



Raleigh Civic
Symphony
*Chamber
Orchestra*

Youthful Masters:
Schubert and Brahms



Raleigh Civic Chamber Orchestra
Randolph Foy, Conductor

Sunday, October 5, 2003 at 3:00 P.M.

Talley Student Center Ballroom
NC State University, Raleigh

Program

Symphony no. 3 in D major (D200) (1815) Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

1. Adagio maestoso; Allegro con brio
2. Allegretto
3. Minuetto
4. Presto vivace

— *Intermission* —

Serenade no. 1 in D major (op. 11) (1857) Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

1. Allegro molto
2. Scherzo
3. Adagio non troppo
4. Minuetto I & II
5. Scherzo
6. Rondo

Notes

Franz Schubert – Symphony no. 3

“In all the history of music there has never been another man of such stupendous natural talents.”

H.L. Menken

“...the composer nearest to God.”

Arthur Schnabel, pianist

“Every work Schubert left us is an early work.”

Donald Francis Tovey, musicologist

*“There is more drama in these two minutes [the song, *Der Doppelgänger*] than in the complete output of Richard Wagner.”*

Andras Schiff, pianist



Franz Schubert

Drawing by L. Kupelwieser, 1813

“In the autumn of 1814 [at age 17] after a promising but unspectacular adolescence, Schubert exploded into a burst of creative activity that over the next 15 months was virtually unrivalled in the history of Western music. He also introduced patterns of composition that prevailed for the rest of his life.” (Winter, *New Grove*)

During this period, his compositional output included over 140 songs (including the masterpiece *Erlkönig*), four Singspiele, two symphonies (including the D-Major Third), a string quartet, nine works for solo piano, and nine church works (choir and orchestra). At the same time, Schubert worked as a primary school teacher in his father’s school. It was not an easy job and paid poorly, but at least it apparently left him enough free hours to compose. He continued to take composition lessons from Antonio Salieri, play

in string quartets, and sing in the church choir. Biographer Brian Newbold comments: “...the sheer industry sustained over a long period bespeaks an astonishing fluency, speed of working, and intensity of motivation. If a true composer is one who can seldom escape the compulsion to compose, Schubert was possibly the truest composer of all time.” (Newbold, 41)

Schubert’s first complete symphony dates from early 1814, and already shows a thorough grasp of the genre as it existed in the later symphonies of Haydn, Mozart, Salieri, and the early works of Beethoven. By his third symphony (completed the next year), his compositional voice was well-established.

The Third Symphony opens with a slow introduction (*Adagio maestoso*), whose *pianissimo* quickly ascending scales form a motive that

returns in the following *Allegro con brio*, this time transformed to *fortissimo*. The main theme of the *Allegro* is a triadic figure presented by the clarinet, *pianissimo*, Schubertian in its simplicity and forward propulsion.

The second movement *Allegretto* exemplifies the simple beauty often found in Schubert’s song writing. In the central ‘B’ section, a naïve and folk-like melody in the clarinet emerges with the simplest of accompaniments. The Minuet (*Vivace*), is a minuet in name only, with the tempo of a *scherzo* and Beethovenian accents. Only in the trio do we return to the world of Haydn and folk influence.

The finale (*presto vivace*), bears strong Italian influence in its lightness and propulsion, perhaps from Salieri’s teaching, but more likely from the new sounds in Vienna of Rossini.

Johannes Brahms – Serenade no. 1

“It is a unique synthesis of musical Classicism and nineteenth-century expressiveness that makes Brahms so compelling to listeners at the turn of the twenty-first century. If one considers the surface appeal of Brahms’s music for non-musicians as well as the deeper formal subtleties in which professional musicians delight, one encounters the protean character of his music... and its capacity to sound forever new and vibrant.”

Leon Botstein

“I felt ... that one day there must suddenly emerge the one who would be chosen to express the most exalted spirit of the times in an ideal manner, one who would not bring us mastery in gradual developmental stages but who, like Minerva, would spring fully armed from the head of Jove. And he has arrived - a youth at whose cradle the graces and heroes of old stood guard. His name is Johannes Brahms.”

Robert Schumann (Neue Zeitschrift, 1844)

Brahms’s two orchestral serenades are often overshadowed by the Piano Concerto no.1 of the same period and of course his four symphonies of 20 years later. But even as early works, they are characteristic scores, immediately recognizable stylistically as Brahms.

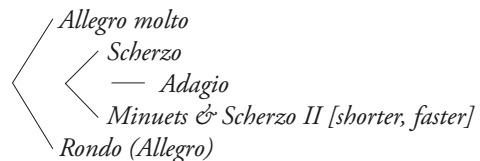
The First Serenade actually began life as a nonet for winds and strings, started when Brahms was 24 years old. This first version owed much to Mozart’s Divertimenti, Beethoven’s Septet, and Schubert’s Octet. But on the advice of violinist Joseph Joachim, who thought that it seemed more orchestral in nature, Brahms re-scored it for a small chamber orchestra with single winds, then later doubled the winds. For a time before its publication in 1860, it was called a “symphony serenade,” but that designation was finally dropped.

The character is indeed that of a serenade – outdoor music with a dance-like nature in many movements. But in scope – both of the entire work (over 40 minutes) and of its individual movements – the work is symphonic, with a grand breadth similar to ‘late’ Schubert. And in its use of the orchestra, this first serenade laid the groundwork for the composer’s mature style of the four symphonies and other orchestral works.



Johannes Brahms
From a portrait by Carl Jagemann,
circa 1860

The six-movement plan is well-conceived and hints at a palindrome structure:



In this plan, the two fast outer movements (allegros) form a frame for two scherzos. The first scherzo – lengthy, dark and moderate in tempo – is balanced by the shorter, brilliant second Scherzo preceded by a pair of lighter Minuets. In the center is the lengthy Adagio movement– spacious, majestic and evocative of nature, and serving as the emotional centerpiece of the entire serenade.

Even though it was written by a 24-year old, the serenade features many characteristics of the mature composer: warmth of expression, dark-hued sonorities, intricate part-writing, cross rhythms, and subtleties of blend and balance – all worthy of the continued praise of Robert Schumann, who in 1853 presciently hailed Brahms as the hope of the future. He was right.

Books and Articles

- Botstein, Leon (editor). *The Compleat Brahms*. New York, W. W. Norton. 1999.
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- Newbould, Brian. *Schubert: The Music and Man*. University of California Press. 1997.
- Reed, John. *Schubert*. New York, Schirmer Books. 1997.
- Winter, Robert. "Schubert," article in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, second edition, edited by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell (London, 2001).

— Program notes by Dr. Randolph Foy

Raleigh Civic Chamber Orchestra

Randolph Foy, Music Director

Violin I

Lin-Ti Wang, concertmaster
Lawrence Evans
Jessica Gilmour
Diana Proffit
Johannes Rudolph
Steven Warwick

Violin II

Mark Furth, principal
Montarie Lanier
Patrick Liu
Karen Moorman
Michael Thelen
Brad Warren

Viola

Jonathan Simonson, principal
Kathryn Baerman
Erik Johnson
Danielle Proffit
Kristen Sinclair

Cello

David Oh, principal
Michael Bridgers
Kerry Pumphrey
Shana Tucker-Williams

Bass

Josh Hines, principal
Andrew Kelley

Flute/piccolo

Mary Mitchell

Oboe

Paul Baerman, principal
John Sprouse

Clarinet

James Williams, principal
Kristen Martin

Bassoon

Cynthia Harris, principal
Russ Hill

Horn

Bill McHenry, principal
Ted Gellar
Melanie McIlvaine

Trumpet

Samantha Williford

Timpani

Candy Pahl

Welcome to our new concertmaster, Lin-Ti Wang. Lin-Ti Wang holds degrees from Chinese Culture University, Taiwan, and has been a member of the National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan, Taipei Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Taipei Young Musicians Orchestra, and has served as concertmaster of the Hwa-Kan Symphony Orchestra. She has been a member of the Formosa String Quartet and performed as soloist with the Hwa-Kan Symphony and Guang-Jen String Orchestra in Taiwan.

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