MAHLER
SUNDAY, JUNE 8, 2008 – 7:00 PM
FIRST FREE METHODIST CHURCH
ORCHESTRA SEATTLE and the SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS
George Shangraw, conductor
ZUGERLEIDER, Opus 103 (Gypsy Songs) – JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)
1. He, Zigeuner, Greise in Die Seiten
2. Hochgetrunken Rimauf
3. Wiss Ihr Wahn Mein Kindchen
4. Lieber Gott, Du Westen
5. Brauner Bursche Fuhrte Zum Tanze
6. Roslein Dreien in Der Reihe
7. Kommt Dir Machmal in Den Sinn
8. Horch, Der Wind Klagt In Den Zweigen
9. Welt Und Breit Schaut Niemand
10. Mond Verhult Sein Angesicht
11. Rote Abendwolken Ziehn

Stephen Wall, tenor; Janene Houston, soprano
Mark Salmon, piano

PSALM 100
ROBERT KECHLEY (born 1952)

Clint Kraus, organ

INTERMISSION

SYMPHONY NO. 4 IN G MAJOR, (Revision of 1806)
GUSTAV MAHLER (1860-1911)
I. Bedächtigung. Nicht ellen
II. In gemächlicher Bewegung. Ohne Hast
III. Ruherov
IV. Sehr behaglich

Janene Houston, soprano

Please disconnect signal watches, pagers and cellular telephones. Thank you.
Use of cameras and recording equipment is not permitted in the concert hall.
Order your copy of a CD or DVD of today's performance in the lobby during intermission or after the concert.

Check the website, www.osscss.org, for updates on when OSSCS performance will appear on cable television and when they are available for streaming or download on the internet.
SOLOISTS
American soprano JANINE HUANG is a versatile performer, and one of the Northwest region’s busiest artists. Her extensive repertoire spans the Baroque era to the present. She has worked under the batons of many fine conductors including Gerard Schwarz, James DePreist, Sidney Watson, Dean Watson, George Shangrow, Richard Sparks, Christophe Chagnard, and Miguel Harth-Bedoya. Concert works that she has performed many times include Cantina Bandito, Mozart’s Requiem, and Mozart, and Mozart’s Mass in C Minor. Also at home on the opera stage, she has sung the roles of Konstanze in Die Entführung aus dem Serail, Susanna in Le Nozze di Figaro, Violante in La Cenerentola, and Despina in Così fan tutte. She has recorded many of North Carolina composer Dan Locklair’s songs and vocal works, and in the fall of 2006 she recorded a work titled Lais of Soundings with the Slovak Radio Orchestra under Karel Tavora for the Naxos label. A recording of world premieres by living composers titled The Shining Plane was also released in 2006, and scheduled for 2008 is a Zimbalist recital titled Songs of the Cotton Grass featuring music of Welsh composer Hilary Tarr. Ms. Huang gave the East Coast premiere of that cycle on a New York State recital tour last October. Also in October, she soloed in the premiere of Judith Lang Zaimont’s Remembrance with Portland Symphony Chorale. This past April she sang in a multi-organization production of Poulenc’s “Gloria” in Sennett Hall, with the participating Portland Eichenberger conducting. Other recordings include So Great a Joy (2001), Living Mysteries (2002), The Chamber Music of Dan Locklair (Albany 2004), and So Much Beauty (2005), the latter releases has called her singing “radiant-voiced and Gramophone, “unfailingly responsive and dedicated.” The Journal of Singing reports a “flawless voice, a voice of the style of. Upcoming performances this year include the role of the Contessa Almaviva in Le Nozze di Figaro with Helena Symphony, Brahms’ A German Requiem with Bronson Symphony, and a return engagement to the Messiah Festival of Music and Art in Kansas. The managing and founding member of Northwest Artists and the recording label Einbromge Productions; she has been a member of the voice faculty at Pacific Lutheran University since 1989

Tenor STEPHEN WALL has appeared frequently with Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers since 1985. He has been featured in leading and supporting roles with Seattle Opera, Portland Opera, Utah Festival Opera, and Tacoma Opera, and has solaced with the symphonies of Seattle, Vancouver, Spokane, Everett, Bellevue, Yakima, Pendleton, Great Falls and Sapporo (Japan). Mr. Wall appears on the OSSCS recording of Handel’s Messiah and song the role of Joe in Seattle Opera’s heralded production of La Fanciulla del West.

CLINT KRAUS is Cathedral Associate Organist and Director of the Youth Music Program at St. James Cathedral. He holds degrees in organ performance from Oklahoma State University and the Eastman School of Music, and is a candidate for the Doctor of Music degree from the University of Washington. He has received prizes in several national and international competitions in California, Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Washington D.C. and has performed for the American Guild of Organists. His two CD recordings Notb! Notb! Notb! and Receive the Song are both available in the St. James Cathedral bookstore.

MARK SALMAN achieved a musical milestone during the 1990-91 concert season when he performed the cycle of 32 Beethoven piano sonatas in a series of eight recitals in New York City. At the age of 28, he became one of the youngest artists to join the ranks of the handful of master pianists who have played the complete cycle. His first CD, featuring the music of Beethoven, Alkan, and Liszt was released in the spring of 1994 on Titanic Records. Mr. Salman has been described as “a brilliant musical mind” and “a born public performer” by David Dubal, author of “The Art of the Piano” and “Evenings with Horowitz.” One of the few pianists of his generation to avoid competitions, he has opted instead to concentrate on his development as a pianist and musician. He is presenting a series of recitals each year which encompass rarely heard masterpieces as well as the staples of the repertoire. Mr. Salman is a native of Connecticut, where he began his studies in the age of eight. Since making his recital debut at eleven, he has been a frequent performer as a recitalist, chamber musician and soloist with orchestras throughout the United States. He has performed in Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall in New York City as well as on WQXR and Classic KQFM radio, and has been the subject of profiles in the New York Times and Kick magazine. In October 1989 he was presented in his New York debut recital at Carnegie’s Weill Recital Hall, which included the New York premieres of three Lizzi works. A graduate of the Juilliard School, he studied with Richard Faber and Joseph Raife, and also counts David Dubal as a significant influence. He previously attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for two years, where he concentrated on chamber music, music composition, studying with the noted composer, John Harbison. Mark relocated to Seattle in the summer of 1994. He performed the Beethoven Sonata Cycle at Shorecrest Performing Arts Center in 1996-97 under the
an impetuous burst of youthful energy, or does the sudden injection of the minor mode carry with it darker implications?

That the material is a quotation from the beginning of the Symphony suggests that in fact it may have been harking back to previous struggles. Nor is the text of the poem entirely comforting, despite the abundance of heavenly food. The first outburst occurs as the child watches John and Herod slaughter a "dear little lamb" to the swooning of low horns, a traumatic vision for a child that inevitably evokes the Crucifixion. The reference to Saint Ursula and her eleven thousand attendant maidens additionally brings to mind the fabled gruesome martyrdom of these young women.

After the images of slaughter, the description of the heavenly garden begins to regain its previous contentment.

ORCHESTRA SEATTLE

JOHN Lembke

VIOIN

Sue Henning

Katherine McWilliams*

CELLO

La Verne Chen

Zon Eastes

Peter Ellis

Patricia Lyon

Jennie Roberts

Valerie Ross

Karen Thomson

Matthew Wylan*

STRING BASS

Jo Hansen*

Ericka Kendal

Kevin McCarthy

FLUTE/PICCOLO

Jenna Califio

Virginia Knight

Shari Müller-Ho*

Melissa Underhill

SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS

ALTOS

Aron Agnew

Julia Akouy-Thiel

Carolyn Avery

Jane Blackwell

Brooke Cassell

Ann Erickson

Courtney Juhi

Ellen Kalse

Lorette Knowles

Leslie Leitz

Laurie Medd

Annie Thompson

Johannes de Lâmmlein auslietet,
Der Metzer Herodes drauf passet,
Wir führten ein göttliches, unschuldig's, geduldig's,
Ein lachendes Lamm so Tod!
Sankt Lukas, der Ochor hat schlichten
Oh, eng' andenken und Achten,
Der Weis' kost' kein Heller
Im himmlischen Keller,
Die Engel, die backen das Brot.

Gut Krüster von allerhand Arten,
Die wachsen im himmlischen Garten,
Gut Spargel, Flocken
Und was wir nur wollen!
Ganz Schüsseln voll sind uns bereit!
Gut Apfel, gut Birn und gut Trauben,
Die Gärten, die alles ernten.

Willst Rehbock, willst Hasen,
Auf offenen Straßen
Sie laufen herbei!
Soll' ein Festtag etwa kommen,
Alle Fische gleich mit Freuden angeschwommen!

Dort blüht schon Sankt Peter
Mit Netz und mit Köder
Zum himmlischen Weiherr heine,
Sankt Martha die Köchin muß sein.

Kein Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden.
Die unserer verglichen werden,
Elflauchende Jungfrauen
Zu tanzen sich trauen!
Sankt Ursula selbst dazu lacht!
Kein Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,
Die unserer verglichen werden.

Biclöhe mit ihren Verwandten,
Sind treffliche Hofmusikanten.

Die englischem Stimmen
Ermündern die Sinnen,
Daß alles für Freuden erwacht.

PROGRAM NOTES

Johannes Brahms

(Born in Hamburg, May 7, 1833; died in Vienna, April 3, 1897)

Zigeunerlieder (Gypsy Songs), Op. 103

Brahms originally composed this cycle of eleven songs for a quartet of solo voices with piano accompaniment; they were published in October 1888 as Zigeunerlieder fur vier Stimmen (Sopran, Alt, Tenor and Bass) with Beilage des Pianoforte von Johannes Brahms (Gypsy Songs for Four Voices (SATB) with Piano Accompaniment), but are performed tonight by a four-part mixed chorus, with soprano and tenor solos, accompanied by the piano. Brahms composed music for a set of German texts by Hugo Conrat in Vienna during the winter of 1887-1888; the resulting songs received their first hearings in private Viennese salon concerts in early 1888, while the first documented public performance took place on October 31, 1888, at the Singsakademiasaal in Berlin. Such was their popularity that, in 1889, Brahms rearranged eight of the eleven songs (Nos. 1-7 and 11) for solo voice and piano.

He was logical and studious and could be reserved, withdrawn, and even morose, but he also loved coarse humor; he was known for his caustic wit ("If there is anyone here whom I have not insulted, I beg his pardon!"), yet possessed a tenderness that he expressed through his ardent and sensuous music. He was frequently faced with the choice between love and committed relationship on one hand, and freedom on the other, and while he longed for commitment, he invariably chose freedom. We find comfort in his sublime and emotionally powerful music, especially in such stressfull times as these. His name was Johannes Brahms, and he was a contradictory character who, as a pianist, conductor, and composer, was not only one of the major musical masters of the 19th century, but is now ranked among the finest composers of all time. With their lucidity of structure ("Without craftsmanship," he observed, "inspiration is a mere reed shaken in the wind"), their general lack of dependence on extra-musical images or ideas, and their lush harmonies, passion, and lyricism, Brahms' works combine the finest characteristics of both the Classical and the Romantic styles of musical composition. His four
symphonies are considered some of the best ever written, and his Lieb (he produced over 200) are loved by music lovers worldwide. He could be pleadingly unassuming when it came to his own compositions portraying the genius of Johann Strauss for his autograph; he scrawled out the opening bars of Strauss’s Blue Danube Waltz on her paper and wrote beneath it, “Not, alas, by Johannes Brahms.” He once commented, “It is not hard to compose, but it is wonderfully hard to let the superfluous notes fall under the table.”

At the age of 10, Brahms was playing the piano in Hamburg’s rough waterfront district taverns and cafes in order to augment his family’s income. He studied piano from the age of seven and theory and composition from age thirteen, and he arranged music for his band-playing father’s light orchestra while reviving many neglected Gypsy style music associated with Hungarian folk music. By the age of 20, his reputation as a pianist enabled him to become concert-tour accompanist to the famous Hungarian violinist, Eduard Reményi. Brahms’ early compositions caught the eye of Joseph Joachim, the leading violin virtuoso of his time; Joachim facilitated a visit between Brahms and the composer, Robert Schumann, who praised the 20-year-old “young eagle” in his musical journal as a genius; called forth to give us the highest ideal expression of our time.” Brahms soon numbered among his influential musical friends and advisors both Schumann and his wife, Clara, the great pianist, to whom he remained very close after Schumann’s mental breakdown and his own resurrection in an insane asylum in 1856, and for whom he developed a deep romantic ardor which later settled into an enduring friendship.

Brahms began his professional career as a musician to the service of Dettmold’s court and made a name for himself in Hamburg in 1859, hoping to obtain an official conducting post and to devote himself to composition. The directors of the Philharmonic, however, could not forget that Brahms came from the slums of Cölln, and he was not given an appointment. He therefore became a resident of Vienna and remained there for 35 years as a renowned and successful bachelor composer of music in almost every genre. It was there that he wrote “(It would be useless,” he said, “as to write an opera. But after the first experience I should probably undertake a second”)”. He conducted a Viennese musical society and travelled extensively throughout Europe; travelled concert tours with Bach, Handel, and Mozart. He was widely acquainted with older music, edited music of the Baroque and Classical eras, and collected music manuscripts. The composer succumbed to liver cancer in 1897 and was buried at sea, in a wooden coffin, on the shores of the Black Sea, Schumann’s probably the one great love of his life, and was buried not far from Beethoven and Schubert.

The Music

With the rapid rise of the urban middle class in 19th-century Europe, an expansive market developed for "house music" that could be performed by a small group of family members or friends singing and playing various solo instruments in different combinations. At a time when the piano was the focal point of middle-class living rooms, Brahms’ songs and chamber music became the sort of comfortable and unassuming thirst of performers and listeners for domestic entertainment pieces for piano and singers. This same increase in the number of routine-bound city-dwellers also intensified the fascination of composers and audiences with the idealized sound of the so-called "Gypsy" people, who were viewed as "romantic figures" living lives that were free, close to nature, passionate, sensual, wild, and rather melancholy. Many of the basic sounds and playing styles of Gypsy music, displayed in the recently-flourishing string town of Eastern Europe and the Balkans, proved so "exotic" and attractive that such significant composers as Haydn, Schumann, Liszt, Brahms, Dvořák, and Bartók imitated them in their work.

Elements of Hungarian popular music appear frequently in Brahms’ music—his Hungarian Dances (originally written for piano four-hands) were well-loved and very lucrative during his lifetime. Late in 1887, after his retirement as director of the Royal Theater in Budapest, Brahms was given some German translations of a collection of Hungarian folk songs (Hungarian Love Songs: Twenty-Five Hungarian Folk Songs for Medium Voice; The piano accompaniments by Zoltán Nagy) by Hugo Conrat, the wealthy Viennese merchant and music lover, with whom Brahms was acquainted. Conrat had turned into rhymed verses the German prose versions of these Hungarian folk song texts translated by one Frédéric Witz, the Conrat household’s Hungarian-born nanny. Brahms replaced the original folk melodies that had been printed with Conrat’s texts with his own colorful settings of the very brief poems (only longer than eight lines) that are "near the original" (as he called the Rimáva) in south central Slovakia, and that treat, in a relatively straightforward, folksong style, the universal themes of nostalgia, romance, love, and beauty. The music’s lens of settings of his views, gave Gypsy life from a wonderful variety of perspectives, and produced some of the German Lieder tradition’s finest representatives.

With their rhythmically energetic melodies and evocative accompaniments, the Zigeunerlieder suggest elements of Hungarian folk music, but their Gypsy flavor results more from a subtle influence of genuine ethnicity (notable are Brahms’ orchestration of phrases and the major and minor modes within the same song), rather than any direct quotation. All of the songs are in the 2/4 meter of the traditional Hungarian drumbeat, the cachanta, which roving Roma bands had popularized, but their variation in tempo, mood, key, formal structure, rhythmic nuance, and harmonic hue hold the interest of performers and listeners alike. The songs range in style from a lively 6/4 at song 1 to a slow 3/4 at song 17, from an old-fashioned waltz to a lively and vigorously patriotic song 26. The second theme of the movement is stated in the oboe. Mahler indicates that the oboe, in the sad key of f minor, is to play mournfully, and while the strings try to comfort them they express tender sadness. Although the music tries to move beyond its sadness, it arrives at an outpouring of grief and consolation disappears without warning.

After a deflected ,thinning of the orchestral texture, Mahler returns for the second time and the song becomes a coping with a series of decorated variations, which seem to aspire upward to spiritual heights. Before this can be realized, however, the mournful second theme returns, and for several measures the only instruments playing are one oboe, English horn, and horn. The trumpet and first violins’ effort to offer comfort once again quickly dissolves and gives way to the cry of grief, this one more stinging than the first. The great altos, nearly impassively to juxtapose anguish and beauty is again apparent as the first theme returns again in the long strings, now in flowing triple. The measures now begin to build in excitement, and Mahler adds a new layer of excitement by bringing in the soloist without transition from the previous. The clarinet quotes the bird-calls from the Scherzo, the cheerfulness of which belies its darker implications. Mahler builds his theme into a near- maniac frenzy running a broken oboe figure which builds as the trio returns, these whimsical variations seem upbeat at face value, almost like a pleasant dream sequence, one remembers Mahler’s constant association between tragedy and “light entertainment.”

The slow introduction begins, giving way to a drawn out episode of reflection that seems like it could be bringing to the movement a close. Suddenly, however, an upward figure in the violins, reminiscent of the Second Symphony and followed by a typically Mahlerian pause, ushers in a glorious burst of light in E major, resplendent with rapid arpeggios in the strings, harp glissando, cymbals, and soaring triangle trill. A massive brass fanfare is underscored by timpani with two mallets at once. As this heavenly vision subsides, the music gradually finds its way back to the home key through and comes to a close with hushed intensity. The violins end with stratospheric harmonics on the leading tone A, a truly shocking major, remarkably mingling a sense of peace with irresolution.

The leading tone is in fact resolved by the major opening of the final movement, the awesome Scherzo movement for soprano. Mahler is said to have remarked that he would have appreciated having the part sung by a young boy. Regardless of whether or not soprano sings the part, the childlike quality of the music is unmistakable. Just as Mahler said that the alto soloist in the fourth movement of the Second Symphony should sound like a child in heaven, here he includes an emphatic note for the soprano indicating “with expression without pathos!” (Curiously, when Mahler still intended to include “Das himmlische Leben” at the end of the Third Symphony, he indicated in a letter that he intended it to be “humorously” and this concease is done so without paradoy!”). Finally, while that setting is not included in the Fourth Symphony, the theme is used several times as a quiet, tenorised accompaniment with no change in the vision, in the three bars that has depicted earthly struggle even more strikingly.

The filling clarinet theme that opens the movement has in fact, already been heard in the horn fanfare at the end of the previous movement, but now it sounds simple and untroubled rather than gorgeous. After the gracious introduction, the soprano sings about the joys of the heavenly life to which Mahler’s own soul has all, a theme that would later become the chorale and the horn chorale ends the verse, however, there is a discomfiting burst of energy from the orchestra. The opening material of the first movement, sighs-bells and all, returns with new urgency (including the shrill sound of two union piccolos). Could this be
Second Symphony, nearly ninety minutes long, Mahler takes his listener from a funeral scene to a human vision of unconditional salvation. While the Second Symphony’s vast orchestra includes as many as 354 instruments, ranging from four horns, and organ, for his Fourth Symphony Mahler employs only four horns, three trumpets, and remarkably no trombones or tuba. The woodwind section has four flutes (two on E-flat clarinet), three oboes (one on E-flat clarinet and one on bass-clarinet), and three bassoons (on one contrabassoon). In addition to horn and the usual sections, this peculiarly constructed instrument section requires five musicians playing timpani, bass drum, cymbals, tim-tam-tam, triangle, sleigh-bells, and glockenspiel. By employing a smaller orchestra than that of his other symphonies, Mahler created a more “classic” effect, three oboes (one on E-flat clarinet), three clarinets (one on E-flat clarinet and one on bass-clarinet), and three bassoons (on one contrabassoon). In addition to horn and the usual sections, this peculiarly constructed instrument section requires five musicians playing timpani, bass drum, cymbals, tim-tam-tam, triangle, sleigh-bells, and glockenspiel. By employing a smaller orchestra than that of his other symphonies, Mahler created a more “classic” effect, three oboes (one on E-flat clarinet), three clarinets (one on E-flat clarinet and one on bass-clarinet), and three bassoons (on one contrabassoon).

Gustav Mahler

(1860–1911)

Symphony No. 4 in G Major

A look at Gustav Mahler, the most important and influential of the late-Romantic symphonists, reveals that his life was an almost miraculous way of pulling together from the searing experiences of the century beneath him the necessary forces to create a new ideal of music. Mahler’s music is a reflection of his personality, which was marked by great inner turmoil and a deep sense of suffering.

Mahler’s music is characterized by its profound emotional intensity and its massive, sprawling form. His symphonies are among the longest in the classical repertoire, often extending well beyond three hours in performance. Mahler’s music is often described as being rich in Symbolism, with a focus on the human condition and the mysteries of existence.

Mahler’s Symphony No. 4, written in 1907, is one of his most beloved works. It is a programme symphony, with each movement representing a different stage of a young man’s life. The symphony is divided into five movements, each with its own distinct character.

The first movement, a scherzo, is based on a folk song that Mahler heard in his childhood. The scherzo is characterized by its driving rhythm and its use of the clarinet and the woodwind section. The second movement is a slow, introspective adagio, in which Mahler reflects on the beauty of the natural world. The third movement, a dance-like minuet, is marked by its playful character and its use of the woodwind section. The fourth movement, a dramatic finale, is marked by its use of the full orchestra and its powerful climax.

Mahler’s Symphony No. 4 is a masterpiece of the late-Romantic period and is considered one of the most significant works in the symphonic repertoire.
Second Symphony, nearly ninety minutes long, Mahler takes his listener from a funeral scene to a human vision of unconditional salvation. While the Second Symphony’s vast orchestra includes as many as eighty musicians (including four horns, four violins, and, for his Fourth Symphony Mahler employs only four horns, three trumpets, and remarkably no trombones or tuba. The woodwind section has five flutes (two on E-flat clarinet), three oboes (one on E-flat clarinet and one on bass-clarinet), and three bassoons (on one contrabassoon). In addition to horn and the usual section, the percussion section includes requiring five musicians playing timpani, bass drum, cymbals, tam-tam, triangle, sleigh-bells, and glockenspiel. By employing a smaller orchestra than that of his other symphonies, Mahler arrives to a more "classical" style, three oboes (one on E-flat clarinet), three clarinets (one on E-flat clarinet and one on bass-clarinet), and three bassoons (one on contrabassoon). In addition to horn and the usual section, the percussion section includes requiring five musicians playing timpani, bass drum, cymbals, tam-tam, triangle, sleigh-bells, and glockenspiel. By employing a smaller orchestra than that of his other symphonies, Mahler arrives to a more "classical" style, three oboes (one on E-flat clarinet), three clarinets (one on E-flat clarinet and one on bass-clarinet), and three bassoons (one on contrabassoon).

Gustav Mahler

Gustav Mahler (Born in Kalisch, October 7, 1860; died in Vienna, May 18, 1911)

Symphony No. 4 in G Major Around the early 1870s, a boy rushed out of his home in Bohemia (still then part of Austria) to escape the sound of his parents' fighting. The violent and strong-willed father frequently abused his wife, and on this occasion it was too much for the young man to bear. The thing that first met the distressed youth's ears after he escaped the hellish domestic scene was a popular song, played by a group of gypsy girls. Decades later, this folk song, now a fully grown man shared this memory with Sigmund Freud. Dr. Ernest Jones, Freud's biographer, recounts that this trauma had a lasting effect: "...the conjuncture of high tragedy and light amusement was eternally fixed in his mind, and the one mood inevitably brought the other with it."

That young man was Gustav Mahler, who by the time his friend with Education was established as one of the foremost conductors of his day, although he was enjoying a lesser degree of prestige as a composer. Mahler was the second of fourteen children, seven of whom died in infancy; by the time his wife Gustav was born his older sister Ida was already dead. The death of his teenage brother Ernst was a particularly devastating event for the young Mahler, who in the last months of his brother's life kept him constant company at his bedside. His experience was almost surely in Mahler's mind as he set Friedrich Rückert's Kindertotenlieder (Songs in the Death of Children), especially as Rückert wrote these poems shortly after losing two children, one of whom was also named Ernst. Mahler's remaining siblings, like his composer himself, were left scarred from their childhood.

Mahler scholar Donald Mitchell describes both Otto and Alois Mahler as having had "no capacity whatever to adjust themselves to the requirements of everyday existence." Alois, who changed his name to Hans Christian to sound less Jewish, "often indulged in ridiculous and self-inflicting impersonations, to the embarrassment of his family." Otto, despite his considerable musical talents, was plagued by self-destructive insecurity and tragically killed himself at the age of twenty-two. Of his siblings, Leopoldine entered into an unhappy marriage and died of a brain tumor, but Emma and Justine married distinguished musicians, and, as Mitchell notes, "seemed able, eventually, to come to some sort of terms with life." Nevertheless, Justine, the closest of Mahler's siblings in his adulthood, had evinced signs of morbid neurosis as a child. While Mahler's mother has proven to be a notoriously unreliable source, her claim that Justine used to entertain fantasies of her own death as a child is quite believable in context of Mahler's biography.

It is little wonder, then, that Mahler was drawn to two poems from Des Knaben Wunderhorn, "Das irdische Leben" ("The Earthly Life") and "Das himmlische Leben" ("The Heavenly Life") in the early decades of the nineteenth century, none turned to this source more frequently than Mahler, who wrote two dozen settings of its poetry.

Mahler's first four symphonies are frequently referred to as "song symphonies" or "Wunderhorn Symphonies," as each incorporates text from Des Knaben Wunderhorn or material from one of Mahler's earlier settings. The first of Des Knaben Wunderhorn's "Das himmlische Leben," was conceived before any of the other movements, which were then constructed with the song as in mind as their endpoint. (In contrast, the second and the writer's preferred order of composition was first the movements of the Second Symphony, and it was not until hearing Klopstock's Resurrection Ode at Hans von Bülow's funeral that the idea for the Finale came to him.) Donald Mitchell notes that in the Fourth Symphony "Das himmlische Leben" is "the controlling presence which orders and determines the total conception of the work. Whereas in the earlier symphonies song sources had certainly played a vital role, but had not, as it were, regulated the shaping and development of the whole work...the Fourth Symphony in its entirety emerged from, and has its life in, the idea of the song..."

"Das himmlische Leben" was first conceived as the seventh and final movement of the immense Third Symphony, which additionally contains a Des Knaben Wunderhorn text in its brief fifth movement. Material from the Third Symphony, mostly from the Wunderhorn movement, is heard in his Fourth and serves as a reminder of its origin. Ultimately, however, Mahler decided to let his Third Symphony stand with only six movements (and even in this form it still his longest composition at over ninety minutes), ending instead with the heartfelt slow movement entitled "What love tells me."

The Fourth Symphony, Mahler's ultimate vehicle for "Das himmlische Leben," takes on quite a different form from the grandeur of his previous three symphonies. In the First Symphony, Mahler emulated the Beethovenian victory-over-struggle paradigm in its grandiose final movement. In its
symphonies are considered some of the best ever written, and his Liede (he recorded over 200 songs) are loved by the world over. He could be peacefully unassuming when it came to his own compositions and publication of the works of Johann Strauss for his autograph, he scribbled out the opening bars of Strauss’ Blue Danube Waltz on her paper and wrote beneath it, “Not, alas, by Johannes Brahms.” He once commented, “It is not hard to compose, but it is wonderfully hard to let the superfluous notes fall under the table.”

At the age of 10, Brahms was playing the piano in Hamburg in his rough waterfront district taverns and coffeehouses in order to augment his family’s income. He studied piano from the age of seven and theory and composition from age thirteen, and he arranged music for his piano-playing father’s light orchestra while reviving many neglected Gypsy-style music associated with Hungarian folk music. By the age of 20, his reputation as a pianist enabled him to become concert-tour accompanist to the famous Hungarian violinist, Edward Reményi. Brahms’ early compositions caught the eye of Joseph Joachim, the leading violin virtuoso of his time; Joachim facilitated a visit between Brahms and the composer, Robert Schumann, who praised the 20-year-old “young eagle” in his musical journal as a genius "...call forth to give us the highest ideal expression of our time.” Brahms soon numbered among his influential musical friends and advisors both Schumann and his wife, Clara, the great pianist, to whom he remained very close after Schumann’s mental instability and suicide in an insane asylum in 1856, and for whom he developed a deep romantic ardor which later settled into an enduring friendship.

Brahms began his professional career as musician to the audience of Detmold, in his hometown of Hamburg in 1859, hoping to obtain an official conducting post and to devote himself to composition. The directors of the Philharmonic, however, could not forget that Brahms came from the slums of the Cossack quarter, and so he was never appointed. He therefore became a resident of Vienna and remained there for 35 years as a renowned and successful bachelor composer of music in almost every genre of opera ("it would be judging the opera," he said, “as to write an opera. But after the first experience I should probably undertake a second!).” He conducted a Vienna musical society which was often held at his apartment with Brahms, Schumann, and at the home of Prokofiev, who became the famous German poet and pianist, and a few others. They hadrammed Schumann, the one particularly good life of his, and was buried not far from Beethoven and Schubert.

The Music

With the rapid rise of the urban middle class in 19th-century Europe, an expansive market developed for "house music" that could be performed by a small group of family members or friends singing and playing various solo instruments in different combinations. At a time when the piano was the focal point of middle-class living rooms, Brahms’ songs and chamber music set the stage for the unplanned, alluringly tasteful art of performers and listeners for domestic entertainment pieces for piano and singers. This same increase in the number of routine-building city dwellers also intensified the fascination of composers and audiences with the idealized romantic music of the Goethe/Goya peoples, who were revered as "romantic figures" living lives that were free, close to nature, passionate, sensual, wild, and rather melancholy. Many of the basic sounds and playing styles of Goya’s music, derived from the folk and indigenous of Eastern Europe and the Balkans, proved so “exotic” and attractive that such significant composers as Haydn, Schuman, Liszt, Brahms, Dvořák, and Bartók imitated them in their work.

Elements of Hungarian popular music appear frequently in Brahms’ music—his Hungarian Dances (originally written for piano four-hands) were well-loved and very lucrative during his lifetime. Late in 1887, after his return from his last visit to Budapest, Brahms was given some German translations of a collection of Hungarian folk songs (Hungarian Love Songs: Twenty-Five Hungarian Folk-Songs for Medium Voice; The piano accompaniments by Zoltán Nagy) by Hugo Conrat, the wealthy Viennese merchant and music lover, with whom Brahms was acquainted. Conrat had turned into rhyme verses the German prose versions of these Hungarian folk songs translated by one Fräulein Wittl, the Conrad household’s Hungarian-born nanny. Brahms replaced the original folk melodies that had been printed with Conrat’s texts with his own colorful settings of the very brief poems (only longer than eight lines) that are near the German “ballad” (now called the Rimkeva) in south central Slovakia, and that treat, in a relatively straightforward, folkloric style, the universal themes of nostalgia, romantic love, and betrayal. The music’s lens of settings, his views György life from a wonderful variety of perspectives, and produced some of the German Lieder tradition’s finest representatives.

With their rhythmically energetic melodies and evocative accompaniments, the Zigeunerlieder suggest elements of Hungarian folk music, but their Gypsy flavor results more from a subtle influence of genuinely ethnic (notably Brahms’ treatment of short phrases) than from a conscious patchwork of Gypsy melodies with their balancing of dissimilar phrases, and the alteration of major and minor modes within the same song, than from any direct quotation. All of the songs are in the 2/4 meter of the traditional Hungarian dance form, as in the capriccio, which vowing Roma bands had popularized, but their variation in tempo, mood, key, formal structure, rhythmic nuance, and harmonic hue hold the interest of performers and listeners alike. It is this quality of this section that allows Brahms to modify the sounds, both instrumental and environmental, that one might hear in a late-19th-century Gypsy camp: listen for guitars and mandolins (No. 1), and theimbals, a type of hourglass dulcimer (No. 30). Sometimes the piano brings to mind natural sounds, such as the river’s plunging rapids (No. 2). In the fifth song, the listener can detect both musical and environmental descriptions of Gypsy life, as the orchestra becomes the orchestra of players, and echoes the “cásdás melody” mentioned in the text.

While a self-effacing Brahms called the Zigeunerlieder “rollicking and unpretentious pieces” and “cheerful and high-spirited nonsense,” Elisabeth Herzogenberg described indeed, this Scherzo may be viewed as Mahler’s take on the “Dance of Death.”

The stormy and rousing main theme of the Scherzo is stated by the horn and soon is joined by repeated notes and a bird-call figure on cackling woodwinds, serving as the introduction to the macabre fiddle music. In the middle of this first Scherzo section there are many music, derived from the gypsy-inspired stringing over rumbling horns, complemented by horn and glockenspiel: a respite reminiscent of the Scherzo in the Second Symphony. The first trio (contrasting section), in F major, adopts a lurcher character. There is a brief bird-call figure that re-echoes in the horns as they become more prominent without transition from the previous. The clarinet quotes the bird-calls from the Scherzo, the cheerfulness of which belies its darker implications. Mahler builds his theme into a near-melancholy one, suggesting a bird perched on a fence, perhaps in a haze of reverie. As these whirlwind variations seem upbeat at face value, almost like a pleasant dream sequence, one remembers Mahler’s constant association between tragedy and “light amusement.”

In the last section, which began, giving way to a drawn out episode of reflection that seems like it could be bringing to the movement a close. Suddenly, however, an upward figure in the violins, reminiscent of the Second Symphony and followed by a typically Mahlerian pause, ushered in a glorious burst of light in E major, resplendent with rapid arpeggios in the strings, harp glissandi, cymbals, and soaring triangle trill. A massive brass fanfare is underscored by timpani played with two mallets at once. As this heavenly vision subsides, the music gradually finds its way back to the home key through and comes to a close with hushed intensity. The violins end with stratifying harmonics on the leading tone in E major, remarkably mingling a sense of peace with irresolution.

The leading tone is in fact resolved by the G major opening of the final movement of the Scherzo, which also resounds in the final movement of the Fourth Symphony. While the movement is scored for soprano, Mahler is said to have remarked that he would have appreciated having the part sung by a young boy. Regardless of whether a boy or adult soprano sings the part, the childlike quality of the music is unmistakable. Just as Mahler said that the alto soloist in the fourth movement of the Second Symphony should sound like a child in heaven, here he includes an emphatic note for the soprano with “with expression of strong surprise without parody!” (Curiously, when Mahler still intended to include “Das himmlische Leben” at the end of the Third Symphony, he indicated in a letter that he intended it to be “humorously” in character. This Vance would have needed the companion Wunderhorn “Das irdische Leben” (“The Earthly Life”), in which a child dies of starvation. While that setting is not included in the Fourth Symphony, the two together will increase this movement’s sense of the wall in the three walls that have depicted earthly struggle even more strikingly.

The filling clarinet theme that opens the movement has, in fact, already been heard in the horn fanfare at the end of the previous movement, but now it sounds simple and untroubled rather than gloomy. After the gracious introduction, the soprano sings about the joys of the heavenly life to the string figures from the “one day.” After a majestic horn chorale ends the verse, however, there is a discomfiting burst of energy from the orchestra. The opening movement of the final movement, sighs-bells and all, returns with new urgency (including the shrill sound of two union piccolos). Could this be
an impetuous burst of youthful energy, or does the sudden injection of the minor mode carry with it darker implications? That the material is a quotation from the beginning of the Symphony suggests that in fact it may be harboring back to previous struggles. Nor is the text of the poem entirely comforting, despite the abundance of heavenly food. The first outburst occurs as the child watches John and Herod slaughter a "dear little lamb" to the sound of low horns, a traumatic vision for a child that inevitably evokes the Crucifixion. The reference to Saint Ursula and her eleven thousand attendant maidens additionally brings to mind the fabled gruesome martyrdom of these young women.

After the images of slaughter, the description of the heavenly garden begins to regain its previous contentment.

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**Johannes das Lammlein aussetzter, Der Metzer Herdes drauf passet, Wir feren ein gudlig, Unschuldig’s, geduldig’s, Erleichter Lammlein als Tod! Erschn Lukan, der Ochsen lil schlienent Ohs! spin’ Enkenden und Achten, Der weir kost’ kein’ Halter Im himmlischen Keller, Die Engeln, die backen das Brot.

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**Program Notes**

Johannes Brahms
(Born in Hamburg, May 7, 1833; died in Vienna, April 3, 1897)

Zigeunerrieder (Gypsy Songs), Op. 103

Brahms originally composed this cycle of eleven songs for a quartet of solo voices with piano accompaniment; they were published in October 1888 as Zigeunerrieder für vier Stimmen (Sopran, Alt, Tenor, and Bass) with a supplemental Piano Part of Johannes Brahms (Gypsy Songs for Four Voices (SATB) with Piano Accompaniment), but are performed tonight by a four-part mixed chorus, with soprano and tenor solos, accompanied by the piano. Brahms composed music for a set of German texts by Hugo Conrat in Vienna during the winter of 1887-1888; the resulting songs received their first hearings in private Viennese salon concerts in early 1888, while the first documented public performance took place on October 31, 1888, at the Singakademie in Berlin. Such was their popularity that, in 1889, Brahms rearranged eight of the eleven songs (Nos. 1-7 and 11) for solo voice and piano.

**The Man**

He was logical and studious and could be reserved, withdrawn, and even morose, but he also loved coarse humor; he was known for his caustic wit ("If there is anyone here whom I have not insulted, I beg your pardon!"), yet possessed a tenderness that he expressed through his ardent and sensuous music. He was frequently faced with the choice between love and commitment related to one hand, and freedom on the other, and while he doted on commitment, he invariably chose freedom. We find him in sublime and emotionally powerful music, especially in such stressful times as these. His name was Johannes Brahms, and he was a contradictory character who, as a pianist, conductor, and composer, was not only the most influential of the major musical masters of the 19th century, but is now ranked among the finest composers of all time. With their lucidity of structure ("Without craftsmanship," he observed, "inspiration is a mere reed shaken in the wind"), their general lack of dependence on extra-musical images or ideas, and their lush harmonies, passion, and lyricism, Brahms works combine the finest characteristics of both the Classical and the Romantic styles of musical composition. His four
SOLOISTS
American soprano JANINE HOUSTON is a versatile performer, and one of the Northwest region’s busiest artists. Her extensive repertoire spans the Baroque era to the present. She has worked under the batons of many fine conductors including Gerard Schwarz, James Conlon, and Mark Elder, performing with such orchestras as the Seattle Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the Minnesota Orchestra. She has recorded with such artists as the London Philharmonic, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra.

MARK SALMAN received a musical milestone during the 1990-91 concert season when he performed the cycle of 32 Beethoven piano sonatas in a series of eight recitals in New York City. At the age of 28, he became one of the youngest artists to join the ranks of the handful of master pianists who have played the complete cycle. His first CD, featuring the music of Beethoven, Alkan, and Liszt, was released in the spring of 1994 on Titanic Records. Mr. Salman has been described as “a brilliant musical mind” and “a born public performer” by David Dubal, author of “The Art of the Piano” and “Evenings with Horowitz.” One of the few pianists of his generation to avoid competitions, he has opted instead to concentrate on his development as a pianist and musician. He is presenting a series of recitals each year which encompass rarely heard masterpieces as well as the staples of the repertoire. Mr. Salman is a native of Connecticut, where he began his studies at the age of eight. Since making his recital debut at eleven, he has been a frequent performer as a recitalist, chamber musician and soloist with orchestras throughout the United States. He has performed in Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall in New York City as well as on WNCN, WQXR and Classic KING-FM radio, and has been the subject of profiles in the New York Times and Kick magazine. In October 1989 he was presented in his New York debut recital at Carnegie’s Weill Recital Hall, which included the New York premieres of three Lizzi works. A graduate of the Juilliard School, he studied with Richard Faber and Jose Rafael, and also counts David Dubal as a significant influence. He previously attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for two years, where he concentrated on chamber music, string composition, studying with the noted composer, John Harbison. Mark relocated to Seattle in the summer of 1994. He performed the Beethoven Sonata Cycle at Shorecrest Performing Arts Center in 1996-97 under the
ZIGEUNERLIDER (Gypsy Songs)

1. He, Zigeuner, greife in die Sielen ein! Spiel das Lied vom ungetauften Mädlein! Laß die Sielen weinen, klagen, traurig bange, Bis die heiße Träne netzet diese Wange!


5. Brauner Bursche führt zum Tanze Sein blaulugig schönes Kind; Schlägt die Sporen keck zusammen, Coradsmelodie beginnt.

6. Röslein dreihe in der Reife blühn so rot, Daß der Busch zum tübel gehe, ist kein Verbot! Liebe Gott, wenn das verloren war, Stünd die schöne weile Welt schon längst nicht mehr; Ledig bleiben Sünde war!

Schrägtes Städtchen in Alfold ist Ketschenwe, Dort gibt es gar viele Mädchens schmuck und nett! Freunde, sucht euch dort ein Bräutchen aus.

Freut um ihre Hand und grüßet euer Haus, Freundenheiter leiert aus.

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