

For immediate release
Alan Gilbert triumphs in Berlin

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Alan Gilbert, New York Philharmonic Music Director Designate, Scores Triumph in Return to Berlin Philharmonic

**Gilbert's Next Performances, Back with NY Phil, Will Include Martinu's Fourth Symphony,
Mahler's First Symphony, and World Premiere of Peter Lieberon's *The World in Flower***

When Alan Gilbert made an unscheduled debut conducting the Berlin Philharmonic in 2006 (replacing the indisposed Bernard Haitink at short notice) few people would have imagined that his next appearance before Berlin's greatest symphony orchestra would be as Music Director Designate of the New York Philharmonic. Having welcomed him as a "podium god" the first time around, the press was prepared for his triumphant return to the Philharmonie on April 18.

Berlin's *Morgenpost* review headline reads: "Martinu Rediscovered in the Philharmonie ... Why wander so far afield when the good – the very good – is so close at hand?" The review begins:

"The New York Philharmonic made an especially happy selection with Alan Gilbert as its next chief conductor. ... Gilbert returned to the Berlin Philharmonic's podium, where he stood as a substitute several years ago, and demonstrated everything he has as a conductor and musician. They're not often the same thing. He ripped Bohuslav Martinu from the perpetual twilight that has been so negligently inflicted upon him, and, with an enlightened performance of the Fourth Symphony, demonstrated the gravitas, greatness, and originality of this master. ... A musical panorama of great density came to the fore; for Gilbert and the curious orchestra (which last played this symphony 20 years ago) knew exactly how to put it across – with utmost intensity."

Luckily, music lovers around the world will – for the price of a ticket to a movie – be able to hear the performance online, where it is available in the Berlin Philharmonic's new Digital Concert Hall. A trailer is available now and the full concert – including a pre-recorded intermission segment featuring Gilbert discussing the program with BPO flutist Emmanuel Pahud – will be posted shortly. Here's the link:
dch.berliner-philharmoniker.de/#/en/concertarchiv/archiv/2009/4/t27/.

Before arriving in Berlin, Gilbert conducted Germany's NDR Symphony Orchestra, of which he is principal guest conductor, in a series of concerts of Debussy, Ravel, Haydn,

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and Strauss in Hamburg and Kiel. The Hamburg *Abendblatt* noted that the French Impressionists were treated to “particular devotion Gilbert led the magically performed *Nocturnes* with wonderfully subtle colors. [Ravel’s *Daphnis et Chloé*] Suites grew from fluffy sound-formations, via the superb woodwind solos, to orgiastic final dances.”

Die Welt went even farther, praising Gilbert’s especially well-designed program (Salome’s dance preceded her monologue, with Strauss’s “orientalism” balancing the perfumes of French “antiquity”):

“The journey through the sensually dazzling aural landscapes of the turn of the previous century began in the dreamscape that opens the first *Daphnis et Chloé* Suite. ... The NDR Chorus was astonishing as it followed the composer’s instruction to ‘sing as if from a distance’. ... The wind soloists and chorus attained a peak of atmospheric sound-art in Debussy’s Three Nocturnes Thomas Hengelbrock, whose appointment as the NDR’s next chief conductor was announced the same day, is taking on quite an inheritance.”

A reviewer in Kiel, Germany’s northernmost city, sounded somewhat envious of New York’s next Philharmonic Music Director: “Gilbert demonstrated once again how he manages to transform the NDR into a sinuously organic, shimmering Ravel orchestra.”

Alan Gilbert returns to the New York Philharmonic on April 30 for a pair of programs. In the first, he reprises the Martinu Fourth Symphony that so impressed Berlin, and will also conduct works by Dvorák and Saint-Saëns (April 30; May 1, 2, and 5). And on May 7, 8, and 9 he leads the world premiere of Peter Lieberson’s cantata *The World in Flower* – a New York Philharmonic commission – with Joyce DiDonato, Russell Braun, and the New York Choral Artists – on a program with Mahler’s Symphony No. 1. This is the first time Gilbert has performed a Mahler symphony with the New York Philharmonic, and, as a bonus, the program opens with Mahler’s delightful “Blumine”, a movement originally written for the First Symphony but ultimately removed from it.

Gilbert returns to lead the New York Philharmonic in a number of free summer concerts (July 14–20), including its traditional Concerts in the Parks series, which brings the orchestra to Central Park for two concerts, as well as Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx and Prospect Park in Brooklyn. He also leads the Philharmonic in two free indoor concerts in Queens and Staten Island. Alan Gilbert’s final concerts with the Philharmonic before becoming Music Director in September 2009 will take place at the Bravo!-Vail Valley Music Festival, during the Orchestra’s annual residency there (July 24–31).

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Alan Gilbert – Spring Concerts with the New York Philharmonic

April 30; May 1, 2, and 5 (New York, NY)

New York Philharmonic

Dvorák: *The Golden Spinning Wheel*

Saint-Saëns: Violin Concerto No. 3 (with Joshua Bell)

Martinu: Symphony No. 4

May 7–9 (New York, NY)

New York Philharmonic

Mahler: “Blumine”

Lieberson: *The World in Flower* (world premiere and New York Philharmonic commission with Joyce DiDonato, mezzo-soprano; Russell Braun, baritone; and the New York Choral Artists)

Mahler: Symphony No. 1

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– April 27, 2009

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