



## **Carl Maria von Weber - *Concerto in F major for bassoon and orchestra op. 75***

Among the first masters of Romanticism, Carl Maria von Weber was an artist with a whimsical nature and particularly devoted to the theater. This attitude is also found in the instrumental production where, alongside other valuable works, the Concerto for bassoon and orchestra in F major op. 75. Made in 1811 at the request of Georg Friedrich Brandt, principal bassoon of the Munich orchestra, the concert is characterized by a writing that is as balanced as it is vibrant and full of momentum. The particular tonal sensitivity with which Weber manages to personalize the individual instruments in his compositions for soloist and orchestra is clearly evident in the three movements into which the score is articulated. After an Allegro built according to the rules of the sonata form, it is above all in the second movement - Adagio - that the bassoon shows itself to be the undisputed protagonist thanks to a particularly lyrical melodic line, which at times takes on the appearance of a theatrical recitative, and also in the concluding Rondò, in which he is called to juggle numerous bravura passages that once again underline his technical and expressive qualities.

## **Gustav Mahler - *Symphony No. 5 in C sharp minor***

The Symphony No. 5 in C sharp minor is the work of full Mahlerian maturity and represents the watershed between the first symphonies, linked to the fairytale world of the Wunderhorn, and the last ones, marked by the intimate lyricism and mournful atmospheres of Friedrich Rückert's lieder. Mahler began composing it in 1901, a painful year in which the composer, struck by a hemorrhage, came close to death. The five movements of the symphony form three large blocks recognizable by thematic and expressive affinities and the funereal atmosphere that distinguishes the first block, formed by the first two movements, is clearly a direct expression of the author's private suffering. Indeed, the opening of the Symphony is a dramatic and somber phrase from the trumpet that triggers a funeral march, reminiscent of the music heard by military garrisons during childhood, as well as an indelible mark in Mahler's sonic memory. And also the second movement, Allegro, shares the same desperation with the first, proposing an elaboration of the materials heard previously. However, the heart of the symphony is the imposing Scherzo which marks the emotional and existential turning point (it was in fact composed in 1902, a happy year for Mahler who returns to Maiernigg accompanied by his young wife Alma). The contrast with the first two movements is very clear: the anguish is replaced by the playful tones of the Ländler, by waltz rhythms and nostalgic melodies. The famous Adagietto for strings and harp, which opens the third block, is entrusted with the task of lightening the atmosphere in an interlude of pure sonorous ecstasy and abandonment of the things of the world; while the final Rondò, between thematic repetitions, wide-ranging chorales and fugues, sanctions the victory of life over pain and death.