



# The Mahler Family Letters

*Stephen McClatchie*

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Hundreds of the letters that Gustav Mahler addressed to his parents and siblings survive, yet they have remained virtually unknown. Now, for the first time Mahler scholar Stephen McClatchie presents over 500 of these letters in a clear, lively translation in *The Mahler Family Letters*. Drawn primarily from the Mahler-Rosé Collection at the University of Western Ontario, the volume presents a complete, well-rounded view of the family's correspondence.

Spanning the mid 1880s through 1910, the letters record the excitement of a young man with a burgeoning career as a conductor and provide a glimpse into his day-to-day activities rehearsing and conducting operas and concerts in Budapest and Hamburg, and composing his first symphonies and songs. On the private side, they document his parents' illnesses and deaths and the struggles of his siblings Alois, Justine, Otto, and Emma. The letters also give Mahler's insightful impressions of contemporaries such as Johannes Brahms, Richard Strauss, and Hans von Bülow, as well as his personal feelings about significant events, such as his first big success--the completion of Carl Maria von Weber's *Die drei Pintos* in 1889. In the fall of 1894, the character of the letters changes when Justine and Emma come to live with Mahler in Hamburg and then Vienna, removing the need to communicate by letter about quotidian matters. At this point, the letters relay noteworthy events such as Mahler's campaign to be named Director of the Vienna Court Opera, his conducting tours throughout Europe, and his courtship of Alma Schindler.

*The Mahler Family Letters* provides a vital, nuanced source of information about Mahler's life, his personality, and his relationships. McClatchie has generously annotated each letter, contextualizing and clarifying contemporary historical references and Mahler family acquaintances, and created an indispensable resource for all Mahlerists, 19th-century musicologists, and historians of 19th-century Germany and Austria.

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