responsible for its removal in 1899.

Why, then, *did* Mahler drop *Blumine*? La Grange quotes an unpublished section of Natalie Bauer-Lechner's memoirs in which Mahler tells her, "It was mainly because of an excessive similarity of key that I eliminated the 'Blumine' Andante from my First."[22] This is puzzling, as Donald Mitchell remarks, since the first movement is in D, *Blumine* is in C, and the scherzo is in A. Mitchell suggests that Mahler might have been absent-mindedly thinking that *Blumine* was in D, as it appears *Werners Trompeterlied* was. That could explain why Mahler said what he did to Bauer-Lechner, but of course, at the point when he removed *Blumine*, between 1894 and 1896, he knew that it was in C.[23]

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[20] Mitchell, *GM:TWY*, 301 n 108.
[21] La Grange, *M:VO*, 753.
[22] La Grange, *M:VO*, 753.
[23] Mitchell, *GM:TWY*, 224.

Mitchell also quotes Bruno Walter as saying that "Mahler made me a present of an unpublished fifth movement of the First Symphony as a souvenir; it was a wonderful, idyllic piece with a trumpet theme, which he had found insufficiently symphonic."[24] This is more plausible, and yet Mahler thought the movement sufficiently "symphonic" to perform as part of his symphonic poem in 1889, 1893, and 1894. Mitchell adds that Mahler's "continuing affection for it is rather amusingly shown in later years by the fact that he drew the attention of his friends to it (and in more than one case made them a gift of the MS or of a MS containing the movement) while simultaneously 'denouncing' the piece, insisting on its destruction or enjoining them never to perform it."[25]

It's evident that Mahler was of two minds about *Blumine*. In 1884, he was pleased with his *Trompeter* music. In 1886, he told Max Steinitzer the serenade was too sentimental and asked him to destroy his copy. In 1888, he put the serenade into his new symphonic poem. In January of 1893, he took it out; in August, he put it back in. In the 1893 MS that's in the New York Public Library, he writes of *Blumine* (now an "Andante con moto"), "The entire piece tender and flowing throughout! No *ff*!! No dragging!" Kornél Ábrányi and August Beer admired it; so did Bruno Walter. Yet the letter that Natalie Bauer-Lechner sent to Ludwig Karpath in 1900 reads, "Here [following the scherzo!] a sentimental and rapturous piece was originally inserted, a love scene that Mahler jokingly called his hero's 'blunder of youth' and that he later eliminated."[26]

"To include a 'character piece' in a symphony," Mitchell sums up, "was a practice that Mahler was to make his own, e.g. the Andante in the Second, the Minuet in the Third, even the Nocturnes in the Seventh. From that point of view, the Andante of the First Symphony at least provides an historical precedent. But of course one only needs to compare the elaborate compositional character of, say, the Minuet from the Third Symphony with 'Blumine' to see at once the essential symphonic element — an indispensable *density* of musical thought — that is missing in the latter."[27] The Adagietto of the Fifth Symphony

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[24] *Der Tag* (Vienna) 17 November 1935; cited in *Gustav Mahler: The Wunderhorn Years*, 221.
[25] Mitchell, *GM:TWY*, 221.
[26] La Grange, *M:VO*, 749.
[27] Mitchell, *GM:TWY*, 300 n. 102.

and the Andante amoroso of the Seventh are not so very much denser than *Blumine*, but certainly *Blumine*, with its A-B-A (B being two variants of A) structure, minimal modulation (could that be what Mahler meant by “excessive similarity of key”?), and abundant repetition, is naïve in a way that those later movements are not. One could argue that such naïveté was appropriate to depict a first love that the hero of the symphony goes on to rise above; perhaps that was even Mahler’s original thought. Like Jean Paul’s *Titan*, Mahler’s is by turns naïve and sentimental, scathing and sarcastic. But naïve and sentimental were not in fashion in the 1890s, and neither was Jean Paul. Perhaps, too, Mahler came to be embarrassed by his “youthful folly” with Johanna Richter.

The last straw may have been the negative review the Weimar performance received from Ernst Otto Nodnagel. Floros argues that “Mahler must have taken Nodnagel’s objections to heart because at the next performance, which he conducted on 16 March 1896 in Berlin, he did without the program, introducing the work simply as ‘Symphony in D major’ and dropping the ‘Blumine’ movement — to the great satisfaction of Nodnagel, who gladly stated that the work now found ‘lively approval, even from part of the hostile press.’ ”[28] In fact, the reception in Berlin was mixed, and the symphony never achieved the success Mahler hoped for. Still, he now one critic in his corner. Given Mahler’s pre-Weimar doubts about *Blumine* and the public’s failure to appreciate the Jean Paul allusions, one can not make Nodnagel responsible for the deletion of movement and program, but would Mahler have dropped them if Nodnagel’s review had been favorable, or if this work had been a popular and critical success to begin with? As late as 1892, he was still trying to get his cantata *Das klagende Lied* published as a three-movement work; only after he failed to do so did he delete the opening *Waldmärchen* movement.

Or the last straw may have been the realization — if Mahler ever did realize it — that the six notes of the first trumpet phrase of *Blumine* are identical to the first six notes of the big C-major melody that begins at measure 61 of the finale of Brahms’s First Symphony, which premiered in 1876. Both are even in C major. What would the critics say? Every subsequent performance would give them their opportunity. So would publication of the movement.

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[28] Floros, *GM:TS*, 28.

IV

What argues for the restoration of *Blumine* to Mahler's First, however, is the symphony's debt to the serenade. If Mahler was ever conscious of that debt, he would appear to have forgotten by 1896. But his subconscious remembered, because phrases from *Blumine* keep cropping up in his subsequent symphonies.

Almost from the moment of the rediscovery of *Blumine*, Jack Diether became its chief proponent. He wrote the liner notes for the first three recordings of the First Symphony with the "new" movement. The scherzo, as he pointed out in his Pye note, "contains a characteristic dance-metamorphosis of the opening measures of the trumpet theme from *Blumine*." And in his Odyssey note, he explained that "the 'Blumine' music — for all its far-off, dreamy, soloistic 'otherness' — does fit into the scheme of No. 1 to the extent that it begins with and grows out of the interval of the rising fourth, just as all the other sections of the work begin with rising or falling fourths. . . Most telling of all, perhaps, is the fact that the lyrical section of the finale (both in the exposition and in the reprise) *refers back* to 'Blumine' in the nostalgic way of lyrical 'flashbacks' found in all the other Mahler symphonies. Only, in this case, there has never been anything to flash back to, so that the deepest inner meaning of these references in the finale has until now been lost to us." Diether expands on these thoughts in his RCA note, observing that "the trumpet theme's two-bar cadence figure, played thus by the violins in the 'Blumine' movement [measures 28-30], is extended into a 16-bar cadence in the finale [measures 206-221], beginning with a rising sequence built on the first bar and ending with a passionate swell based on the second bar that is followed in turn by a falling sequence on the same figure, as an 'after-song' in the cellos. All this is surely the epitome of Gabriel Engel's 'endless leave-taking.' In the varied reprise, the reappearance in the oboe of the rising sequence evokes an even more passionate outpouring in the full orchestra, the significance of which is bound to be lost on that listener who is totally unfamiliar with the music to which it alludes!"

In fact the symphony is even more indebted to *Blumine* than Diether realized. In *Gustav Mahler: The Early Years*, Donald Mitchell cited Max Steinitzer's recollection of the beginning of *Werners Trompeterlied*, which is in 6/8 and C major. On the following page, Mitchell continued, "The first phrase is not unpromising, but its continuation is so feeble that belief is shaken in the accuracy of

Steinitzer's memory. Though we learn that Mahler himself came to angry condemnation of the tune, on the basis of Ex. 1, it is scarcely possible to imagine that there was ever a time when the tune had his confidence."[29] After *Blumine* came to light, Mitchell revised his estimate: "I am glad to have the opportunity to quote this lovely tune complete, if only to redress the harsh criticism I made of it in *The Early Years* based on Steinitzer's six-bar quotation."[30]

What Mitchell doesn't tell us about Steinitzer's *Trompeterlied* memory in light of the discovery of *Blumine* is that the harmony is quite different. Indeed, the harmonization that Steinitzer remembered is so banal, one has to wonder whether it isn't that rather than the continuation of the melody that struck Mitchell as feeble back in 1958. If Steinitzer's version is accurate, then Mahler rewrote the *Trompeterlied* to create *Blumine*. But is this harmony really Mahler's? Mitchell believes that *Blumine* is the *Trompeterlied* transposed from D to C (perhaps because the first movement of the symphony was already in D) — which would mean that Steinitzer's recollection was indeed faulty.

If in fact *Blumine* is *Werners Trompeterlied* in C major, if Mahler expressed his feelings for Johanna Richter in his *Säkkingen* serenade as well as in the songs of *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, we might expect to find some connection between the two. And we do. In measures 4-5, 6-7, and 8-9 of "Ging heut' morgens über's Feld," in the voice and the first violins, there's a rising-falling six-note sequence that's identical to what the trumpet plays at measure 17 of *Blumine*. This idea recurs in the second verse at measures 32-33, 34-35, and 36-37 (voice, flutes, clarinets) and in the third at 67-68 (first violins) and 89-90 (first violins). It's a simple sequence, and its occurrence in the song could be nothing more than coincidence.

It is, however, no coincidence that *Blumine*'s opening C-major trumpet phrase (BL 4-6) also appears in "Ging heut' morgens." It's suggested at GHM 11-12 (voice and second violins), where on the words "Guten Morgen" the five-note germ grows to six with an interpolated F-sharp. Another version appears at the end of the verse, GHM 23-25, where the vocal part — "Wie mir doch die Welt gefällt" — is embroidered by the violins and the violas. The idea recurs in the

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[29] Donald Mitchell, *Gustav Mahler: The Early Years* (1958; London: Faber and Faber, revised edition 1980), 227-228.

[30] Mitchell, *GM:TWY,* 300 n. 101.

second verse at 39-41 ("ihren Morgengruß geschellt" with clarinets) and again for "Wie mir doch die Welt gefällt" at 51-53, and in the bridge to the third verse it pops up in the clarinets at 62-64 and the violas at 64-65. In the third verse proper, the first violins take it up at 71-73, underneath "gleich die Welt zu funkeln an." And then in 81-83, at "Blum' und Vogel, Groß und Klein," the *Blumine* idea blossoms: the first five notes (in the vocal part and the first violins) reproduce the A-minor form of the idea that Mahler wrote for the oboe at BL 72-73 and the last five notes reproduce the idea in its main form as articulated in BL 5-6.

Far from having no connection with Johanna Richter, *Werners Trompeterlied* contributed a cadence to one of the *Gesellen* songs that Mahler wrote for her some six months later. And inasmuch as the First Symphony's opening movement draws on "Ging heut' morgens," it's hardly surprising to hear BL 5-6 turn up in the exposition, budding in the first violins at measure 80 and blooming at measures 90-91. The rising-falling figure from BL 17 also plays a part, first appearing in the cellos at measures 66-67 before being passed on to the first violins (76-77) and the seconds (77-78). Even the introduction provides a "flashback": the trumpet's rising C-major arpeggio in BL 9-10 becomes the horns' rising D-major arpeggio at 32-33 of the first movement.

During the initial long, slow build-up of the development, the cellos essay a phrase (first heard at 169-171) that's looking for completion, and when at 223-224 they find it, it turns out to be the "Blumine"/"Groß und Klein" motif. The first violins quote the entire "Blum' und Vogel, Groß und Klein" phrase at 227-229, and at 233-234 the second flutes throw in BL 17, followed by the second violins at 237-238. This completed phrase reappears at 298-304, traveling from the bassoons to the clarinets and violas and then to the cellos, as the development, becoming agitated, prepares for its concluding crisis. Once that's overcome, the winds and the horns take up the rising D-major arpeggio at 361-363, the trumpets start the development phrase at 363, with the violas and cellos joining in on the BL 5-6 "chorus," and the first violins finish up with the "Blum' und Vogel, Groß und Klein" phrase at 370-372, throwing in a couple of BL 5-6 motifs for good measure. Winds and strings reiterate BL 17 from 385 to 390, preparing the way for the trumpets to reinitiate the development phrase at 391, the oboes and clarinets picking it up at 393, the violins following at 397, and the flutes, oboes, and clarinets delivering a farewell variation at 397.

To follow the process by which *Blumine* helped form this movement is, of course, to “hear” the symphony backward. Imagine being a sharp-eared critic in 1889 Budapest, or 1893 Hamburg, or 1894 Weimar. Imagine your surprise, when the slow movement begins, at discovering that the “Groß und Klein” figure is its foundation. It’s as if the wonder the composer had found in flower and bird had now also been discovered in a young woman. When the trumpet plays its G-C-E-G arpeggio, you’re reminded of the A-D-F#-A horn arpeggio you heard in the first movement’s introduction; then the rising-falling figure that drives both “Ging heut’ morgens” and the first movement appears at measure 17. Even the cadence that ends the first section of *Blumine*, at 28-29, might sound familiar: it resembles the falling six-note figure with which “Ging heut’ morgens” ends. This is also the cadence to which, as Jack Diether noted, the last movement flashes back.

The story of the composer and his young lady continues in the Scherzo. There’s only the vaguest resemblance between the tripping A-major figure in the winds at measures 10-12 and the arpeggios of BL 9-10 and the first movement’s 32-33, but it’s worth noting because this figure becomes one of the building blocks of the finale, and when it makes its first appearance there, at measures 300-302, as a triumphant trumpet call in C major, its G-C-C-D-E-F-G represents a filled-out version of BL 9-10’s G-C-E-G. *Blumine* proper enters the Scherzo at measure 18, where the BL 5-6 melody appears in the dialogue between the bassoons/violas/cellos and the violins. The development of this dialogue sees the five-note figure augmented to seven-note form, and that in turn is varied in the second half of this repeated section, beginning at measure 38. Like the development of the first movement, the “development” of the scherzo seems to be looking for a theme, and what it finds, at measure 68, is BL 5-6, which once again moves from background to foreground — it’s as if the composer were trying to put this motif out of his mind but it kept reasserting itself. Mahler marked this section “Wild,” and indeed the motif develops in unbridled joy before subsiding into its original form at measure 104 and returning to its original role as the main section of the Scherzo wraps up. The trio motif that the first violins articulate at 177-178 is the first four notes of BL 5-6 turned upside down, and at 182-184 the flutes play a variant of BL 5-6. At 206-207, the first violins allude to BL 28-29; they seem to be bidding it farewell, but it’s not ready to say goodbye.

"Funeral March" references to Johanna Richter are confined to the *Gesellen* song "Die zwei blauen Augen." In the finale, however, at measure 175, the lyrical second subject begins in the first violins with the variation on BL 28-29 before the first violins and cellos develop the original version at 206-221, as Jack Diether noted. Sorrow turns to protest at the outset of the development as the motif is annunciated first in the horns (266-269) and then in the trumpets (270-273 and 282-289) before the winds and horns (290-293) play a syncopated version of BL 5-6 to initiate the C-major first statement of the triumphant march (300-302), which as we have seen alludes to BL 9-10. The violins, meanwhile, contribute at 302-304 the scurrying version of BL 5-6 that was so prevalent in the first movement. In the recapitulation, the cellos have the BL 28-29 variation at 458-460; then beginning at 480, a version of BL 28-29 is passed from the oboes to the first violins to the rest of the strings before 490-495 bring a final anguished outburst from the flutes, oboes, and violins, Mahler finally letting go of Johanna Richter and marching on. Even then, at 555-556, the second violins look wistfully back with the syncopated version of BL 5-6 that was heard at 290-293, and the firsts join in at 561-563.

V

Mahler's subsequent symphonies continue to look back. The four-note germ of BL 5-6 — which, it turns out, is the first four notes of the plainchant Dies Irae — permeates his Second Symphony. The five-note version becomes part of the trumpet cadence at measures 9-12 of "Urlicht." In the finale, the "Ewig" motif that the horns take up at measure 31 is rounded off by the "Groß und Klein" phrase. BL 5-6 becomes a sad cadence in the horns at 82-83; at 103-104, BL 72-73 becomes a lament for cor anglais that the orchestra takes up at 123-124. The trumpets ring out the "Ewig" cadence at 164-166, and the horns follow at 173-175. The march that erupts at 220 is built on BL 5-6; the strings continue with it under the trumpets at 250. Distorted, BL 5-6 becomes a cry of distress in the trumpets beginning at 310; at 331-332, the lament that the cor anglais sounded at 103-104 is taken up by the trombones. The first violins have the "Ewig" cadence at 430-431, the first oboe following at 433-434, just before the chorus enters. That cadence returns at intervals thereafter: the first trumpet at 496-497; the violins at 507-508; the horns at 539-540 and passing it along to the trumpets, the trombones, and the violins; the choral fugue on "Mit Flügeln werd' ich mir errungen" that begins at 671. And the alto

and the cor anglais take up BL 72-73 at measures 566-567. Thereafter, the “Ewig” theme transcends the *Blumine* elements, and they’re not heard at the apotheosis.

BL 5-6 also appears in a cadential role in the Third Symphony, at 17-18 (second violins) of the Adagio; in the Fourth, at 6-7 (first violins) and 40-41 (cellos) of the opening movement, rounding off the first and second subjects, and at 43-45 (violins) of the Poco Adagio; and in the Fifth, at 196-197 (first violins) of the Rondo Finale, where it closes the joyful reprise of the Adagietto. On the other hand, the theme for eight horns that opens the Third — where Mahler has in mind (or in his subconscious) not only BL 4-6 and the Brahms C-major theme but also the student song “Wir hatten gebauet ein stattliches Haus” that appears in Brahms’s *Academic Festival Overture* — has philosophical and political as well as romantic overtones. And in the trio of the Scherzo of the Seventh Symphony, at measure 246, the horns and the cellos join in a funhouse-mirror waltz parody of BL 4-6; it turns dark and brutal when repeated by the trombones and tubas at 416.

Then there’s the Andante of the Ninth Symphony, where BL 28-29 precipitates the catastrophic collapses of the exposition (measures 92-94 in the first violins) and the development (196-198 in the brass, winds, and first violins; 295-297 in the A clarinets and trumpet; 308-310 in the winds, trumpets, violins, and violas). Mahler also looks back to Jean Paul here. Toward the end of the novel *Titan*, Roquairol is heard singing the folk tune “Freut euch des Lebens” (“Enjoy Life”), which Johann Strauss turned into a waltz in 1870. Mahler alludes to Strauss’s work beginning at measure 17 in the first violins, and he quotes it in the first/second-violin duet that begins at 147. There’s another reminder in the Tenth Symphony: at 420 of the first Scherzo (Deryck Cooke III), the trumpets look back to the variant of BL 28-29 that appears at 175 of the First Symphony’s finale. In its Tenth incarnation, this melody conjures the barbershop-quartet music Meredith Willson wrote for “Lida Rose” in *The Music Man*. Willson, of course, never heard what Mahler wrote and vice versa.

VI

Like many composers, Mahler continued to work on his compositions even after they had been presented to the public. He reorchestrated parts of his Fifth Symphony years after the premiere; he switched the order of the Sixth’s inner movements while he was rehearsing the symphony for its premiere, and after it had been published. He

conducted his “Tondichtung”/First Symphony as a five-movement work three times before deleting the *Blumine* movement. The result was more cogent as a symphonic work but less so as a narrative. The original version is a kind of novel in which we hear the germ of an idea in the first movement that expresses itself as a sentimental attachment in the second and haunts the (wedding?) dance of the third before disaster strikes in the fourth. In the finale, Mahler leaves it (sentimentality? puppy love? Johanna Richter?) behind and marches triumphantly on. The four-movement version is a mystery with the key pages ripped out.

The conflicting explanations Mahler gave for his decision also raise doubts. Could his ambivalence about *Blumine* have owed as much to his ambivalent feelings about Johanna Richter as it did to the piece’s compositional limitations? If he noticed that *Blumine*’s main melody had the same notes as Brahms’s most famous theme, would he not have been tempted to bury the movement before some critic made the same observation? And if the deciding factor was a review that called *Blumine* “trivial,” would he have admitted as much?

Mahler never looked back on his decision to excise *Blumine*. But in his symphonies, the movement’s themes, like his hero, marched on.

Coda

One additional practical argument that has been raised against the restoration of *Blumine* to the 1899/1906 version of the First Symphony is that between 1894 and 1899 Mahler enlarged the orchestration of the rest of the symphony and that *Blumine*, having been deleted, remained a small chamber piece. Yet the table that Donald Mitchell provides in *The Wunderhorn Years* doesn’t show a very great difference between the 1893 MS and the 1899 Weinberger score — Mahler quadrupled the winds and added three horns and a second timpanist.[31] This by itself hardly seems reason to exclude the movement from the 1899/1906 version. Mitchell’s description of the paper Mahler used for *Blumine* suggests that at least part of the movement survived intact from its 1884 serenade inception to its appearance in the 1893 score, so it’s hardly certain that he would have thought it too small for the 1899/1906 symphony.[32] Mitchell, having already stated, “I can see no harm in an occasional

[31] Mitchell, *GM:TWY,* 212.
[32] Mitchell, *GM:TWY*, 198.

performance of the [1899/1906] symphony with the Andante installed as its second movement," continued, "As for those who laboriously reconstruct a set of performing materials from the 1893 MS and then solemnly play an orchestration much of which Mahler spent years revising and refining — this seems to me to be musicology (if that's what it is) run mad."[33]

[33] Mitchell, *GM:TWY*, 224.