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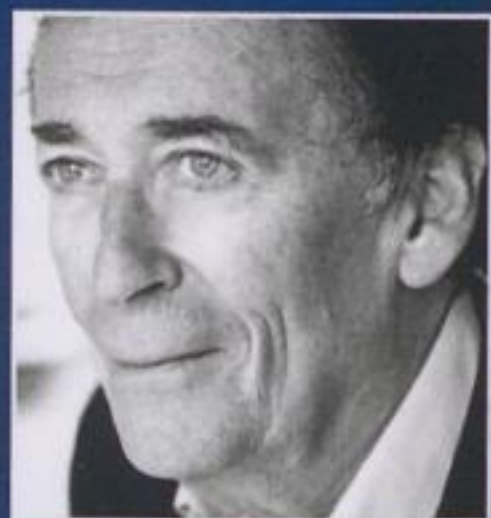
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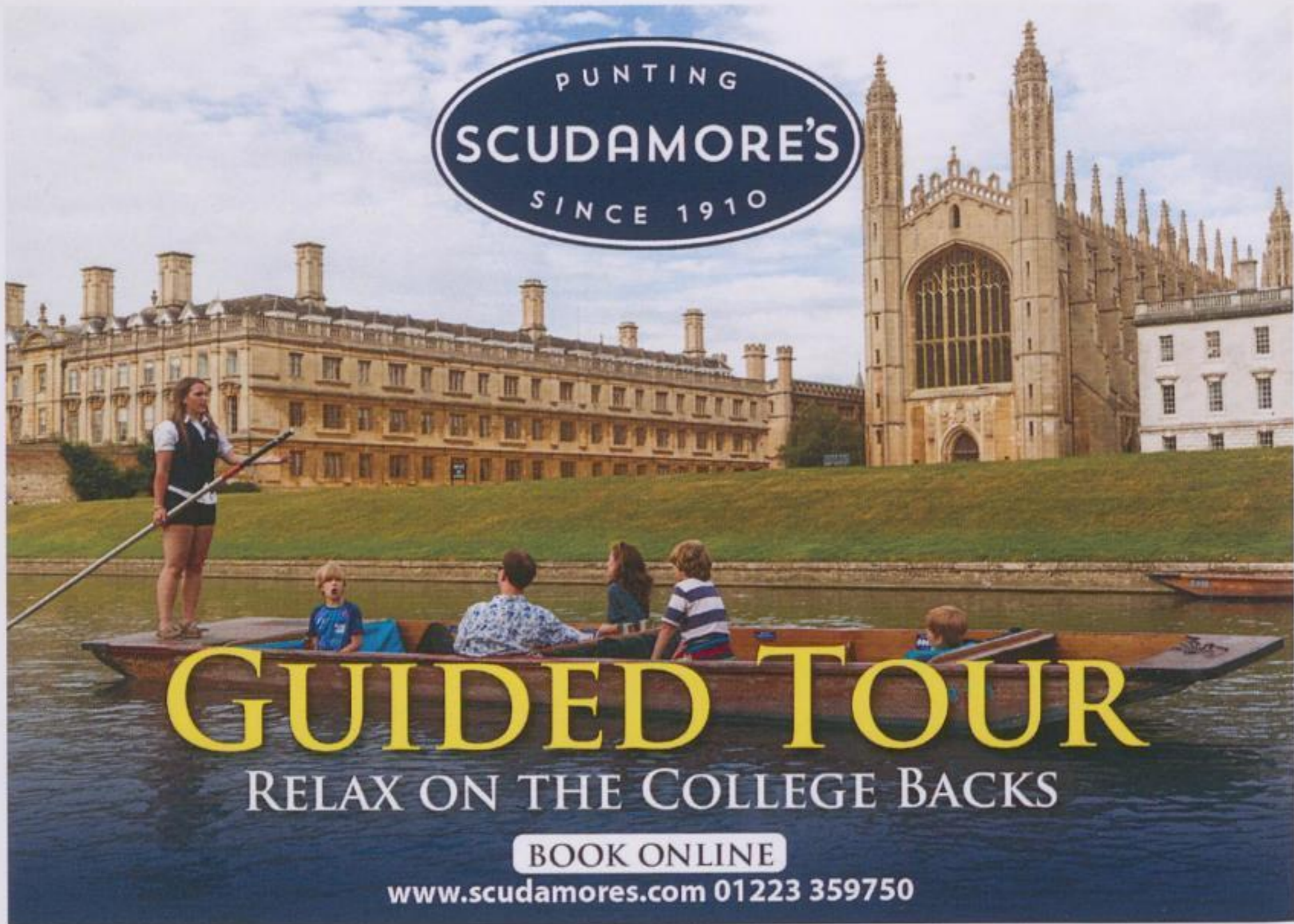
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WAGNER

Die Meistersingers Overture (9')

SCHUMANN

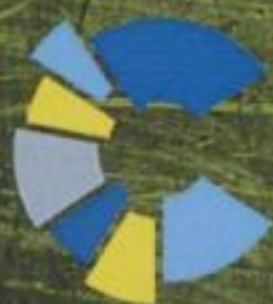
Piano Concerto (31')

BRAHMS

Symphony No. 4 (39')

Conductor: **Michael Sanderling**

Soloist: **Peter Donohoe** (piano)



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The Dresden Philharmonic



The Dresden Philharmonic is the orchestra of Dresden, the State Capital of Saxony. Since 2011, Michael Sanderling has been its Principal Conductor, following Kurt Masur, Marek Janowski, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos and others in this position. The Dresden Philharmonic continues the tradition of the Ratsmusik, the city council's musicians who were first mentioned in the fifteenth century and had grown into an orchestra by the early nineteenth century. Since 1870, the year when Dresden got its first great concert hall, the

Philharmonic's symphony concerts have been an established part of the city's concert life. The Dresden Philharmonic has ever since been a concert orchestra with regular ventures into the fields of opera concertante and oratorios. It is housed in the Palace of Culture in the middle of the Old Town. The listed shell of the building will be built-in with a new, ultra-modern concert hall by 2017. Until then, the Philharmonic performs concerts for large orchestra mainly in the Albertinum and the Schauspielhaus.

The Dresden Philharmonic offers great musical and stylistic variety. On the one hand, the orchestra has been able to retain its very own "German" sound in the Romantic repertoire. On the other hand, it has developed flexibility of sound and style for Baroque and Viennese Classic music as well as for modern works. Renowned conductors and composers headed the orchestra early on, from Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Dvořák and Richard Strauss to Erich Kleiber and Knappertsbusch, Previn and Marriner, to Andris Nelsons and Kristjan Järvi. Premieres remain an important part of the orchestra's programme today.

The Dresden Philharmonic joins the Dresden Kreuzchor for the Christmas and Easter Bach performances at the Kreuzkirche. For the great choral symphonies the orchestra can rely on the Dresden Philharmonic Choir as an excellent partner. Another important tradition is chamber music and chamber symphonies performed by the Dresden Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra, all of whose musicians come from the Dresden Philharmonic.

Not only does the Dresden Philharmonic enjoy an extraordinarily large number of regular subscribers; with its family programmes, film music concerts etc. it does a great job in introducing classical music to new groups of listeners. Guest performances all over the world are testimony to the high renown the Dresden Philharmonic enjoys in the world of classical music. Another remarkable aspect is the Philharmonic's impressive discography which started to develop in 1937. Currently, a new cycle is being recorded for the Sony Classical label, with Principal Conductor Michael Sanderling pairing a selection of Dmitri Shostakovich's symphonies with Beethoven's symphonies.

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Michael Sanderling

Conductor



Michael Sanderling has been Principal Conductor at the Dresden Philharmonic since 2011. As his contract was prolonged, this extremely successful example of co-operation between the conductor and the orchestra will continue until at least 2019.

At the same time, he is a sought-after guest conductor in the world's greatest music centres and directs renowned orchestras such as the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra, the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo, the Berlin Konzerthausorchester, the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the NHK Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo, the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and Germany's great radio orchestras.

Born in Berlin, Michael Sanderling is one of the few who made their way from being orchestra musicians into the top league of conductors. In 1987, aged 20, he became a cello soloist at the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra under Kurt Masur, then from 1994 to 2006 he filled the same position at the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra. As a soloist, he gave guest performances with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and the Orchestre de Paris, to name but a few, and as a passionate chamber musician he was a member of the Ex Aequo trio for eight years.

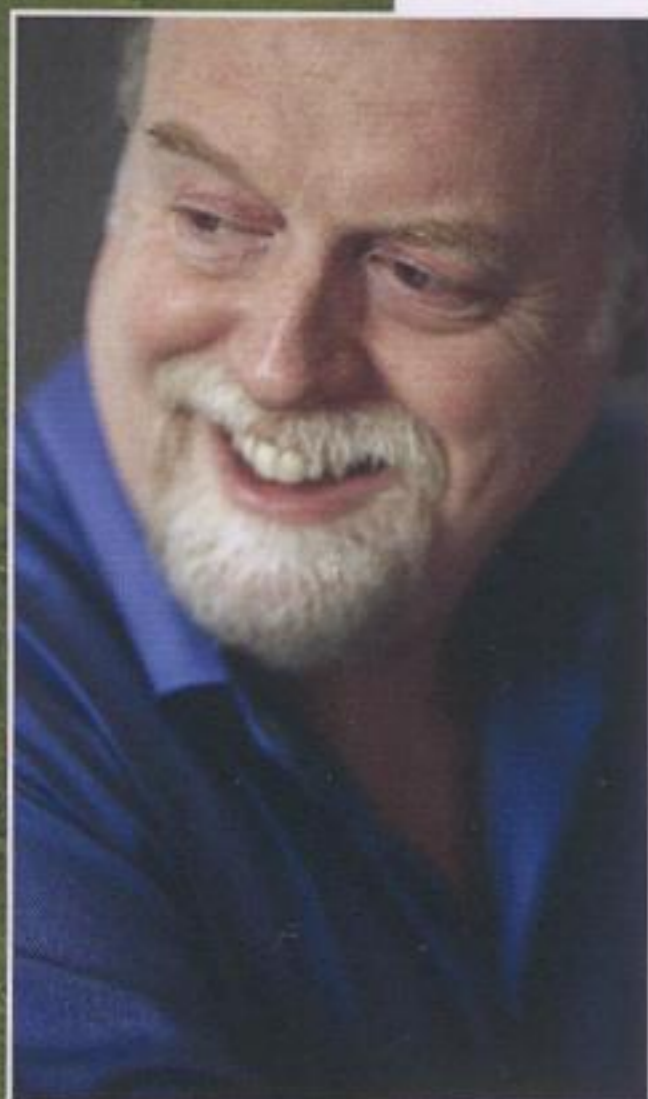
It was at a rehearsal of the Berlin Chamber Orchestra in 2000 that he stood at the conductor's desk for the first time – and was on fire. Familiar with a conductor's work from his childhood as the son of legendary Kurt Sanderling, Michael assumed more and more conducting jobs and was appointed principal conductor and art director of the renowned Kammerakademie Potsdam in 2006. He was successful as an opera conductor with Philip Glass' "The Fall of the House of Usher" in Potsdam and with a new production of Sergei Prokofiev's "War and Peace" at Cologne Opera. As a cellist and conductor he has made CD recordings of important works from the repertoire of Dvořák, Schumann, Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Tchaikovsky and others. However, it has been a long time since he last performed as a cellist.

What is close to Michael Sanderling's heart is work with young musicians. He teaches as a professor at Frankfurt University for Music and Performing Arts and co-operates regularly with the Bundesjugendorchester, the Jerusalem Weimar Youth Orchestra, the Junge Deutsche Philharmonie and with the Schleswig-Holstein Festival Orchestra. From 2003 to 2013 he was associated with the Deutsche Streicherphilharmonie as its principal conductor.

Speaking the language of the orchestra musicians, Michael Sanderling is considered to be efficient at rehearsals and yet able to bring out the fire in the musicians during concerts. His musical horizon encompasses Bach and Handel as well as premieres, of which he has conducted many by now, and it is a major concern for him to develop the Dresden Philharmonic's flexibility of sound and style even further.

Peter Donohoe

Piano



Peter Donohoe was born in Manchester in 1953. He studied at Chetham's School of Music for seven years, graduated in music at Leeds University, and went on to study at the Royal Northern College of Music with Derek Wyndham and then in Paris with Olivier Messiaen and Yvonne Loriod. Since his unprecedented success as joint winner of the 1982 International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, he has developed a distinguished career in Europe, the USA, the Far East, New Zealand and Australia. He is acclaimed as one of the foremost pianists of our time, for his musicianship, stylistic versatility and commanding technique.

Recent and forthcoming engagements include appearances with the Dresden Philharmonic Orchestra, the BBC Concert Orchestra, RTE National Symphony Orchestra, Berlin Konzerthaus Orchestra, the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and CBSO (under Sir Simon Rattle), a UK tour with the Russian State Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as concerts in South America, Europe, Hong Kong, South Korea, Russia, and the USA. Other engagements include performances of all three MacMillian piano concertos with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, a series of concerts for the Ravel and Rachmaninov Festival at Bridgewater Hall alongside Noriko Ogawa, and performances with The Orchestra of the Swan. Donohoe is also in high demand as an adjudicator at piano competitions around the world, including the International Tchaikovsky Piano Competition, Moscow, the Queen Elisabeth Competition, Belgium, and the Hong Kong International Piano Competition.

As well as performing, Donohoe has an impressive catalogue of recordings. In 2015 he will release a disc of solo piano works by Scriabin to mark the 100th anniversary year of the composer's death (SOMM Records). His third volume of Prokofiev Piano Sonatas is also due for release, again with SOMM Records. Gramophone described the first Prokofiev disc as 'devastatingly effective', declaring Donohoe to be 'in his element'; and his second Prokofiev disc was given 5 stars by BBC Music Magazine. Donohoe is also set to release two discs of works by Shostakovich; a disc of preludes and fugues, and a disc of sonatas and concertos with the Orchestra of the Swan, both with Signum Records.

Donohoe has performed with all the major London orchestras, as well as orchestras from across the world including Royal Concertgebouw, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Munich Philharmonic, Swedish Radio, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Vienna Symphony and Czech Philharmonic Orchestras. He has also played with the Berliner Philharmoniker in Sir Simon Rattle's opening concerts as Music Director. He made his twenty-second appearance at the BBC Proms in 2012 and has appeared at many other festivals including six consecutive visits to the Edinburgh Festival, La Roque d'Anthéron in France, and at the Ruhr and Schleswig Holstein Festivals in Germany. In the United States, his appearances have included the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Detroit Symphony Orchestras. Peter Donohoe also performs numerous recitals internationally and continues working with his long standing duo partner Martin Roscoe, as well as more recent collaborations with artists such as Raphael Wallfisch, Elizabeth Watts and Noriko Ogawa.

Donohoe has worked with many of the world's greatest conductors including Christoph Eschenbach, Neeme Jarvi, Lorin Maazel, Kurt Masur, Andrew Davis and Yevgeny Svetlanov. More recently he has appeared as soloist with the next generation of excellent conductors such as Gustavo Dudamel, Robin Ticciati and Daniel Harding.

Peter Donohoe is an honorary doctor of music at seven UK universities, and was awarded a CBE for services to classical music in the 2010 New Year's Honours List.



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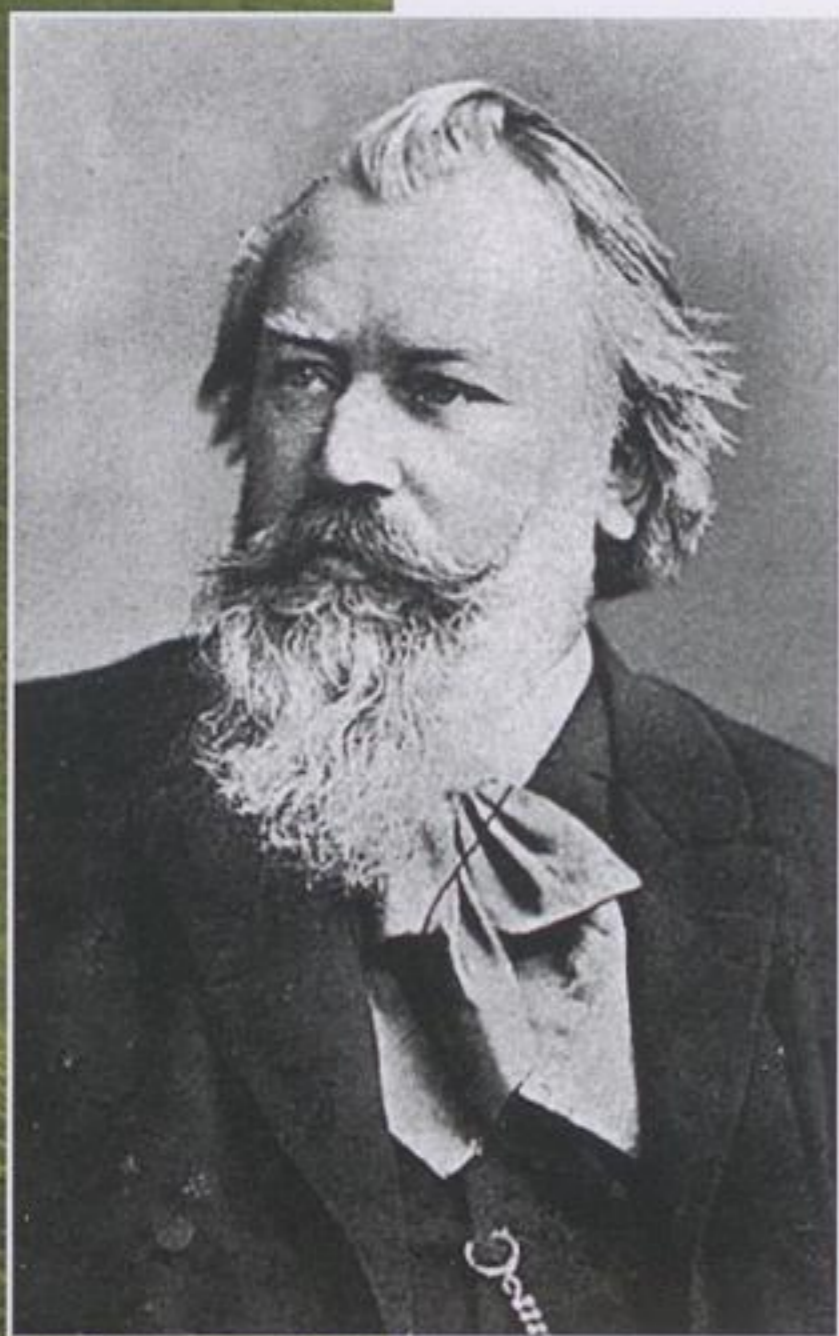
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Brahms: Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98

Allegro non troppo
Andante Moderato
Allegro giocoso
Allegro energico e passionato



Strange things happened to the symphony during the course of the nineteenth century. Berlioz and Liszt gave its movements literary titles and freely married it to the tone poem. Wagner in his maturity never wrote a symphony and believed that he had absorbed its essential qualities into the texture of his music dramas. The results were original and beautiful. But in opposition to this trend arose Brahms, who felt that something important in the great tradition of music had been lost. He bent his life's work towards the restoration of what he saw as the main line, stemming from the giants of the past, and epitomised by Beethoven. A part of this task was the recreation of the symphony as a monumental, self-contained form in the classical tradition.

By the very nature of this task, as Brahms saw it, it could not be approached lightly. An early effort turned into the massive and dramatic First Piano Concerto. Not until he was forty-three, in 1876, did he produce his First Symphony, the splendour of which caused it to be described, jokingly yet admiringly, as 'Beethoven's Tenth'. The following year came the more genial and lyrical Second Symphony. Six years then elapsed before the Third Symphony appeared, with its engaging combination of earthy, folk-style melodies and autumnal sadness. Then in 1885 came the monumental Fourth Symphony. Probably of all the four works, it best sums up what Brahms was aiming at, in turning the old great formal tradition to the deepest romantic expressive uses.

The affecting 'sighing' theme, played by violins and echoed by woodwinds, that opens the first movement, *Allegro non troppo*, was drawn by Brahms from one of Beethoven's most introspective works, the slow movement of the Op. 106 piano sonata. A dramatic conflict is set up by the second theme group, with its brilliant fanfares from horns and woodwinds, followed by a grand, soaring theme from the cellos. Two moods are thus put into opposition, and Brahms alternately develops the second theme group and the first, then moves with gathering force and power to the great climax which takes place in the very closing pages, or coda, an affirmative transformation of the reflective opening theme.

Notable in the movement, as indeed throughout the Symphony, are the subtle cross-rhythms which straddle bar-lines, and which give the music a richness of texture and turbulent inner life. In his orchestral colour Brahms seeks to create not sharp contrasts, but a subtly changing balance of strings, woodwinds and brass, like the innumerable degrees of light and shadow through which Rembrandt realizes the underlying monumental structure of his great paintings.

The slow movement, *Andante moderato*, begins with horns, soon joined by the other woodwinds over *pizzicato* strings, in a theme that has the slow lilt of dance music carrying a heavy weight of sadness. The violins come to the forefront with a long, singing melodic line of beautiful serenity. A stormy climax builds up, with triplet figures peeled out by the full orchestra, and then the triplet motif is transformed into a hauntingly lovely melody for the cellos. One of the great moments in this movement comes near the close, when this same consoling melody is taken up and expanded upon by the full string section.

The boisterous third movement, *Allegro giocoso*, had justly been called the only 'true scherzo' in the Brahms Symphonies. In its amiable and vigorous nature it is akin to a robust folk song. The last movement, *Allegro energico e passionato*, is one of the greatest examples of Brahms's 'groundbreaking conservatism'. He adapted the old baroque form of the *chaconne*, or *passacaglia*, with its variations over a ground bass. The basic theme of eight notes is announced by brass, woodwind and drums in eight mighty chords. It is present as the foundation of all the subsequent thirty variations and coda. But unlike the use of the form a century and two before Brahms, here the theme is so absorbed in the harmonic texture, and in melodies which are subtle variants of its basic shape, to the point that often the listener feels, rather than hears, its presence. This is especially so in the reflective middle section of the movement, with its plaintive flute solo, followed by awesome trombone chords. And, as in the first movement, the conclusion is a powerful and confident transformation of the opening theme.

Schumann:

Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 54

Allegro affetuoso

Intermezzo: Andantino grazioso

Allegro vivace



It was in 1840 that Robert Schumann finally succeeded in marrying Clara Wieck, despite her father's bitterly determined opposition. Up to this time he had composed virtually nothing but piano music. But from then on his genius sought a wider range of musical expression. The year of his marriage saw a passionate outpouring of songs, well over a hundred of them, mostly on the subject of love. In the following year, 1841, he was to write his 'Spring' Symphony; a Symphonic Fantasia, later to be transformed into the Fourth Symphony; and a Fantasia for piano and orchestra.

It was this Fantasia, written for Clara, which ultimately became the first movement of his Piano Concerto. Three more years passed before the rest was written, years in which he turned from one medium to another. After the succession of piano music, lieder and orchestral works, there came in 1842 a sudden switch to chamber music, when he wrote three string quartets, a piano quartet and the famous piano quintet. Then

he turned to choral music, writing his little-known cantata 'Paradise and the Peri' in 1843. But at the end of this year he first began to show signs of his coming mental troubles; and following a tour which took him and Clara as far afield as St. Petersburg and Moscow, he had another, more serious, period of nervous depression. Back at home in Leipzig he started work on 'Faust'. Then at the end of the year he and Clara moved to Dresden, where, in 1845, he returned to orchestral music and extended the Fantasia into a full-scale three-movement concerto.

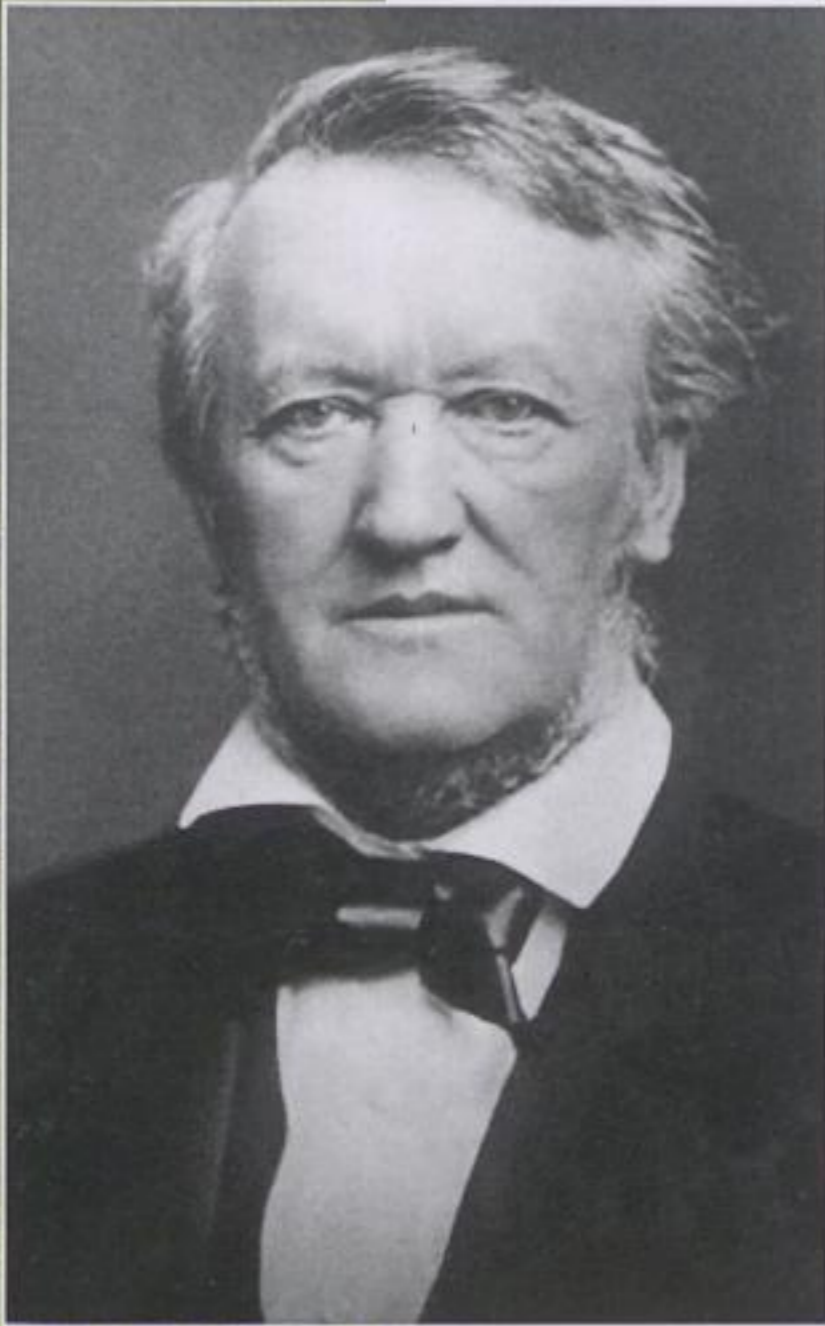
Schumann himself said that the work 'comes somewhere between a concerto, a symphony and a grand sonata'. Although written for Clara to play on tour (as indeed she soon did, with much success, in Leipzig, Vienna and Budapest) it is far from being merely the virtuoso showpiece which the term 'Romantic Concerto' is usually taken to suggest. Sir Donald Tovey described it as 'eminently beautiful from beginning to end...free, spacious, and balanced in form...rich and various in ideas.' Nor does it display Schumann's often-criticised thickness of scoring. It is mainly in the symphonies that his orchestration is apt to be turgid: in the Cello Concerto it is economical to the point of sparseness, and in the Piano Concerto the orchestral parts are carefully laid out with a real sensitivity to matters of timbre and balance.

After the soloist's opening flourish, the woodwinds announce the movement's deeply poetic main theme. It is taken up by the piano (with a slight but telling change in harmony), and continued on violins with piano accompaniment. The official second subject starts like the first subject, but now in C, the relative major key. Then in a more animated section it is taken up and extended by the clarinet. After a tutti (based on a phrase from the first subject continuation), a sudden key-change, to the distant realms of A flat major, ushers in the first part of the development section. The change in time signature and the slowing of tempo make this a contemplative and peaceful interlude. The peace is shortly disturbed by a brisk dialogue between soloist and orchestra, based on the opening bars of the concerto. Then a long and impassioned passage for piano, with flute and strings, leads to the home key for the recapitulation, which is fairly exact until the soloist's cadenza and the jubilant march that closes the movement.

The Intermezzo is a tender movement in Schumann's shy-sounding, reticent vein. It is mainly built from the opening theme, contrast being provided by a more expansive melody on the cellos. After a reminder from the woodwind of the first movement, the finale is launched. This movement is basically in sonata form, with the vigorous opening theme as first subject and the curiously syncopated melody (which first appears on the strings, echoed legato by the piano) as the second. Schumann introduces several unorthodox touches. Most notable among these are the use of new material (a sinuous oboe theme) that plays an important part in the development; the switch to D major at the start of the recapitulation; and the triumphant reappearance of the first subject at the end of the recapitulation. None of these disturbs the movement's balance or design, and arguably they enhance the Concerto's most essential qualities: its sheer spontaneity and youthful romanticism.

Wagner:

Overture: Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg



The German composer Richard Wagner was one of the major creative figures of the nineteenth century. A great man of the theatre, in his middle years he composed an unbroken succession of operatic masterpieces: *The Flying Dutchman* (1843), *Tannhauser* (1845), *Lohengrin* (1848), *Tristan and Isolde* (1859), *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg* (1867), and *The Ring of the Nibelungs* (1852-1874). His final opera was *Parsifal* (1882). He established the Bayreuth Festival for the performance of his music. He died after an eventful life in 1883.

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, or *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg*, was Wagner's only mature comedy, and his only work dealing with ordinary historical figures. The plot focuses upon the cobbler-poet Hans Sachs (1494-1576) and the Guild of Mastersingers. A wealthy member of the Guild, Pogner, has decided to offer his daughter, Eva, in marriage to the winner of a singing contest. The young hero Walther is in love with Eva, and decides to enter the contest but is unaware of its complex rules. With the aid of Sachs, and despite the

bitter opposition of Beckmesser, who also aspires to marry Eva, Walther wins the contest with his prize song, and so the hand of Eva.

Wagner created some of his finest music for the opera, which covers a very wide range of dramatic and emotional situations, but which is dominated above all by the fresh enthusiasm of young love, tempered by the wisdom of the Mastersingers, as personified by Sachs.

The Overture opens with the majestic theme associated with the Mastersingers themselves, and goes on to encompass many of the principal musico-dramatic themes of the opera, before concluding, as it began, with music of impressive pomp and ceremony with which the operatic action is launched.

Programme notes by David Patmore

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