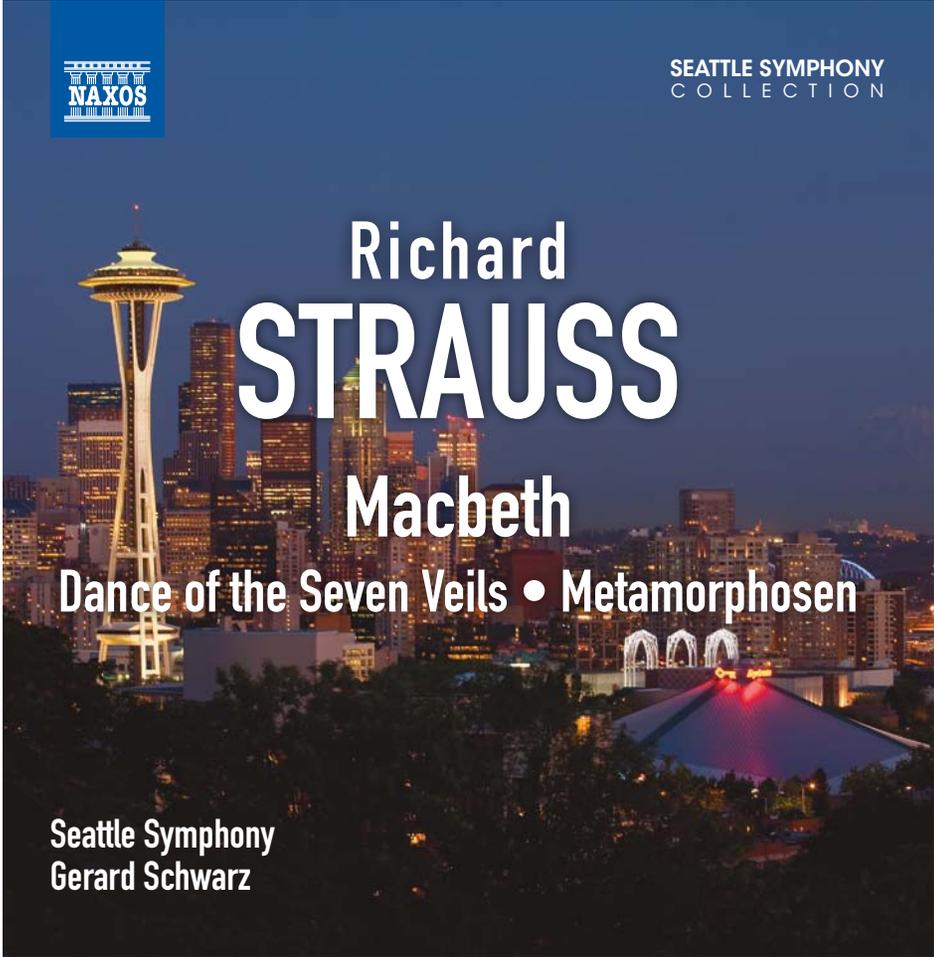


The NAXOS logo is located in the top left corner of the album cover. It consists of the word "NAXOS" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, with a stylized graphic of a classical building facade above it.

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The background of the album cover is a night-time photograph of the Seattle skyline. The Space Needle is the most prominent feature on the left, illuminated against the dark sky. Other skyscrapers are visible in the center and right, their lights glowing. In the foreground, the roof of the Seattle Symphony Center is visible, lit with red lights. The overall scene is a panoramic view of the city from an elevated position.

Richard  
**STRAUSS**

**Macbeth**

**Dance of the Seven Veils • Metamorphosen**

Seattle Symphony  
Gerard Schwarz

## Richard Strauss (1864-1949) Macbeth • Dance of the Seven Veils • Metamorphosen

The German composer and conductor Richard Strauss represents a remarkable extension of the work of Liszt and Wagner in the symphonic poems of his early career. His operas show an equally remarkable use of late romantic orchestral idiom, often within an almost Mozartian framework. Born in Munich, the son of a distinguished horn-player and his second wife, a member of a rich brewing family, Strauss had a sound general education at the Ludwigsgymnasium in Munich, while studying music under teachers of obvious distinction. Before he left school in 1882 he had already enjoyed some success as a composer, continued during his brief period at Munich University with the composition of concertos for violin and for French horn and a sonata for cello and piano. By the age of twenty-one he had been appointed assistant conductor to the well-known orchestra at Meiningen under Hans von Bülow, whom he succeeded in the following year.

In 1886 Strauss resigned from Meiningen and began the series of tone-poems that seemed to extend to the utmost limit the extra-musical content of the form. The first of these works, *Aus Italien* ('From Italy'), was followed by *Macbeth*, *Don Juan*, *Tod und Verklärung* ('Death and Transfiguration') and, after a gap of a few years, *Till Eulenspiegel*, *Also sprach Zarathustra* ('Thus Spake Zarathustra'), *Don Quixote* and *Ein Heldenleben* ('A Hero's Life'). Meanwhile Strauss was establishing his reputation as a conductor, directing the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra for a season and taking appointments in Munich and then at the opera in Berlin, where he later became Court Composer.

The new century brought a renewed attention to opera, a medium in which he had initially enjoyed no great success. *Salome*, performed in Dresden in 1905, was followed in 1909 by *Elektra*, with a libretto by the writer with whom he was to collaborate over the next twenty years, Hugo von Hoffmannsthal. *Der Rosenkavalier* ('The Knight of the Rose'), a romantic opera set

in the Vienna of Mozart, was staged at the Court Opera in Dresden in 1911, followed by ten further operas, ending with *Capriccio*, mounted at the Staatsoper in Munich in 1942.

It was unfortunate that, in the eyes of many, Strauss was compromised by his seeming acquiescence under the National Socialist Government that came to power in 1933, taking over from conductors threatened by the régime or from those, like Toscanini, who refused engagements under the prevailing circumstances. In particular his acceptance in 1933 of the position of President of the new *Reichsmusikkammer* established by Joseph Goebbels, with Furtwängler as Vice-President, brought later criticism and hostility, although Strauss's actions may be seen as defending his Jewish daughter-in-law and his own grandchildren from the obvious dangers that the Third Reich presented. After 1945 he withdrew for a time to Switzerland, returning to his own house at Garmisch only four months before his death in 1949.

Strauss completed the first version of his symphonic poem *Macbeth* in 1888, revising it in the following years to give its first performance with the Weimar Hofkapelle in October 1890, after the first performances of *Don Juan* and *Tod und Verklärung*. He himself later preferred the title *Ton-Dichtung* (tone-poem) for compositions of this kind, although they remain fundamentally symphonic. *Macbeth* is in the form of a symphonic movement and opens with a fanfare-like motif of kingship, followed by the theme representing Macbeth himself, soaring in its ambition and combined with a secondary element heard from the horns and bass trumpet. A further motif is introduced in the lower wind and string registers, suggesting Macbeth's mounting ambition. The theme for Lady Macbeth carries the words in the score:

*Hie thee hither,  
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,  
And chastise with the valour of my tongue,*

*All that impedes thee from the golden round,  
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem  
To have thee crown'd withal.*

This is introduced by flutes and clarinets, over a sustained horn note, but is followed by a further motif that suggests her inner turmoil.

The principal material now introduced, there is an episode in which Macbeth and his wife converse in dialogue that rises in intensity, as she attempts to screw his courage to the sticking-place. The music mounts to a climax and the kingly motif is heard three times. King Duncan, whose murder the Macbeths have now planned, draws near, to their agitation, as the strings provide a scurrying introduction to a second episode, based on material associated with Lady Macbeth. Now Duncan is heard, in royal procession, announced by the kingly motif and greeted by Lady Macbeth. In the development earlier themes return, with the Macbeth theme first heard. It is in this section that Duncan is murdered and that the guilty pair hear knocking at the castle gate. Macbeth is even now haunted by his conscience:

*Wake Duncan with thy knocking,  
I would thou could'st.*

The fairly short recapitulation follows the final self-destruction of Lady Macbeth, whose music becomes fragmented. Macbeth himself faces defeat as the distant drums and fanfares of the approach of Malcolm and Macduff are heard.

The opera *Salome*, based on Oscar Wilde's play, was first staged in Dresden in 1905 and won immediate favour, although the censors in Vienna prevented its performance until 1918. *Salome's Dance of the Seven Veils*, in return for which she demands from Herod the head of John the Baptist, was, as Strauss suggested, the dance of a chaste oriental princess, to be performed with the most simple and restrained gestures.

Strauss dated the beginning of the composition of *Metamorphosen* to 13 March 1945 and its completion to 12 April. Described as a study for twenty-three solo strings, ten violins, five violas, five cellos and three double basses, it was dedicated to Paul Sacher and the Zürich Collegium Musicum who gave the first performance at the

Zürich Tonhalle on 25 January 1946. The period was one of the greatest difficulty, not only in the material shortages and the problems of the occupation of Germany by foreign powers, but one of moral suffering with the destruction of many of the great monuments of German culture: opera houses and theatres, the Goethe house in Frankfurt and the historic city of Dresden. To Strauss it must have seemed that the world he had known had been destroyed.

It was from his reading of Goethe that Strauss drew inspiration for *Metamorphosen*, its title an allusion to Goethe's *Die Metamorphose der Pflanzen* and *Die Metamorphose der Tieren*, his German answer to the *De rerum natura* of Lucretius. It has been suggested that *Metamorphosen*, not in the Lisztian sense of the metamorphosis of a theme, arose from the idea of setting a late poem by Goethe, whose works Strauss was reading again, taken from *Zahme Xenien*, fourteen lines starting *Niemand wird sich Selber kennen / Sich von seinem Selbst- Ich trennen* (No one can know himself / separate himself from his very self). *Metamorphosen* starts with the cellos and basses before the fourth and fifth violas announce the theme, a reminiscence of his reworked *Trauer um München* (Lament over Munich) and a clear reference to the *Funeral March* from Beethoven's *Eroica Symphony*, a theme heard, prefixed by the words *In Memoriam*, from the lower strings in the closing bars of the work. The viola theme seems about to be repeated, but instead a new theme is introduced by the first and second violas with the first cello. A change to G major allows the appearance of a new theme, marked *etwas fließender*. These themes, with other motifs, variously treated, provide the substance of the work. The opening *Adagio* is heard again in a form of recapitulation, followed by the principal motto theme and the theme that followed from it. The third theme, *allmählich etwas fließender*, returns, but breaks off. After a silence, the opening material starts the coda, leading finally to the motto theme, accompanied by the "Eroica" theme, *molto lento*, ending the major achievement of Strauss's old age.

Keith Anderson

## Gerard Schwarz



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Gerard Schwarz serves as Music Director of the Eastern Music Festival and Conductor Laureate of the Seattle Symphony. A renowned interpreter of nineteenth-century German, Austrian and Russian repertoire in addition to contemporary American composers, Schwarz recently completed his final season as Music Director of the Seattle Symphony after an acclaimed 26 years. His previous positions as Music Director include New York's Mostly Mozart Festival, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and the New York Chamber Symphony. As a guest conductor he has worked with many of the world's finest orchestra and opera companies. His discography of over 350 releases showcases his collaborations with the Seattle Symphony, the Berlin Radio Symphony, The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Czech Philharmonic, the London Symphony Orchestra and L'Orchestre National de France, among others. His pioneering recordings of American symphonists Diamond, Hanson, Hovhaness, Piston and William Schumann have received high critical praise, as have his cycles of works by Brahms, Mahler, Rimsky-Korsakov, Robert Schumann, Shostakovich, Richard Strauss, Stravinsky and Wagner. Schwarz has received hundreds of honours and accolades including two Emmy Awards, 13 GRAMMY® nominations, six ASCAP Awards and numerous *Stereo Review* and *Ovation* Awards. He holds the Ditson Conductor's Award from Columbia University, was the first American named Conductor of the Year by *Musical America* and has received numerous honorary doctorates. The National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences gave Schwarz its first "IMPACT" lifetime achievement award.

## Seattle Symphony



Gerard Schwarz conducts the Seattle Symphony in Benaroya Hall, Seattle  
Photo courtesy of Yuen Lui Studio

The Seattle Symphony, founded in 1903, has gained international prominence with more than 140 recordings, twelve GRAMMY® nominations, two Emmys and numerous other awards. Gerard Schwarz led the orchestra from 1985 to 2011, and is now Conductor Laureate. The Seattle Symphony is internationally recognized for its innovative programming and extensive recording history. The orchestra performs in one of the world's finest concert venues – the acoustically superb Benaroya Hall – in downtown Seattle. Under the leadership of Music Director Ludovic Morlot since September 2011, the Symphony is heard live from September through July by more than 315,000 people. For more information on the Seattle Symphony, visit [www.seattlesymphony.org](http://www.seattlesymphony.org).

The three works in this programme reflect different aspects of Strauss's compositional life. The tone-poem *Macbeth*, written between 1888 and 1891, offers a grippingly taut narrative. The *Dance of the Seven Veils* from the 1905 opera *Salome* is one of its most exciting and intoxicating moments. Towards the end of his life, facing the ruin wrought by World War II, Strauss took inspiration from Goethe and wrote *Metamorphosen*, one of the most moving of all twentieth-century works.



Richard  
**STRAUSS**  
(1864-1949)

- |   |  |              |
|---|--|--------------|
| ❶ | <b>Macbeth, Op. 23, TrV 163</b>  | <b>19:15</b> |
| ❷ | <b>Dance of the Seven Veils from<br/>Salome, Op. 54, TrV 215</b>       | <b>10:17</b> |
| ❸ | <b>Metamorphosen – Study for 23 solo strings,<br/>Op. 142, TrV 290</b> | <b>32:18</b> |



## Seattle Symphony • Gerard Schwarz

Recorded on 31 May 1990 (*Macbeth*); 31 March & 13 May 1987 (*Dance*)  
17 April 1992, 8 & 9 February 1993 (*Metamorphosen*) at the Seattle Center Opera House, USA  
Executive Producer: Amelia S. Haygood • Recording Producers: Adam Stern, Carol Rosenberger (*Dance*),  
Bejun Mehta (*Dance*) • Recording Engineer: John M. Eargle  
Associate Engineer: Al Swanson (*Macbeth, Metamorphosen*) • Assistant Engineers: Li Teo (*Macbeth*),  
Matthew Luthans (*Metamorphosen*) • Production Associate: Phyllis Bernard (*Dance*)  
Booklet notes by Keith Anderson  
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