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Nota di contenuto	1 What Did Mahler Look Like? An Attempt at a Description -- 2 Small Steps: Kalischt and Iglau (1860-75) -- 3 Studies in Vienna (1875-80) -- 4 The Summer Conductor: Bad Hall (1880) -- 5 Emotional Ups and Downs in Laibach (1881-2) -- 6 For the Last Time in the Provinces: Olmütz (1882-3) -- 7 Presentiment and a New Departure: Kassel (1883-5) -- 8 The Avid Reader: Mahler and Literature -- 9 Becoming Mahler: Prague (1885-6) -- 10 The First Symphony -- 11 Life's Vicissitudes: Leipzig (1886-8) -- 12 Notes on Mahler's Songs -- 13 Lowland Dreams: Budapest (1888-91) -- 14 The Conductor -- 15 The Second Symphony -- 16 Self-Realization: Hamburg (1891-7) -- 17 Jewishness and Identity -- 18 The Third Symphony -- 19 The God of the Southern Climes: Vienna (1897-1901) -- 20 Mahler's Illnesses: A Pathographical Sketch -- 21 The Fourth Symphony -- 22 Vienna in 1900: Alma as a Young Woman (1901-3) -- 23 The Fifth Symphony -- 24 'Nothing is lost to you': Faith and Philosophy -- 25 The Sixth Symphony -- 26 Opera Reform - Early Years of Marriage - Mahler's Compositional Method (1903-5) -- 27 The Seventh Symphony -- 28 The Administrator - Contemporaries - Signs of Crisis (1905-7) -- 29 The Eighth Symphony -- 30 Annus Terribilis (1907) -- 31 Das Lied von der Erde -- 32 Starting Afresh: New York (1908-11) -- 33 The Ninth Symphony -- 34 Crisis and Culmination (1910) -- 35 The Fragmentary Tenth Symphony -- 36 'My heart is weary' - The Farewell -- 37 Mahler

Sommario/riassunto

A best seller when first published in Germany in 2003, Jens Malte Fischer's *Gustav Mahler* has been lauded by scholars as a landmark work. He draws on important primary resources—some unavailable to previous biographers—and sets in narrative context the extensive correspondence between Mahler and his wife, Alma; Alma Mahler's diaries; and the memoirs of Natalie Bauer-Lechner, a viola player and close friend of Mahler, whose private journals provide insight into the composer's personal and professional lives and his creative process. Fischer explores Mahler's early life, his relationship to literature, his achievements as a conductor in Vienna and New York, his unhappy marriage, and his work with the Metropolitan Opera and the New York Philharmonic in his later years. He also illustrates why Mahler is a prime example of artistic idealism worn down by Austrian anti-Semitism and American commercialism. *Gustav Mahler* is the best-sourced and most balanced biography available about the composer, a nuanced and intriguing portrait of his dramatic life set against the backdrop of early 20th century America and fin de siècle Europe.
