Tanglewood 2022

Tuesday, August 16, 8pm | THE CYNTHIA AND OLIVER CURME CONCERT

Florence Gould Auditorium, Seiji Ozawa Hall

GARRICK OHLSSON, piano

JOHANNES BRAHMS
Complete works for solo piano, Program 1

Eight Piano Pieces, Opus 76
Capriccio in F-sharp minor (Un poco agitato)
Capriccio in B minor (Allegretto non troppo)
Intermezzo in A-flat (Grazioso)
Intermezzo in B-flat (Allegretto grazioso)
Capriccio in C-sharp minor (Agitato, ma non troppo presto)
Intermezzo in A (Andante con moto)
Intermezzo in A minor (Moderato semplice)
Capriccio in C (Grazioso ed un poco vivace)

11 Variations on an Original Theme, Opus 21, No. 1

14 Variations on a Hungarian Song, Opus 21, No. 2

{Intermission}

Four Ballades, Opus 10
No. 1 in D minor (Andante)
No. 2 in D (Andante)
No. 3 in B minor (Intermezzo: Allegro)
No. 4 in B (Andante con moto)

Variations (14) on a Theme by Paganini, Opus 35, Book 1

Tanglewood 2022

Thursday, August 18, 8pm | THE CYNTHIA AND OLIVER CURME CONCERT

Florence Gould Auditorium, Seiji Ozawa Hall

GARRICK OHLSSON, piano

JOHANNES BRAHMS
Complete works for solo piano, Program 2

Sonata No. 2 in F-sharp minor, Opus 2
Allegro non troppo ma energico
Andante con espressione
Scherzo: Allegro
Finale: Introduzione (sostenuto)—Allegro non troppo e rubato

Six Piano Pieces, Opus 118
Intermezzo in A minor (Allegro non assai, ma molto appassionato)
Intermezzo in A (Andante teneramente)
Ballade in G minor (Allegro energico)
Intermezzo in F minor (Allegretto un poco agitato)
Romanze in F (Andante)
Intermezzo in E-flat minor (Andante, largo e mesto)

{Intermission}

Three Intermezzi, Opus 117
No. 1 in E-flat (Andante moderato)
No. 2 in B-flat minor (Andante non troppo e con molto espressione)
No. 3 in C-sharp minor (Andante con moto)

Variations and Fugue in B-flat, on a Theme by Handel, Opus 24
Theme. Aria
Variations 1-25
Fugue

Tanglewood 2022

Tuesday, August 23, 8pm | THE CYNTHIA AND OLIVER CURME CONCERT

Florence Gould Auditorium, Seiji Ozawa Hall

GARRICK OHLSSON, piano

JOHANNES BRAHMS
Complete works for solo piano, Program 3

Two Rhapsodies, Opus 79
No. 1 in B minor (Agitato)
No. 2 in G minor (Molto passionato, ma non troppo allegro)

Seven Fantasies, Opus 116
Capriccio in D minor (Presto energico)
Intermezzo in A minor (Andante)
Capriccio in G minor (Allegro passionato)
Intermezzo in E (Adagio)
Intermezzo in E minor (Andante con grazia ed intimissimo sentimento)
Capriccio in D minor (Allegro agitato)

Variations (14) on a Theme by Paganini, Opus 35, Book 2

{Intermission}

Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Opus 5
Allegro maestoso
Andante espressivo; Andante molto
Scherzo: Allegro energico
Intermezzo (Rückblick): Andante molto
Finale: Allegro moderato ma rubato

Tanglewood 2022

Thursday, August 25, 8pm | THE CYNTHIA AND OLIVER CURME CONCERT

Florence Gould Auditorium, Seiji Ozawa Hall

GARRICK OHLSSON, piano

JOHANNES BRAHMS
Complete works for solo piano, Program 4

Scherzo in E-flat minor, Opus 4

Variations in F-sharp minor on a theme by Schumann, Opus 9

Sonata No. 1 in C, Opus 1
Allegro
Andante
Scherzo: Allegro molto e con fuoco
Finale: Allegro con fuoco

{Intermission}

16 Waltzes, Opus 39

Four Piano Pieces, Opus 119
No. 1 in B minor (Intermezzo: Adagio)
No. 2 in E minor (Intermezzo: Andantino un poco agitato)
No. 3 in C (Intermezzo: Grazioso e giocoso)
No. 4 in E-flat (Rhapsody: Allegro risoluto)

Notes on the program
by Jan Swafford

BRAHMS AND THE PIANO

Johannes Brahms began his serious musical training with the keyboard. By the time he left his hometown of Hamburg at age 20, he was planning a career as a composer/pianist. That meant he would be writing sonatas, concertos, and other keyboard works geared for himself as a performer. But little about Brahms's career thereafter went according to the conventional script, and neither did his relationship to the piano and the music he wrote for it.

It was less from ambition and more out of boredom that Brahms departed Hamburg on a concert tour at the end of 1853, accompanying a violinist. The results of the tour were historic. As both composer and pianist, Brahms revealed a talent for dazzling famous musicians. After one encounter with Brahms playing his music at the piano, Robert and Clara Schumann declared him to be a genius. In Düsseldorf the Schumanns practically adopted Brahms into their family. Soon Brahms was astonished to find that Robert had written a journal article virtually declaring this student barely out of his teens to be the coming savior of German music.

As Brahms was trying to absorb the implications of his sudden notoriety, disaster struck. In a fit of madness Robert Schumann tried to kill himself, and was institutionalized. In the next months, as Robert withered away, Brahms and Clara—fourteen years his senior, with seven children—fell into a helpless and frightening passion for each other. Meanwhile Brahms struggled to compose with the burden of Robert's prophecy hanging over him. Most of his attempts involved the piano, including the First Piano Concerto. When Robert finally died, Brahms's response was not to marry Clara but to flee back to Hamburg, where he continued his search for a voice, and for the confidence to go on.

Probably he did not realize it yet, but by then he was done with piano sonatas or any other big and ambitious solo keyboard works, with the exception of sets of variations. His first solo works after the youthful early keyboard opuses were the Opus 9 Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann and the Opus 10 Ballades. These were followed by four more sets of variations, the only solo piano works he produced between 1857 and 1863. After that, settled into Vienna, still relatively early in his career, he was finished with keyboard variations as well. He devoted the bulk of his career to chamber, orchestral, and vocal music. His solo piano music took the form of smallish works under the generic titles of Intermezzo, Ballade, Rhapsody, Capriccio, and the like.

In the largest view, Brahms's solo piano music stretches from the ambitious early sonatas with their mingling of Beethovenian and Romantic elements to the exquisite late works that are almost scientific studies of the art of composition in the guise of warm, passionate, charming little salon pieces.

THE EARLY PIANO MUSIC

Composed starting in his late teens, the piano sonatas of Opp. 1, 2, and 5 were the first and last Brahms published in the sonata genre, even though they constitute some of the most impressive early opuses in history. Unlike his later important works, these are not always immediately recognizable as Brahms. They are among the most purely and passionately Romantic works in all his keyboard music, but at the same time they exemplify his steady involvement with Classical formal models. The three Variation sets of opp. 9, 21, and 24 range from intimate and personal (the Variations on an Original Theme and the Variations on a Theme by Schumann) to the expansive, witty, and extraverted Variations on a Theme by Handel.

Our tour of the works will be in chronological order, which the opus numbers roughly track.

Scherzo in E-flat minor, Opus 4 (1851) (Program 4, Thursday, August 25)

The Romanticism of this earliest surviving work, written when Brahms was eighteen, is manifest first in its key of E-flat minor: the age was given to these dark-tinged tonalities neglected by earlier composers. It is ironically demonic in tone and relentless in rhythmic drive, with two lyrical Trios as contrast. The scherzo section is more gleefully demonic, the piano sound big and colorful, almost orchestral.

Sonata No. 2 in F-sharp minor, Opus 2 (1852) (Program 2, Thursday, August 18)

This sonata was actually Brahms's first, written when he was nineteen. It begins with a dramatic declamatory gesture in four octaves; from then on the piece is pealingly colorful, the expression ardent, recalling the late-18th-

century *Sturm und Drang* vein of perfervid emotionalism. Marked *Andante con espressione*, the second movement is variations on a stark, enigmatic theme that Brahms said was based on a German medieval lovesong.

Some Brahms thumbprints are already evident in this first major work. One is the orchestral approach to the instrument, another his adherence to Classical forms at the same time as he responded individually and creatively to his models. The scherzo is a case in point: the scherzo proper is a mad dash in B minor quickly over, its Trio a lilting, strangely poignant dance in D major. In the finale Brahms tries a striking experiment: an introduction like an improvisatory meditation on the coming main theme. After the intense and often *marcato* Allegro, the sonata trails off into ambiguous filigree, with two big chords for a deliberately unfulfilled finish.

Sonata No. 1 in C, Opus 1 (1852-53) (Program 4, Thursday, August 25)

The C major sonata, issued as Opus 1 but composed second, has a conciseness contrasting the Romantically extravagant F-sharp minor. Now the Classical side of Brahms takes center stage. It begins with a muscular gesture echoing Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* Sonata, not only in its proclamatory quality but in its quick turn to a quiet, contrapuntal phrase. The most identifiably "Brahmsian" moments of the first movement are some lyrical, yearning subthemes in parallel thirds—already a Brahms thumbprint.

The evocative second movement is a theme and variations with an overtly Romantic element: it is based on a folk song, "Furtively the moon rises," and pictures the text verse by verse. It has an antique, faraway quality that foreshadows Brahms's "bardic" style. The scherzo is in an ebullient E minor; it has a long, elegant, surging Trio. Brahms said the blistering and brilliant 9/8 finale was based on the Robert Burns song "My heart's in the highlands." Like many last movements this is a rondo, but among other novelties the rondo theme is varied and developed on each return, instead of the usual more or less literal repeat.

Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Opus 5 (1853) (Program 3, Tuesday, August 23)

The massive, five-movement F minor was Brahms's last piano sonata. For all his youth—he was twenty when he composed it—the piece has a seasoned maturity beyond the earlier pieces. There is less virtuosity for its own sake, more expressive depth and variety. The sonata seems almost like a summary and compendium of its predecessors: a grand, foreboding, and virtuosic first movement like the F-sharp minor, but tightly made like the C major, with all the melodic material derived from transformations of the opening theme; a brilliant scherzo, rhythmically dazzling like its predecessors, its placid Trio more contrasting than usual; a pensive and songful slow movement. That slow movement is not an old tune as in the C major sonata, but rather a song without words, whose text Brahms cites at the head of the movement: "The twilight falls, the moonlight gleams, two hearts in love unite, embraced in rapture."

The finale approximates sonata-rondo form (traditionally ABACABA or the like) and is perhaps the most expressively complex movement Brahms had written—the almost playful beginning grows into expansive and impassioned sections, these resolve into an ingenuous chorale theme, and all finally comes to a crashing, two-fisted coda.

Four Ballades, Opus 10 (1854) (Program 1, Tuesday, August 16)

The title "Ballade" implies a story, like a sung ballad, the music free of traditional formal patterns (though in such pieces Brahms often tends to some kind of ABA outline). The first of the four pieces is a brooding song without words in D minor, the melody reflecting the first two verses of the Scottish ballad "Edward," which begins,

> Why does your sword so drip with blood, Edward, Edward?
> And why so sad are ye?
> "Oh, I have killed my hawk so fine..."

But it is his father Edward has killed, not his hawk. The music wordlessly sets the lyric. This is a work as close to true program music as Brahms would ever approach. We sense that not only in the implied text, but in the singular sound of the music. In its archaic atmosphere and striding dactylic rhythms, the "Edward" Ballade is a defining example of the Brahmsian "bardic style."

Each of the Opus 10 Ballades tells its own "story," concrete or abstract, each a striking piece, each something of a stylistic experiment. The middle section of No. 2 perhaps recalls the dancing course of some Schubert impromptus, No. 3 the earlier Brahms E-flat minor Scherzo. No. 4 is the most expressively intricate, beginning with an almost Chopinesque grace but contrasting that with the B section, a quiet *Lento* marked "with intimate sentiment." This music murmurs on as if the fingers were drifting into its subtle tonal colors.

BRAHMS'S VARIATION SETS

The five sets of variations Brahms wrote between 1854 and 1863 are not only beautiful and masterful examples of the genre; they also trace a personal journey. The *Schumann* Variations are intimately involved in his emotional life of the time, while his mentor Robert Schumann was wasting away in an asylum and Brahms was falling in love with Clara Schumann. The two shorter sets of Opus 21, the Variations on an Original Theme and the Variations on a Hungarian Song, mark a turn to a theme in his own voice and to one rising from his involvement with the Hungarian/Gypsy style. The next two sets are at once the largest, finest, and last of Brahms's piano variations: the Variations on a Theme by Handel and Variations on a Theme by Paganini.

Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann, Opus 9 (1854) (Program 4, Thursday, August 25)

One day in May 1854, in the period of their growing love, with Brahms trying to find his creative footing, Clara Schumann played for Johannes her variations on a theme Robert wrote shortly before his breakdown. Immediately Brahms began writing his own set of variations on the same theme. There is an unmistakably intimate and personal atmosphere to these sixteen variations. To begin with, Robert's eloquently simple melody is based on his "Clara theme," a set of notes—C–B–A–G-sharp–A—that he used to symbolize his wife in his music. The *espressivo* penultimate variation is in the style of a song without words, while the final one is whispering, strange, and portentous, seeming to evoke distant bells.

Variations on an Original Theme and Variations on a Hungarian Song, Opus 21, nos. 1 and 2 (1856-57) (Program 1, Tuesday, August 16)

The theme Brahms supplied for his "Original Theme" Variations in D major is in his distinctive poignant and lyrical mode. Here he reveals great skill in creating flow, contrast, and balance among variations. In the course of the eleven mostly short segments he also explores some of his prophetic rhythmic conceptions: variations 5-7, for example, unfold in a kind of meterless and almost pulseless rhythmic fog. The last variation is expansive and summarizing in effect, featuring long trills and an ethereal atmosphere recalling the variations in Beethoven's last piano sonata.

Most of Brahms's works in the Hungarian/gypsy style are ebullient and passionate, with sudden shifts of tempo and mood. The Variations on a Hungarian Song are a case in point. They are largely tiny variations on a tiny D major theme, each exquisitely realized micro-miniatures with kaleidoscopic moods. The breathless and mercurial last variation is followed by a return to the original theme for a vigorous coda.

Variations and Fugue on a Theme by G.F. Handel, Opus 24 (1861) (Program 2, Thursday, August 18)

The Handel theme Brahms chose for this set is striking to hear in the Romantic century: a genial and dancelike theme sparkling with Baroque ornamental frills. With this work Brahms pays tribute to one of the giants of the past who were his virtual religion. Now the subjectivity of Brahms's earlier music including the *Schumann* Variations has given way to a more impersonal voice—though this music is also full of irony, youthful ebullience, and sheer fun.

These are *character variations*, each of them strongly marked and usually involving some clear style and a steady evocation of other instruments: Handel's theme becomes yearningly Romantic (as if in strings), bravura (winds), and folkish; there are keyboard toccatas, a fanfare, a flourish of hunting horns, a Baroque aria as if accompanied by guitar, a lilting *siciliana*, a tinkling music-box. At the end comes a grand summary fugue that is Baroquely Handelian and Brahmsian at the same time.

Variations on a Theme by Paganini, Opus 35 (1862-63)

(**Book 1**: Program 1, Tuesday, August 16; **Book 2**: Program 3, Tuesday, August 23)

In the early 1860s Brahms became friends with small-statured but steel-fingered pianist Karl Tausig, who had studied with über-virtuoso Franz Liszt. Inspired by Tausig, Brahms decided to make a foray into Lisztian territory with a set of supremely challenging variations on a Hungarian-flavored theme by the violinist Paganini—whose superhuman skills had once inspired Liszt. Each of the twenty-eight variations amounts to a figuration study, often concentrating on a specific technique: racing thirds or octaves in each hand, arpeggios, complicated trills, high velocity, and the like. Nearly everything is *brillante* in the extreme, sometimes nearly berserk; over and over the segments dazzle the ears as well as tax the fingers. Brahms joked to his publisher that the cover of the music should

feature instruments of torture. And here, having long since left piano sonatas behind, Brahms also departed from the keyboard variation genre.

16 Waltzes, Opus 39 (1865) (Program 4, Thursday, August 25)

Brahms was a lifelong fan of popular music, especially the varieties he heard around him in Vienna: waltzes and the Hungarian music played by Gypsy bands in cafes. He wrote a good deal in both veins himself, among them these sixteen small pieces that are as beloved as his later *Liebeslieder Waltzes*. They amount to a series of small excursions in contrasting moods of the dance. They progress from sentimental to pompous to gracious, and so on—often recalling an important Brahms model, Schubert. No. 14 is a vivacious Hungarian tune with imitations of the Gypsy cimbalom. Most famous is the swaying, high-Viennese, deliciously schmaltzy No. 15, one of Brahms's artless little melodies to put beside his ubiquitous *Lullaby*.

THE MIDDLE PERIOD

Starting with the Eight Piano Pieces of 1871-78, Brahms wrote only smaller piano works going under the noncommittal titles of Capriccio, Intermezzo, Rhapsody, and the like. Now focused on his larger works, he spent long stretches writing no solo piano music at all. The sets he issued periodically are in the tradition of Romantic keyboard character pieces. But here as in all else, Brahms was not a mainstream Romantic. One sign of his independence is the refusal in his maturity to write any sort of programmatic instrumental piece based on stories or images, as in a great many Romantic character pieces by composers including his mentor Robert Schumann.

Any of Brahms's six collections of miniatures can be performed as a set, but the pieces work equally well as single items, as encores, in ad hoc groupings. The pieces usually explore one or two basic ideas, saturating the fabric with them to the point that it is sometimes hard to say where the boundary lies between harmony and melody. There is a steady interest in rhythmic novelties: exploring two-against-three and other polyrhythmic effects, shifting the perceived downbeat around the bar, sometimes blurring the sense of meter or pulse to create a wandering rhythmic flow. We hear much of his characteristic "*moll-Dur*" ("minor-major") quality, the German term for his poignant mixture of major and minor modes.

At the same time, there is no question that these works short in duration but large in impact came out of Brahms's life and feelings. Even as he used his keyboard miniatures to explore some of the deepest levels of his craft, and to develop ideas that went into his larger works, their immediate effect contains some of the most palpably emotional music he ever wrote, from delicate wistfulness to full-throated passion and despair.

Eight Pieces, Opus 76 (1871-78; mostly 1878) (Program 1, Tuesday, August 16)

All the pieces of Opus 76 are labeled either Capriccio or Intermezzo, the former being generally more weighty, the latter more placid. Each has its own personality, its characteristic texture and figuration. The opening Capriccio in F-sharp minor is marked *Un poco agitato*, a little agitated, but it is more than a little so. There is a sense of surging passion that never relents and carries through the sections of the ABA^1B^1Coda outline. For contrast, Capriccio No. 2 in B minor is a witty, dancing and prancing piece in a vein of Viennese *Gemütlichkeit*, meaning warm, cozy good cheer.

Intermezzo No. 3 in A-flat is a study in rhythmic displacement, the lyrical and expressive right hand sounding like the beat, which is really contained in the staccato, dancing left hand. The quietly remarkable Intermezzo No. 4 in B-flat unfolds in hazy harmonies wandering in a misty landscape. In a lyrical and passionate mode, the central Capriccio No. 5 in C-sharp minor is overtly Chopinesque, and like the Chopin Preludes it is a big piece on a small canvas. Marked *Agitato*, it features abrupt changes of direction, charged silences, and agitated chromaticism.

Much of the No. 6 Intermezzo in A major unfolds flowingly in a polyrhythmic fog in which neither meter nor pulse always defines itself. Intermezzo No. 7 in A minor is largely through-composed, though the lyrical movement proper is framed at each end by a solemn declamatory song. The final Capriccio, No. 8, is a quietly wandering web of roving harmonies nominally in C major, but only toward the end does the key come into focus.

Two Rhapsodies, Opus 79 (1879) (Program 3, Tuesday, August 23)

Brahms rarely spoke of the personal inspirations of a work, but the intensely passionate quality of the two Rhapsodies of Opus 76 seems to rise from a clear source—his feelings for a woman. They are dedicated to Elizabeth von Herzogenberg, whose long association with Brahms began when she was a brilliant and bewitching teenaged student of piano and composition in Vienna. He may well have commemorated one more old, lost love by placing his yearnings and regrets into these two perfervid pieces.

The major changes from Opus 76 in these Rhapsodies have to do with heightened drama and a stronger character for each. The first, in F-sharp minor, explodes into a rush of sound and emotion, a surging intensity that at times becomes almost crazed. The harmonies are some of the most unsettled Brahms ever wrote, and much of the music is a steady developing variation of the electrifying opening figure. The quiet B section provides some relief, but the pealing figure soon intrudes, building to tremendous intensity until there is a massive uprush of notes like a whirlwind. Both A and B sections return lengthened and intensified. The coda sinks to an exhausted *pianissimo*.

The G minor Rhapsody is less frenzied than the first, but if anything more relentless in its drive. Its layout is a miniature sonata form; the second theme with its ominous surging triplet ostinato builds to an anguished cry. The development section is entirely devoted to the surging triplets, which rise like a mounting obsession. The coda bleeds away the figures surrounding the triplets until there is little left but the simmering, fading obsession figure.

THE LATE PIANO WORKS

Brahms's last four sets of piano miniatures—more Capriccios, Intermezzos, and the like—were mostly written in 1892-93, a decade after his last solo keyboard music. By this point he was consciously winding down as a composer. Why this surge of little pieces? Brahms did not say why, but surely some of it was the desire of an aging master to return to his own instrument. Beyond that, these pieces may have been a gift for the ailing love of his life, Clara Schumann, who could no longer perform extended works. Clara loved these pieces dearly. The last piano works are the final distillation of the man and craftsman: intimate, often autumnal and elegiac, full of regrets over the past yet with bursts of ebullience, written from the heart and directed to the heart of each player and listener.

Seven Fantasies, Opus 116 (by 1892) (Program 3, Tuesday, August 23)

Though grouped as Fantasias, these seven miniatures are individually headed with Brahms's usual titles of Capriccio and Intermezzo. Whether they were planned as a set to play in one sitting is a longstanding question. The *Presto energico* that begins the set is an inimitably Brahmsian stormy minor-key piece. Its form is largely through-composed, with a hint of a B section but otherwise a continual development of the opening gesture.

The pieces proceed in contrasts: the limpidly lyrical Intermezzo No. 2 followed by the pealing and restless *Allegro passionato* of the No. 3 Capriccio, then a sighing No. 4 Intermezzo in which the player's two hands seem to be engaged in a flirtatious dialogue. No. 5 is a brief and quietly ironic Intermezzo based on a single lilting idea, No. 6 a genial and flowing ABA Intermezzo, the only one of the set in a major key. The concluding Capriccio, an ABA form marked *Allegro agitato*, picks up the dynamic opening plunge of No. 3. It ends the set with a thundering *fortissimo*.

Three Intermezzos, Opus 117 (1892) (Program 2, Thursday, August 18)

Feeling his age, declining in creativity, and burying a row of friends brought Brahms to an emotional crisis in these years. A friend heard him howling in anguish as he composed. Perhaps he was working on these three Intermezzos, which he called "cradle-songs of my sorrows." At times they have an almost uncanny beauty and poignancy. Brahms prefaced the first with some lines from a folksong: "Sleep softly, my child, sleep softly and well!/It grieves me so to see you weep."

Each piece is unique. The first Intermezzo, in E-flat major, is the most like a lullaby, with a lovely and ingenuous melody that repeats over and over as if with gathering emotion. The middle is a gentle stretch marked "always *pianissimo* but very expressive." No. 2 in B-flat minor is a soft babbling texture marked "sweetly," with no sense of meter and little of pulse—and no real cadence until the last chord. The sweetly contrasting B section has a waltz-like lilt, then the A material is developed on its return. Stark, dark, and murmuring, No. 3 in C-sharp minor could be a lullaby only as prelude to a sad dream. After a lacy and hopeful B section the piece ends as plaintively as it began.

Six Pieces, Opus 118 (by 1893) (Program 2, Thursday, August 18)

These introverted pieces are again freestanding works, designed to be combined ad lib. with other pieces. With their intensified exploration of restless harmonies, unsettled rhythms, and thematic integration, they are some of the most influential works Brahms wrote, a model for Schoenberg and beyond. Except for the first, all are in a simple ABA outline with only perfunctory transitions among the sections.

The first Intermezzo, nominally in A minor though never clearly so until the end, begins with a cry of anguish. The rest of this short piece takes the opening idea through steady variation and kaleidoscopic harmonies. Another Intermezzo, No. 2 is more wistful in tone; it proceeds with a couple of motifs woven into every part of the fabric.

Here is another trend in Brahms that intensifies here: as later in Schoenberg, the motivic saturation is such that it becomes hard to draw a line between what were once the largely separate realms of melody and harmony.

No. 3, called a Ballade, is a Gypsy-styled *Allegro energico*. In contrast, the No. 4 Intermezzo is a quietly babbling harmonic labyrinth with a more striding B section. No. 5, called Romance, has a flowing melody steadily developed and an archaic, storytelling feel, which is contrasted by a sweet *Allegretto grazioso* B section. The last Intermezzo in the set is in E-flat minor, a high-Romantic and often tragic key. It is marked *Andante, largo e mesto*, the last word meaning "mournful." The darkly dancing middle section has Gypsy overtones. The piece ends in deep gloom.

Four Pieces, Opus 119 (1893) (Program 4, Thursday, August 25)

Once again, this set proceeds in contrasts. The autumnal Intermezzo in B minor is one of his most remarkable short works, its leading idea a texture of murmuring, complex harmonies. The B section is warm and gracious, but with its own touches of poignancy. Next comes a dashing E minor Intermezzo marked "a little agitated," its middle section a *gemütlich* waltz in E major.

After two yearning and shadowed minor-key pieces, Brahms gives us two bright and lively ones in major. No. 3, a lilting C major Intermezzo marked *giocoso*, joyfully, has a lyrical middle section. For his final published solo piano work, Brahms exits with a lusty *Allegro risoluto* Rhapsody in his Gypsy mode. It is the longest and most ebullient of the late piano pieces, with a grand and memorable theme.

And so Brahms said farewell to his instrument, at the same time saying farewells to so many other things and people he loved: farewell to Clara Schumann, farewell to his creative life, farewell to his backward-looking conceptions of music as he observed the advent of Mahler and Richard Strauss, and the descent of his culture toward catastrophe. Brahms saw all that coming, along with his approaching end, and that too played a part in his gigantic little piano works of 1892-93.

Jan Swafford is an award-winning composer and author whose books include biographies of Brahms, Beethoven, Mozart, and Charles Ives. He is an alumnus of the Tanglewood Music Center, where he studied composition.

Guest Artist

Garrick Ohlsson

Since his triumph as winner of the 1970 Chopin International Piano Competition, Ohlsson has established himself worldwide for both his interpretive and technical skills. Long regarded as one of the world's leading Chopin exponents, he commands an enormous repertoire that ranges over the entire piano literature. A student of the late Claudio Arrau, Ohlsson is particularly noted for his masterly performances of Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert, as well as the Romantic repertoire. He has at his command more than eighty concertos, ranging from Haydn and Mozart to works of the 21st century, many commissioned for him. This season, in concerto repertoire including Beethoven, Grieg, and Rachmaninoff, he returned to the Sarasota Orchestra, Quad City Symphony, and the Atlanta, BBC Scottish, Dallas, Madison, Seattle, Toronto, and Tulsa symphony orchestras. Ohlsson and piano-duo partner Kirill Gerstein performed several recitals across the U.S. In the 2018-19 season he launched a multi-season project exploring the complete solo piano works of Brahms in four programs. An avid chamber musician, Ohlsson has collaborated with the Cleveland, Emerson, Tokyo, and Takács string quartets and, in May 2018, the Boston Symphony Chamber Players on tour in Europe. With violinist Jorja Fleezanis and cellist Michael Grebanier, he is a founding member of the San Francisco-based FOG Trio. Passionate about singing and singers, Ohlsson has appeared in recital with such legendary artists as Magda Olivero, Jessye Norman, and Ewa Podles´.

Ohlsson can be heard on the Arabesque, RCA Victor Red Seal, Angel, BMG, Delos, Hänssler, Nonesuch, Telarc, Hyperion, and Virgin Classics labels. His critically acclaimed ten-disc set of the complete Beethoven sonatas for Bridge Records was awarded a Grammy for volume 3. Among his latest CDs are Brahms Piano Sonatas and Rhapsodies (2021) and piano quintets of Elgar and Beach (2020), both on Hyperion.

A native of White Plains, NY, Garrick Ohlsson began his piano studies at age 8 at the Westchester Conservatory of Music; at 13 he entered the Juilliard School in New York. His musical development has been influenced in completely different ways by a succession of distinguished teachers, most notably Claudio Arrau, Olga Barabini, Tom Lishman, Sascha Gorodnitzki, Rosina Lhévinne, and Irma Wolpe. Although he won first prizes at the 1966 Busoni Competition in Italy and the 1968 Montreal Piano Competition, it was his 1970 triumph at the International

Chopin Competition in Warsaw, where he won the Gold Medal (he remains the single American to have done so), that brought him worldwide recognition as one of the finest pianists of his generation. Since then, he has made nearly a dozen tours of Poland, where he retains immense personal popularity. Ohlsson was awarded the Avery Fisher Prize in 1994 and received the 1998 University Musical Society Distinguished Artist Award in Ann Arbor, MI. He is the 2014 recipient of the Jean Gimbel Lane Prize in Piano Performance from the Northwestern University Bienen School of Music, and in August 2018 the Polish Deputy Culture Minister awarded him with the Gloria Artis Gold Medal for cultural merit. He is a Steinway Artist and makes his home in San Francisco.

A frequent guest at Tanglewood, Garrick Ohlsson was the 2017 Koussevitzky Artist, supported by Cynthia and Oliver Curme/The Lost & Foundation, Inc., a designation created to honor artists whose presence at the BSO's summer home has made a lasting impact on the musical and educational programs there.

The Cynthia and Oliver Curme Concerts

August 16 to August 25, 2022

The four August performances of Garrick Ohlsson in Ozawa Hall are supported by a generous gift from Great Benefactors Cynthia and Oliver Curme. Cindy and Ollie are true champions of the Boston Symphony Orchestra both in Boston and the Berkshires. They are longtime concert-goers, who have been a part of the BSO family for more than 38 years.

Both Cindy and Ollie are passionate advocates for music and arts education, and they are musicians themselves. Cindy, who is a classically trained pianist, worked at the Symphony as part of the administration from 1984 to 1995, and she later served as a volunteer. Elected a BSO Advisor in 2003 and Trustee in 2005, Cindy served as a Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees from 2015 to 2016 and from 2017 to 2018. In 2021, Cindy was elevated to Life Trustee. Cindy remains extremely active in her role as a Life Trustee, serving on several board committees. Cindy and Ollie have served on many Symphony and Tanglewood Gala Committees, including as co-chairs for the 2010 Opening Night at Tanglewood and 2005 Opening Night at Symphony. Ollie served on the BSO's Media and Technology Committee.

In addition to her involvement here at the BSO, Cindy has been involved with several arts organizations, including serving as Chair of the Advisory Council at Boston University Tanglewood Institute and the boards of the Boston Conservatory at Berklee and The Terezín Music Foundation. Ollie, who recently served as a senior advisor at Battery Ventures and currently teaches at the Brandeis Osher Center for Lifelong Learning, studied several instruments as a child, and continued into adulthood. Together, they share their commitment to music with their three sons, all of whom studied music.

The Curmes were leading supporters of the Tanglewood Forever Campaign, the Artistic Initiative, and the Immediate Impact Fund. The Curmes named Cindy's Café at the new Linde Center for Music and Learning, in celebration of Cindy's lifelong association with Tanglewood as staff, volunteer, Trustee, and Chair of the Tanglewood Forever Campaign. Cindy also served as Co-Chair of the Beyond Measure Campaign. Longtime donors to the BSO Annual Funds, Cindy and Ollie are members of the Koussevitzky Society. They have also supported many BSO programs and projects over the years, including the Fellowship program at the Tanglewood Music Center, the Play It Forward Fund, and even the BSO's production of the "New Tanglewood Tales" and "BSO 360."