



## **Alban Berg - *Drei Bruchstücke aus Wozzeck***

«I saw Wozzeck on stage, before the war, and I got such an incredible impression that I decided to put him into a music opera immediately.» This is what Alban Berg wrote to his friend and colleague Anton Webern in 1918, a time when his name was known only in the small circle of Schoenberg's students. International fame and affirmation will come a few years later and thanks to *Wozzeck*, a work inspired by the novel by Georg Büchner, which will soon become a crucial work of the early 20th century as well as an emblem of expressionist theater. In Büchner's text Alban Berg had in fact identified themes particularly important to Expressionist poetics such as the nightmare, mental alienation, brutal murder. After completing the score in 1921, the author decided to extrapolate from the three acts of the opera a selection of symphonic and vocal pages to create a concert version, the *Drei Bruchstücke aus Wozzeck*. The first of them brings together two scenes from the first act: the military march announcing the arrival of the army and the dramatic and melancholy lullaby that Maria sings to her child. The second piece, extrapolated from the beginning of the third act, is a short lyrical parenthesis before the killing of Maria. The woman, repentant for having betrayed Wozzeck with Tamburmaggiore, seeks comfort in reading the Bible and intones a heartfelt prayer. In the third and last passage, the two final scenes of the work are summarized. The tragedy is now over: Wozzeck, unable to bear the humiliation caused by the betrayal of Maria, in a rage raptus, kills her with his knife, and then drowned himself in the pond where he threw the bloody blade. The next morning some children play near the pond, including Maria's son and Wozzeck who, regardless of reality and wrapped in an alienating and hallucinatory musical dimension, continues to play with the rocking horse like a robot.

## **Anton Bruckner - Sinfonia n. 9 in re minore**

Anton Bruckner started his career as a symphonist at the age of forty, relatively late by the standards of the time, nevertheless fate had been kind to him, allowing to live long enough to develop a respectable catalog of symphonies. In fact, when death overtook him at the age of seventy-two in 1896, Bruckner had eleven symphonies to his credit, although he wanted to catalog only nine. The last of them, the Symphony no. 9 in D minor, however, it remained unfinished as it lacked the final movement, of which only a few sketches remain. It is said that Bruckner, perhaps aware of his imminent death, suggested to the director Hans Richter that he conclude the symphony with the *Te Deum* (both Symphony No. 9, dedicated to God, and the *Te Deum*, a hymn of thanksgiving to God, are pages united by sacred solemnity and vertical momentum). It therefore remains a mystery why Bruckner, despite having the possibility of concluding the Ninth (the first three movements had been composed between 1891 and 1894), decided to use the energies of his later years to revise other symphonies written previously, as he was used to do, setting aside the composition of the fourth movement of his last symphony. Yet, listening to the Ninth Symphony seems to lack nothing: the sense of unlimited waiting that one breathes from the very beginning, the continuous upward tension achieved through the procedure of dynamic and structural crescendo at the same time, the gradual detachment from earthly things interspersed with apocalyptic visions and moments of sound rarefaction find the culmination in the last bars of the Adagio in which the music rises to peaks of absolute transcendence. Then, perhaps, it is useless to ask ourselves at all costs what would have been the conclusion of a work which by its nature is already projected beyond the finite.