UGA Symphony Orchestra and Choral Ensembles

Tuesday, April 17, 2018 • 8:00 p.m.

University of Georgia Symphony Orchestra
conductor Mark Cedel
assistant conductor Jean Gomez

UGA Hodgson Singers
conductor Daniel Bara
assistant conductor Lee Wright

University Chorus
conductor J.D. Burnett
assistant conductor Christopher Mason

UGA Men’s Glee Club
conductor J.D. Burnett
assistant conductor Justin Bowen

UGA Women’s Glee Club
conductor Lee Wright
assistant conductor Marshall Williams

with
mezzo-soprano Magdalena Wór

Program

Johannes Brahms Alto Rhapsody, Opus 53
Magdalena Wór, mezzo-soprano

Brahms Nänie. Opus 82

INTERMISSION

Brahms Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Opus 73
Allegro non troppo
Adagio non troppo
Allegretto grazioso (quasi Andantino)
Allegro con spirito
Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)
Alto Rhapsody, Opus 53

The Alto Rhapsody was composed in the autumn of 1869; the first performance took place in Jena on March 3, 1870. The score calls for a solo alto voice, men’s chorus, and orchestra consisting of pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and horns, plus strings. Duration is about 14 minutes.

On May 11, 1869, Clara Schumann had happy news to share with her good friend Brahms when he visited her in Baden-Baden: her daughter 24-year-old daughter Julie had just become engaged. Brahms choked out a few words and, to Clara’s surprise, promptly disappeared. Perhaps only now did she understand some of the composer’s behavior during the previous half-dozen years.

Julie was described as an ethereal beauty, and Brahms had evidently found her captivating as early as 1861, when he dedicated to her his Opus 23 Schumann Variations, on a theme composed by her father. At the time Clara evidently regarded it simply as homage to her family, because Robert, before his death, had been the young Brahms’s best friend and strongest proponent. Julie was a beautiful but frail angel, who often suffered from illness. Brahms evidently felt a deep and growing affection for her, but his reaction was complicated by the fact that his role in helping to care for the family after Robert’s death made him a kind of surrogate father to Julie, and his warm friendship with Clara—twenty years older than he—made her a cross between a mother figure and a fantasy lover. Combined with these emotional complexities was the fact that Brahms’s early experiences playing the piano in the brothels of Hamburg led him to view the sexual side of human relations as something essential.

Out of his sadness at realizing he had lost her, Brahms found words that perfectly expressed his emotional condition and set them to music in one of his most moving scores. He presented the work as an expression of his own struggle with loneliness. A week after Julie’s wedding on September 22, 1869, Brahms visited Clara and played for her the work he called his “bridal song.” Clara’s response (in her journal): “It is long since I remember being so moved by a depth of pain in words and music.”

The text that Brahms chose for what became one of the most personal expressions of his life comprises the central part of a difficult poem of Goethe’s, Harzreise im Winter ("Winter Journey Through the Harz Mountains"). Of the poem’s 88 lines, Brahms set only about one quarter of the whole. Goethe’s poem was written after a 1777 visit to the Harz Mountains, where he met a correspondent of his, a misanthropic young fellow named Plessing, who had withdrawn to the Harz Mountains, where he met a correspondent of his, a misanthropic young fellow named Plessing, who had withdrawn from the world into the solitude of nature.

Goethe’s poem describes one who goes “off apart,” praying that the Father of Love may have on his Psalter “a single tone perceptible to his ear,” which might “revive his heart.” Surely Brahms offered that prayer for himself. Goethe’s poem spoke to him with unusual directness, and he responded to it with shattering, personal music.

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The orchestral introduction shivers in its chilly C-minor depiction of the winter scene, interrupted by the alto soloist—entering suddenly as if overheard in the middle of a thought—who notices the solitary wanderer. A central section, actually an aria, describes the one who, having been scorned, now scorns all in return. The harmonic and rhythmic agitation of this section yields magically at the entrance of the men’s voices and a turn to a consoling C major and a warmly ardent melody praying for the reconciliation of the wanderer.

Aber abseits, wer ist’s?
Ins Gebüsch verliert sich sein Pfad,
Hinter ihm schlagen
Die Sträuche zusammen,
Das Gras steht wieder auf,
Die Ode verschlingt ihn.

Ach, wer heilt die Schmerzen
Des, dem Balsam zu Gift ward?
Der sich Menschenhass
Aus der Fülle der Liebe trank?
Erst verachtet, nun ein Verächtter,
Zehrt er heimlich auf
Seinen eignen Wert
In ung’nügender Selbstsucht.

Ist auf deinem Psalter,
Vater der Liebe, ein Ton
Seinem Ohre vernehmlich,
So erquicke sein Herz!
Öffne den umwölkten Blick
Über die tausend Quellen
Neben dem Durstenden
In der Wüste.

– Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832)
– English translation by S.L.
Brahms
Nänie, Opus 82

Nänie was composed in 1881, and the first performance took place in Zurich on December 6 that year. The score calls for four-part mixed chorus and an orchestra consisting of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and horns in pairs, three trombones, timpani, harp and strings. Duration is about 14 minutes.

Nänie (the Greek word “nenia,” or “song of lamentation”), Op. 82, is one of the least known of Brahms’s major works, and one of the most excessively beautiful in its balance and repose. Schiller’s classicizing poem, a lament that “Even Beauty must die,” was an obvious choice of text for a piece to memorialize the composer’s friend, the painter Anselm Feuerbach.

Brahms may have first encountered the poem in a setting by Hermann Goetz, which happened to have been performed in Vienna in February 1880, within a month of Feuerbach’s death. He did not choose the text immediately, however. In July 1880 he wrote his friend Elisabet von Herzogenberg, assuring her that he was “quite willing to write motets or anything else for chorus (I am heartily sick of everything else!)” — but the problem was finding a text that could inspire his musical imagination. “They are not heathenish poems, especially as a memorial to Feuerbach, whose favorite subjects were drawn from classical mythology.

In any case, Brahms completed his setting in the summer of 1881. It is one of his most exquisite creations, yet is performed surprisingly rarely. A musical setting of a text that laments the transitoriness of all things, life, love, beauty, and heroic glory might have turned out profoundly gloomy — but it is not. Brahms makes it serene and accepting, quite in the spirit of Schiller’s poem and the gentle fatalism of Greek antiquity.

Schiller’s poem is cast in Greek hexameters—long lines that Brahms found it a challenge to set, but they inspired him to create a long-breathed flowing melody in 6/4 first heard in the oboe, then forming the basis of a gentle canon in the voices — soaring, hovering, and intertwining from part to part. The text is filled with mythological references that few will immediately recognize today (hence the footnotes added here), but Brahms either understood them or received an explanation before he set the poem to music. At the mention of Achilles’ mother Thetis rising from the sea to lament the death of her son, the music moves to a bright and serene D major and the opening material. Brahms chooses to pass rather quickly over Schiller’s description of Thetis’ liver torn out by a boar which the boar savagely ripped in his delicate mouth — translated as “the mouth of the beloved is splendid.”

“To be even a song of lamentation in the mouth of the beloved is splendid.”

Nänie
Auch das Schöne muss sterben! Das Menschen und Götter bezwinget,
Nicht die eterne Brust rührt es des stygischen Zeus.

Einmal nur erweichte die Liebe den Schattenheersersch,
Und an der Schwelle noch, streng, rief er zurück sein Geschenk.

Nicht stillt Aphrodite dem schönen Knaben die Wunde,
Die in zierlichen Leib grausam der Eber geritzt.

Nicht ertet den göttlichen Held die unsterbliche Mutter,
Wenn er, am skäischen Tor fallend, sein Schicksal erfüllt.

Aber sie steigt aus dem Meer mit allen Töchtern des Nereus,
Und die Klage hebt an um den verherrlichten Sohn.
Siehe, da weinen die Götter, es weinen die Göttinnen alle,
Dass das Schöne vergeht, dass das Vollkommen sterbt.

Auch ein Klaglied zu sein im Mund der Geliebten ist herrlich,
Denn das Gemeine geht klanglos zum Orkus unsang.

— Friedrich Schiller

Nenia
Even Beauty must die; that which overcomes men and gods
Does not touch the iron breast of the Stygian Zeus.

Only once did love soften the ruler of shadows,
And then, at the very threshold, he sternly called back his gift.

Aphrodite could not staunch the wound of the beautiful youth
which the boar savagely ripped in his delicate body.

Nor could the immortal mother save the godlike hero,
when he, falling at the Scaean gate, fulfilled his destiny.

But she ascends from the sea with all the daughters of Nereus,
and raises the lament for her glorified son.

Behold, the gods weep, and all the goddesses, too,
that Beauty must pass away, that the Perfect must die.

To be even a song of lamentation in the mouth of the beloved is splendid,
for the Common goes down to Orcus unsung.

— translation by Steven Ledbetter

1 Hades, the ruler of the Underworld, beyond the River Styx.
2 Orpheus was allowed to leave the Underworld with his beloved wife Eurydice, but when he looked back at her once before reaching the surface, he lost her again forever.
3 Adonis, loved by Aphrodite, found his death in a boar hunt.
4 Achilles, son of the sea nymph Thetis, who died at the hands of Paris before the gates of Troy.
5 The father of Thetis and the other sea nymphs.
6 The Latin name for the kingdom of the dead, and its ruler.
Brahms

Symphony No. 2 in D, Opus 73

The Symphony No. 2 was composed in 1877, during a productive summer stay at Pörtschach, Carinthia (southern Austria); the first performance took place under the direction of Hans Richter in Vienna on December 30, 1877. The symphony is scored for two each of flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, and strings. Duration is about 42 minutes.

It is a well-known fact that Brahms put off allowing a symphony to be brought to performance until his forty-third year, so aware was he of the giant shadow of Beethoven. But once he had broken the ice, he did not hesitate to try again. His First Symphony was completed in 1876; the Second came just the following year, when Brahms spent the first of three happy and musically productive summers at Lake Wörth, near Pörtschach in the southern Austrian province of Carinthia. Between 1877 and 1879 he composed a major work each summer—the Second Symphony, the Violin Concerto, and the G major Violin Sonata. Richter’s performance of the symphony in Vienna was an enormous success, and it received similar acclaim in Leipzig two weeks later. (To be sure, Vienna and Leipzig were the centers of the Brahms cult, with critic Eduard Hanslick in the former and Clara Schumann in the latter.)

Elsewhere the notices were more varied. The criticism most frequently encountered was that Brahms’s music was too intellectual, too calculated, had too little emotional quality. In the 1880s a Boston critic, W. F. Apthorp, wrote that it would take “a year of severe intellectual work” to “really fathom the Second Symphony,” and he wondered whether the effort was worth it. Today the reaction is just the opposite; most listeners regard Brahms’s Second as the most spontaneous, the most sheerly sensuous, a work that pulses with the sounds of nature. Or, as the title of a recent book about the Second by Harvard musicologist Reinhold Brinkmann puts it, the work is Brahms’s “late idyll.”

It feels much more relaxed than the tense, driven First Symphony.

Nonetheless, the Second is, if anything, even more finely precision-ground than before; the parts fit as in a superbly made Swiss watch. Everything in the first movement grows out of some aspect of its opening phrase and its three component parts: a three-note “motto” in cellos and basses, the arpeggiation horn call, and a rising scale figure in the woodwinds. One of the loveliest moments in the first movement occurs at the arrival of the second theme in violas and cellos, a melting waltz tune that is first cousin to Brahms’s famous Lullaby.

The second movement, a rather dark reaction to the sunshine of the first, begins with a stepwise melody rising in the bassoons against a similar melody descending in the cellos, the two ideas mirroring each other. Rising and falling in slow, graceful shapes, each grows organically into rich and sinuous patterns.

Beethoven would have written a scherzo for his third movement. Brahms avoids direct comparison by writing a lyrical intermezzo, though shaped like a scherzo with two trios. A serenading 3/4 melody rising in the bassoons against a similar melody descending in the cellos, the two ideas mirroring each other. Rising and falling in slow, graceful shapes, each grows organically into rich and sinuous patterns.

The final Allegro is a close knit as the first movement and is based on thematic ideas that can ultimately be traced back to the very beginning of the symphony, including the motto figure. Here Brahms’s lavish invention makes familiar ideas sound fresh in new relationships. The great miracle of the Second Symphony is that it sounds so easy and immediate, yet turns out to be so elaborately shaped, richly repaying the most concentrated study, yet offering immediate delight to the casual listener.

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University of Georgia Symphony Orchestra

conductor **Mark Cedel**
assistant conductor **Jean Gómez**

**VIOLIN I**
Anastasia Petrunina, Concertmaster
Alexandra Ambaramsian
Teresa Grynia
Yeasol Kang
Serena Sibelli
Caroline Dorr
Shahada Buckley
Lourenço De Nardin Budo
Sarah Ewing
Nicole Valerioti
Audrey Butler
Monica Cortiss

**VIOLIN II**
JP Brien-Slack, Principal
Vivian Cheng
RJ Gary
Catherine Cook
Gabriella Davis
Kelle Shaw
Meghan O’Keefe
Erin Lollar
Jan Chen
Olivia Curtis
Jan Jones
Sam Ferguson
Jasmine Lau

**VIOLA**
Nicholas Lindell, Principal
Kuan Huah Chen
Wesley Hamilton
Claudia Malchow
Elitsa Atanasova
Ava Cosman
Joy Hihek
Seonkyu Kim
Sarah Akin
Will Ruff
Tre Golden
Adia Dukes

**CELLO**
Adriana Ceia, Principal
Valentina Ighija
Elizabeth Klingbeil
Michael Marra
Jasmine Rhee
Jamie Mancuso
Jordan Richey
Natalie Bow
Abigail Jones

**BASS**
Leonard Ligon, Principal
Mattia Beccari
Nahee Song
Claudia Amaral
Quentin Smith
James West

**FLUTE**
Lindy Thompson, Principal
Hannah Peterson

**OBOE**
Remy Kepler, Principal
Nic Kirip
Felisha Jones

**TROMBONE**
Andrew Taylor, Principal
Luke Anders
Kyle Moore
Nic Keltchew

**VIOLA**
Nicholas Lindell, Principal
Kuan Huah Chen
Wesley Hamilton
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Kyle Moore
Nic Keltchew

University Chorus

conductor **J.D. Burnett**
assistant conductor **Christopher Mason**

**SOPRANO**
Alissa Berkowski
Natalie Bowen
Jackie Broadwell
Helen Hill
Megan Kleinert
Diana Ricketts
Sarah Simmons
Amber Tejeda
Ching Yang

**ALTO**
Carla Cao
Ashley Gable
Amanda Gillis
Prisneel Goorah
Mary Humeble
Mary Hutchinson
Alex Kelsen
Lauren McGhee
Jaimie Pannites
Charlotte Riemsma
Amy Savelle
Olivia Soehner

**TENOR**
Nicholas Clemm
Richard Gary
Chun-Ju Lai
Christopher Mason
Andrew Miller

**SOPRANO 1**
Kelsie Kruskol
Katie Kuntsevich
Vanessa Lewis
Jenny Mai
Caterina Villari
Susan Vinler

**ALTO 2**
Carol Corina
Rebecca Emerson
Marjanne Goozé
Taylor Grant
Kaya Hanner
Victoria Hiten
Ellie McQuaig
Kathryn Miller
Karen Redwine
Kate Sabey
Hannah Stephen
Sandie Woods

**TENOR 2**
Richard Littlefield
Grayson Fynn

**BASS 1**
Jorge Lopez
Alexander Miller
Jackson Mitchell
Joseph Mullen
Alexandre Tchaykov
Marshall Williams

**BASS 2**
Frank Block Jr.
Justin Bowen
Gustavo Cervantes
Richard Hill
David Maulding
William Schatzman
Vern Sumner
Garrick Widdowson

UGA Symphony Orchestra and Choral Ensembles

UGA Hodgson Singers

conductor **Daniel Bara**
John D. Boyd UGA Foundation Professor of Choral Music

assistant conductor **Lee Wright**
pianist **Elena Lyalina**

**SOPRANO**
Seyda Arjomand
Taryn Ballard
Allison Collier
Lauren Dempsey
Victoria Brahma
Kailyn Gilmore
Campbell Harden-Allen
Abigail Jones
Liana Mosley
Lakin Morris
Jordan Richey
Emma Robertson
Deborah Stephens

**ALTO**
Samantha Barnes
Kathryn Buchanan
Emily Carey
Naomi Goldstein
Keyra Grant
Holly Huggins
Tori Langham
Sidney Mulkey
Myah Padjen
Amanda Rockenbach
Shreya Viswanathan

**TENOR**
Grant Allen
Nikolos Bacoite
Nick Byrd
Huston Collings
Antonio Del Sesto
Eric Dowler
Thomas Folger
Chase Law
Christopher Mason
Mitchell Powers
Austin Shively

**BASS**
Henry Adams
Justin Bowen
Eric Jasso
David Johnson
Jake Mappes
Sebastian Nazaire
Harrison Stenson
Nathan Trivers
Marshall Williams
Lee Wright

**SOPRANO 1**
Alissa Berkowski
Natalie Bowen
Jackie Broadwell
Helen Hill
Megan Kleinert
Diana Ricketts
Sarah Simmons
Amber Tejeda
Ching Yang

**ALTO 1**
Carla Cao
Ashley Gable
Amanda Gillis
Prisneel Goorah
Mary Humeble
Mary Hutchinson
Alex Kelsen
Lauren McGhee
Jaimie Pannites
Charlotte Riemsma
Amy Savelle
Olivia Soehner

**TENOR 1**
Nicholas Clemm
Richard Gary
Chun-Ju Lai
Christopher Mason
Andrew Miller

**SOPRANO 2**
Alexa Bialow
Keiley Barber
Andrea Clements
Elizabeth Dempsey
Rebecca Dorrill
Emily Germany
Rachel Jones
Beata Kochut

**ALTO 2**
Carol Corina
Rebecca Emerson
Marjanne Goozé
Taylor Grant
Kaya Hanner
Victoria Hiten
Ellie McQuaig
Kathryn Miller
Karen Redwine
Kate Sabey
Hannah Stephen
Sandie Woods

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Richard Hill
David Maulding
William Schatzman
Vern Sumner
Garrick Widdowson
UGA Women’s Glee Club

conductor Lee Wright
assistant conductor Marshall Williams

SOPRANO
Janine Albrecht
Jennifer Aplin
Ashlyn Baerwalde
Chelsea Brown
Jenniville Burton
Marion Cassim
Bella Castano
Abigail Childers
Maggie Christine
Brittany Clarke
Sarah Corbin
Lauren Covington
Kenzie Day
Sarah Deal
Isabel Flanagan
Rachel Gadda
Sophia Gao
Julia Garner
Madison Hagen
Amelia Johnson

Sky Kim
Camille Lascala
Karyn Lewis
Allison Lindsey
Michal Mach
Gwen McMillan
Jess Monacelli
Emma O’Neal
Caroline Poole
Faith Powell
Rebekah Rexford
Sarah Schultz
Claire Sims
Katie Schumacher
Kennedy Smith
Sydney Swinson
Mallory Upton
Cecelia Venditto
Sydney Wakeford
Maddison Wilkes

ALTO
Isabel Arenas
Cora Bauman
Brittany Borzillo
Jessi Bowling
Catie Cawley
Madeline Danser
Lizzie Digiovanni
Sarah Dillon
Catalina Duling
Donna Ganjue
Laura Beth Garrett
Grace Gerely
Felicity Guy
Sarah Gayle Hammond
Bri Hawkins
Jamie Jimenez
Kaitlyn Jones
Erika Klar
Virginia Kuester
Chloe Lee

UGA Men’s Glee Club

conductor J.D. Burnett
assistant conductor Justin Bowen

TENOR 1
Kyle Ag-imouhuede
Ethan Craft
Tom Littlejohn
Will McCarthy
Austin Shively
Jacob Smith
Braden Taylor

Caleb Anderson
Ricardo Chavez
Jacob Duke
Cold Dziedzic
Thomas Folger
Kaden James
Chase Law
Stevie Popovich
Christian Poppell
Josh Stewart

TENOR 2
Caleb Anderson
Ricardo Chavez
Jacob Duke
Cold Dziedzic
Thomas Folger
Kaden James
Chase Law
Stevie Popovich
Christian Poppell
Josh Stewart

BASS 1
Wallace Arnold
Marc Biemiller
Nick Byrd
Row Jeries
Dylan Kilgore
Nick Loudermilk
Kaito Nagashima
Sebastien Nazaire
Hal Richards
Marshall Williams

BASS 2
Justin Bowen
Tom Connerly
Blake Davis
Presley Flynt
Keshav Kalathoor
Sam Kim
David Maulding
Kelton McConnell
Nick Turner
Overton Wright

Alexandra Mprofu
Madilyn Patterson
Georgette Roty
Alison Schultz
Kate Templeton
Marta Torres
Anna Wakeman
Julia Warren
Leslie Wastendorf
Ashley Waterfill
Martha Wier
Sarah Willoughby