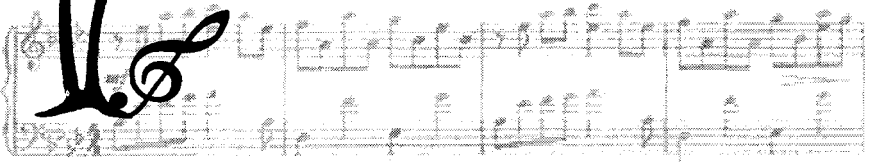




FRIENDS OF MUSIC



PRESENTS



THE LYNN UNIVERSITY PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA

JON ROBERTSON
Conductor

DANIELA SHTEREVA
Violin

Monday February 11, 2008

8:00 PM

**THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT SEASON
OF THE FRIENDS OF MUSIC OF HUNTINGTON LAKES
THEATRE OF THE PERFORMING ARTS**

PROGRAM

Academic Festival Overture,

Johannes Brahms

Opus 80

Concerto for Violin

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

and Orchestra in D Major, Opus 35

Allegro moderato

Canzonetta: Andante

Finale: Vivacissimo

Daniela Shtereva

Violin

~ Intermission ~

Symphony No. 8 in G Major, Opus 88

Antonin Dvorak

Allegretto con brio

Adagio

Allegretto grazioso — molto vivace

Allegro ma non troppo



THE PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA OF LYNN UNIVERSITY

The Philharmonia Orchestra sets the standard for university-level symphonic training. The orchestra was founded in 1991, as the Harid String Orchestra with the founding of the Conservatory and became a full symphony orchestra in 1993. As an integral part of the training of both undergraduate and graduate music students of Lynn University, the Philharmonia offers excellent orchestral training through the preparation and performance of orchestral repertory and its public performances. Both the public and the press have enthusiastically received the orchestra. Music directors of the Philharmonia have included numerous conductors of renown. The orchestra has performed frequently in many of the finest venues of this region. Now in its 12th season as a full symphony orchestra, the Lynn University Philharmonia continues to present high-quality concerts of the finest repertory.

THE DISTINGUISHED CONDUCTOR

Maestro Jon Robertson enjoys a distinguished career, both as a pianist, conductor and academician. Already established as a brilliant concert pianist, he was awarded full scholarship six consecutive years to The Juilliard School of Music, where he earned a B.M., M.S., and D.M.A. degrees in piano performance.

Maestro Robertson became the Conductor and Music Director of the Redlands Symphony Orchestra in the fall of 1982 and remains so to the present.

As guest conductor, Maestro Robertson has conducted orchestras nationally and internationally, among others, the San Francisco Symphony, the Beijing Central Philharmonic in China, the Cairo Symphony Orchestra in Egypt and was the principal guest conductor of the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra in Yerevan from 1995 to 1998.

For twelve years, 1992-2004, Maestro Robertson served as Chair of the Department of Music at UCLA and is presently Dean of Lynn University Conservatory of Music.

"Robertson is a conductor who inspires confidence in a listener — his beat is utterly secure; his feeling for structure, unfailing; his overall manner, no-nonsense elegance."

Mark Swed, Los Angeles Times

THE DISTINGUISHED SOLOIST

Daniela Shtereva is the first-place winner of the Lynn University National Violin Competition for 2007 as well as other important competitions in recent years. Born in Bulgaria, her performances at prestigious venues have been numerous and of high critical acclaim. She holds several academic degrees, foreign as well as domestic. Her teachers have been major figures in the world she now so brilliantly occupies. Among her teachers has been world-famous Russian violin virtuoso, David Oistrakh. Among her other achievements has been the five CDs she recently recorded. She performs on a renowned instrument lent her by her teacher.

We welcome Ms. Shtereva to our concert hall and wish her well in her career.



PROGRAM NOTES

**Academic Festival Overture,
Op. 80**

**Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)**

The contrast between Brahms the private man and the artist is striking and revealing. His home was always in a chaotic state. He paid almost no attention to his personal appearance, wearing his inexpensive, almost shabby, outmoded clothing; he always travelled third class and dined in modest restaurants. In his personal relationships, he could sometimes be rude, brusque, even cruel; at other times, he was the most caring and warmest of friends. A lifelong bachelor, his intimate behavior might have earned him a place in People magazine or a tabloid. In money matters, he never was able to forget his early poverty and was always extremely frugal, at times even cheap, although his apartment had rolls of money lying scattered everywhere.

In artistic matters, however, he was fanatically methodical and meticulous, obsessively organized and orderly. More than any other composer, Brahms was painfully aware of his place in history and of his responsibility to his self-imposed destiny. For this reason,

he was almost psychotically self-critical; in later life he destroyed much of his early work.

Success came late to Brahms, but it came resoundingly following his towering first symphony and other major compositions that were at once recognized throughout Europe as those of a true master creator. In 1879, the University of Breslau awarded Brahms, a self-effacing man, an honorary degree. At first, Brahms hardly acknowledged the honor, merely sending the university a post card; soon afterwards, persuaded by friends that he was treating his distinction with insufficient respect and gratitude, he composed the Academic Festival Overture to commemorate the event.

The overture is based on a number of traditional, and somewhat raucous student songs; it is a rousing piece, robust, lively, indeed even humorous, and in the eyes of the university officials, ill befitting the dignity of the institution and the honor granted to Brahms. The overture, is in fact, a work quite atypical of Brahms, lacking his usual elevated tone, and certainly the solemnity expected on this exalted occasion.

The most famous and most widely recognized part of the Academic Festival Overture (a title Brahms disliked) is the final section, based on the Latin song, the *Gaudeamus Igitur*, which in English reads: "Let us now enjoy ourselves, / while we are still young / For when golden youth has fled / and in (old) age our joys are dead / then the dust doth claim us."

Brahms conducted the first performance at the university; it was received without enthusiasm. Today it is one of Brahms' most popular orchestral works, filled with zest, a sense of fun, a happy tuneful music reflecting university life from the perspective of the young, vigorous students in the prime of life, while paying scant attention to the desiccated professoriate.

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**Concerto for Violin and
Orchestra in D Major, Op. 35**

**Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
(1840 - 1893)**

It is evident that a mistake was made, unavoidably, in scheduling the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto twice in one season. This happened

by circumstances beyond our control. But wait — this may well turn into a fortunate consequence. Let me explain.

A few years ago, the Harid Conservatory had two outstanding violin students, BOTH of whom had prepared the same piece for an important competition. Their teacher had permitted — in fact encouraged — this situation. He wanted the audience to hear how two gifted performers could each interpret the same music in such very different ways. It reminded me of my shock of actually hearing the Tchaikovsky performed by Nathan Milstein in a maximally "schmaltzy" way, whereas Jascha Heifetz played it with minimum sentiment. Both played superbly, but so differently — a revelation for me in my adolescent experience of great music.

This circumstance also relates to a nineteenth century custom of having the same music played twice successively if demanded by length and interrupting applause by the audience.

Finally, there is my firm belief in literally "soaking" myself in new — and demanding — music until it becomes familiar — and, hopefully, pleasurable. So with this second performance you are on your way.

Take your pick. All these methods work to enhance one's familiarity and enjoyment ... although customs have changed in our time.

Most important, the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto is indisputably one of the very small handful of violin concertos clearly destined to offer great pleasure to our great grandchildren and theirs. (I guarantee it in writing. You can trust me.)

* * *

Symphony No. 8 in G Major, op. 88

**Antonin Dvorák
(1841 - 1904)**

*"With Handel and Haydn, Dvorák is the healthiest
of all composers."*

Paul Stefan

Dvorák's Ninth Symphony ("From the New World") is his best known and one of the sturdiest pillars in the repertory. Indeed, it

is, ironically, for this reason considered a 'warhorse' that is, a work that has been played, some feel, too often, tending to be taken for granted, evoking a feeling of "Oh, no, not that again!" Familiarity breeds contempt — the ironic penalty of success. The Ninth, a work of vast dimensions and infinite vistas, established Dvorák's reputation universally. But as the saying goes: "No good (or great) deed goes unpunished."

Thus unfortunately overshadowed by the Ninth, his other works tend to be neglected, the attitude being: "If he could do it once, why not always?" Unreasonable, but all too human. In short, audiences were and remain spoiled.

Tonight's work, the Eighth, is certainly played but not as often as it deserves to be. Unlike the "New World", it is a work of simpler, more direct beauty, startling in its sunniness and apparent artlessness. Its melodies flow effortlessly, seemingly too easily, yet are deeply moving. To Dvorák, melody was the essence of music, never mere 'catchy' tunes, ingenious but finally superficial. The effect is to satisfy our deepest need for beauty.

Some have said of Dvorák's music that it all too often falls just a bit short of first-rank greatness. This symphony, the Eighth, should help to establish his rightful place in music.

Never one with a tragic view of life, lacking an oceanic sweep or dark passion, his music avoids the 'gloom, doom, tomb' syndrome of other composers. Yet it is never merely 'pretty'; somehow, magically, it attains a depth of candid sincerity. The joyous transparency of his melody is like a cool summer breeze gently breathing across a colorful flower-filled meadow. Although he had more than his share of personal sorrow, Dvorák's view of life was joyful and uncomplicated. An unpretentious, warm person and artist, unsophisticated — except in his music — he generously offers us in this symphony a work perfectly reflective of his gentle and serene inner being.

DAVID KAPLAN



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