



Maestro Michael Morgan Playlist Details

For over thirty years, Michael Morgan has been the Oakland Symphony Conductor and Music Director. Here, he puts together a list of his favorite music with a brief explanation on what this music means to him and his life.

1.) *Mahler Symphony No. 7*. Leonard Bernstein conducts New York Philharmonic. This is the recording that started my obsession with this piece. It is an amazing puzzle for the conductor. And, of course, Bernstein was one of my most important mentors.

2.) *Mendelssohn Elijah*. Rafael Frubeck de Burgos with New Philharmonia Orchestra. I adore this piece and the peerless singing of Janet Baker, along with the spectacular singing and English diction of Nicolai Gedda make this just a treasured recording.

3.) *Stephen Foster Song Book*. Robert Shaw Chorale. Count this as a somewhat guilty pleasure. I love these songs (unfortunate, outdated, racist language and all) and the sound Robert Shaw got out of his singers is incomparable. Robert Shaw was also one of the greatest men I ever met.

4.) *Mussorgsky prelude to Khovanshchina* (Dawn over the Moscow River) Mravinsky/Leningrad Philharmonic. This is a sentimental choice. My father took me to my first concert and this was the first piece performed at that concert.

5.) *Verdi Caro Nome (from Rigoletto)* Leontyne Price, *The Prima Donna Collection*. Of course she would never have done the role of Gilda onstage but this studio recording ending in an astonishing High E is an off-brand favorite of every Price fan. Which is everybody.

6.) *Bach Cantata No.54. Widerstehe doch der Sunde*. Harnoncourt, Paul Esswood/Concensus Muscus Wien One of my favorite Cantatas led by

two of my favorite artists. Old school historically informed performance.

7.) *Dvorak Symphony No. 7* Witold Rowicki/London Symphony Orchestra. The greatest Dvorak Symphony performed by another of my important teachers: Witold Rowicki, a founder of the Warsaw Philharmonic.

8.) *Bach B minor Mass*. John Eliot Gardiner/The English Baroque Soloists. A favorite piece led by a favorite conductor. But I could endorse any of a number of recordings by early music specialists.

9.) *Schumann Frauenlieben und Leben*. Any of the recordings by Kathleen Ferrier. The combination of Schumann's heartfelt song cycle and the great English Contralto Kathleen Ferrier is highly moving. She was an extraordinary voice, to say the least.

10.) *Bernstein Mass* Bernstein conducting, Alan Titus as Celebrant. A piece totally unlike any other that exists in the world. It is a summing of Bernstein's world view the way Bach's B minor Mass was a summing up of his. Bernstein's world is more familiar to us and even though it's a Vietnam War era piece, it always feels contemporary.

11.) An encore: William Bolcom's Lime Jello, Marshmallow, Cottage Cheese Surprise. Joan Morris/William Bolcom. Any recording by Bolcom and his wife Joan Morris is worth your time. This song is entirely fun and was memorably an encore at the cabaret show of Kitty Carlilse Hart she did in San Francisco just before her death.