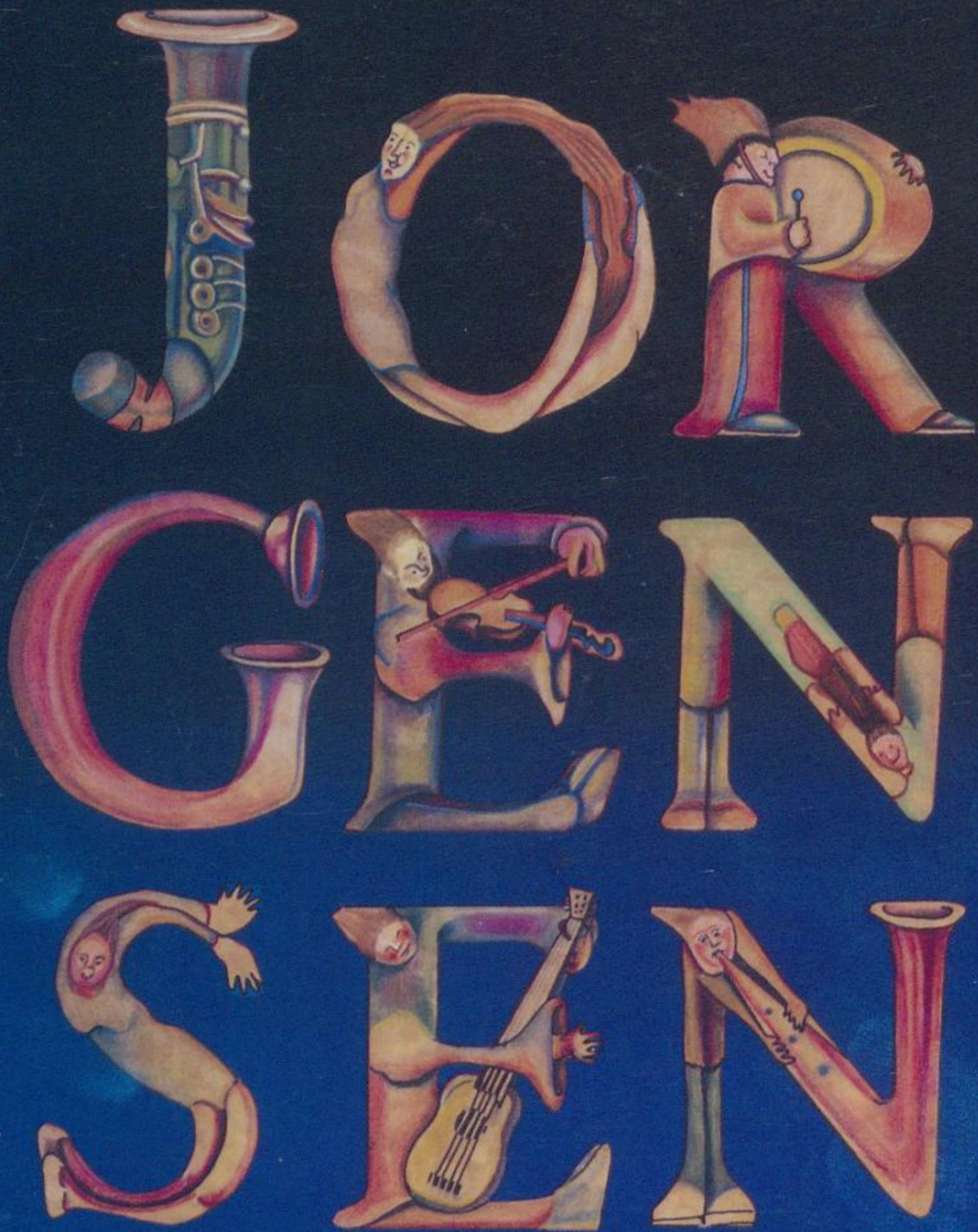


*Come To Your Senses*



*Jorgensen Auditorium 1993/1994*

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Saturday, February 5, 1994, at 8 pm

ICM Artists, Ltd.  
*presents*

# DRESDEN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

PHILIPPE ENTREMONT, *Conductor*

CHO-LIANG LIN, *Violin*

CARTER BREY, *Cello*

## PROGRAM

Overture from "Oberon" Carl Maria von Weber

Concerto in A minor, Op. 102 Johannes Brahms  
for Violin and Cello  
Allegro  
Andante  
Vivace non troppo

*-Intermission-*

Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92 Ludwig van Beethoven  
Poco sostenuto - Vivace  
Allegretto  
Presto  
Allegro con brio

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The orchestra acknowledges the kind support of BMW Dresden Branch

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## PROGRAM NOTES

### Overture to the Romantic Opera, *Oberon*

Carl Maria von Weber

Born December 18, 1786, in Eutin

Died June 5, 1826, in London

The composition of the opera *Oberon* cost Weber his life. In 1824, a London impresario, impressed with the success of *Der Freischütz*, proposed that he write an opera based on either Goethe's *Faust* or Wieland's poem, *Oberon*. Weber made his choice, but before signing the contract he consulted his doctor about his tuberculosis. He was told that if he went to Italy for an extended rest, he might live a few more years, but that if he continued to work, especially in cold and damp London, he would only hasten his death. He went, nevertheless, for he badly needed the money that success would bring.

The librettist sent his text to Weber piecemeal, and the composition was begun in January, 1825. Weber had in the meantime taken an intensive course of lessons in English and was not pleased with his libretto. The number of speaking roles, he said, and "the omission of music from its most important moments means that it cannot be called an opera, and that it will not be played in the theaters on the Continent."

On March 25, 1826, Weber arrived in London from Germany with as much of the score as he had been able to write in advance. In a month he finished composing the music, while also directing fifteen rehearsals. He wrote the *Overture* last and noted in his score "Completed April 9, 1826 at a quarter to twelve in the morning - and with it the whole opera, *Soli Dei Gloria!*" Three days later, the opera had its premiere at Covent Garden. The *Overture* was encored and there were ovations throughout the evening. Weber had contracted to conduct the first twelve performances of *Oberon*. With great effort, he got through eleven, but he died before the twelfth.

As he had feared, *Oberon* had little success after its introduction in London. In the theater, the feeble, confused tale of *Oberon*, King of the Fairies, sent off by his wife, Queen Titania, to see if he could find evidence of true love in the world, did not sustain interest. In the concert hall, the *Overture*, which is a medley of the splendid tunes from the opera, lives on. It is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani and strings.

### Concerto for Violin, Cello and Orchestra in A minor, Op. 102

Johannes Brahms

Born May 7, 1833, in Hamburg

Died April 3, 1897, in Vienna

Long before he really needed to do so, Brahms became concerned about the fading of his creative force and wondered how he would spend his last years. In middle age, he assumed a harsh and severe attitude toward much of the world outside his work, a protective stance made necessary by his wish to preserve his

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time and strength for composition, and he even quarreled with some of his oldest and most faithful friends. His disagreements with Clara Schumann were relatively easily smoothed over but a problem with the violinist, Joachim, was somewhat more difficult.

The two men, friends since 1853, had kept in touch through the passing years even though their busy careers prevented them from meeting often, but after a letter from Brahms to Mrs. Joachim was instrumental in defeating the violinist's divorce suit, they did not speak for several years. It was Brahms, surprisingly, who took the first steps toward reestablishing their friendship, and his peace-offering was this *Double Concerto*. It did succeed in patching up their friendship, but the old intimacy was never regained.

Why this "work of reconciliation," as Clara Schumann called it in her diary, is for the unusual combination of violin and cello rather than for violin alone, is not clear. Perhaps Robert Hausmann, the cellist in Joachim's quartet, had asked Brahms for a solo piece, and the composer was to use him as intermediary in reopening contact with the violinist. Perhaps the cello part was to be a cushion in case Joachim rejected Brahms's proposal to renew their friendship. The *Concerto* was completed during the summer of 1887, in Switzerland, at Thun. Brahms told a friend to whom he habitually described his works-in-progress in deprecatory terms that his "latest folly" was a "form of idiocy." To Clara Schumann he admitted that he was having problems in writing for the soloists, but she replied encouragingly that as the composer of such fine sonatas for violin and for cello he certainly knew how to deal with the instruments.

In the end, Brahms and Joachim together worked over the solo parts, making them more effective - and more difficult to play - than they were at first. The two soloists are given all the time they need to display themselves individually, and when they play together, their music is often so richly textured that the listener could imagine them to be an entire string quartet. The *Concerto* is Brahms's last orchestral work, and the writing is as full as it is in any of his symphonies, which led to complaints, after early performances, that the orchestra covered the soloists. Since then, musicians have learned how to balance these apparently unequal sonorous forces.

Joachim was joined by Hausmann in the first performances of the *Concerto*. In September, 1887, they tried it out in a private reading with the Baden-Baden Orchestra. Brahms conducted, and Clara Schumann was there. On October 18, in Cologne, they gave the first public performance. It was six years since Brahms had written a concerto, and then he had given the world his huge *Second Piano Concerto*, whose four movements had led many musicians to think of it as a symphony for piano and orchestra. The *Double Concerto* is more conventional, in three compact movements, classical in construction. The first, *Allegro*, is a powerful, dramatic movement, with great rhythmic force; the second, *Andante*, based on two expansive, fresh and lyrical melodies; the third, *Vivace non troppo*, a cheerful and witty rondo that recalls Joachim's Hungarian origins. The scoring calls for pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets and bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

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## Symphony No. 7, in A Major, Op. 92

Ludwig van Beethoven  
Born December 16, 1770, in Bonn  
Died March 26, 1827, in Vienna

Unlike most of Beethoven's major works, the *Seventh Symphony* was not years in preparation. The earliest sketches date from 1811 and in the spring of 1812, it was done. Beethoven noted the date of its completion in his manuscript, but unfortunately it was trimmed off by a careless bookbinder. In April, 1813, the Symphony was read through in private at the residence of the Archduke Rudolph, and the first public performance was given at the spectacular concert on December 8, with *Wellington's Victory*.

Ludwig Spohr, a violinist and composer whose works were then thought to rival Beethoven's, was the concert master that night, and he wrote in his *Autobiography*, "At this concert, I saw Beethoven conduct for the first time. Although I had heard about it often, it still surprised me. He conveyed expression to the orchestra by the most peculiar body motions. Whenever there was a *sforzando* [a strong accent], he threw up his arms, which had been crossed on his breast. He crouched down at a *piano* [that is, a soft passage], and bent lower as the sound diminished. For a *crescendo*, he rose gradually until, at the *forte*, he leapt into the air, often shouting aloud unconsciously at the same time."

Each of the *Seventh Symphony's* movements is built on a rhythmic figure that seems to dominate it in much the same way the *Beethoven's Fifth Symphony* is dominated by its opening, rhythmic, four-note motto. After a long, slow introduction, *Poco sostenuto*, the first movement becomes the dancing *Vivace* that led Wagner to call this *Symphony* the very "apotheosis of the dance." The second movement is a processional, *Allegretto*. The third movement is an expanded scherzo *Presto*, in which the contrasting, slower trio section is played twice. The finale, *Allegro con brio*, heavily and often irregularly accented, is a rhythmic movement of enormous vigor.

The *Symphony* is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani and strings. The orchestra score was published in May, 1816, with a dedication to Count Moritz von Fries and an arrangement for piano was dedicated to the Czarina Elisabeth Alexievna, Empress of All the Russias.