

Notes and Tempos for Mahler 2

There are a lot of German indications in the score and the parts. If you need some help with translations, check out this web site:

<https://www.orchestralibrary.com/reftables/mahler2gloss.html>

Mvmt. I

The prevailing tempo of the opening of this movement is quarter-note equals 80. However, the figures in the Basses and Cellos in measures 2 and 4 are much faster - roughly quarter equals 144. In measure 4, the fermata is relatively short. I will give a strong gesture on beat 3 for the entrance right off the beat in cellos and Basses. Bassoons and Contra enter on the downbeat of measure 5 after 7 16th-notes in the low strings.

It's Mahler, so we will have some push/pull all the time.

The next real tempo change will be 2 after Reh. 4. This is faster, roughly quarter equals 100. That remains the tempo until Reh. 6 when we start a very gradual slow down into Reh. 7. Where the quarter-note will equal roughly 66.

The next section (from Reh. 7 until 5 bars after Reh. 9) stays in that slow four. At 5 bars after Reh. 9 we will go just a little quicker, quarter equals roughly 76.

We start to speed up at Reh. 10 all the way until Reh. 11 where prevailing tempo is quarter equals 100.

At Reh. 12 we will go faster - approx. quarter equals 128. At 13 we will continue in this tempo but I will go into cut-time - half equals 64. This remains the prevailing tempo until Reh. 15. Reh. 15 is fast and in four - quarter equals 144 with a big ritardando in the last four bars before 16.

Reh. 16 is slow - approx. quarter equals 60. We will very gradually push the tempo.

Reh. 17 quarter equals approx. 84.

Reh. 18 quarter equals approx. 140

Reh. 19 quarter equals approx. 112

Reh. 20 quarter equals approx. 60

5 bars after reh. 20 is the recapitulation. This will sound a lot like the opening. The prevailing tempo at reh. 21 is quarter equals 80.

There is a slowing down after reh. 22 and then it keeps getting slower and slower until reh. 24.

Reh. 24 quarter equals approx. 66.

The last change is suddenly faster at reh. 27 - quarter equals approx. 108.

Mvmt. II

There will be a big break between movements 1 and 2. Mahler wrote in the score that you should have *at least* 5 minutes after movement 1 before starting movement 2.

At the opening - in 3, eighth equals approx. 88.

Reh.3 - not hurrying. Basically the same tempo - eighth equals approx. 88-92. After reh. 4 we will speed up, but not that much, maybe to eighth equals 100 or so.

Reh. 5 is like the beginning, eighth equals 84-88.

Reh. 6 is quicker, eighth equals approx. 96-100. There is a big slow down again after reh. 11.

Reh. 12 - one more time eighth equals approx. 84-88.

Mvmt. III

This is mostly in 1. Dotted-quarter equals approx. 54.

The first tempo change is at reh. 37 - faster, dotted-quarter equals approx. 60.

Reh. 40 is slower, but still in 1, dotted-quarter equals approx. 42.

The last six bars or so before reh. 43 will get slower and I will go into 3. Then staying in 3, we will push the tempo again at reh. 43 until we get back to tempo 1, dotted-quarter equals approx. 54, at reh. 44.

After reh. 49, we will push the tempo, staying in 1. The fastest it will get will be approx. dotted-quarter equals 72. We will slow down again the last few bars before reh. 51, but we will stay in 1 the whole time.

The end of movement 3 goes straight into movement 4.

Mvmt. IV - "Urlicht"

Opening - fermatas will be not too long.

At measure 3 it is slow, but not dragging, approx. quarter equals 60.

At Reh. 1 it will be a touch slower, prevailing tempo of quarter equals 54. Both of the ritardandos between Reh 2 and 3 will be significant.

Reh. 3 is quicker, approx. quarter equals approx. 80.

The ritardando before Reh. 6 is massive. I will conduct 4 eighth-notes in the bar before 6. From 6 to the end is very slow.

The last bar has a fermata and then we go straight into the 5th movement.

Mvmt. V

This starts fast. The first measure will be in a very fast three - eighth equals 216. Then that goes straight into 1 at measure 2, dotted-quarter equals roughly 72.

It stays in 1 while slowing down before the break right before Reh. 2.

At reh. 2, we will be in four, quarter equals approx. 60.

Reh. 3 stays slow, prevailing tempo is roughly quarter equals 56. This stays the same until reh. 7.

Reh. 7 - in 2, half equals approx. 60. We will start to push the tempo after reh. 8. It will get to be about half equals 88.

Reh. 10 - slow again. In 4, quarter equals approx. 54. This is the prevailing tempo until reh. 14.

3 bars after reh. 14 - fast. In 4, quarter equals 140.

“Kräftig” after reh. 15 - a touch slower, quarter equals 128-132.

8 bars before reh. 19 - another touch slower, quarter equals 104-108.

Reh. 20 - fast, quarter equals 140.

Reh. 21 - slow. In 2, half equals 64.

Reh. 22 - now I conduct quarter notes. The tempo stays the same, quarter equals 128

There is a big speed up going into reh. 25. Reh. 25 - in 2, half equals 88. Reh. 26 - we will push the tempo.

Reh. 27 - very slow. In 2, half equals 40-42.

Reh. 29 - very slow, conducted with all the long fermatas.

Reh. 30 - in 4, quarter equals 120. We will work out these cadenzas in rehearsal.

Reh. 31 – “Aufersteh’n”

It’s very slow. Metronome around quarter equals 44.

I will conduct the rit. eighth notes on “ja” and “wirst” – they will be slow (closer to the quarter-note pulse than an eighth-note pulse).

The quarter-note rest 3 bars before 32 will be longer than one exact beat.

Big breath between “Leben” and “wird” 3 bars after 32.

Reh. 33 - in 4, quarter equals 50.

Reh. 35 – “Wieder aufzublüh’n”

Slow, but not dragging. Quarter equals 60 or so.

This section moves more regularly than the first chorale.

4 bars before 37 (Zurückhaltend) we slow down the tempo a little. I will conduct the big triplet for the sopranos and altos.

Reh. 37 - quarter equals approx. 64.

Reh. 39 - "O glaube"

In 2, half equals roughly 60

Halfway between 40 and 41 I will push the tempo.

Reh. 41 - In 4, quarter equals roughly 88-92

Reh. 42 – "Was entstanden ist"

Slower. Quarter equals 69 or so.

Reh. 43 – "Hör auf"

Slower. This should feel more like the earlier material (Reh. 35). Quarter equals approx. 60.

"Bereite dich" is faster – quarter equals approx. 80. Then after the fermata rest it goes back to roughly 60.

From Reh. 44 – 46, I will conduct in 2, with the half-note equal to approx. 96.

At 46, the old half-note becomes the quarter (quarter equals 96). I will be in 4 for 4 measures and then keeping the exact same tempo, go into 2 at 5 bars after 46 (half equals 48).

I will push the tempo in 2 until 3 bars before 47. At that point we slow down. I will conduct all four quarter notes in the measure before 47.

Reh. 47 – "Sterben werd ich"

This is the moment that the entire symphony has been building towards. This should be everything that you've got from here to the end!

This is in 2. Half equals approx. 76. Last couple of bars slow down into 4 and then at Reh. 48 we are in 4. Quarter equals approx. 60. I will push the tempo in the second half of the music leading into Reh. 49. 3 bars after 49 I will conduct in 3. The ritardando will be massive.

7 bars after reh. 49 - In 2, half equals approx. 54. At 50 we will push the tempo, 5 bars after reh. 50 is in 1.

Reh. 51 to the end is in 2, half notes are roughly 50.