

Benjamin Zander - Possibility in Troubled Times

- Good afternoon everybody. I am truly honoured to introduce today's guest. I first saw him over 20 years ago at YPO event, and the memory stayed with me for decades. To watch him in action is truly mesmerising. When our mutual friend, Dori, told me of their friendship decades later, I was delighted to get to meet him in person. Benjamin Zander is the conductor of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra and the Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra.

He's also a guest conductor with orchestras around the world and is a three time Grammy nominee. For the past 60 years, Zander has occupied a unique place as a master teacher, deeply insightful and programing interpreter, and as a profound source of inspiration for audiences, students, professional musicians, corporate leaders and politicians around the world. He has persistently engaged, well-informed musical and public intellectuals in a quest for insight and understanding into the western musical cannon and the underlying spiritual, social and political issues that inspired its creation.

His performances have inspired thousands of musicians renewed their sense of idealism and shed fresh, insightful, and sometimes provocative light on the interpretation of the central symphonic repertoire of the 19th and 20th centuries. Critics and the public have been united in their praise for Zander's interpretation of the central repertory. Zander enjoys an international career as a speaker on leadership with several keynote speeches at the Davos World Economic Forum where he was presented with the Crystal Award for outstanding contributions in the arts and international relations.

The bestselling book, the "Art of Possibility," co-authored with leading psychotherapist Rosamund Zander, has been translated into 18 languages. In 2019 Benjamin Zander was presented with a lifetime achievement award at the ABSA Achievement Awards in Johannesburg in recognition of his contribution in the sphere of music, culture and leadership. This is the first time that the award has been given to a non South African previous recipients of the award includes Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu. Zander's Ted Talk on the transformative power of classical music has been seen by almost 15 million people.

Before we hear him talk, let's hear him make music. Here he is with his youth orchestra, young musicians between the ages of 12 and 21, playing the opening section of Mahler's second symphony in the legendary Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. A hall in which Mahler himself conducted the symphony. Ben, a very, very warm welcome. It's an absolute pleasure to have you here on our academy and I'm now going to be handing the floor over to you. Thank you once again for joining us.

Video with music plays.

- Well you've just Mahler heard convey death, despair, protest, coiled energy, a tragic funeral march, and finally a towering cataclysmic climax full of grief all in two minutes. You've seen 120

kids, aged 12 to 21, embrace it, absorb it, and convey it. The gentleman at the radio station who interviewed me after the performance said to me a very simple question, "How is that possible?" Well, I hope to convey to you some of what makes it possible during this hour that we're going to spend together. I want to tell you about, I could talk about many different things, but I decided to talk today about music and possibility and the youth orchestra in particular, and this tuition free orchestra.

That means that nobody is kept out of it. Nobody pays to play in it. And so we can take people from all different walks of life and different backgrounds and we take them on a great journey when they join this orchestra, join a journey into shaping leaders through music, shaping future leaders through music. And we take them around the world. Every year. We took them on a Mahler journey to his home, to all the places where Mahler had been active in Berlin and in Vienna and in Budapest, in Salzburg.

And gave them a deep experience of what it felt like to be in Mahler's shoes, learnt the background, learned the meaning of the piece. And we would've come this year to South Africa. And it's a matter of great sadness to all of us because of the coronavirus, we had to cancel our tour and it was heartbreaking for all of us 'cause we'd spent a great deal of time, not on the second symphony this time, but on the first symphony of Mahler and also on on the symphony "Fantastic." Which we're going to bring in many other things and we were going to bring music, great music, great musicianship, and also possibility.

And Wendy, I want to thank you for this opportunity that I can spend with your friends and colleagues. I didn't know which to talk about. I thought should I talk about possibility? Should I talk about music? I decided we talk about both. We talk about music and we'd also talk about possibility. How we can travel with 120 youngsters from the age of 12 to 21 with only four chaperones. How is that possible? Well they are trained in possibilities. So I want to go into that in some detail now. And the "Art of possibility," the book, the yellow book, which Wendy mentioned in her introduction has on the back a sentence, "In the face of difficulty, we can despair, get angry or choose possibility."

Now we have ample opportunity to feel difficulty at this moment. This is one of the most difficult moments for all of us in our lifetimes. And it's very easy to get into the despair and it's very easy to get angry, particularly if you are in America and you see how inept and how inappropriate so much of what's going on in the government and in the leadership. It makes us very angry, but actually it doesn't help to be angry. So we can choose possibility. Now let's just see for a moment, what do we mean when we say possibility?

Possibility is a conversation to hold. And it's not the same as positive thinking. Positive thinking is something quite different. Positive thinking is where you pretend that things are good when you know they're terrible. And there's a lot of that going on too. Donald Trump is with all his happy talk about everything's fine and nothing, there's no problem and so on. That's extremely irritating. Positive thinking is very, very annoying. And that's not at all what we're talking about.

What we're talking about is possibility.

And I want to give you a story because it'll make it very clear. My father immigrated from Germany in 1937 to escape Hitler and he came with his wife and three children I was born then in 1939 in London, he lost his mother in the concentration camps and eight members of the family were gassed in the death camps. And he lost everything. He lost all his belongings and his profession and his house and his money. And everything. And came to England and started a life there. And then, as many of you know, all that generation were interned to get them out of the way because Hitler was in Paris. And it became very dangerous. Rather like the Americans, did the same with the Japanese.

And so he found himself on an island off the coast of England, the Isle of Man with 2000 other men. And you can imagine the state of anxiety and despair and yeah, anger and just total upset. And some of them were so depressed that apparently they just stared at the barbwire fence all day. He and some others decided that there were a lot of intelligent people in this place. Let's have a university. And they started university in that place and they had 46 classes a week. No books, no paper, no pencil, no chalk, no blackboard, just people talking to each other. Now that is possibility. If he'd gone around saying, isn't this great here, somebody would've hit him in the face. That's positive thinking, completely different.

He told a lovely story, which I'll repeat to you 'cause I think you'll appreciate it. I very rarely told it. But he told me this, that there was one of the most depressed people in that camp was a man by the name of Leo Volmster, who was the the pianist at the Berlin Opera. And he had a legendary memory, which my father knew 'cause he was, although not a professional musician, he knew about music. And so he went to Leo Volmster and said, "If I get some music paper, would you write out the choruses of the opera?" He was a grumpy man. He was very depressed. But he said he would do that.

So my father borrowed from the one of the guards some exercise books from his child's school and wrote pages and pages and pages of five lines. And Leo Volmster, wrote the choruses. And my father said, when they sang the "Prisoner's chorus" from Fideilo, he said it wasn't a great performance but he'd never been more moved by it. And here we are 80 years later talking about it. And my father had a way of always somehow seeing possibility. He used to say there's no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing. And the last thing he said, my brother was his doctor and went to see him.

He was blind in an old people's home. And my brother knocked on the door and said, "Dad, it's Luke." And my father said, "Is there anything I can do to help?" It was the last thing he said, he died that night. So can you imagine that in that state of mind when you're really, nothing is possible anymore, where death is the only thing and you still manage to come up with, "Is there anything I can do to help?" probably with a little chuckle. 'Cause he knew how funny it was. So it's a way of being, it's a way of approaching life. And I want to just dwell for a moment on how did the composers deal with difficulty?

Beethoven, for instance, how did Beethoven deal with difficulty? He was alone, he was sick, he was in war and above all he was deaf. And you know what he did?

Speaker plays piano on and off throughout the following section:

You try and stay gloomy while that music is going on. You can't, you can't. 'Cause Beethoven is saying, and just think what he was saying. He brought in at that moment in the final movement of the fifth symphony, the trombones, they'd been waiting for 150 years. The heightened symphony is no trombones, the Mozart symphony, no trombones, the first symphony, the second symphony, the third symphony, the fourth symphony, the fifth symphony, the first movement. Full of tragedy, full of drama, full of, he was attacking the audience.

He was saying, "Don't be complacent, don't be complacent." Shaking his fist at the world. That's what he was doing. And then finally in the last moment, the lead in and finally the trombone. The joy, the energy, the passion, the gorgeous seniority of a full orchestra in full flight, oh my God, irresistible. Still to this day, every time you hear it, you can't resist it. That's Beethoven. In spite of his terrible, terrible handicaps. Of course when he did the a "Eroica" symphony, you couldn't stay cheerful, while this was going on. A great funeral march for a hero. And we learned in a sense from Beethoven how to deal with the world, how to experience our humanity.

And in the end of his life, the final one, tone deaf stone deaf, he now not only brought in the trombones, but a chorus finally. All human beings will be as brothers, all human beings will be as brothers. Wear your soft wings to war. He wrote the song for the possibility of human beings. And we still sing it and we still feel that passion, that exaltation from this man who was suffering as much as a human being can suffer, lost in his own world, in his head, unable to hear can tankers because he couldn't communicate and he had no companion. But he poured all his love and all his passion for humanity into his music.

Tchaikovsky. What about Tchaikovsky? Tchaikovsky had the terrible fate of being a homosexual in a world that did not tolerate the idea. He had to hide it. He had to pretend he got married. And the day after he married, he threw himself in the river to go kill himself. But he survived. But he never got over that terror. Something that he actually in the end did commit himself. It's not clear about that. But certainly he suffered terribly in his life and yet yet he wrote. And when I do that with my youth orchestra, I tell them to sing. Look what happens to the, bass, And he violins go up. Triumph, defiance against fate.

That's how the composers do that. And they do it for us. They do it for us so that we can experience that we can be taken out of our daily lives, our worries and our self-absorption, caring about our competition. And no, we just put ourselves in the hands of these incredible. Mozart. What about Mozart? Well now Mozart incredibly enough Mozart in the 600 letters that remain of Mozart times 600 letters, there was no evidence of any self depression. He was unable to think of a failure even when concerts were a disaster. He somehow made something

of it.

Yes, he wrote, yeah, "My concert was a splendid success from the point of view of honour and glory, but a failure as far as money was concerned. Unfortunately some prince was giving a and the Hessian troops were holding a grand manoeuvre. But I was in such good form they implored me to give another concert the next Sunday." So he was a pathological optimist. He always took the bright side of life. Whatever happened. And you know, as he grew older, and people don't know this, I mean he didn't grow very old, 35 he was dead. But in the later years he had very serious illness, he lost four children and repeated professional and financial disasters, his optimism grew. That's the extraordinary thing.

And in I call that Amadaity, 'cause his middle name is Amadeus. Amadaity, that's a very valuable quality to have in the face of terrible difficulties. And then he wrote his music. And I'm just going to play a little bit. This is a sonata, a slow movement of the sonata for piano. And it's so beautiful. It's like an opera. It's as if there's a young couple and they sing. Isn't that full of love? I love you so. Oh so joyful. Now the second part, imagine somebody said that to you, You might answer, So one says and you say and now together The father doesn't want the girl to be with the boy. So he says you shouldn't do it. Now it's the same upbeat.

And he says And she says, "Please, please, daddy." We're so happy together. And you are going to have grandchildren. Now comes a very sad section. Now they ask a question. Now they talk together. Searching. Like two sopranos. And that's so beautiful. We want to hear it again, right? You want to hear it the end now maybe a little softer. And now that sad section again. But something is going to happen this time. Are you ready? Like a knife in the heart that E minor, that's the central moment, the moment of the deepest sorrow. Let's hear me one more time. Now you know it's coming.

Now it goes back to the first part, but it's different because of all we've been through. And now comes one final last phrase and it seems to say farewell. I wonder how you feel right now. Your body, your breathing, your head, calm, at one, at peace, whatever suffering there is around you, that's the genius of Mozart. And it's the genius of these tones that they can do that for us. They can take our physical being and our mental being and transform it into another place. Mahler, for instance, Mahler who went through so much suffering, eight children died in in his youth, brothers and sisters.

The coffin was a regular part of his life. We forget that death was almost omnipresent for people at that time. It's only very recent that people have lived for long periods of time and because illness was everywhere and so death was ever present and yet somehow these composers managed to find a way. This is the which judge failed. Forgive me, I'm not a pianist so I can't play. And you heard I made some mistakes. We have a rule in our orchestra that if you make a mistake, you go like this, "How fascinating." It's hard to do. Try it on the golf course next time you're out there because it's actually hard to do because when we make mistakes, we usually contract, pull down and that makes it more likely we'll make a mistake the next time.

Piano section ends.

But, "How fascinating," lifts your spirit and also you ask the question, how fascinating, what did I do wrong? And how can we do it better? How do we face difficulty? Well this now we get to the heart of the matter. I'll give you two pictures. This is one, this is radiating possibility and this is the downward spiral. And the downward spiral is exactly what it says it is. It's going down like that. And it's the elements of this decision, this decision to be in possibility is that you can choose between this and this every time you open your mind.

And it's something that I put in minds of the players and the youth of the orchestra from the very, very first day that they come into it. And we work on it all the time that they're there. And it's an extremely important part of the study. The music is part of the study and this is part of the study and this is the world of competition, of measurement, of winning and losing, of failing and success, measurement of any kind, comparisons of any kind are in this world.

And they're very used to it. It's very exciting 'cause they go in for competitions that they want to win, that they lose. It's like the stock market goes up and goes down and there's a certain excitement that goes with it, but also despair and resignation and fear and dis-ease lives in this world. And this is the world of the obsession about wealth and fame and power. And that's the world of the damage part. Radiating possibility on the other hand is about community, about sharing, about spirituality, creativity, joy, stories. And that's where classical music lives. That's where this music lives. So we learn gradually over the time that these young musicians are in the orchestra, all the practises which enable people to move into this world.

And the word vision, which is in the middle, is an essential part of being in possibility. And we call the trip that we go on Tour of Possibility and it's written on the t-shirt so everybody can see that's what we are is a tour of possibility, giving music to the world. That's what it is about. And the result, the physical result of being in possibility is shining eyes. That's the way you know that you are in possibility. I made a very important discovery when I was about 45 that the conductor doesn't actually make a sound. He has power, but his power comes from his ability to make other people powerful.

So when I discovered that it became extremely important and I began to read it, am I doing that? And the way you know is if the eyes are shining and if the eyes are not shining, you don't blame the players. You say, who am I being that the eyes are not shining? Can do that with our children too. We can do it with other people in our lives, the people who work for us. And so it becomes something that we control ourselves by making that choice. And in order to move into possibility, you have to make a choice every time, every day.

And you keep working on it and working on it and working on it. And it's like practising the violin or any anything else that's difficult. You have to keep working on it and practising it. There's the famous story of the two shoe salesmen, but I've told many times, I'll tell you one more time

'cause there may be somebody who hasn't heard it. Two shoe salesmen go from Manchester to Africa in the 19th century to see if they can sell shoes. One of them writes the telegram back to the factory in Manchester, says, "Situation hopeless, stop. They don't wear shoes." The other one writes back, Glorious opportunity. They don't have any shoes yet."

Now each one of the, they're talking about the same thing, the circumstances don't change what changes what they say about it. And you notice that the music of the downward spiral, situation hopeless, they don't wear shoes and the music of glorious opportunity, they don't have any shoes yet. So now we have a situation where at least on the face of it, things seem to be in terrible shape in the world. And it is true that the things could hardly be worse. But at the same time, it gives us a great opportunity for possibility. There is no situation so bad that it isn't open to possibility and no situation so good that it is invulnerable, that it isn't vulnerable to downward spiral. So it's up to us how we approach it.

My father told a wonderful story which actually told at his funeral the story of the man who goes to the rabbi and says, "Rabbi, you told us about the prayer with praise. But I can't remember, how does it go," and the rabbi says, "Yes, it goes like this. When you have good news, you thank the Lord. When you have bad news, you praise the Lord." "Oh yes, that's right," says the man. "But rabbi, how do you know which is the good news and which is the bad news?" The rabbi says, "You are very wise, my son. So just to be on the safe side, always thank the Lord." So in this situation, I mean you don't want to be silly and banal about it, but there is a very good sign over here in America that the disaster, the catastrophe of the financial and medical situation that we're going to get rid of Donald Trump.

And we might not have been able to do that otherwise. I shouldn't get into politics. But there's no doubt that the world would be a much healthier place without that kind of leadership. And incidentally, talking of health, the ridiculous system of health that we have in America, which is based on people's employment, has got to give way because suddenly we have millions of people who are not employed and they have no healthcare. So there are a number of things it takes an enormous disruption like Mahler's Symphony, this explosions of terror, like the opening of the graves in the final movement of the second symphony. I mean it's the most deafening, catastrophic, cataclysmic sound in the whole world.

And the result is the resurrection. So it takes a tremendous amount to disrupt and explode what is locked in place. Habits, attitudes. Look, what's happened to us now. We have completely different attitude to black people and to women and to the whole thing is turned upside down, which is a very good thing indeed. So I'm going to say something, it's pretty outrageous but I'm going to say it anyway. I say that the next 30 years are going to be the most exciting 30 years in human history and many of you'll be around to see it. I'm 81 so I won't see much of it, but I'm looking far ahead and I think things are going to be fantastic.

And I just want to tell you about some of the things that have happened since our last concert. The last note that was played in Symphony Hall in Boston was on March the 12th by the youth

orchestra. We played a concert, Patricia Stravinsky and the Symphony Fantastic, which we were going to bring to South Africa. There has not been a sound in that hall and there will not be a sound for a very, very long time. Well it was very, very sad. They didn't allow us to have an audience.

We had a few parents there and I had to tell the orchestra members to clap and shout and stomp their feet at the end when they just played just to clapping for themselves because there was nobody else to clap, which they did fantastically, on the recording it sounds like a full house. Anyway, what happened at that concert, very interesting in Patricia's Stravinsky Ballet, complicated, very difficult to play. It was live streamed. And one of the members had a teacher, one of his teachers, English teacher, was sitting at home watching the livestream film of the youth orchestra playing Patricia. And she was watching with her 10 year old daughter. And her 10 year old daughter got very interested 'cause we had the words across the screen so she could follow the story.

And she got more and more interested in the story and more and more excited and started rooting for Patricia to win the ballerina against them all. And her mother said, "What? Why do you feel that?" And she said, "Well I can see they obviously belong together." And the mother thought to herself, "What?" She's a teacher of course. She said, "What is it in the music that makes her feel that?" And she was feeling the same way. And so I found out about that and I had a lot of time on my hands. Usually at that time of year I'm raising money to go on tour, have to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars. But I wasn't raising money at all. I was sitting actually with nothing to do. And so I heard that.

And so I settled down and I wrote and then recorded a detailed description of Patricia from the point of view of a 10 year old so that a 10 year old would understand and all the musical examples went in there and so on. And I sent it to her and she was very excited. I told her she wasn't to listen to more than one. It's in four parts, not more than one part at a time because like a Pooh story, like Winnie the Pooh, you read one at night, you don't read another. So she wasn't, and I said there was a treat at the end when she got to the end and she got very excited. By the fourth day, apparently she was beside herself.

And then she, and she followed the whole thing. She had knew a little bit of music 'cause she played the piano and so on. And it was a very, very detailed thing. Long, long, complicated thing. And when she got to the final section, I'll tell you the secret, which was, it was me reading Pooh Sticks, which is my favourite of all the Pooh stories. And then she sent it to all her friends and her mother sent it because everybody's at home with nothing to do. And so all the 10 year olds in the neighbourhood, were studying Patricia.

Now that is possibility and I'm going to make it available. So all of you, it's going to be sent to you. And so any 10 year old, incidentally, it's good for a 20 year old as well. It's a way of getting inside the music in a way that non-musicians, people who don't know music, can't possibly have. But we don't normally have time to do those things. So this was a very, very exciting thing

and there'd be many, many, many things that have happened like that. And I could go out and tell you some of those things.

But for instance, conducting, I've started teaching conducting on Zoom, which is completely ridiculous 'cause you can't, there's no coordination. So you can't actually make music, you can only react to somebody's shaping. And so I turned out, I worked with one person and then with more, and then now there are 275 conductors in 22 different countries all meeting and studying and unheard of situation. Incredible. And I'm having huge fun with it because it's a new way of thinking and it's illuminating for me in different ways. And I'm more having much more time to follow all the many, many things that are going on on the internet. Just yesterday there was a concert with some fantastic musician, Yo-Yo Ma and Manny Acts and Alicia Wilderstein.

And they were all playing in order to raise money so that people could get IDs in America so they could vote. Well now there's a course, there's a course. So we were all listening to the music and sharing those things and it's absolutely fantastic period of learning. Now people ask, what about my orchestra? Well, most orchestras can't play because we're not allowed more than 25 people, right? Can't have an orchestra, a full orchestra, because I have a hundred people in this orchestra. So what we've done and we've set up five orchestras and they'll meet in in parts and bits and pieces and we'll play.

And with piano, who added and you know, well whatever we can do to make music, because live music is what's so important. You know, my father was so funny because when he was in the old people's home, he could move. He had a friend and they talked every day on the phone. And if there was something live on the radio, they would listen. But if it wasn't live, if it had been recorded before, they weren't interested. And if it was live, they would end their conversation by sync, "See you in the Royal Festival hall in half an hour." So the live music is so crucial and so life giving. So I introduced a new idea, which is concerts in my driveway.

I have a nice sized driveway. And so we've started concerts. We just had our 11th concert on Sunday afternoon, 11 weeks in a row. And the neighbours come in and passes by cars, stop, there's bicycles and they all wear masks and they're distancing from each other. And the players are so thrilled to be doing it. They are so moved to have a chance to play because that's their lifeblood. That's why they studied in practise is to give the music away. They do it for nothing. And we have a little slot, a five minute slot. The the programme is called, "Safe and Sound." So, and it's called, "Live in the Drive."

They play in the driveway and you are going to see it. And I want you to notice some things 'cause I've decided to play you five minutes. The last part of the last movement of the Brandenburg fourth concerto of Bach. Carol Wincenc is the flautist. She's a world class flautist who happens to live in the neighbourhood during the summer. And she of course wanted to play. And her student is playing with the second flute and she used to play my youth orchestra. So that's family. The other members are members of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra.

Of the grownup orchestra. And I want you to notice as it goes, that Bach has a, what I call a cosmic pulse. It's a pulse which goes and goes and goes and goes. And when the piece is over, it will still keep going. That's the genius of Bach. He seems to have a connection to the cosmos in some mysterious way. I want you to notice this one moment when the violinist who had there was no rehearsal, they just ran through it before, plays brilliant little bit and gets more and more, more, more extravagant and excited and goes and keep almost hysterical. I want you to notice the violinist who also used to play in my youth Oscar many, many years ago.

Now she's grey haired, but she plays as if she's dancing. You notice that violinist up on the right there at five past one, incredible. And then there's one wonderful moment when the bass player has to stop playing because the wind has taken his music away. So suddenly the bass is missing. But the cello goes on playing and it sounds lovely, but when the bass comes in again, wha! All is right with the world. And then at the end there are three chords together, pa, da, pa, pa. And the third one is a, just a gigantic yes to the world.

I mean it's incredibly strong. You'll see a lady sitting in a wheelchair who is 104 years old, she hasn't missed a single concert. She comes down with her nurse from the down in her wheelchair, 104. Yesterday she came and her great great grand niece was there, she's just under two. So we worked out, there's 102 years between them and they sat quietly through the whole concert enjoying it probably as much as each other. So these are the wonderful things. See how you feel at the end.

See whether you feel the exuberance. And it turns out since it was put online, you know, because they, it was livestream. 17,000 people have watched it and we'll go on watching. It's just people playing music because they love it and they want to share it. It's such a beautiful thing. And I think you will feel that. I think somebody should have a Bach loop. In other words continuous Bach going from morning to night forever. That would solve many of the problems in the world. But at least I hope you'll enjoy this. It's the "Brandenburg Concerto number four," the final movement. Presto played by the group of players who came together to play in my driveway.

Video with music plays.

- [Audience Member] Thank you, Ben

- Well what beauty? And you still hear. Just so beautiful. And what Bach wrote at the end for the glory of God. That's what he wrote. It wasn't about him. He wasn't drawing attention to himself only for possibility. I call that possibility 'cause we don't need to believe in God, but we have to be aware and available for possibility. And that's what all these composers have added to our life. That place to go beyond despair, beyond anger, but beyond self-absorption, beyond fear to a place of glory called possibility. So I thought it would be good to end today with the last part of Mahler's second symphony, the very final few moments. It's a place where he's gone through a long journey. It's an hour and a half of music and it's a very, very long journey.

Here's the score. And at the end, the place where we're going to start, it says, "With wings that I have gained, I will ascend" and the music goes up and up and up leads to the place, the great chorus sings, comes in, "I will be ascend." And it says, "I will die in order to live." This is the idea of the resurrection, of a rebirth, of a regrowth, of something new, something we can move towards, which will give us. And the triumph is hard one, it is a hard one triumph. And we can feel that deeply in our souls as we struggle with all the great problems that the world has. And finally, it comes to all resurrection.

And you can take that either religious terms, but I think Mahler was not that specifically religious. I think he was about renewal, about renewal. And he says, "What you have struggled will bring you to God. What you have struggled will bear you to God." It says, "Will take you to God." It's one of the greatest ends, maybe the greatest end of any symphony in the world. And it's irresistibly powerful. It ends with the final section, short section for the orchestra. It dies down to acquire deep sigh of contentment.

And then a final E flat, major chord of overwhelming glorious triumph that is overwhelming. If anything in music in life is overwhelming, it's the end of Mahler second symphony. And again, if one just thinks these are children playing, remarkable children, highly trained, deeply dedicated, masterful in the art of possibility. You know, when we go on tour, we don't need chaperones to look after them, to discipline them. They discipline themselves. They're playing in the Concertgebouw, they're playing in Berlin, they're playing Mahler's second symphony. How could they possibly go off track when that's what they're up to?

Set them tasks which are enabling and which are difficult. And they will rise to the occasion. We can't punish them, we can't send them home if they misbehave, we need them. We need every single one of them. So we have to find a different way. So we've found the pathway of the art of possibility to enrol each one of them in being responsible for the whole. And we have a remarkable set of assignments for them. Each week. Walk with spirit and love. Come from the power of a child. There's some beautiful ones which give them a sense that they're part of something bigger than just their own needs and their own pleasures. Learn to focus what is at hand. Remember your innate joy in the midst of difficulties. Wouldn't that be a good assignment for all of us? Remember your innate joy in the midst of difficulty.

My beloved partner Rosamund comes up with these, the author of the book, "the Art of Possibility." She comes up with these assignments every week and they grow into them, they grow into it, into possibility. And it's a life giving, life developing way of being. So this is the final three minutes. It's not long, but it's three of the greatest minutes in life that you are about to hear. And we are going to send you a copy of the original recording so you can listen to the whole thing at home. Isn't that wonderful? And I've had a wonderful time with you today. I can't tell you how grateful I am to Wendy and to Dori and I love South Africa. We had such an incredible time there when I was there last, we've been six times and we hope to come back with the youth orchestra. Now listen to Mahler's great resurrection, finale.

Video with music plays.

- Ben, that was fantastic. What a powerful and inspirational presentation. Talking about inspirational, I would like to invite my friend and yours, Dori Weil who was instrumental in your tour to South Africa last year to say a few words over to you, Da.

- Dori?

- Where is Dori?

- [Dori] Can you hear me?

- Now.

- Okay. That's technology. Ben, I wanted the opportunity, which Wendy kindly afforded me. First of all, I want to share a secret about you. And second of all, there's a confession to be made. The secret is when I was looking at your driveway and that fabulous orchestra and the piece that you conducted, I was trying to peer around the corner into the beautiful garden that sits in front of your front door. Because you all think that the best thing that Benjamin Zander does in the whole world is create this emotional rollercoaster of just feeling and passion through music. But I happen to know that he makes a fantastic omelette, which I've been privileged to share. So thank you.

Just reminded me of that. And the other Ben is really a confession. You know, when I was tenacious, I was inspired by your work, "The art of possibility." We wanted you to come to South Africa, not only to entertain corporate South Africa at the Jewish Report event, the ABSA Jewish Achiever Awards, and to offer you the award that you won. The extraordinary and special recognition that was offered to you. That was part of it. And there was huge anticipation and excitement. Some people had heard you speak before, they remembered the feeling of inspiration that you left with them and the anticipation.

But actually it was really much, much more than that. It was the person having you here and knowing what the Jewish Report would organise and that what we could set up, the person of you who epitomises, there's no gap, between what you do, what you say, what you do, and the person that you are. And it's the person, the abundant person, the spirit that is so contagious. And we just knew that if you made yourself available, you would make everybody in your orbit feel valuable. And we needed to expose you and your value to especially the youth and the kids. It wasn't only the youth orchestra, it was those kids who greeted you with such joy in Soweto and in all the other places that you went, who wouldn't leave you alone apart from the music, they wanted to play with you, engage you, as if there was a mingling of you and them and the value that they felt and that emanated from you made them feel the possibility that they talk about.

Because that's the first step. When you feel valuable, you want to take the first step into the whole. You feel possible if you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change. So it really is a tribute to Ben, the person and how valuable that trip was last year. Who would've known that we'd be in this world now? And that you also felt that it was contagious. Because I know that there was another tour that was planned.

You were well on the way to organising it. And there was something that touched you so deeply about being amidst these people that you went back and you said, we have to take the youth orchestra to South Africa and it was scheduled for June. We now know that it, you need to reschedule it. We need you here desperately. Your energy and spirit is what is so uplifting in addition to the words and the musical journey that you take us on. So this just to remind you of the impact that you made and the impact that you're going to continue to make on us and on the world. So thank you so much and you'll come back. Okay, we waiting for you.

- Okay, we'll be back. Thank you, Dori. Beautiful work. Thank you.

- Good.

- So Ben, once again, that was fantastic and I really do love you. You'll always make me smile. Your optimism, your upbeat personality, can-do-attitude is infectious. And anyone who's lucky enough to have had you as their teacher has been granted a life-affirming gift. I've carried your message of the art possibility with me all those years ago. And whenever I've made a mistake or failed what I'm doing, I do throw my arms up and say, "How fascinating."

And then I try as quickly as possible to fix it before bursting into tears or try not to avoid bursting into tears. Ben, thank you for taking us on a journey of some of the greatest composers and how they as artists dealt with the emotional complexities that came with adversity playing so beautifully and inspiring us to find the possibility in all things. No matter how dire they may seem. You've really shown us the transformative effect that music has on our minds, our bodies, and our souls. Your lasting legacy is not only seen through music, but your commitment to engage with youth around the world and bring music to touch their lives.

- [Benjamin] Beautiful.

- So Ben, Dori, my dear friends, I really cherish Shaw wonderful friendship. And I want to thank you so much for taking the time to be with us this afternoon. To Shauna, I want to thank you for helping Ben and his team at this presentation. And to all of you who have joined us this afternoon, I say thank you. Good afternoon and goodnight.