



CHICAGO SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA
RICCARDO MUTI
ZELL MUSIC DIRECTOR

OCTOBER 13-15, 2017
ZELLERBACH HALL, UC BERKELEY
FALL 2017 ORCHESTRA RESIDENCY

Todd Rosenberg Photography



Riccardo Muti

Born in Naples, Italy, Riccardo Muti is one of the preeminent conductors of our day. In 2010, when he became the 10th music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO), he had more than 40 years of experience at the helm of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (1968–1980), the Philharmonia Orchestra (1973–1982), the Philadelphia Orchestra (1980–1992), and Teatro alla Scala (1986–2005).

Muti studied piano under Vincenzo Vitale at the Conservatory of San Pietro a Majella in Naples and subsequently received a diploma in composition and conducting from the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan. His principal teachers were Bruno Bettinelli and Antonino Votto, principal assistant to Arturo Toscanini at La Scala. After he won the Guido Cantelli Conducting Competition in Milan in 1967, Muti's career developed quickly.

Herbert von Karajan invited him to conduct at the Salzburg Festival in Austria in 1971, and Muti has maintained a close relationship with the summer festival and with its great orchestra, the Vienna Philharmonic, for more than 45 years. He has received the distinguished Golden Ring from the Philharmonic and been recognized with the Otto Nicolai Gold Medal. He also is a recipient of a silver medal from the

Salzburg Mozarteum and the Golden Johann Strauss Award by the Johann Strauss Society of Vienna. He is also an honorary member of Vienna's Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, the Vienna Hofmusikkapelle, the Vienna Philharmonic, and the Vienna State Opera.

In addition to his distinguished appointments as music director, Muti has received innumerable international honors. He is a Cavaliere di Gran Croce of the Italian Republic, Officer of the French Legion of Honor, and a recipient of the German Verdienstkreuz. Queen Elizabeth II bestowed on him the title of honorary Knight Commander of the British Empire, Russian President Vladimir Putin awarded him the Order of Friendship, and Pope Benedict XVI made him a Knight of the Grand Cross First Class of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great—the highest papal honor. Muti also has received Israel's Wolf Prize for the arts, Sweden's prestigious Birgit Nilsson Prize, Spain's Prince of Asturias Award for the Arts, Japan's Order of the Rising Sun Gold and Silver Star decoration, and the gold medal from Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as the prestigious "Presidente della Repubblica" award from the Italian government. He has received more than 20 honorary degrees from universities around the world.

Passionate about teaching young musicians, Muti founded the Luigi Cherubini Youth Orchestra in 2004 and the Riccardo Muti Italian Opera Academy in 2015 to pass on the Italian opera tradition to young conductors and répétiteurs. Through *Le vie dell'Amicizia*, a project of the Ravenna Festival in Italy, he has conducted in many of the world's most troubled areas in order to bring attention to and advocate for civic and social issues.

Riccardo Muti's vast catalog of recordings, numbering in the hundreds, ranges from the traditional symphonic and operatic repertoires to contemporary works. He also has written two books, *Verdi, l'italiano* and *Riccardo Muti: An Autobiography: First the Music, Then the Words*, both of which have been published in several languages.

www.riccardomutimusic.com



Todd Rosenberg Photography

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) is consistently hailed as one of the greatest orchestras in the world. Its music director since 2010 is Riccardo Muti, one of the preeminent conductors of our day. Founded in 1891 by its first music director, Theodore Thomas, the CSO's other illustrious music directors include Frederick Stock, Désiré Defauw, Artur Rodzinski, Rafael Kubelík, Fritz Reiner, Jean Martinon, Sir Georg Solti, and Daniel Barenboim. From 2006 to 2010, Bernard Haitink served as principal conductor, the first in CSO history. Pierre Boulez was appointed principal guest conductor in 1995 and then named Helen Regenstein Conductor Emeritus in 2006, a position he held until his death in January 2016. Celebrated cellist Yo-Yo Ma was appointed the CSO's Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant in 2010. Samuel Adams and Elizabeth Ogonek were appointed the CSO's Mead Composers-in-Residence in 2015.

The renowned musicians of the CSO command a vast repertoire that spans from Baroque to new music. They annually perform more than 150 concerts, most at Symphony Center in Chicago, and, since 1936, in the summer at the

Ravinia Festival. The CSO also tours nationally and internationally. Since its first tour to Canada in 1892, the orchestra has performed in 29 countries on five continents during 60 international tours.

Since 1916, recording has been significant in establishing the orchestra's international reputation, with recordings by the CSO earning a total of 62 Grammy Awards from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. In 2007 the CSO launched an independent label, CSO Resound. The 2010 release of Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* was recognized with two Grammy Awards. Listeners and fans around the world can hear the CSO in weekly airings of the CSO Radio Broadcast Series, which is syndicated on the WFMT Radio Network and online at CSO.org/Radio. In addition, the CSO's YouTube video of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, conducted by Muti, has received over seven million views.

Annually, the CSO engages more than 200,000 people of diverse ages, incomes, and backgrounds through the innovative programs

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ORCHESTRA ROSTER

CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

RICCARDO MUTI ZELL MUSIC DIRECTOR

Yo-Yo Ma
*Judson and Joyce Green
Creative Consultant*

Duain Wolfe
*Chorus Director
and Conductor*

Samuel Adams,
Elizabeth Ogonek
*Mead Composers-
in-Residence*

VIOLINS

Robert Chen
*Concertmaster
The Louis C. Sudler Chair,
endowed by an anonymous
benefactor*

Stephanie Jeong
*Associate Concertmaster
The Cathy and Bill Osborn
Chair*

David Taylor
Yuan-Qing Yu
*Assistant Concertmasters**

So Young Bae
Cornelius Chiu
Alison Dalton
Gina DiBello
Kozue Funakoshi
Russell Hershov
Qing Hou
Blair Milton
Paul Phillips, Jr.
Sando Shia
Susan Synnstedt
Rong-Yan Tang §

Baird Dodge
Principal

Sylvia Kim Kilcullen §
Assistant Principal

Lei Hou
Ni Mei
Fox Fehling
Hermine Gagné
Rachel Goldstein
Mihaela Ionescu
Melanie Kupchynsky §
Wendy Koons Meir
Matous Michal
Simon Michal
Aiko Noda
Joyce Noh
Nancy Park †
Ronald Satkiewicz
Florence Schwartz

VIOLAS
Charles Pikler §
*Principal
The Paul Hindemith
Principal Viola Chair,
endowed by an
anonymous donor*

Li-Kuo Chang
*Assistant Principal
The Louise H. Benton
Wagner Chair*

John Bartholomew
Catherine Brubaker
Youming Chen
Sunghee Choi
Wei-Ting Kuo
Danny Lai
Diane Mues
Lawrence Neuman
Max Raimi
Weijing Wang

CELLOS
John Sharp
*Principal
The Eloise W. Martin Chair*

Kenneth Olsen
*Assistant Principal
The Adele Gidwitz Chair*

Karen Basrak
Loren Brown
Richard Hirschl
Daniel Katz
Katinka Kleijn
Jonathan Pegis §
David Sanders
Gary Stucka
Brant Taylor

BASSES
Alexander Hanna
*Principal
The David and
Mary Winton Green
Principal Bass Chair*

Daniél Armstrong
Roger Cline †
Joseph DiBello
Michael Hovnanian
Robert Kassinger
Mark Kraemer
Stephen Lester
Bradley Opland

HARPS
Sarah Bullen
Principal
Lynne Turner

FLUTES
Stefán Ragnar Höskuldsson
*Principal
The Erika and
Dietrich M. Gross
Principal Flute Chair*

Richard Graef
Assistant Principal
Emma Gerstein
Jennifer Gunn

PICCOLO
Jennifer Gunn

OBOES
Michael Henoch
*Assistant Principal
The Gilchrist
Foundation Chair*

Lora Schaefer
Scott Hostetler

CLARINETS
Stephen Williamson
Principal

John Bruce Yeh
Assistant Principal

Gregory Smith
J. Lawrie Bloom

E-FLAT CLARINET
John Bruce Yeh

BASS CLARINET
J. Lawrie Bloom

BASSOONS
Keith Buncke
Principal

William Buchman
Assistant Principal

Dennis Michel
Miles Maner

CONTRABASSOON
Miles Maner

HORNS
Daniel Gingrich
Acting Principal

James Smelser
David Griffin
Oto Carrillo
Susanna Gaunt

TRUMPETS
Mark Ridenour
Assistant Principal

John Hagstrom
Tage Larsen

TROMBONES
Jay Friedman
*Principal
The Lisa and Paul Wiggin
Principal Trombone Chair*

Michael Mulcahy
Charles Vernon

BASS TROMBONE
Charles Vernon

TUBA
Gene Pokorny
*Principal
The Arnold Jacobs
Principal Tuba Chair,
endowed by
Christine Querfeld*

TIMPANI
David Herbert
*Principal
The Clinton Family Fund
Chair*

Vadim Karpinos
Assistant Principal

PERCUSSION
Cynthia Yeh
Principal

Patricia Dash
Vadim Karpinos
James Ross

LIBRARIANS
Peter Conover
Principal

Carole Keller
Mark Swanson

ORCHESTRA PERSONNEL
John Deverman
Director

Anne MacQuarrie
*Manager, CSO Auditions
and Orchestra Personnel*

STAGE TECHNICIANS
Kelly Kerins
Stage Manager

Dave Hartge
James Hogan
Peter Landry
Christopher Lewis
Todd Snick
Joe Tucker

EXTRA MUSICIANS
David Immon, *trumpet*
Jonathan Cegys, *bass*
Ying Chai, *violin*
Kiju Joh, *violin*
Tamae Clara Takarabe, *violin*
Alex Vvedenskiy, *oboe*

* Assistant concertmasters
are listed by seniority.
† On sabbatical
§ On leave

*The Nancy and Larry Fuller Oboe
Chair and The Adolph Herseth
Principal Trumpet Chair, endowed
by an anonymous benefactor, are
currently unoccupied.*

*The Chicago Symphony Orchestra
string sections utilize revolving
seating. Players behind the first
desk (first two desks in the violins)
change seats systematically
every two weeks and are listed
alphabetically. Section percussionists
also are listed alphabetically.*



Friday, October 13, 2017, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Chicago Symphony Orchestra Riccardo Muti, *conductor*

PROGRAM

Gioachino ROSSINI (1792–1868) Overture to *William Tell*

Elizabeth OGONEK (b. 1989) *All These Lighted Things*
(three little dances for orchestra)
(West Coast Premiere)
exuberant, playful, bright
gently drifting, hazy
buoyant

INTERMISSION

Anton BRUCKNER (1824–1896) Symphony No. 4 in E-flat Major (*Romantic*)
Moving, not too fast
Andante quasi allegretto
Scherzo: Moving
Finale: Moving, but not too fast

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*This performance is made possible, in part, by
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Cal Performances' 2017–18 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.*

Gioachino Rossini
Overture to *William Tell*

Time has not been kind to Rossini. Today he is identified with a handful of comic operas (often dismissed as implausible and silly, and frequently staged as sophomoric slapstick) and a dozen or so overtures, the most famous of which brings to mind a television cowboy who rode high in the ratings from 1949 until 1965 instead of the heroic figure of William Tell. The opening sentence of Philip Gossett's article in *The New Grove* offers a healthy corrective: "No composer in the first half of the nineteenth century enjoyed the measure of prestige, wealth, popular acclaim or artistic influence that belonged to Rossini."

Rossini was born less than three months after the death of Mozart ("He was the wonder of my youth," Rossini later wrote, "the despair of my maturity, and he is the consolation of my old age"), was a professional contemporary of Beethoven and Schubert (as well as the young Mendelssohn and Berlioz), and lived into the era of Wagner and Brahms. But he retired in 1830, at the height of his career, leaving behind the world of opera where he had reigned since 1812, when his *La pietra del paragone* triumphed at La Scala. During the remaining four decades of his life he did not write another opera (for a while he contemplated a treatment of Goethe's *Faust*), choosing instead to preside over his celebrated salon (one of the most fa-

mous in all Europe) and to putter in the kitchen (Tournédos Rossini are his most famous concoction). Only occasionally did he put pen to manuscript paper.

William Tell was his last opera. It is a vast, imposing, and richly beautiful work in four acts, and in its day it was extravagantly praised (Donizetti said Act 2 was composed not by Rossini but by God) and frequently staged, though seldom complete. (Once, when the head of the Paris Opera encountered Rossini on the street and boasted that the second act of *Tell* was being performed that very night, the composer replied, "Indeed! *All of it?*") In our time, productions of *William Tell* are almost unheard of—Rossini's serious operas, more important historically than the comedies, are relatively unknown to us today. Ironically, the overture to *William Tell* has become one of the most popular pieces in the orchestral repertory.

The opera is based on Friedrich Schiller's retelling of the story of the Swiss patriot William Tell and his famous bow and arrow. A complex tale with a strong political theme (the scene is Switzerland during the Austrian occupation), it first attracted Goethe, who contemplated writing an epic poem on the tale, and then Schiller, who made it the subject of his last completed play. (Tell's status has fallen in our day: an exhibition in Lausanne in 1994 downgraded him from national hero to the purely fictional creation of Swiss folklore.)

GIOACHINO ROSSINI
OVERTURE TO *WILLIAM TELL*

COMPOSED
 1828–29

FIRST PERFORMANCE
 August 3, 1829; Paris, France

INSTRUMENTATION
 flute and piccolo, two oboes and
 English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons,
 four horns, two trumpets, three trombones,
 timpani, triangle, bass drum, cymbals,
 strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME
 12 minutes

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES
 October 22, 1892, Orchestra Hall.
 Theodore Thomas conducting
 July 1, 1937, Ravinia Festival.
 Gennaro Papi conducting

CSO RECORDING
 1958. Fritz Reiner conducting. RCA.

Rossini's overture was immediately popular and it often was played independently from the opera during the composer's lifetime. When Berlioz wrote a long and detailed review of *William Tell* in 1834, he could not disguise his admiration for Rossini's music. He noted that the overture was in an entirely new, enlarged form, and had "in fact become a symphony in four distinct movements instead of the piece in two movements usually thought to be sufficient."

The overture opens unexpectedly with music for solo cellos, one of Rossini's greatest masterstrokes. "It suggests the calm of profound solitude," Berlioz wrote, "the solemn silence of nature when the elements and human passions are at rest." A mountain storm blows up, its turbulence and erupting tension suggesting that both bad weather and patriotic war lie just over the horizon. "The inevitable decrescendo of the storm is handled with unusual skill," Berlioz writes of the magical passage that leads the listener directly down to the mountain valley, where an English horn plays an Alpine herdsman's melody. Then the galloping allegro vivace begins—a dazzling finale, full of brilliant, incisive effects and irresistible energy. Even in 1834 Berlioz commented, with a touch of envy, that its brio and verve "invariably excite the transports of the house."

Elizabeth Ogonek

All These Lighted Things (three little dances for orchestra)

(West Coast Premiere)

"As soon as I wrote my first piece," Elizabeth Ogonek told a reporter in 2015, the same year she was appointed as the CSO's Mead Composer-in-Residence, "I knew instantly that I would spend the rest of my life composing." It is that kind of commitment, coupled with an early sense of her life's purpose, that has carried Ogonek from her characteristically searching student days, when she first thought that she would pursue a career as a concert pianist, to having her music premiered by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Once she fixed on a path, her focus didn't falter: she holds degrees from

the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music and the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music, and in 2015 she completed doctoral studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London.

All These Lighted Things, her new piece for the CSO, took nearly five months "and many, many sleepless nights" to write. Ogonek used to compose music "in order," that is from the first page to the last. But that process has already changed in her still-young career, and this new score was written in fits and starts, hopping between its three dance-like movements. It was mostly composed in her home studio and in her campus office in Oberlin, Ohio, where she is an assistant professor of composition at the Oberlin Conservatory, a position she began the first year of her Chicago residency. She started the score in Santa Fe, New Mexico, at the Women's International Study Center (based in a home originally built by members of Sibelius' extended family). During 10 days there, she defended her dissertation (on Skype); finished *In Silence*, which was commissioned by Music-NOW (the CSO's new-music concert series, now in its 20th season), and premiered in Chicago in May; and put onto paper her first ideas for the Chicago Symphony piece. Months later, she finished the score only minutes before heading out to teach her freshman composition class at Oberlin. "That particular class saw a very human Elizabeth: weary, relieved but uncertain, excited but nervous."

All These Lighted Things began with a deceptively simple yet deeply earnest desire to compose something happy and melodic. She had come to realize, partly through writing, but even more through teaching, that when she whittles down her musical values to the most fundamental ones, she is always left with the idea of a melodic line. "So that's where I chose to start."

Although she rarely begins to work with a title already in mind, "All these lighted things," a line from a poem by Thomas Merton, came to her before she wrote a note, and in many ways it guided the direction of the piece. She had been thinking about the liturgy of the hours and how, as a ritual, it marks the progress of light

throughout the day. She knew Merton's *A Book of Hours*, with its poems about dawn, day, dusk, and dark, and was especially taken by his evocation of dawn—"By ceasing to question the sun/I have become light." To Ogonek the message was clear: I have chosen to trust that light will appear and it has. *All These Lighted Things* explores the various ways "in which musical objects are made visible by this metaphorical light."

Poetry has regularly played an important role in Ogonek's music. (*Falling Up*, the piece that introduced her to MusicNOW audiences in March 2016, used the writings of both Arthur Rimbaud and Shel Silverstein as a starting point.) The way that words are an "expressive and freeing medium" for poets became a lens through which she has tried to make sense of her own work as a composer. Ogonek began turning to poetry as a way of structuring her musical ideas—"of holding me accountable for the decisions I would eventually make"—and to provide a frame to work within. She likes to quote Stravinsky: "The more constraints one imposes, the more one frees one's self. And the arbitrariness of the constraint serves only to obtain precision of execution."

All These Lighted Things brings together many strands in Ogonek's life, from her early love for playing the piano and her Polish her-

itage (she is also a quarter Croatian and half Indian) to her current role in Chicago. With *All These Lighted Things*, she was thinking not only about writing for the musicians of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, but also about the kinds of things Riccardo Muti brings to music—the drama that he elicits from the orchestra, his natural physical connection to the music-making process (she recalls the excitement of seeing him leap into the air at the very end of *La mer* at a concert he led in Geneva, Switzerland), and "how his musical rapport with the orchestra results in this incredibly flexible, almost caramel-like sound."

Although the score is one of Ogonek's few works for full orchestra, she says she has always felt an affinity for orchestral music—an attraction to the spectrum of sounds and colors you can get out of a vast community of musicians. "The orchestra," she says, "is an environment in which my imagination really has the ability to run free." But writing for orchestra is also the most challenging thing she has done: "Not only does it take me forever to write music, but it can also be overwhelming to know that you are responsible for every single musician on stage."

Ogonek is now at work on a cycle of pieces for 14 players to be premiered on the final MusicNOW concert of the season.

ELIZABETH OGONEK

***ALL THESE LIGHTED THINGS* (THREE LITTLE DANCES FOR ORCHESTRA)**

COMPOSED

2017

Commissioned by the
Chicago Symphony Orchestra

FIRST PERFORMANCES

September 28 and 29 and October 1, 2017;
Orchestra Hall, Chicago, Illinois.
Chicago Symphony Orchestra.
Riccardo Muti conducting

INSTRUMENTATION

two flutes and two piccolos, two oboes,
two clarinets and E-flat clarinet,
two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets,
three trombones and tuba, timpani,
percussion (crotales, marimba, slapstick,
piccolo woodblocks, rainsticks, triangles,
Burma bells, Chinese opera gongs,
vibraphone, vibraslap, tubular bells,
glockenspiel, Japanese singing bowls,
suspended cymbals, sizzle cymbal,
egg shakers, bass drum), strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

15 minutes



Elizabeth Ogonek on *All These Lighted Things*

When I began working on *All These Lighted Things*, I set out to write a set of mazurkas based on musical fragments from the other two works on this program (*William Tell*/Bruckner's Fourth). I would get up every day and scavenge for material that I could transform into something I thought would be interesting. Every day, despite my efforts, I would fail miserably. I quickly gave up on that plan.

Something inside of me was fervently committed to the mazurka: perhaps my Polish heritage, perhaps the joyful abandon with which Polish people dance the mazurka, or perhaps my unabashed love of Chopin.

Chopin has been a preoccupation of mine lately. I think it's because the piano music is some of the first music I really fell in love with as a kid. When I think back to my earliest memories as a musician, I'm reminded of Chopin's F-minor ballade or the D-flat-Major nocturne or the A-minor mazurka (Op. 17, No. 4), and how my heart would leap out of my chest as I listened to those pieces, and to so much other of Chopin's piano music. There's something about the unapologetic lyricism, the manipulation of time, the burgeoning intensity, and range of expression—as Chopin returned again and again to the same forms—that gets me every single time.

Eventually, the mazurka plan fell by the wayside as well. But what stuck was a collection of little dance-like figures that I had composed as I tried to make each iteration of my initial compositional plan work. As I thought about how time transformed the bones of the mazurka for Chopin, it occurred to me that I could take my dance figures and cast them through imaginary “filters” to see how they might bend and warp. For example, the first dance explores the ways in which a tune possessing several qualities characteristic of the mazurka (triplet and dotted rhythms, second beat emphasis, in three) might fluidly transition between contentedness, ecstasy, and irrational danger. The second dance presupposes that a sarabande has been stretched out and submerged in water. Elements of the slow, stately dance surface only occasionally. Lastly, the third dance is, in my mind, more communal than the other two. Each section begins with a small grouping of instruments and, like a fly strip, begins to attract more and more members of the orchestra doing their own thing until the independent lines become indistinguishable. The result is a composite sound made up of all the kinks and quirks that give way to individual personalities.

The title, *All These Lighted Things*, comes from a line in a poem about dawn, written by Thomas Merton. At the heart of the piece is celebration and reverence for the things that bring joy. It comes on the heels of several very dark works and, thus, is a kind of first morning light.

Anton Bruckner

Symphony No. 4 in E-flat Major (*Romantic*)

Anton Bruckner was 40 years old when he wrote his first significant large-scale work—a mass in D minor—and 42 before he wrote the first symphony he was willing to claim. After years as a diligent student, Bruckner had finally found his own voice, but he was not confident enough to trust it. The third and fourth symphonies were the toughest for him, and, in both cases, he needed several separate attempts—and a number of smaller touch-ups—before he was satisfied. He began the Fourth Symphony in 1874. Four years later, he wrote a new scherzo and finale. In 1880 he made further

changes, reaching what was, for the time being, his final score. But in the late 1880s, he picked up his pencil and returned to the E-flat symphony. (It is the 1886 version, published in the edition of Leopold Nowak, that is performed at these concerts).

Bruckner was responding not just to his own second thoughts, but also to the trivial—though deeply wounding—criticism of others. Well-meaning friends suggested pruning (Bruckner has always seemed long-winded to the unsympathetic listener) and recommended other changes, which Bruckner dutifully considered and often accepted. Franz Schalk and Carl Löwe—two favorite, though unfaithful disciples—thought the scherzo of the Fourth Symphony ought to end pianissimo the first time around, rather than in a blaze of brass as Bruckner conceived it. And so it does, in the first printed edition that they prepared in 1890. (However, when it came time to authorize that edition, Bruckner refused to sign the printer's copy; it was published anyway.)

Bruckner was certainly not the first composer to suffer at the hands of insensitive friends and colleagues. A tall, awkward man with a severely cropped Prussian haircut and a wardrobe of seriously misshapen suits, his very appearance seemed to invite doubt and scorn, if not ridicule. (Beethoven, once arrested as a vagrant, had already proved that fashion plays no role in musical greatness.) But Bruckner's

problem lay deeper. From his earliest days, he fought a devastating insecurity that frequently damaged his dealings with people, made his life one of perpetual misery, and almost denied him a career as a composer.

Yet, despite his doubts, the failure of several important performances, the hostility of musicians (the Vienna Philharmonic rejected his first three symphonies as unplayable), and the disloyalty of his students, Bruckner managed to get something down on paper that pleased himself, if no one else. In time, his unorthodox style, with its leisurely pace, slowly unfolding harmony, obstinate repetition of simple motives and chords, and apparent resistance to wrap things up, found other receptive listeners.

Six of Bruckner's symphonies start with a vague rumble that Bruckner picked up from the opening of Beethoven's Ninth and then focus on an important theme as it breaks through. Sometimes the effect is almost improvisational, as if Bruckner sat at the piano—or at the organ, for that was his instrument—one hand waiting to see what the other would do. In the Fourth Symphony, it takes us a surprisingly long time to figure out how quickly the music is moving. A calm, clear horn call beckons over string tremolos. But as the theme emerges, it brings with it faster countermelodies and increasing activity.

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ANTON BRUCKNER
SYMPHONY NO. 4 IN E-FLAT MAJOR (ROMANTIC)

COMPOSED

1874, revised 1878, 1880–81, 1886, 1888

FIRST PERFORMANCE

February 20, 1881, Vienna, Austria.
Hans Richter conducting

INSTRUMENTATION

two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets,
two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets,
three trombones and tuba, timpani, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

69 minutes

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES

January 22 and 23, 1897, Auditorium
Theatre. Theodore Thomas conducting

CSO RECORDINGS

1972. Daniel Barenboim conducting.
Deutsche Grammophon
1981. Sir Georg Solti conducting. London



Saturday, October 14, 2017, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Riccardo Muti, *conductor*
Stephen Williamson, *clarinet*

PROGRAM

Franz SCHUBERT (1797–1828) Symphony No. 8 in B minor, D. 759
(Unfinished)
Allegro moderato
Andante con moto

Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART (1756–1791) Clarinet Concerto in A Major, K. 622
Allegro
Adagio
Rondo: Allegro
Stephen Williamson, *clarinet*

INTERMISSION

Robert SCHUMANN (1810–1856) Symphony No. 2 in C Major, Op. 61
Sostenuto assai—Allegro ma non troppo
Scherzo: Allegro vivace
Adagio espressivo
Allegro molto vivace

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Franz Schubert
Symphony No. 8 in B minor, D. 759
(Unfinished)

We do not know why Schubert never finished his B-minor symphony. This has been one of music's great unanswered questions for more than a hundred years, and, despite some intelligent speculation, we still come up empty-handed today. At least we *know* that he did not finish it. For many years, music lovers persisted in believing that the missing movements sat, forgotten, in some Viennese attic. On the other hand, scholars no longer suggest that Schubert intended to write a two-movement symphony, giving the composer credit for a bold stroke that, for all his daring, is not his.

The facts are scarce and mysterious, which has only heightened the intrigue over the years. There was no mention of this symphony made during the composer's lifetime. It lay buried, like hidden treasure, in Anselm Hüttenbrenner's cluttered study until the 1860s—more than 30 years after Schubert's death—when it was dusted off to take its place as No. 8 among the known Schubert symphonies.

The full score, clearly written in Schubert's own hand, is dated 30 October 1822, Vienna,

and signed, with his characteristic flourish, Franz Schubert. The manuscript, headed "Symphony in B minor," includes two movements: a wonderful, singing Allegro moderato and a heartbreaking Andante con moto—both so sublime that the *Unfinished* nickname is all the more frustrating. On the back of the final page of the Andante are nine measures of a scherzo, fully scored, followed by four blank pages. In the 1960s, Christa Landon discovered a missing leaf that ought to have come before the empty pages, containing measures 10 through 20 and then stopping abruptly, as if Schubert had been interrupted mid-thought. (A piano sketch of the symphony shows that Schubert had planned the entire scherzo and the beginning of a trio.)

We do not know what interrupted Schubert, but a number of theories have been proposed. This was, after all, a time of many unfinished instrumental works: from February 1818 to November 1822, he started and set aside three—possibly four—different symphonies. Late in 1822, Schubert contracted syphilis and began to suffer from depression and failing health. He also was nearly paralyzed by a growing awareness of Beethoven's extraordinary

FRANZ SCHUBERT
SYMPHONY NO. 8 IN B MINOR, D. 759 *(UNFINISHED)*

COMPOSED

manuscript dated October 30, 1822

FIRST PERFORMANCE

December 17, 1865; Vienna, Austria

INSTRUMENTATION

two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets,
 two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets,
 three trombones, timpani, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

22 minutes

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES

October 30 and 31, 1891, Auditorium
 Theatre. Theodore Thomas conducting
 July 5, 1936, Ravinia Festival.
 Ernest Ansermet conducting

CSO RECORDINGS

1954. Antal Doráti conducting. Mercury
 1958. Bruno Walter conducting. CSO
*(Chicago Symphony Orchestra in the
 Twentieth Century: Collector's Choice)*
 1960. Fritz Reiner conducting. RCA
 1968. Seiji Ozawa conducting. RCA
 1978. Carlo Maria Giulini conducting.
 Deutsche Grammophon
 1979. Sir Georg Solti conducting.
 EuroArts (video)

symphonic work—music that blazed new paths in an area in which Schubert felt the least assured. (Schubert often struggled with the compositional process, even though it is true that a song once came so easily to him that he jotted it down, fully formed, on the back of a menu.)

Perhaps Schubert was trying to face down the giant using the language they both understood best. He was always too shy to contact Beethoven, even though they lived in the same city for years. (When Beethoven was so deaf that he provided books for visitors to write down what they wanted to say, his nephew Karl mentioned, in August 1823: “They greatly praise Schubert, but it is said that he hides himself.”) The two men met only once, when Schubert went to visit Beethoven on his deathbed with Josef and Anselm Hüttenbrenner, the brothers who already had Schubert’s unfinished symphony in their possession.

When Schubert abandoned work on the B-minor symphony, he gave it to Josef Hüttenbrenner, probably in 1823, after ripping out the unfinished scherzo. (The first nine measures remained simply because they were written on the back of the Andante.) At some point, Josef gave the manuscript to his brother Anselm, who shoved it in the back of a drawer. (A score by Schubert that remained in Josef’s possession—music for Goethe’s *Claudine von Villa Bella*—was used by his servants as kindling sometime in 1848.) On March 8, 1860, in a letter to Johann Herbeck, an influential Viennese musician, Josef casually mentioned that Anselm “possesses a treasure in Schubert’s B-minor symphony, which we rank with his Great C-Major symphony, his instrumental swan song, and with all the symphonies of Beethoven—only it is unfinished.” Herbeck would never forget the morning some five years later when he actually held the manuscript in his hands.

The attempts to round off Schubert’s score—as if two polished, magnificent movements were somehow unsatisfactory—began with the very first performance on December 17, 1865, when the finale of Schubert’s Third Symphony was tacked on to ensure a rousing finish. Over the years, other endings have been proposed. (In 1928, the Columbia Gramophone Com-

pany even considered hosting a competition for the best completion of the *Unfinished Symphony*.) There have always been those who claimed that Schubert actually finished the work, and, as recently as 1942, it was suggested that Anselm Hüttenbrenner had lost the manuscript of the last two movements. Today, convinced by the evidence that Schubert’s *Unfinished Symphony* was, in fact, never finished, we are more willing to accept the brilliance of what we have rather than long for what we do not.

Imagine the joy of uncovering one of music’s true masterworks. Even Eduard Hanslick, as demanding (and sometimes as nasty) as any critic in the 19th century, quickly turned to butter when he reviewed the first performance in 1865:

When, after the few introductory measures, clarinets and oboes in unison begin to sound their sweet song above the peaceful murmur of the violins, then each and every child recognizes the composer, and a half-suppressed outcry “Schubert” buzzes through the hall. He has hardly entered, but it is as if one knows him by his step, by his manner of lifting the latch.

We now know Schubert perhaps best of all by that sweet song, and there are generations of schoolchildren who may never forget those unfortunate words—“This is the symphony that Schubert wrote and never finished”—that eager music teachers have added to the lovely cello melody that follows. The pathos and beauty of this entire stretch of music is extraordinary, but even more remarkable is the way Schubert sustains the spell throughout the movement and on into the second. Schubert’s sketches show that he originally wanted to end his first movement in B Major—which would have broken the mood—but he thought better of it, leaving us instead in the dark recesses of B minor.

The slow movement—and it is only relatively slow, for Schubert specifies *Andante con moto* (with motion)—is in the unexpected key of E Major, where he would again uncover great riches in the *Adagio* of the C-Major string quintet. In this lovely movement, a few especially

eloquent details stand out: the high-flying clarinet solo that gently sails over shifting chords, and a wonderful moment of total stillness, disturbed only by the octave call of the horn, just before Schubert leads us back to the opening.

And it is here, with this perfect Andante, that we must stop. Schubert's plans for the third-movement scherzo look promising—it begins with a strong theme, first played in octaves by the full orchestra. There is no telling what might have emerged had he polished this raw material into something as fine as the two movements we know so well.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Clarinet Concerto in A Major, K. 622

This concerto is the last important work Mozart finished before his death. He recorded it in his personal catalog without a date, right after *The Magic Flute* and *La clemenza di Tito*. The only later entry is the little *Masonic* Cantata, dated November 15, 1791. The Requiem, as we know, did not make it into the list.

For decades the history of the Requiem was full of ambiguity, while that of the Clarinet Concerto seemed quite clear. But in recent years, as we learned more about the unfinished Requiem, questions about the concerto began to emerge. The Requiem riddles are now largely solved, damaging a fair amount of romantic myth and cinematic drama in the process. But an accurate account of the Clarinet Concerto seems more uncertain today than ever.

Let us start with Anton Stadler. Mozart tells us that he wrote the concerto for this great vir-

tuoso clarinet player, a close friend, a fellow Mason (although a member of a different lodge), and, on numerous occasions, a spirited gambling companion. Mozart enjoyed Stadler's friendship and admired his talent, easily accepting that the latter was infinitely more generous and reliable than the former. The musical skill was evidently prodigious: "One would never have thought," wrote a critic in 1785, "that a clarinet could imitate the human voice to such perfection." But Sophie Haibel, Mozart's sister-in-law, remembered Stadler as one of the composer's "false friends, secret bloodsuckers, and worthless persons who served only to amuse him at the table and intercourse with whom injured his reputation." Perhaps she had learned from Constanze of the 500 gulden Mozart lent Stadler, a hefty sum that was still unpaid when officials tallied the composer's estate.

Stadler's true debt to Mozart is one clarinetists still owe him today: pages upon pages of music as precious as any in the repertory. It is likely that Mozart first heard Stadler play in March 1784, in a performance of his B-flat wind serenade (K. 361). The Clarinet Trio, written two years later and supposedly finished in a bowling alley on one of the many occasions when Mozart could not separate music from life, may have been composed with Stadler in mind. By 1789, the year of the magnificent Quintet for Clarinet and Strings (K. 581), virtually every note Mozart wrote for the instrument, including the added clarinet parts for the great G-minor symphony, was written for Stadler.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART CLARINET CONCERTO IN A MAJOR, K. 622

COMPOSED

September–November 1791

FIRST PERFORMANCE

Date unknown

INSTRUMENTATION

solo clarinet, two flutes, two bassoons,
two horns, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

28 minutes

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES

July 25, 1957, Ravinia Festival. Reginald Kell as soloist, Georg Solti conducting
November 18, 1961, Orchestra Hall.
Clark Brody as soloist, John Weicher conducting

We now come to the last year of Mozart's life. In late August 1791, Mozart set off for Prague to supervise the first performances of *La clemenza di Tito*, accompanied by Stadler, who was to play in the Prague orchestra; Franz Xaver Süssmayr, who would soon inherit the task of finishing the Requiem; and Constanze. Mozart worked on the opera in the coach, writing two virtuoso obbligato solos for Stadler. The premiere on September 6 was decently received, though the empress Maria Luisa is said to have shouted from her box, "Una porcheria tedesca!" ("German rubbish," to use the imperial translation.) Mozart returned home to Vienna, leaving Stadler behind to accept thunderous applause and cheers from his fellow orchestra members for his big solos each night.

On September 28, Mozart entered *The Magic Flute* in his catalog; the premiere, two nights later in a suburban Viennese theater, was only a partial success. Sometime in the middle of this crazy schedule—two opera premieres in less than a month, plus work on a requiem that had recently been commissioned through a mysterious messenger—Mozart began what would be his last concerto, for Stadler's clarinet. But there is no mention of the concerto until October 7, when Mozart wrote to Constanze, who had gone to Baden, boasting that after she left he played two games of billiards, sold his horse for 14 ducats, sent out for black coffee, and smoked a splendid pipe of tobacco before orchestrating "almost the whole Rondo for Stadler." A letter dated October 14 (Mozart's last) describes the evening Mozart took Salieri to see *The Magic Flute*, an outing unfairly embellished in Peter Shaffer's *Amadeus*. Little more than a month later, Mozart fell ill; he died in less than three weeks.

We come now to the questions, some still unanswered. Around the time Mozart met Anton Stadler, he had begun to play a large new clarinet—today called a basset clarinet, though in Mozart's day it had no particular name. This curious instrument extended the clarinet's glorious lower register down a major third, reaching four new deep and resonant notes.

It seems clear that this is the instrument Mozart had in mind when he wrote both the celebrated quintet and this final concerto.

But by the time the Clarinet Concerto was published, a decade after Mozart's death, Stadler's basset clarinet had gone out of favor, and the concerto was printed in a version rewritten for the narrower range of the standard clarinet. Even though a contemporary review argued that this was not the music Mozart wrote, and Stadler was still alive to protest, players and audiences quickly came to accept this revised version. Mozart's autograph score has been lost. There is, however, a fragment, 199 measures long and written entirely in Mozart's hand, of a concerto in G for basset horn (another ancient member of the clarinet family) that nearly duplicates more than half of the first movement of the Clarinet Concerto. Apparently Mozart first conceived this music for basset horn, perhaps as early as 1787, and later rewrote and finished it for Stadler's modified clarinet. We cannot be sure for whom the earlier concerto was intended, nor why he chose to rewrite it for Stadler at one of the most hectic times in his life. But we do know that Mozart had nothing to do with the version for standard clarinet—the one that generations of musicians have come to love, and the one that Stephen Williamson performs tonight.

The concerto is one of Mozart's most personal creations; like the final piano concerto, it is as intimate and conversational as chamber music, rather than grand and dramatic. We cannot blame historians—or playwrights for that matter—for suggesting Mozart knew his time was running out, for the music implies as much. The slow movement carries an almost unnatural burden of sadness on its simple phrases; it is one of Mozart's greatest arias and a testament to the power of music to say what words cannot. Of the two outer movements, with their endless, natural lyricism, no words are more apt than those Mozart scholar H. C. Robbins Landon remembered from Shakespeare: "The heart dances, but not for joy."

Robert Schumann**Symphony No. 2 in C Major, Op. 61**

In August 1844, Robert Schumann suffered a severe breakdown. Medical reports seldom shed much light on works of art, but in Schumann's case, his creative process was regularly dictated by his physical condition. His fragile life was marked by recurring melancholy and depression beginning as early as 1828. There were recurrences in October 1830, throughout 1831, and in the autumn of 1833, when he attempted suicide by leaping from his fourth-floor apartment window—his diary that year records his fear of going mad. There were other breakdowns in 1837, 1838, and 1839, but with the happiness of marriage to Clara Wieck in 1840, and the abundant, joyous outpouring of songs that year, it seemed that he had put his demons behind him, and that better times lay ahead.

But in 1842, Schumann collapsed from exhaustion and overwork. The worst time of all came in 1844: he could not even listen to music—"which cut into my nerves as if with knives"—and he complained of a constant, debilitating ringing in his ears. He also suffered from trembling and from unreasonable fears of sharp metal objects and heights (doubtless the consequence of renting that fourth-floor apartment). When Robert and Clara went to Dres-

den that October, his nights were sleepless and sheer torture; Clara would awaken to find him "swimming in tears." He wrote no music for a year—it took him weeks just to draft a letter. Eventually he began to study Bach systematically, and to try his own hand at some compositional exercises.

This C-Major symphony is the first large-scale piece Schumann wrote after his breakdown. For a composer who cut his teeth on piano pieces and songs, moved naturally into chamber music, and had only recently tackled writing for orchestra, this was a bold effort, perhaps even a test of the strength of his recuperation. Although we know it as Schumann's second symphony, it follows an abandoned effort from 1832—attempted long before his confidence and talent worked in tandem—and several works dating from 1841: the *Spring* Symphony published as his first, the D-minor symphony later revised and published as No. 4, and the beginnings of another symphony in C minor. Schumann took to the new medium with great enthusiasm, if not comparable experience: the *Spring* Symphony, for example, was sketched in four days and finished in less than a month.

The C-Major symphony did not go as quickly or as easily, partly because Schumann was feeling his way back toward a full workload.

ROBERT SCHUMANN
SYMPHONY NO. 2 IN C MAJOR, OP. 61

COMPOSED

1845–46

FIRST PERFORMANCE

November 5, 1846; Leipzig, Germany

INSTRUMENTATION

two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets,
two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets,
three trombones, timpani, and strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

34 minutes

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES

October 23 and 24, 1891, Auditorium
Theatre. Theodore Thomas conducting
July 2, 1942, Ravinia Festival.
Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting

CSO RECORDINGS

1957. Fritz Reiner conducting. CSO
(*From the Archives*, vol. 1: *The Reiner Era*)
1977. Daniel Barenboim conducting.
Deutsche Grammophon

Three years after finishing the music, he wrote to D.G. Otten, the music director in Hamburg:

I wrote my symphony in December 1845, and I sometimes fear my semi-invalid state can be divined from the music. I began to feel more myself when I wrote the last movement, and was certainly much better when I finished the whole work. All the same it reminds me of dark days.

Though Schumann did indeed write the symphony in a month, the orchestration took much longer. He began to score the first movement in February 1846 and did not finish it until early May. The work was completed the following October 19, just three weeks before Felix Mendelssohn conducted the first performance.

All of Schumann's symphonies search for new light to shed on a familiar form. They are marked by innovation and experiment—and sometimes by a rather deliberate attempt to avoid comparison with the towering achievements of Beethoven. The D-minor piece eventually published as his Symphony No. 4 is so daring and unconventional that Schumann thought of calling it a “symphonic fantasy,” side-stepping the issue altogether. All four published symphonies aim for unity by linking the movements through titles or thematic cross-reference.

The C-Major symphony begins with a moody slow introduction, the most obvious reminder of the composer's dark days. More importantly, it provides the main theme and several subsidiary ideas for the ensuing *Allegro ma non troppo* as well as the brass fanfare that returns to crown the first three movements and to hover near the end of the symphony. Although the first movement itself is high in energy and emotion, Schumann chooses to follow it not with the accustomed calm of a slow movement, but with a virtuosic

scherzo. And he thwarts expectations by giving us two independent trios, the first genial in a rustic way, and the second, with its theme presented both upright and upside down, a reminder that it was Bach's music that led Schumann back to his desk.

Like Beethoven in his Ninth Symphony, Schumann has kept us waiting for the slow movement, and he does not disappoint. This is music of great beauty, written in C minor (the other three movements are in C Major) and revitalized midway through by the beginnings of a fugue—another tip of the hat to Bach. Despite Schumann's claims of improved health, the finale has often troubled analysts; even Donald Tovey, normally rational though often outspoken, found it incoherent. It is mainly a question of proportion. It begins with great authority and confidence, and includes as its second theme a brilliant transformation of the principal melody from the *Andante*. The development and recapitulation merge, ending in C minor. Then follows a coda so long (half the movement's length) and remarkable that it nearly overshadows all that came before. It is based on a theme that is completely new to the symphony, though Schumann had used it before, in his Piano Fantasy, pointedly borrowing it from Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte* (“To the distant beloved”), where it accompanies the words “Take, then, these songs of mine.” By 1845 Schumann had married his own beloved, offering her some 121 songs in the year of their marriage alone, and so the reference is both loving and triumphant, a reminder that it was Clara who encouraged Robert to try writing for orchestra, wisely promising that “his imagination cannot find sufficient scope on the piano.”

—Phillip Huscher

Phillip Huscher has been the program annotator for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra since 1987.



Todd Rosenberg Photography

Stephen Williamson is principal clarinet of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Riccardo Muti. Williamson formerly was principal clarinet of both the New York Philharmonic (2013–14) and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra (2003–11). In addition, he has been a frequent guest principal clarinet with the Saito Kinen Festival Orchestra in Japan under Seiji Ozawa.

Williamson currently is a faculty member of DePaul University in Chicago. He also has served on the faculty at Columbia University and the Mannes College of Music in New York City, as well as at the Pacific Music Festival

in Sapporo, Japan. Williamson has recorded for the Sony Classics, Telarc, CRI, BMG, Naxos, and Decca labels, and can be heard on numerous film soundtracks. He was a featured soloist with the CSO under John Williams, recording Williams' Oscar-nominated score for Steven Spielberg's film *Lincoln*.

An avid soloist and chamber musician, Williamson has performed extensively in the United States, Europe, and Asia. He has collaborated with such artists as James Levine, Yo-Yo Ma, Mitsuko Uchida, Jeffrey Kahane, Anne-Marie McDermott, Emanuel Ax, and Meliora Winds; the Aspen, Dorian, and Sylvan wind quintets; and the Brentano, American, Jasper, Brasilia, and Dover string quartets. Past concerto performances include Mozart's Clarinet Concerto with the CSO (2016), the Pacific Music Festival Orchestra in Japan (2011), and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in Carnegie Hall under conductor Fabio Luisi (2012).

Williamson received his bachelor's degree and performer's certificate from the Eastman School of Music, and his master's degree from the Juilliard School. As a Fulbright scholar, he furthered his studies at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin. His past teachers include Peter Rieckhoff, Charles Neidich, Kenneth Grant, and Michael Webster.

A longtime Selmer-Paris and Vandoren Artist, Williamson currently plays Selmer Signature clarinets and uses Vandoren traditional reeds with a James Pyne JX/BC mouthpiece.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS (continued from page 16)

of the Negaunee Music Institute at the CSO. The Institute also manages the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the only pre-professional training ensemble of its kind affiliated with a major American orchestra.

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Sunday, October 15, 2017, 3pm
Zellerbach Hall

Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Riccardo Muti, *conductor*

PROGRAM

Johannes BRAHMS (1833–1897) Symphony No. 3 in F Major, Op. 90
 Allegro con brio
 Andante
 Poco allegretto
 Allegro

INTERMISSION

BRAHMS Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73
 Allegro non troppo
 Adagio non troppo
 Allegretto grazioso (Quasi andantino)
 Allegro con spirito

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Johannes Brahms**Symphony No. 3 in F Major, Op. 90**

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra played Brahms' Third Symphony in its very first season. By then, Johannes Brahms, still very much alive, had stopped writing symphonic music. It was a time of tying up loose ends, finishing business, and clearing the desk. (At the end of that season, in the spring of 1892, Theodore Thomas, the CSO's first music director, invited Brahms to come to Chicago for the upcoming World's Columbian Exposition, but the composer declined, saying he did not want to make the long trip.) It is hard today to imagine that Brahms' Third Symphony was once a challenging work of contemporary music. Yet several hundred people walked out of the first Boston Symphony performance in 1884, and the critic for the *Boston Gazette* called it "painfully dry, deliberate, and ungenial." (It had been introduced to America a month before at one of Frank van der Stucken's Novelty Concerts in New York.)

Even when Brahms' music was new, it was hardly radical. Brahms was concerned with writing music worthy of standing next to that by Beethoven; it was this fear that kept him from placing the double bar at the end of his First Symphony for 20 years. Hugo Wolf, the adventuresome song composer, said, "Brahms

writes symphonies regardless of what has happened in the meantime." He did not mean that as a compliment, but it touches on an important truth: Brahms was the first composer to develop successfully Beethoven's rigorous brand of symphonic thinking.

Hans Richter, a musician of considerable perception, called this F-Major symphony Brahms' *Eroica*. There's certainly something Beethovenesque about the way the music is developed from the most compact material, although the parallel with the monumental, expansive *Eroica* is puzzling, aside from the opening tempo (*Allegro con brio*) and the fact that they are both third symphonies. Brahms' Third Symphony is his shortest and his most tightly knit. Its substance came to him in a relatively sudden spurt: it was mostly written in less than four months—a flash of inspiration compared to the 20 years he spent on his First Symphony. Brahms was enjoying a trip to the Rhine at the time, and he quickly rented a place in Wiesbaden, where he could work in peace, and canceled his plans to summer in Bad Ischl. The whole symphony was written nonstop.

The benefit of such compressed work is a thematic coherence and organic unity rare even in Brahms. Clara Schumann wrote to Brahms on February 11, 1884, after having

JOHANNES BRAHMS
SYMPHONY NO. 3 IN F MAJOR, OP. 90

COMPOSED

1882–83

FIRST PERFORMANCE

December 2, 1883; Vienna, Austria

INSTRUMENTATION

two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets,
two bassoons and contrabassoon,
four horns, two trumpets, three trombones,
timpani, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

38 minutes

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES

April 22 and 23, 1892, Auditorium Theatre.

Theodore Thomas conducting

July 11, 1936, Ravinia Festival.

Hans Lange conducting

CSO RECORDINGS

1940. Frederick Stock conducting. Columbia

1957. Fritz Reiner conducting. RCA

1976. James Levine conducting. RCA

1978. Sir Georg Solti conducting. London

1993. Daniel Barenboim conducting. Erato

spent hours playing through the work in its two-piano version: “All the movements seem to be of one piece, one beat of the heart.” Clara had been following Brahms’ career ever since the day he showed up at the door some 30 years earlier, asking to meet her famous husband. By 1884, Robert Schumann—Brahms’ first staunch advocate—was long dead, and Brahms’ on-again-off-again infatuation with Clara was off for good. But she was still a dear friend, a musician of great insight, and a keen judge of his work.

Surely, in trying to get her hands around the three massive chords with which Brahms begins, Clara noted in the top voice the rising F, A-flat, F motive that had become Brahms’ monogram for “frei aber froh” (free but joyful), an optimistic response to the motto of his friend Joseph Joachim, “frei aber einsam” (free but lonely). It is one of the few times in Brahms’ music that the notes mean something beyond themselves. That particular motive can be pointed out again and again throughout the symphony—it is the bass line for the violin melody that follows in measures three and four, for example. Clara also cannot have missed the continual shifting back and forth from A-natural to A-flat, starting with the first three chords and again in the very first phrase of Brahms’ cascading violin melody. Since the half step from A-natural down to A-flat darkens F Major into F minor, the pre-eminence of F Major is not so certain in this music, even though we already know from the title that it will win in the end.

In four measures (and as many seconds), Brahms has laid his cards on the table. In the course of this movement and those that follow, we could trace, with growing fascination, the progress of that rising three-note motive, or the falling thirds of the violin theme, or the quicksilver shifts of major to minor that give this music its peculiar character. This is what Clara meant when she commented that “all the movements seem to be of one piece,” for, although Brahms’ connections are intricate and subtle, we sense their presence, and that they are unshakable.

For all its apparent beauty, Brahms’ Third Symphony has not always been the most easily grasped of his works. Brahms does not shake us by the shoulders as Beethoven so often did, even though the quality of his material and the logic of its development is up to the Beethovenian standards he set for himself. All four movements end quietly—try to name one other symphony of which that can be said—and some of its most powerful moments are so restrained that the tension is nearly unbearable.

Both the second and third movements hold back as much as they reveal. For long stretches, Brahms writes music that never rises above piano; when it does, the effect is always telling. The Andante abounds in beautiful writing for the clarinet, long one of Brahms’ favorite instruments. (The year the Chicago Symphony first played this symphony, Brahms met the clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld, who inspired the composer’s last great instrumental works, the Clarinet Trio and the Clarinet Quintet.) The third movement opens with a wonderful, arching theme for cello—another of the low, rich sounds Brahms favored—later taken up by the solo horn in a passage so fragile and transparent it overrules all the textbook comments about the excessive weight of Brahms’ writing.

There *is* weight and power in the finale, although it begins furtively in the shadows and evaporates into thin air some 10 minutes later. The body of the movement is dramatic, forceful, and brilliantly designed. As the critic Donald Tovey writes in his famous essay on this symphony, “It needs either a close analysis or none at all.” The latter will save the sort of scrutiny that is not possible in the concert hall, but two things do merit mention. The somber music in the trombones and bassoons very near the beginning is a theme from the middle of the third movement (precisely the sort of thematic reference we do not associate with Brahms). And the choice of F minor for the key of this movement was determined as early as the fourth bar of the symphony, when the cloud of the minor mode crossed over the bold F-Major opening. Throughout the finale, the clouds return repeatedly (and often unexpectedly), and Brahms makes something of a cliffhanger out

PROGRAM NOTES

of the struggle between major and minor. The ending is a surprise, not because it settles comfortably into F Major, but because, in a way that is virtually unknown to the symphony before the 20th century, it allows the music to unwind, all its energy spent, content with the memory of the symphony's opening.

Brahms

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73

Within months after the long-awaited premiere of his First Symphony, Brahms produced another one. The two were as different as night and day—logically enough, since the first had taken two decades of struggle and soul-searching and the second was written over a summer holiday. If it truly was Beethoven's symphonic achievement that stood in Brahms' way for all those years, nothing seems to have stopped the flow of this new symphony in D Major. Brahms had put his fears and worries behind him.

This music was composed at the picture-postcard village of Pörtlach, on the Würthersee, where Brahms had rented two tiny rooms for his summer holiday (and where he would write his Violin Concerto the next summer). The rooms apparently were ideal for composition, even though the hallway was so narrow that Brahms' piano could not be moved up the stairs. "It is delightful here," Brahms wrote to

Fritz Simrock, his publisher, soon after arriving, and the new symphony bears witness to his apparent delight. Later that summer, when Brahms' friend Theodor Billroth, an amateur musician, played through the score for the first time, he wrote to the composer at once: "It is all rippling streams, blue sky, sunshine, and cool green shadows. How beautiful it must be at Pörtlach." Eventually listeners began to call this Brahms' *Pastoral* Symphony, again raising the comparison with Beethoven. But if Brahms' Second Symphony has a true companion, it is the violin concerto he would write the following summer in Pörtlach—cut from the same D-Major cloth and reflecting the mood and even some of the thematic material of the symphony.

When Brahms sent the first movement of his new symphony off to Clara Schumann, she predicted that this music would fare better with the public than the tough and stormy First, and she was right. The first performance, on December 30, 1877, in Vienna under Hans Richter, was a triumph, and the third movement had to be repeated. When Brahms conducted the second performance, in Leipzig just after the beginning of the new year, the audience was again enthusiastic. But Brahms' real moment of glory came late in the summer of 1878, when his new symphony was a great success in his native Hamburg, where he had twice failed to win a coveted

JOHANNES BRAHMS SYMPHONY NO. 2 IN D MAJOR, OP. 73

COMPOSED

1877, summer

FIRST PERFORMANCE

December 30, 1877; Vienna, Austria

INSTRUMENTATION

two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets,
two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets,
three trombones and tuba, timpani, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

46 minutes

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES

November 23 and 24, 1894, Auditorium
Theatre. Theodore Thomas conducting
July 10, 1936, Ravinia Festival.
Hans Lange conducting

CSO RECORDINGS

1976. James Levine conducting. RCA
1979. Sir Georg Solti conducting. London
1993. Daniel Barenboim conducting. Erato

music post. Still, it would be another decade before the Honorary Freedom of Hamburg—the city’s highest honor—was given to him, and Brahms remained ambivalent about his birthplace for the rest of his life. In the meantime, the Second Symphony found receptive listeners nearly everywhere it was played.

From the opening bars of the Allegro non troppo—with their bucolic horn calls and woodwind chords—we prepare for the radiant sunlight and pure skies that Billroth promised. And, with one soaring phrase from the first violins, Brahms’ great pastoral scene unfolds before us. Although another of Billroth’s letters to the composer suggests that “a happy, cheerful mood permeates the whole work,” Brahms knows that even a sunny day contains moments of darkness and doubt—moments when pastoral serenity threatens to turn tragic. It is that underlying tension—even drama—that gives this music its remarkable character. A few details stand out: two particularly bracing passages for the three trombones in the development section, and much later, just before the coda, a wavering horn call that emerges, serene and magical. This is followed, as if it were the most logical thing in the world, by a jolly bit of dance-hall waltzing before the music flickers and dies.

Eduard Hanslick, one of Brahms’ champions, thought the Adagio “more conspicuous for the development of the themes than for the worth

of the themes themselves.” Hanslick was not the first critic to be wrong—this movement has very little to do with development as we know it—although it is unlike him to be so far off the mark when dealing with music by Brahms. Hanslick did notice that the third movement has the relaxed character of a serenade. It is, for all its initial grace and charm, a serenade of some complexity, with two frolicsome presto passages (smartly disguising the main theme) and a wealth of shifting accents.

The finale is jubilant and electrifying; the clouds seem to disappear after the hushed opening bars, and the music blazes forward, almost unchecked, to the very end. For all Brahms’ concern about measuring up to Beethoven, he seldom mentioned his admiration for Haydn and his ineffable high spirits, but that is who Brahms most resembles here. There is, of course, the great orchestral roar of triumph that always suggests Beethoven. But many moments are pure Brahms, like the ecstatic clarinet solo that rises above the bustle only minutes into the movement, or the warm and striding theme in the strings that immediately follows. The extraordinary brilliance of the final bars—as unbridled an outburst as any in Brahms—was not lost on his great admirer Antonín Dvořák when he wrote his *Carnival Overture*.

—Phillip Huscher

Phillip Huscher has been the program annotator for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra since 1987.

From Beethoven's Ninth, Bruckner also found his model for a large-scale structure: a big first movement, a spacious adagio, a scherzo in sonata form, and a wide-ranging finale that gathers many threads together in a new light. It is useless (though accurate) to note that the first movement of Bruckner's Fourth is twice as long as any opening symphonic movement in Mozart or Haydn, and comparable only to those of Beethoven's *Eroica* and Ninth symphonies, among its predecessors. For Bruckner is not Haydn, Mozart, or Beethoven—not in the way he handles themes, plans his harmonic structure, or conceives form—even if he is working with many of the same tools.

It has taken music lovers some time to understand him. Robert Simpson, who wrote one of the first comprehensive studies of the symphonies, describes Bruckner's technique as a manifestation of patience. It is patience that many listeners today do not bring to Bruckner, and he will not divulge his greatness without it. Bruckner has never been known to make a long story short, but he is a masterful storyteller. The slow movement of this symphony moves at a deliberate and relentless gait, but it is shrewdly paced and lovingly told, and there are moments of almost unimaginable beauty. The grand climax is truly impressive only if one has made the slow ascent.

The scherzo, with its combination of hunting calls and brass fanfares, is lively, exciting stuff. But the pace is still leisurely, and the trio (marked "Not too quickly") is delicately scored and even more relaxed. When the scherzo returns, it is particularly noticeable how Bruckner relies not on speed, but on sheer sonority—here the full brass band—to create excitement.

A Bruckner finale is always large and complicated, and this one gave him an especially hard time. As the British critic Donald Tovey pointed out long ago, this finale is really a slow movement, with all its customary attributes, despite what Bruckner chooses to call it. It

opens, like the symphony, with a serene horn call over low stirrings that leads to increased commotion. Bruckner takes time for any number of detours to distant harmonic regions, enriching the itinerary immeasurably. There is a sense throughout of covering vast distances—an understanding of musical space that is new to the symphony. The shadow of the scherzo hovers. Near the end, after a barrage from the full orchestra, there is a great, unexpected pause, and then the last full paragraph. As Bruckner told the conductor Arthur Nikisch—in explanation of one of his most common idiosyncrasies—he liked to catch his breath before saying something significant. And the ending is important, for it brings us back to the opening of the symphony, with its simple horn call. There is both a sense of wrapping things up and the satisfaction of reunion, as Bruckner gathers together familiar themes, like tourists who have gone their separate ways and meet at the day's end.

A postscript. Scarcely three months after Bruckner's death in Vienna, Theodore Thomas and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra introduced his Fourth Symphony to Chicago on January 22, 1897, as a way of "keeping audiences in touch with musical progress," the *Tribune* said. It was the first symphony by Bruckner the orchestra ever played.

A parting word about the subtitle, *Romantic*. This is the only Bruckner symphony with a subtitle added by the composer himself. It was part of a scheme devised by his friends, after the symphony was completed, to give the music a programmatic storyline as well as a title, to draw a more receptive audience. Bruckner reluctantly agreed, but admitted that even he did not know what the finale was supposed to depict.

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