

What do conductors say about the 9th?

Wilhelm Furtwängler, Otto Klemperer and Kurt Masur discuss the 9th Symphony.

Furtwängler: Nowadays people are apt to prize a clean and accurate reproduction of what's written in the score above everything else. Can one do justice in a line drawing to a work whose significance lies in its vision of colour? The duty of the performer is to go back continually to the style of the work itself, and base himself on that. The stronger the structure of the work is and the greater composers mastery of form, the more clearly defined is the interpretative task.

Klemperer: Very important for every conductor and for the orchestra is the upbeat, not downbeat, upbeat. There it makes the orchestra more attentive.

Masur: The greatest danger for performance is that you have the feeling you know the piece already. And I tell you after all those performances and there were a lot, around 100 or more, I always am asking myself "Where did you have the feeling that it went?" Only because the score is printed, the parts are printed, everybody knows it, and where you have to pay attention that the freshness and the creativity of a performance is so convincing for the listener that it feels it might have been composed yesterday.