



La Jolla
Symphony
& Chorus

2019-2020
SEASON

Mandeville Auditorium

February 8-9, 2020

STEVEN SCHICK
Music Director

RUBEN VALENZUELA
Choral Director

La Jolla Symphony & Chorus

2019 - 2020 SEASON

Sat, March 14, 2020 at 7:30pm

Sun, March 15, 2020 at 2pm

Mandeville Auditorium, UCSD

Steven Schick and
Michael Gerdes
conducting

BENJAMIN BRITTEN

War Requiem

GUEST ARTISTS:

Ariana Strahl, soprano

John Buffett, baritone

John Russell, tenor

*San Diego Master
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Children's Choir



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Steven Schick Music Director

Ruben Valenzuela Choral Director

David Chase Choral Director Emeritus

Saturday, February 8, 2020, 7:30pm

Sunday, February 9, 2020, 2:00pm

Mandeville Auditorium, UCSD

JOHANNES BRAHMS **Academic Festival Overture, Opus 80**

MICHAEL PISARO **Umbra & Penumbra (12 poems to 行欣)**
for amplified solo percussion and orchestra
Percussion Soloist: Greg Stuart

INTERMISSION

ANAHITA ABBASI **why the trees were murmuring**
Brenda and Steven Schick Commission
Improvising Soloist:
Peter Sloan
Spatialized Ensemble:
Berk Schneider, Ryan Keefe, Samantha Urbina,
Christopher Clarino, Mike Jones, Matt LeVeque,
Rebecca Lloyd-Jones

JOHANNES BRAHMS **Symphony No. 3 in F Major, Opus 90**
Allegro con brio
Andante
Poco allegretto
Allegro

We gratefully acknowledge our underwriters for this concert

Dr. James Swift & Suzanne Bosch-Swift ■ Family of Joan Forrest
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From the Conductor

Robert Schumann bestowed what he thought was the ultimate compliment on Frédéric Chopin when he declared, "Hats off, gentlemen, a genius!"

We're hearing that word — genius — a lot these days, mostly about Beethoven, whose 250th birthday we'll celebrate this year. Even when we don't actually use the word, we use the concept. A couple of decades after he was rendered bare-headed by Chopin, Schumann was nearly as effusive in a comment about the early works of Johannes Brahms: "It seemed as though, roaring along like a river, he united them all as in a waterfall bearing aloft a peaceful rainbow above the plunging waters below." Wow! Strong words for a rare talent.

But, these days geniuses seem to be everywhere. People talk about the genius of the Beatles on the 50th anniversary of their final recordings, or even about the cool-as-a-cucumber genius of Patrick Mahomes in the NFL play-offs. There are genius putdowns on Twitter, genius training regimens and diets, and of course the annual MacArthur "Genius Awards." No fewer than three dystopic genius scenarios play regularly on TV: "Pure Genius," "Evil Genius" and, scariest of all, stable genius.

Enough with genius already!

While I'm completely in favor of exceptional accomplishment and visionary engagement with the world, I am troubled by the label of genius. Mario Puzo, who guided my teen-age emotional life to an embarrassingly large extent wrote, "great men are not born great, they grow great and so it was with Vito Corleone." But not so with genius. As opposed to greatness, genius is that quality of brilliance that one cannot cultivate; one is born with it. For us ordinary folk then, the concept of genius is self-defense. Brahms was born a genius; I was not. So, I cannot expect to achieve his level of accomplishment. The word is also bad for Brahms, since it implies that his extraordinary music was the result of superior DNA and not acquirable skills and perseverance.

But, what if we stopped worshipping at the altar of genius? What if ball-to-the-wall creativity, engagement, vision, and imagination were not the

no-fly zone of genius, but a space that *anyone* can navigate for the low cost of a little courage and a lot of patience. The luminous mid-century mystic Simone Weil wrote, "real genius is nothing else but the supernatural virtue of humility in the domain of thought." What an invitation for all of us! Where we all have access and none is left to shoulder the crushing verdict of insufficiency.

So, as we listen to today's concert, might we imagine that Brahms is one of us, and that we are one with him? Might we hear his musical decisions in the intimate *Third Symphony* as simple human ones? Perhaps even brave ones? In the ubiquitous language of outpouring — one of the many aspects that links our extroverted age to his — let's not underestimate the cultural risks involved in ending each movement with a whisper rather than a shout. In his bigger-is-better age, as in ours, concerted inward reflection, pursued to a point approaching prayer, took courage.

In a face-off between courage and genius, I'd take courage any day.

And what about Anahita Abbasi's *Why the Trees were Murmuring*, this year's Brenda and Steven Schick commission to reflect social and environmental optimism? Abbasi's project, now still in its early rehearsals, recalls anthropologist Eduardo Kohn's "How Forests Think" in its evocation of the sentient quality of non-human life. The multi-layered vitality of Abbasi's rasping, pulsating, mercurial score seems more like the vitality of our one wild world than the tepidly duplicating landscape of the civilized.

Michael Pisaro, a national treasure of a composer, has pursued music over a lifetime more as a series of gentle sonic imbrications than as a suite of stentorian calls for attention. In his new piece, *Umbra & Penumbra*, a commission by the La Jolla Symphony with additional funds from the Schick family commissioning project, Pisaro projects a skein of fine percussion sounds onto an aquarelle of orchestral textures in a way that beckons us closer to the music. The extraordinary percussionist Greg Stuart, Pisaro's principal collaborator and advocate, coaxes sounds from vibraphone, bass drum and gong through gentle

strokes, bowings, fine sandpaper, and even falling grain on instruments' surfaces. These are otherworldly sounds: fresh, unexpected, life-affirming.

Every evening, in the windless winter midnight, I sit for a moment outside our house to listen to the sounds of the earth. The heavy stillness of a nearby Torrey Pine seems to amplify the distant rumble of surf. Surrounded by growing things, I am moved by the quiet intelligence of our world. Certainly, I think nightly, we humans cannot be this planet's most evolved creatures.

Finally, this is my strongest objection to genius. It is a tired concept, rooted ultimately in the increasingly dangerous credo of human exceptionalism. When Australia is burning and our faith in each other is cooling; when oceans are rising and human morale is sinking, is it not time to elevate some other quality to the pinnacle of artistic experience? Instead of an adoration of genius, perhaps we should cultivate a fresh take

on older ideas. As we listen to Brahms, can we find new edges in what, through over-use, we've rubbed smooth? Or, perhaps it is the daring of Anahita Abbasi we crave now—her unflinching willingness to walk away from clearly marked trails and enter the tangled liminal spaces of exploration. Maybe we need the patience and humility of Michael Pisaro, a musician of such keen sensitivity that a grain of rice falling on a cymbal contains the whole world.

If we conceive music, not as a product manufactured by genius, but as a fleeting moment of grace, a flash of human incandescence available to us all, we might be able to respond to the urgency of this moment. As environmentalist and author Terry Tempest Williams recently wrote,

"What is beauty if not stillness?
What is stillness if not sight?
What is sight if not an awakening?
What is an awakening if not now?" ■

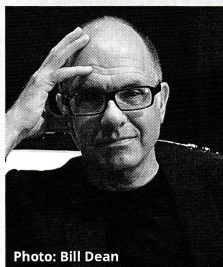


Photo: Bill Dean

STEVEN SCHICK

music director

Percussionist, conductor, and author Steven Schick was born in Iowa and raised

in a farming family. Hailed by Alex Ross in *The New Yorker* as "one of our supreme living virtuosos, not just of percussion but of any instrument," he has championed contemporary percussion music by commissioning or premiering more than 150 new works. The most important of these have become core repertory for solo percussion. In 2014 he was inducted into the Percussive Arts Society Hall of Fame.

Schick is in his 13th season as artistic director and conductor of the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus. He is also co-artistic director of the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity Summer Music Program and artistic director and conductor of the Breckenridge Music Festival.

As a guest conductor he has appeared with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Milwaukee Symphony, Ensemble Modern, the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), and the Asko/Schönberg Ensemble.

Schick's publications include a book, "The Percussionist's Art: Same Bed, Different Dreams," and many articles. He has released numerous recordings including the 2010 "Percussion Works of Iannis Xenakis," and its companion, "The Complete Early Percussion Works of Karlheinz Stockhausen" in 2014 (both on Mode). He received the "Diapason d'Or" as conductor (Xenakis Ensemble Music with ICE) and the Deutscheschallplattenkritikpreis, as percussionist (Stockhausen), each for the best new music release of 2015.

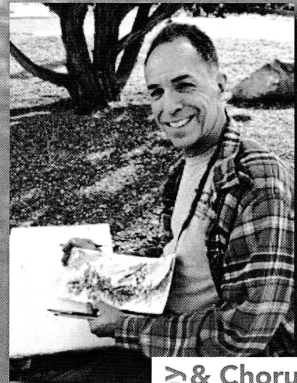
Steven Schick is Distinguished Professor of Music and holds the Reed Family Presidential Chair at the University of California, San Diego.

The Art of Music

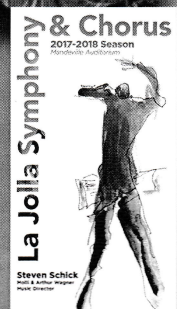
Meet Jay Wolf Schlossberg-Cohen

Fine artist Jay Wolf Schlossberg-Cohen is in his fourth season as artist-in-residence at La Jolla Symphony & Chorus. Jay sketches live performances in pen and ink, later adding watercolor, to capture the excitement of live performance. He will be live painting at our March concert.

Jay, who lives in Baltimore and works with other nonprofits such as the Baltimore Symphony, generously donates his work to LJS&C to help support our organization. Like the illustration which graced our 2017-18 Season Brochure, each image is full of life and memories of our concerts. Past images auctioned at our annual Gala have raised thousands of dollars for LJS&C.



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Program Notes

by Eric Bromberger

Academic Festival Overture, Opus 80

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Born May 7, 1833, Hamburg

Died April 3, 1897, Vienna



The University of Breslau conferred an honorary doctorate on Brahms in March 1879. This was an unusual honor for someone who had never attended college, but Brahms (perhaps true to character) responded only by sending off a postcard of

thanks. When it was diplomatically suggested that a somewhat more significant gesture of gratitude might be in order, Brahms got the hint. In the summer of 1880, he fled to his favorite summer retreat—Bad Ischl, in the mountains east of Salzburg—where he wrote two overtures. These two pieces were utterly opposite in character, as Brahms well knew. “One laughs, the other weeps,” he said.

If the *Tragic Overture* weeps, the *Academic Festival Overture* does indeed laugh. Brahms described it as “a potpourri of student songs a la Suppé,” but this music is a good deal more complex than that, for it features an unusual treatment of sonata form (with introduction and finale), subtle thematic transformation, and some appropriately learned counterpoint. Brahms wears this learning lightly, though, and the *Academic Festival Overture*

emerges as one of those rare things among his works—a fun piece, full of high spirits and tongue-in-cheek humor.

After a mock-serious introduction in C minor (a musical portrait of an academic procession?), Brahms builds the overture on traditional German student songs. Quiet trumpets nobly announce *Wir hatten gebauet ein stattliche Haus* (“We Had Built a Stately House”), and the second theme group is built around the bustling bassoons’ comic treatment of an old song making fun of green freshmen, *Was kommt dort in der Höh* (“What Comes There on High?”)—the full orchestra’s explosive answer completes the joke. Brahms transforms his themes very subtly—beneath the laughing surface, this is an extremely well-made piece—and rounds things off with the best joke of all: at the end, the old celebration song *Gaudeamus igitur* (“Therefore let us enjoy ourselves”) becomes the mock-heroic climax, thundered out by the brass as strings race madly along beneath them.

Brahms himself conducted the premiere at the University of Breslau on January 4, 1881, with the faculty of the university seated solemnly behind him. One wonders just how amused those professors were by Brahms’ music, which is part gesture of appreciation, part fun, and part send-up of the whole notion of academic seriousness. ■

Thank You!



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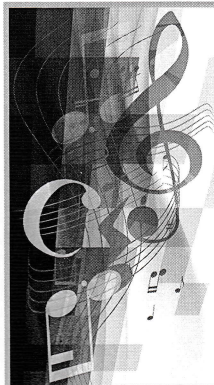
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Mission Statement

Rooted in San Diego for over 60 years, the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus enriches our lives through affordable concerts of ground-breaking, traditional and contemporary classical music.

Umbr & Penumbra (12 poems to 行欣) for amplified solo percussion and orchestra

MICHAEL PISARO

Born 1961, Buffalo



The composer has supplied a program note:

I wanted to hear what would happen if the sounds of solo percussion were placed at the foundation of the orchestra. (In most pieces in the concerto form, the soloist serves the function of ornament.) As we began working on the piece Greg Stuart and I quickly arrived at the idea that a single kind of sound on a single instrument would form the basis for each section. Each sound, whether relatively simple or complex, whether consistent or erratic, is magnified (i.e., extended and amplified). The role of the orchestra is to draw out the colors cast by the shadow of this sound.

After 40 years of composing, I still find the basic phenomenon of sound extremely strange. Its apparent sensory directness is an illusion: hearing is a reflection or shadow of the vibration that stimulates it (Umbr). Listening is a reflection of that reflection, a shadow of the shadow (Penumbra).

As the number of sounds I wanted to use increased, the planned length of the individual sections decreased. The colors of the piece began to fan out from light to dark, from sparse mist to heavy fog. I reread Kenneth Rexroth's "The Love Poems of Marichiko" and was inspired by the way the seemingly weightless brevity of the poems almost conceals their burning intensity.

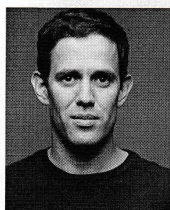
The piece is dedicated to my wife Hsing-Hsin (行欣). ■

Michael Pisaro was born in Buffalo in 1961. He is a composer and guitarist, and a member of the Wandelweiser Composers Ensemble. He has composed over 80 works for a great variety of instrumental combinations, including several pieces for variable instrumentation. A particularly large category of his works is solo works, notably a series of 36 pieces (grouped into 6 longer works) for the three-year, 156-concert series organized by Carlo Inderhees at the Zionskirche in Berlin-Mitte from 1997-1999. Another solo piece, *pi* (1-2594), was performed in installments by the composer on 15 selected days in February, 1999, in Evanston, Illinois, and in Düsseldorf in 2000-2001.

His work is frequently performed in the U.S. and in Europe, in music festivals and in many smaller venues. It has been selected twice by the ISCM jury for performance at World Music Days festivals (Copenhagen, 1996; Manchester, 1998) and has also been part of festivals in Hong Kong (ICMC, 1998), Vienna (Wien Modern, 1997), Aspen (1991) and Chicago (New Music Chicago, 1990, 1991). He has had extended composer residencies in Germany (Künstlerhof

Schreyahn), Switzerland (Forumclaque/Baden), Israel (Miskanot Sha'ananim), Greece (EarTalk) and in the U.S. (Birch Creek Music Festival/Wisconsin). Concert length portraits of his music have been given in Munich, Jerusalem, Los Angeles, Vienna, Brussels, Curitiba (Brazil), Berlin, Chicago, Düsseldorf, Zürich, Cologne, Aarau and elsewhere.

Most of his music of the last several years is published by Timescaper Music (Germany). Two CDs of his work have been released by Edition



GREG STUART

percussion

Greg Stuart is a percussionist whose work draws upon a

mixture of music from the experimental tradition, Wandelweiser, improvisation, and electronics. His performances have been described as "a ghostly, gorgeous lesson in how close, concentrated listening can alter and enhance perception" (*The New York Times*). Since 2006, he has collaborated extensively with the composer Michael Pisaro, producing a large body of music comprised of pieces that focus on the magnification of small sounds through recording and layering, often in combination with field recordings and/or electronic sound. His role as an interpreter of Pisaro's compositions has been called "a David Tudor to Pisaro's Cage" (*The Boston Globe*). Stuart's most recent collaboration with the composer, *Continuum Unbound*, a three-disc box set on Gravity Wave, grew out of the pair's field recording work in Congaree National Park and was selected by *The Wire* as one of the best albums of 2014.

Stuart currently performs with fellow percussionists Tim Feeney and Sarah Hennies in the percussion trio, Meridian, and with computer musician Joe Panzner. Other recent collaborations include projects with Ryoko Akama, Erik Carlson, Antoine Beuger, Eva-Maria Houben, Jürg Frey, Kunsu Shim,

Wandelweiser Records. He has performed many of his own works and those of close associates Antoine Beuger, Kunsu Shim, Jürg Frey and Manfred Werder, and works from the experimental tradition, especially John Cage, Christian Wolff, Robert Ashley and George Brecht.

Before joining the composition faculty at CalArts, he taught music composition and theory at Northwestern University from 1986 to 2000.

Bonnie Jones, Phillip Bush, Nomi Epstein, Speak Percussion, and the International Contemporary Ensemble. He has appeared as a featured performer at numerous festivals and notable venues presenting experimental music including MaerzMusik (Berlin), the Melbourne Festival, Café Oto (London), Arnolfini Centre for Contemporary Arts (Bristol), Cha'ak'ab Paaxil (Mérida), Issue Project Room (New York), REDCAT (Los Angeles), Big Ears (Knoxville), Elastic Arts Foundation (Chicago), New Music Co-Op (Austin), Philadelphia Sound Forum, and Non-Event (Boston) among others. He has recorded for numerous labels, including Edition Wandelweiser, Gravity Wave, Erstwhile, Cathnor, New World Records, Accidie, L'innomable, caduc, Lengua de Lava, Crisis, and Senufo Editions.

An enthusiastic educator, Stuart has given lectures, workshops, and performances at the University of Huddersfield, Universidade Federal de Goiás, Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Victorian College of Arts, Oberlin Conservatory, the University of Louisville, the New England Conservatory of Music, Harvard University, Florida State University, Georgia State University, and Tulane University. Stuart holds a D.M.A. and M.A. from the University of California, San Diego, and a BMus from Northwestern University. He is currently an Associate Professor at the University of South Carolina School of Music in Columbia, SC where he teaches experimental music, music history, and runs the Experimental Music Workshop.

why the trees were murmuring

ANAHITA ABBASI

Born 1985, Iran, Shiraz



The composer has supplied a program note:

Why the trees were murmuring is an appreciation of diversity and community.

In writing this piece, I was moved to explore these themes from various

perspectives. Performers are positioned around the concert hall and sounds are embracing the audience. A unique collection of diverse materials and practices has come together and formed a hybrid assemblage in which different kinds of musical practices such as — improvisation, vocalization and spatialization have joined the orchestra and created a multi-diverse community.

The composition of the musical material is also influenced and shaped based on the qualities of a diversified community. Aside from having an improviser soloist on the stage, the spatialized ensemble surrounding the audience and the extensive exploration of instrumental colors, every group of instrument functions additionally as soloists in one or more parts of the piece. At the same time that everything is precisely notated, there is always a level of freedom in every section, which allows the realization of the piece to be a co-joint act.

Why the trees were murmuring reveals a journey of colorful pallet of instrumental sounds hybridized with the whisperings of the fragmented texts. These snippets of texts are selected from *Braiding Sweetgrass*, written by Robin Wall Kimmerer and poems by the iconoclast Iranian poet Forough Farrokhzad.

The piece unfolds into an improvised coda by the orchestra, amidst the bird calls, various bells, the traces of hope, light and love from the orchestra and the solo trombone and ultimately the orchestra whispering ...“I will greet the sun again”...

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Brenda and Steven Schick for their trust in commissioning me this piece; to Steve Schick for our fruitful continuous collaborations; to La Jolla Symphony for bringing this piece to life; to Jessica Flores, Matt and the production staff for their endless support, to Rebecca, Chris, Mike and Berk for their friendship and artistry; to my friend Ine Vanoveren for being my all time, title-guru across the globe; to Peter Sloan for being the source of inspiration in creating this piece and ultimately to my mentor Rand Steiger for his unconditional continued guidance throughout these years. Without your support I would have not been able to be here today.

The piece is dedicated to the exceptional community of UC San Diego music department. ■

Anahita Abbasi's music has been commissioned and performed by distinguished soloists and ensembles such as Mahan Esfahani, Steven Schick, Ensemble Modern, Klangforum Wien musicians, Quatour Diotima, Mivos Quartet, International Contemporary Ensemble, Off Spring, and has been showcased at festivals all around the world among which: Darmstadt Ferienkurse (Germany), Ircam – Manifeste Academy (France), Matrix – Experimental studio des SWR (Germany), BIFEM (Australia), Klangspuren Schwaz (Austria), Sound State festival (London), Tectonics (Glasgow), Akademie der Künste (Berlin), Mostly Mozart Festival (USA), Soundnow festival - Bent Frequency (Atlanta), Klang Festival (Copenhagen), Mike - En festival (USA), Tage neuer Musik (Austria), Tongyeong International music festival (Korea) Impuls festival (Austria), Time of music (Finland), Atlas festival (Netherlands), Grachten festival (Netherlands) and many others.

In 2014, she received the work-scholarship from Experimentalstudio des SWR in Freiburg. A recipient of a 2015 Morton Gold ASCAP young composers award, Ms. Abbasi was also nominated in 2017 at the Cairo Contemporary Festival as one of the “*women composers of our time*” alongside Kaija Saariaho and Isabel Mundry. Aside from teaching composition and giving lectures and workshops on fundamentals of creation, she is also a founding member of

Schallfeld Ensemble in Graz, Austria as well as IFCA (Iranian Female Composers Association) in New York City; where she is curating concerts, creating platforms and advocating for young composers and acts as their ambassadors in presenting their music to others.

Anahita Abbasi (1985) was born and raised in Iran, Shiraz. In 2005 she moved to Austria and pursued her undergrad at the University of

music and performing Arts Graz, where she studied music theory with Clemens Gadenstätter and Christian Utz & composition with Beat Furrer and Pierluigi Billone; while working closely with Georges Aperghis, Franck Bedrossian and Philippe Leroux. Abbasi is currently residing in San Diego and pursuing her Ph.D. in composition with Rand Steiger at the University of California San Diego.

Texts: fragments from poems by Forough Farrokhzad
Translated by (Sholeh Wolpé)

I will greet the sun again
and the little river that once ran in me
and the clouds that were my ruminations
and the aching blooms of poplar trees,
my companions in those seasons of drought.

I will greet the crowd of crows again,
who brought me their rich perfumes,
gifts from gardens of the night,
and my mother who lived in the mirror
and whose shape was the shape of my own old age.

I will greet the earth again,
who in her lust to create me again,
fills her fiery belly with seeds of green.

I am coming, I am coming, I will come again,
with my long hair dripping the scent of dirt,
with my eyes inflicting the density of darkness,
with brambles I've picked from the far side of the wall.

I am coming, I am coming, I will come again,
and the doorway once more will be filled with love
and I'll greet the lovers standing in the doorway,
and the little girl there
still standing in love.

■ ■ ■

No one thinks of the flowers.
No one thinks of the fish.
No one wants to believe the garden is dying,
that its heart has swollen in the heat
of this sun, that its mind drains slowly
of its lush memories.

Our garden is forlorn

Everyone knows,
everyone knows
that you and I have seen the garden
from that cold sullen window
and that we have plucked the apple
from that playful, hard-to-reach branch.

Everyone is afraid
everyone is afraid, but you and I
joined with the lamp
and water and mirror and we were not afraid.

Everyone knows,
everyone knows
we have found our way
Into the cold, quiet dream of phoenixes:
we found truth in the garden
In the embarrassed look of a nameless flower,
and we found permanence
In an endless moment
when two suns stared at each other.

■ ■ ■

I am not talking about timorous whispering
In the dark.

I am talking about daytime and open windows
and fresh air and a stove in which useless things burn
and land which is fertile
with a different planting
and birth and evolution and pride.

I am talking about our loving hands
which have built across nights a bridge
of the message of perfume
and light and breeze.

come to the meadow
to the grand meadow
and call me, from behind the breaths
of silk-tasseled acacias
just like the deer calls its mate.

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Symphony No. 3 in F Major, Opus 90

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Brahms spent the summer of 1883 in Wiesbaden, where he took a second-story apartment looking out over the Rhine. He had just turned 50, which is a bad birthday for anyone, but at this moment in his life he was feeling new energy. In January of that year he had heard a contralto. Her name was Hermine Spiess, she was 26, she had a beautiful voice, and Brahms fell in love with her. Hermine lived in Wiesbaden, so Brahms found an apartment there, and that summer — with a magnificent view of the Rhine and very much in love with a young woman — Brahms composed his *Third Symphony*. At 50, Brahms was a supremely accomplished composer — powerful, subtle, refined, and passionate — and his mastery is evident in every measure of the *Third Symphony*. Of his four symphonies, the *Third* is the shortest, most concise, and most subtle (all four movements end quietly), and it is marked by an attention to instrumental color rare in Brahms' music.

The opening *Allegro con brio* is extraordinary music, even by Brahms' standards. It is built around a three-note motto: the rising sequence F-Ab-F. Brahms said that motto was a reflection of his personal credo "Frei aber froh: "Free but happy." That rising three-note figure will saturate this movement: they are the first three notes of the symphony, and that motto will function melodically, serve as an accompaniment, and bind sections together. After the brass blazes out the motto to open the symphony, the main theme — marked *passionato* — comes crashing downward in the violins like a mighty wave. It is characteristic of this symphony that the three-note motto has been instantly transformed into the bass-line beneath this powerful theme, and over the next few moments the motto will be woven into the texture of the music countless times. The second theme, sung by solo clarinet and quickly taken up by the violas, dances gracefully in the unusual meter 9/4, but surprisingly the development is quite short. A noble horn call (derived from the opening motto) leads to an extended — and very agitated — recapitulation before the movement closes on a quiet restatement of the opening theme.

The two middle movements are also unusual: the *Third Symphony* has no true slow movement, nor is there a scherzo. Instead, Brahms offers two moderately-paced central movements, both littered with his constant reminder to performers: *dolce, espressivo*. The *Andante* (in sonata form) opens with a graceful tune announced by clarinets and bassoon, and — curiously — those two instruments also have the slightly-sprung second theme; the luminous closing

moments of this gentle movement are particularly beautiful. The cellos' C-minor melody at the start of the *Poco Allegretto*, with its subtle shadings and gypsy turns, is one of the most haunting themes Brahms ever wrote. A slightly rustic middle section, full of off-the-beat accents, gives way to the return of the opening theme, but now—in a magic touch—Brahms assigns it to the solo horn, which soars above shimmering string accompaniment.

The finale opens ominously in F minor, but this quickly gives way to the heroic main theme in C major for cellos and horns. A powerful development—with secondary material derived from the second movement—leads to a conclusion full of even more original touches. The music turns quiet, and—very subtly—Brahms begins to bring back themes from earlier movements: the three-note motto from the first movement, the second theme from the *Andante*, and finally—at the very end—the opening theme of the first movement. That theme had been heroic at the very beginning of the symphony, but now it returns in dignified calm. Its quiet concluding descent has been compared by one critic to the fall of autumn

leaves, and this very concise symphony ends not in thunder but on a restrained wind chord.

The premiere of the *Third Symphony* in Vienna on December 2, 1883, was the occasion of one of the major collisions between the Wagner and Brahms factions in that city. The followers of Wagner, who had died earlier that year, tried to hiss each movement of the symphony, but they were drowned out by the cheers of Brahms' supporters. The young Hugo Wolf, a passionate Wagnerian and a sworn enemy of the "classical" Brahms, wrote a searing review of the symphony, calling it "Disgustingly stale and prosy. Fundamentally false and perverse. A single cymbal-stroke of a work by Liszt expresses more intellect and emotion than all three symphonies of Brahms and his serenades taken together." Brahms' lifelong friend Clara Schumann, however, had quite a different view. She wrote the composer: "What a harmonious mood pervades the whole! All the movements seem to be of one piece, one beat of the heart, each one a jewel. From start to finish one is wrapped about with the mysterious charm of the woods and forests." ■

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