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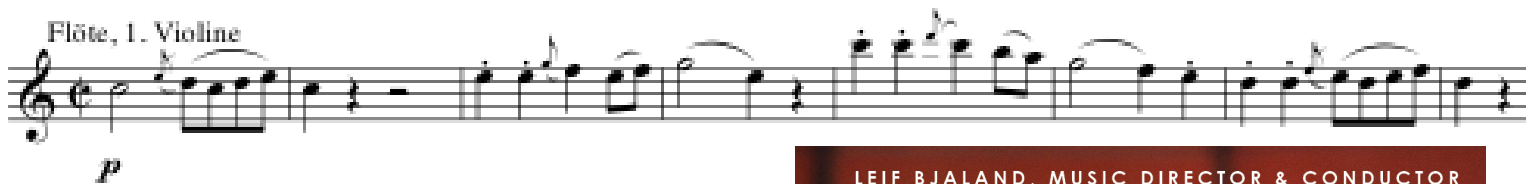
This afternoon’s concert showcases masterworks by Haydn and Brahms. Maestro Leif Bjaland and the WSO will feature one of Haydn’s finest symphonies, along with the lyrical second piano concerto of Johannes Brahms, who incorporates Haydnesque Classical style in this romantic masterpiece.



Franz Joseph Haydn (31 March, 1732 - 31 May, 1809)
Symphony no. 100 in C major (H.W.V. I/100) “Military”

*I. Adagio - Allegro II. Allegretto III. Menuetto:
Moderato IV. Presto*

Scored for pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, trumpets, percussion and strings



The musical legacy of Franz Joseph Haydn is broad and deep. His original and lasting contributions to chamber music and symphonic form have garnered him the epithets, “Father of the String Quartet” and “Father of the Symphony.” He was a close friend and mentor of Mozart and one of Beethoven’s teachers, for which he is affectionately known as “Papa” Haydn. From the sheer number of symphonies Haydn composed, one hundred and four of which are extant, many of those have nicknames as well. There is the famous “Surprise” Symphony, three early ones named for times of day (“Morning,” “Noon” and “Night”), one entitled

“The Bear,” another “The Hen,” and one named for the Empress Maria Theresia. The sobriquet of this afternoon’s symphonic offering, “Military,” stems from its fanfares for trumpet and percussion; it was originally entitled, “The Grand Overture with a Militaire Movement.”

The work was composed during Haydn’s second trip to London, one of an extraordinary set of twelve symphonies he composed for the impresario Johann Peter Salomon’s concert series, each of which is a masterpiece. The “Military” Symphony premiered at the Hanover Square Rooms on 31 March 1794, with the composer himself conducting from the fortepiano. One of Haydn’s many wondrous innovations was to begin some of his symphonies not with the usual fast tempo of *Allegro*, but rather, as here, a slow and stately *Adagio*, with double dotted rhythms recalling Baroque French music, followed after a pregnant pause by a sprightly *Allegro*. In the second movement, Haydn added “Turkish” influences (cymbals, triangle and bass drum) to the percussion section, musically tone painting the conflict between the Ottoman Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Hapsburgs, which prompted one music critic to quip that it reminded him of “the advancing of battle, the thundering of the onset, the clash of arms, and the hellish roar of war raised to a climax of hellish sublimity.” Haydn cleverly switches from bright C major to brooding C minor (three flats) with each entrance of the instruments, to emphasize the darkness of those war years. A leisurely *Menuetto* calms matters, while the last movement is marked by the return of the percussion to create delightful musical color to the sparkling *tutti* finale.

LEIF BJALAND, MUSIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR

MARCH 11 • 3PM

MASTER
MUSICIAN

**GARRICK
OHLSSON**



Johannes Brahms (7 May, 1833 - 3 April, 1897)
Piano Concerto no. 2 in Bb major, Op. 83

I. *Allegro non troppo* II. *Allegro appassionato*
III. *Andante* IV. *Allegretto grazioso - Un poco più presto*

Scored for pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons and trumpets, four horns, timpani and strings. Many of Brahms' masterpieces were birthed in pairs. His string quintets and sextets, the serenades, the cello sonatas, clarinet sonatas and piano concertos are all musical twins, yet twins with vastly different personalities. Writing two works within the same genre allowed Brahms to explore not only varied thematic material, but more importantly to this deeply introspective composer, their contrasts. If Brahms' first piano concerto can be characterized as blazing fire, heralding the arrival in 1858 of the twenty-five year old genius, then the second, which was begun twenty years later, has the crystalline beauty of polished ice. Brahms' two concertos for piano and orchestra are pillars of Romanticism. Each approaches fifty minutes, among the longest in the repertoire. Brahms would often send a completed score to one of his close friends for their opinion before it went to the publishers. With the second concerto, it was to the brilliant surgeon and superb amateur violinist, Professor Theodor Billroth, chair of surgery at the University of Vienna. Brahms, in his typically ironic and self-deprecatory style, appended a note to Billroth which read, "Here are some little piano pieces... and a tiny wisp of a scherzo." In reality, the concerto is among the most difficult in the repertoire, requiring both muscularity and technical precision to actualize. Brahms himself premiered

the work in November 1881 in Budapest, dedicating it to Eduard Marxsen, his piano teacher from student days in Hamburg. It was a resounding success, with Brahms subsequently touring Europe with it. Even Franz Liszt, no great friend of the composer, was moved to comment that "it possesses the pregnant character of a distinguished work of art, in which thought and feeling move in noble harmony."

The concerto is monumental in size and scope; it contains four movements, not the usual three typical of Classical and Romantic style. Indeed, the work is crafted with a symphonic architecture, where piano and orchestra are equal partners. The concerto's tonic is in the appealing key of Bb major (two flats), a tonality often said to represent springtime. Perhaps Brahms was thinking of his mentor, Robert Schumann, who also composed a symphony in Bb major, nicknamed *Fruhling* ("Spring"). A glorious French horn melody opens the work, lyrically echoed by piano and woodwinds. Here Brahms employs classical Sonata form,



in which the motif is modulated through the dominant of F major (one flat) and eventually back to the tonic, channeling Mozart and Haydn, but with piano chords that are absolutely Beethovenian in their impact. The second movement is not a conventional slow *Andante*, but rather, a stormy *Scherzo* and *Trio*, also in Sonata form. The piano introduces the melody, which is developed in a lovely mid-section by the woodwinds before the recapitulation. The ethereal third movement becomes the *Andante*. Time stands still as a yearning cello floats an exquisite melody, which is echoed by winds and strings. The piano then enters with a delicate series of rising arpeggios and develops the theme. The fourth movement returns to the tonic of Bb major with a series of new motifs. In the coda, in a typical Brahmsian rhythmic twist, the main theme is now served up in galloping triple meter, introduced by piano and then shared back and forth with orchestra until the rousing finale.

Program Notes

Vincent de Luise M.D., Cultural Ambassador, WSO;
Assistant Professor, Yale University School of Medicine