

# The University Musical Society

of

## The University of Michigan

*Presents*

*The* ANN ARBOR

# *May Festival*

THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA

EUGENE ORMANDY, *Musical Director and Conductor*

WILLIAM SMITH, *Assistant Conductor*

EUGENE ORMANDY, *Conducting*

SOLOIST

MAYUMI FUJIKAWA, *Violinist*

SATURDAY EVENING, MAY 6, 1972, AT 8:30

HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

### Compositions of Johannes Brahms

Tragic Overture, Op. 81

Symphony No. 3 in F major, Op. 90

Allegro con brio

Andante

Poco allegretto

Allegro

INTERMISSION

\*Concerto in D major for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 77

Allegro ma non troppo

Adagio

Allegro giocoso, ma non troppo vivace

MAYUMI FUJIKAWA

\* Available on Columbia Records RCA Red Seal

## PROGRAM NOTES

by

GLENN D. MCGEOCH

### Compositions of Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

#### Tragic Overture, Op. 81

Brahms lived in a spiritually poverty-stricken and soul-sick period, as did Schumann; an age which was distinctly unfavorable to genuinely great art, unfavorable because of its hidebound worship of the conventional; and its showy exterior did not hide the inner barrenness of its culture.

Even as Beethoven before him, Brahms was essentially of a hearty and vigorous mind. Standing abreast of such vital spirits as Carlyle and Browning, he met the challenge of his age and triumphed in his art. By the exercise of a clear intelligence and a strong critical faculty he was able to temper the tendency toward emotional excess and to avoid the pitfalls of utter despair into which Tchaikovsky was invariably led. Although Brahms experienced disillusionment no less than Wagner and Tchaikovsky, his was another kind of tragedy—the tragedy of a man born out of his time. He suffered from the changes in taste and perception that inevitably come with the passing of time. His particular disillusionment, however, did not affect the power and sureness of his artistic impulse. With grief he saw the ideals of Beethoven dissolve in a welter of cheap emotionalism. He saw the classic dignity of that art degraded by an infiltration of tawdry programmatic effects and innocuous imitation and witnessed finally its subjugation to poetry and the dramatic play. All of this he opposed with his own grand style—profoundly moving, noble, and dignified. “With a sweep and thrust he forced music out upon her mighty pinions to soar once more.”

The Romantic period in general adopted, unchanged, the standard form of the overture created by Beethoven. In this period it emerged as a concert piece, independent of the work it prefaced, e.g. Beethoven's three *Leonore* overtures written for his only opera, *Fidelio*; Weber's overtures to *Der Freischütz* and *Oberon*; Wagner's *Rienzi*, *Flying Dutchman*, *Lohengrin*, *Tannhäuser*, *Meistersinger*, and *Tristan and Isolde*. Brahms, like many later composers of the nineteenth century, wrote two such overtures, the *Academic* and the *Tragic*, both composed in the year 1880. In them he displayed the same intricacies of form and colorful orchestration found in the symphony of the period. They form a striking contrast in style and mood. “One weeps, the other laughs,” he once wrote; “I could forbear to satisfy my melancholy disposition to write an overture for tragedy.” There is no program or story attached to the *Tragic Overture*; Brahms gave no indication of his intentions other than this quotation. All the characteristics we associate with his four great symphonies are found here in abundance—warmth, tenderness, nobility, yearning, and conflict. These emotions he evoked by absolute music of surpassing power.

#### Symphony No. 3 in F major, Op. 90

The Brahms first two symphonies were finished in 1876 and 1877, respectively. The third did not follow until six years later and, unlike the others, was immediately successful. In truth Brahms was at the very zenith of his creative powers when he composed this work and with it, his reputation as a symphonist was secured.

In many ways the Third Symphony is his most typical and personal symphonic work. It not only made his name as a symphonist resound throughout the world with full resonance, but of the four he composed, it has remained the public favorite. Although its lyrical themes are of exceptional breadth and richness, their development is accomplished with classical directness and brevity. From the initial sounding of a germ motive (F, A-flat, F octave) at the beginning of the first movement, to the final return at the end of the fourth movement, a regal architecture of sound is created. Epic and virile moments are constantly relieved by those of lyrical tenderness and quiet serenity. The first movement is spirited and energetic, the second and third, wistful and brooding, while the fourth, after a somber beginning, bursts forth with demoniac power, only to return at the end, with the

reappearance of the germ motive of the first movement, to a resigned quietness. All these fluctuating moods are held together in a formal framework of heroic breadth and structural simplicity.

What Brahms was trying to express in this symphony challenged the curiosity of many of his distinguished contemporaries. According to Clara Schumann it was a "Forest Idyl"; to Hans Richter it was another Beethoven "Eroica." Josef Joachim, the famous violinist and intimate friend of Brahms, thought it to be a musical translation of the Greek legend of *Hero and Leander*! Max Kalbeck maintained that it was inspired by the statue *Germania* at Rüdesheim, much admired by the composer. Because of the passage in the first movement, reminiscent of the Venusberg scene in Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, and no doubt because of the fact that Wagner died during its composition, Hugo Riemann believed this symphony to be a tribute to Brahms' famous contemporary.

If words could adequately describe or express the loveliness and significance of this music, there would be no need for it to exist. Let us not be concerned with what Brahms meant to express, but rather heed the admonition of Gustav Mahler that "if a composer could say what he had to say in words, he would not bother trying to say it in music."

Much of the composition of the Third Symphony was done in 1882. It was completed at Wiesbaden in the summer of 1883. Its first performance took place December 2, 1883, at a Philharmonic concert in Vienna. Daniel Gregory Mason wrote of the Third Symphony:

"Certainly in no other work of his is there a happier balance of freshness of inspiration with technical mastery and maturity. Nowhere has he conceived lovelier, more individual melodies. And yet it is in no one melody, nor in any half dozen, that the power and fascination of this work lies, but in the masterly co-ordination of all, the extraordinary diversity of the ideas that pass before us, and their perfect marshaling into final order and complete beauty. Especially remarkable is the rhythmic grasp of Brahms, always one of his greatest qualities. One can think of few works in all musical literature in which the beginning is so completely fulfilled in the end as in the wonderful return of the motto theme and first theme of the first movement, spiritualized as it were by all they have been through, at the end of the finale."

## Concerto in D major for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 77

Great interest was aroused in the musical circles of Germany and Austria when it became known in 1878 that Brahms was at work on a violin concerto intended for the friend of his youth, Josef Joachim. The summer of 1878 the composer spent in Pörtlach where the first draft was finished. Writing to his friend Hanslick, the Viennese critic, from Lake Wörther in Carinthia, Brahms reports that "so many melodies fly about, one must be careful not to tread on them." The peace and tranquillity reflected in the first movement of the concerto is somewhat similar to that of the Second Symphony, also in D major. To many, the sentiment is maintained at a loftier height in the concerto, while the limpid grace of the melodic line has an immediate fascination for the general audience.

After studying the violin part, Joachim replied from Salzburg, "I have had a good look at what you sent me and have made a few notes and alterations, but without the full score one can't say much. I can, however, make out most of it and there is a lot of really good violin music in it, but whether it can be played with comfort in hot concert rooms remains to be seen." After considerable correspondence and several conferences the score was ready and the first performance scheduled for January 1, 1879, in Leipzig.

It remains to be noted that the concerto was not published immediately. Joachim kept it and played it several times in England with much success. The performer on these occasions made alterations to the score which did not always meet with Brahms' approval, evidenced by excerpts from this letter of Brahms to Joachim: "You will think twice before you ask me for another concerto! It is a good thing that your name is on the copy; you are more or less responsible for the solo violin parts."

Brahms did not write out the cadenza at the end of the first movement. Originally, Joachim wrote one himself but since that time it has been provided with cadenzas by nearly all the violin masters.

THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA  
EUGENE ORMANDY, *Musical Director and Conductor*

WILLIAM SMITH, *Assistant Conductor*  
BORIS SOKOLOFF, *Manager*  
JOSEPH H. SANTARLASCI, *Assistant Manager*

<i>Violins</i>	Harry Gorodetzer	<i>Trumpets</i>
Norman Carol	Francis de Pasquale	Gilbert Johnson
<i>Concertmaster</i>	Joseph Druian	Donald E. McComas
David Madison	William Saputelli	Seymour Rosenfeld
<i>Associate Concertmaster</i>	Barbara Haffner	Samuel Krauss
William de Pasquale	Bert Phillips	
<i>Associate Concertmaster</i>	Lloyd Smith	<i>Trombones</i>
Morris Shulik	George Harpham	Glenn Dodson
Owen Lusak	Marcel Farago	Tyrone Breuninger
David Grunschlag	Santo Caserta	M. Dee Stewart
Frank E. Saam	<i>Basses</i>	Robert S. Harper
Frank Costanzo	Roger M. Scott	<i>Bass Trombone</i>
David Arben	Michael Shahan	
Barbara de Pasquale	Neil Courtney	<i>Tuba</i>
Max Miller	Ferdinand Maresh	Abe Torchinsky
Ernest L. Goldstein	F. Gilbert Eney	
Herbert Light	Carl Torello	<i>Timpani</i>
Luis Biava	Wilfred Batchelder	Gerald Carlyss
Larry Grika	Samuel Gorodetzer	Michael Bookspan
Cathleen Dalschaert	Emilio Gravagno	
Vera Tarnowsky	<i>Flutes</i>	<i>Battery</i>
Irvin Rosen	Murray W. Panitz	Charles E. Owen
Robert de Pasquale	Kenneth E. Scutt	Michael Bookspan
Armand Di Camillo	Kenton F. Terry	Alan Abel
Joseph Lanza	John C. Krell	Manuel Roth
Julia Janson	<i>Piccolo</i>	
Isadore Schwartz	<i>Oboes</i>	<i>Celesta, Piano and Organ</i>
Jerome Wigler	John de Lancie	William Smith
Norman Black	Stevens Hewitt	Marcel Farago
Irving Ludwig	Charles M. Morris	
George Dreyfus	Louis Rosenblatt	<i>Harps</i>
Louis Lanza	<i>English Horn</i>	Marilyn Costello
Stephane Dalschaert	<i>Clarinets</i>	Margarita Csonka
Arnold Grossi	Anthony M. Gigliotti	
Manuel Roth	Donald Montanaro	<i>Librarians</i>
Booker T. Rowe	Raoul Querze	Jesse C. Taynton
Herold Klein	Ronald Reuben	Anthony Ciccarelli
<i>Violas</i>	<i>Bass Clarinet</i>	
Joseph de Pasquale	<i>Bassoons</i>	<i>Personnel Manager</i>
James Fawcett	Bernard Garfield	Mason Jones
Leonard Mogill	John Shamlian	
Gabriel Braverman	Adelchi Louis Angelucci	<i>Stage Personnel</i>
Sidney Curtiss	Robert J. Pfeuffer	Edward Barnes, <i>Manager</i>
Gaetano Molieri	<i>Contra Bassoon</i>	Theodore Hauptle
Leonard Bogdanoff		James Sweeney
Charles Griffin	<i>Horns</i>	
Wolfgang Granat	Mason Jones	<i>Photo Publicity</i>
Irving Segall	Nolan Miller	Adrian Siegel
Donald R. Clauser	Glenn Janson	
Renard Edwards	John Simonelli	<i>Broadcast Recording</i>
<i>Violoncellos</i>	Herbert Pierson	<i>Engineer</i>
Samuel Mayes	Kendall Betts	Albert L. Borkow, Jr.
Winifred Mayes		

The Philadelphia Orchestra has participated in the May Festival annually since 1936, Mr. Ormandy conducting since 1937.