

The Symphony's profound second movement (*Adagio*), with its opening cello theme and bassoon countermelody, and Baroque-style contrapuntal development, deepens the sense of elegy. To MacDonald it "has the character of a meditation in the darkest part of a forest." Again, the trombones intrude with solemn notes of warning before a peaceful close. The mood lightens in the third movement, as the wind instruments spin a leisurely Ländler, an Austrian folk dance. Even in the two quicker trio sections, the atmosphere remains serenely bucolic, without the Bacchanalian images conjured in the corresponding movement of Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony.

In Brahms's swift finale the sun truly shines. As music critic Michael Steinberg describes: "The *sotto voce* [very soft] opening is a variation of the first bars of the whole symphony. Later themes move more broadly... though not with less energy. A touch of gypsy music enlivens the scene..." Yet again, the low brass instruments play a crucial role. First, they introduce a more solemn hymn-like episode. Finally, the trombones change their mood and enter in triumph as "this exuberant movement culminates in a blazing affirmation of D major."

Mark Furth



Seventeen year-old **Andrew Tyson**, tonight's piano soloist as winner of the Chapel Hill Philharmonia's 2004 Concerto Competition, is a junior at Durham Academy. He currently studies with Thomas Otten of the UNC-Chapel Hill Department of Music, and studied previously with Mary Turner and Barbara Davis. Andrew has won concerto competitions and performed with the Raleigh Symphony, the Durham Symphony, and the Guilford Symphony Orchestra at the Eastern Music Festival. He has presented solo recitals at Carolina Meadows and The Forest at Duke. Andrew is a long time member of the Duke University String School, where he has played in a variety of chamber music ensembles.



Chapel Hill Philharmonia Musicians

Violin I	Lisa Cohen	Violoncello	Double Bass	Clarinet	Trumpet
Doris Powers*	Cheryl Harward	Dick Clark*	Jim Baird*	Alex Vogel*	David Marable*
José Bastardes	Lindsay Lambe	Kirsten Brown	Carolyn Taff	Willie Davis	Christopher
Regina Black	Sally Rohrdanz	Karen Daniels	Dan Thune	Steve Furs	Holley
Jordan Delphos	Debby Wechsler	Jim Dietz			Hermann
Barbara Hulka	Viola	Len Gettes	Percussion	Bassoon	Wienchol
Elizabeth	Katherine	Jennifer Lee	Roger Halchin*	Paul Verderber*	
Johnson	Stalberg*	Anne McKinzey		Sally DeJoseph	Trombone
Junko Kondo	Kalman Bland	Bob Metzger	Flute		William Hannah*
Susan Strobel	Jamie Bourque	David Peters	Pat Pukkila*	French Horn	Everette
Violin II	Cynthia Gagne	Read Pukkila-	Marty Parah	Jerry Hulka*	Goldston
Mark Furth*	Ena Sugiyama	Worley	Mary Sturgeon	Reuven	John Morrison
Ruth Baldwin	Pat Tennis	Alice Tien	Oboe	Anafshalom	Sean Timmons
Tom Beale	Peggy Yates	Nancy Wilson	Judy Konanc*	Sandy Svoboda	
		Bill Wright	John Konanc	Adams Wofford	* Section Principal

The Chapel Hill Philharmonia gratefully acknowledges donations from

Dr. Richard Clark	Bill & Lindsay Lambe	Alex Vogel	Carolina Meadows
Craig & Vivian Crouse	Patricia Pukkila	Nancy Wilson	Residents Association
Elizabeth Fox	Susan Strobel	Leon & Peggy Yates	Orange County, NC
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Chapel Hill Philharmonia

Hill Hall Auditorium

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

May 6, 2004

Donald L. Oehler, Conductor

Richard Wagner (1813 - 1883)

Lohengrin: Prelude to Act III

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 - 1827)

Concerto No. 3 in C minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 37

1. Allegro con brio

Andrew Tyson, piano

Chapel Hill Philharmonia 2004 Concerto Competition Award

Intermission

Johannes Brahms (1833 - 1897)

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73

1. Allegro non troppo

2. Adagio non troppo

3. Allegretto grazioso (quasi andante) — Presto ma non assai — Tempo I — Presto ma non assai — Tempo I

4. Allegro con spirito

Ludwig van Beethoven, Richard Wagner, and Johannes Brahms stand out among the influential composers of the nineteenth century. They span the Romantic Age — Beethoven the revolutionary whose expressive power stretched the limits of Classicism; Wagner the self-proclaimed creator of *Gesamtkunstwerk* (“total Artwork”) who formulated a new harmonic language; Brahms the self-deprecating upholder of musical tradition who synthesized a new esthetic with the forms of the past.



Lohengrin

Wagner stood as a Colossus in his ego, his ambition, and his impact on Western culture. A self-taught composer and conductor, his fascination with drama drew him to opera. His first successes, *Rienzi* and *Der Fliegende Holländer*, led to a post as Kapellmeister to the court of Saxony, which he held for for six years. In 1848 Wagner wrote *Lohengrin*, the last of his conventional operatic works. In that tumultuous year he also joined a republican movement and in May of 1849 barely escaped arrest after supporting a failed anarchist uprising. Wagner spent the next dozen years in exile. During this time he published a collection of polemics on art and society, some of which are shameful precursors to Nazi doctrine. He also began to realize his dream of a unified form of music drama, exemplified by *Tristan und Isolde* and *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. In his absence *Lohengrin* was first produced in 1850 under the baton of Franz Liszt — Wagner’s closest ally in propounding the visionary “Music of the Future,” and father of Cosima, who eventually became Wagner’s mistress and wife.

The story of *Lohengrin* derives from medieval “Swan Knight” legends. The evil Telramund accuses Elsa, daughter of the Duke of Brabant (a region around Antwerp), of murdering her brother Gottfried, heir to their late father. When no local nobleman will defend Elsa’s honor in a trial of arms, she dreams of a proverbial knight in shining armor. One (Lohengrin) appears, guided by a white swan. He promises to defeat Elsa’s accuser and to marry her, but on condition that she never ask his name or origin. Lohengrin prevails in combat, and he and Elsa prepare to wed. **The Prelude to Act III of *Lohengrin*** sets the stage for the celebration and leads into the opera’s famous Wedding March and Bridal Chorus. However, doubts cunningly sown by Telramund’s pagan wife Ortrud lead Elsa to pose to Lohengrin the forbidden question of his identity. Revealing himself as a Knight of the Holy Grail, Lohengrin declares that he must now depart. Ortrud confesses to having bewitched Gottfried into the swan. Lohengrin’s prayer reverses the spell and Elsa is reunited with her brother, but falls brokenhearted as her knight sails away.

Beethoven, the abused son of an alcoholic minor court musician, has been described as an “ugly, uncouth little man.” He depended for many years on the titled families of Vienna for his living, while frequently berating them, and was an impudent pupil to the master Joseph Haydn. Beethoven lived in perpetual squalor, terrorized landladies, alienated his closest relatives, and failed in his long quest for a perfect love. He existed to compose music, even after losing the ability to hear it. We still hold this flawed, sometimes tortured individual in awe for his creative fire, revolutionary idealism, and transcendent spirit.

The **Concerto No. 3 in C minor for Piano and Orchestra**, written mainly in 1800 and first performed in 1803, helps mark the transition from Beethoven’s Early period, similar in style to Haydn and Wolfgang Amadé Mozart, to the ‘heroic’ Middle period. The work’s premier came less than a year after a psychological crisis — Beethoven withdrew from society because of his worsening deafness. He conquered despair and wrote the ‘Heiligenstadt Testament,’ addressed to his brothers, begging for their understanding and declaring that only dedication to his Art had stayed him from suicide. The unsent document remained among Beethoven’s papers for the remainder of his life.

Beethoven first achieved wide recognition as a keyboard virtuoso, most notably for his emotionally charged improvisations,



Beethoven in 1803

described thus by a witness: “His playing tore along like a wildly foaming cataract... anon he sank down, exhausted, exhaling gentle plaints, dissolving into melancholy.” The Third Piano Concerto (among five) follows the established Classical model, but explores new boundaries in scale and intensity. The first movement opens with a quiet, ominous motif in the strings, echoed by the winds, followed by a more passionate, yearning phrase. This tense drama gives way to a lyrical second subject. The first motif returns, now *fortissimo*, and sets up the piano’s dramatic entrance of three ascending C-minor scales and its own statement of the exposition. The development explores a series of subtle tonal modulations, culminating in a brilliant cadenza written by the composer. The orchestra’s reentry, unexpectedly, is hushed and mysterious, and the timpani finally restates the rhythmic ‘fate’ motif that punctuates the entire movement.

Brahms would have been an apt subject of a famous quotation from Winston Churchill — “It is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.” The composer showed a compulsion for privacy. He habitually destroyed sketches and manuscripts of completed works, along with volumes of correspondence. He fell in love repeatedly but resisted marriage. He wrote works infused with personal meaning but disguised hints of programmatic intent. In middle age he hid his finely chiseled features under a grizzled full beard. He was “*Frei aber froh*” (“Free but happy”). Happy, that is, despite self-enforced isolation, as expressed in a letter to a close friend, the surgeon Theodor Billroth: “For a long time, and for all time, I have been a somewhat lonely individual and still am!”

Even a dime-store psychiatrist can discern roots to Brahms’s insecurities. A child of Hamburg’s slums, he spent formative years earning his keep as a pianist “in waterfront brothels where the women and sailors treated him as a plaything” (Jan Swafford). Then, barely out of his teens, he was publicly declared “a genius,” as Robert Schumann (with whose wife, Clara, Brahms fell in love) grandly predicted that Brahms “would not show us his mastery in a gradual development, but like Minerva spring full-armed from the head of Zeus.” The conductor Hans van Bülow further raised the ante by anointing Brahms the ‘Third B,’ after Bach and Beethoven. To this perceptive, deep student of musical history, the pressure was extraordinary. Whereas Wagner hungered for such recognition, Brahms mournfully complained “You have no idea how it feels to hear behind you the tramp of a giant like Beethoven.” Not surprisingly, Brahms failed to complete his First Symphony until age forty-three. That work, conceived over more than a decade of struggle, pays conscious homage to his predecessor. The great melody of its final movement forcibly calls to mind the “Ode to Joy” of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony. To people who pointed out this similarity, Brahms impatiently retorted “Any ass can hear that.”

Psychologically liberated, Brahms completed the **Symphony No. 2 in D major** within less than a year. Composed at the lovely resort of Pörschach am Wörthersee in the summer of 1877, the work is called by some the “Pastoral” (after Beethoven’s Sixth Symphony) for its sunny character. Brahms teased friends in advance of the symphony’s premier, warning them of its “dirge-like effect,” and stating that the musicians would wear funereal crepe armbands. To the conservative critic Eduard Hanslick, one of his supporters and a harsh detractor of Wagner, Brahms presented a diametrically opposite view — “a symphony that sounds so cheerful and delightful you will think I wrote it for you, or rather for your young wife.” While this is a more accurate portrayal, the Second Symphony spans a broad emotional range. Focusing exclusively on its lyricism will cause one to overlook its dark undercurrents.

The work opens with a three note motif, D - C sharp - D, played by the cellos and basses, a simple pattern that serves as a germ for the entire piece. The horns introduce a melody that fits a Romantic evocation of nature’s beauty. However, “the expansive first subject is... interrupted by a mysterious timpani roll and a figure of three solemn chords from trombones and tuba” (Calum MacDonald). More melodies flow freely, including one reminiscent of Brahms’s famous lullaby, but the ominous sound of trombones and unexpected dissonances again darken the mood. Brahms is not here depicting a natural thunderstorm, as in Beethoven’s “Pastoral.” Rather, these are his inner clouds: “I am, by the by, a severely melancholic person; black wings are constantly flapping above us...”



Brahms, bearded