



PRESENTS

PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA
of
LYNN UNIVERSITY

DR. ALBERT-GEORGE SCHRAM
Conductor

Wednesday, March 2, 2005

8:00 P.M.

THE SPLENDID SEVENTEENTH
CONCERT SEASON
OF HUNTINGTON LAKES
THEATRE OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

PROGRAM

**Symphony No. 39 in E Flat
Major, (K. 543)**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Adagio: Allegro

Andante con moto

Menuetto: Allegretto

Finale: Allegro

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 1 in D Major (*Titan*)

Gustav Mahler

I Langsam, schleppend wie
ein Naturtaut (Slowly and
drawn out like a sound of nature)

II Kräftig bewegt, doch nicht
zu schnell (Busily agitated
but not too fast)

III Feierlich und gemessen
ohne zu schleppen (Solemn and
measured without dragging)

IV Stürmisch bewegt
(Stormily agitated)



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 11th season as a full symphony orchestra, the Lynn University Philharmonia continues to present high-quality concerts of the finest repertory.

THE DISTINGUISHED CONDUCTOR: ALBERT-GEORGE SCHRAM

A native of the Netherlands, Dr. Schram is the resident conductor of the Lynn University Conservatory of Music Philharmonia Orchestra, he has also been resident staff conductor and guest conductor of a number of well-known German orchestras. He was the resident conductor of the Florida Philharmonic. To his credit, wherever Dr. Schram has conducted, performance standards and repertory have been enhanced and subscriptions have increased.

Not only in the U.S. but also in the Far East and Europe has Dr. Schram conducted, sharing his musical expertise and warmth wherever he has been called.

Dr. Schram's studies have been in the European tradition under the tutelage of major conductors, with those of world-class status. His studies have taken him to Europe, Canada, and America. He holds the Doctorate of Musical Arts in conducting.

Huntington Lakes welcomes Dr. Albert-George Schram to our Theatre of the Performing Arts.

PROGRAM NOTES

Symphony No. 39 in **E Flat Major (K. 543)** **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** (1756-1791)

The pathetic circumstances of Mozart's funeral in 1791 are always cited by his biographers to indicate the extreme poverty of his final years. Buried unceremoniously in an unmarked grave, he was then thirty-six years old. His many heart-breaking letters at this time to a friend, a fellow member of the then-liberal secret fraternal society of Freemasons, seeking to borrow money, reveal the depth of his misery.

Yet Mozart was a successful composer; his music was popular, his creativity widely recognized (if not fully appreciated), and so his income should have been adequate. Earlier he had come to Vienna, the Paris of its day, hung up (figuratively) his shingle announcing himself — a remarkably unusual step at that time — as a composer ready to do business. His many biographers are at a loss to explain his poverty. There are, indeed, hints and vague evidence of some self-damaging dissipations that consumed his resources. Both Wolfgang and Constanza, his wife, lived life self-indulgently. In his letters to his son, his overbearing but always practical father constantly (and justifiably) berates Wolfgang for living far beyond his means. But when have sons ever heeded fathers?

Four years before his death, Mozart composed his final — and finest — symphonies, Nos. 39, 40, and 41, again causing his biographers more problems which remain unresolved; for whom, for what occasion did he write these symphonies? Most puzzling is how Mozart, crushed by financial wretchedness, succeeded in creating there symphonic masterpieces free of any sign of his acute inner distress. Somehow, as an artist of genius, he was able to keep his personal life completely separate from his creative life.

Another interesting question: How to explain these superb symphonies when it is common knowledge that Mozart's lifelong interest and intended artistic legacy lay in his work as a composer of piano concertos (27!) and operas (20!)?

Mozart's creative juices were always at floodtide: during the incredibly short six weeks devoted to these three finest

symphonies, he also composed several other major works.

At this time the symphony was a fairly recent form, beginning to develop its own structures, practices, and traditions. Haydn (1732 - 1809), the so-called Father of the Symphony (he wrote 104), was Mozart's closest professional friend and greatest admirer; and it was Haydn that he turned to for the older man's experience and wisdom in dealing with the emerging symphonic form.

The 39th Symphony is a deceptively simple work, so much so that at first hearing, it's simplicity may cause the listener to find it unimpressive. Yet it is music of distinction: in its sober Haydnesque introduction, as an example, Mozart makes use of an expressive discord or dissonance, presaging Beethoven (then seventeen years old) in the opening movement of his third revolutionary symphony (*Eroïca*) seventeen years later. The music is a delight because of its clarity, grace, and flowing melodies, and yet demanding because of its depth, subtlety, and even — yes — its passion. It is music exquisitely nuanced, of the rarest delicacy, making it difficult for many performers to interpret. Just below its well-behaved notes lies its depth on which not a few conductors have foundered. It may be, as some have said, that Mozart is an acquired taste, but once acquired, endless in its gift of radiant beauty.

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Symphony No. 1, in D Major (*Titan*)

Gustav Mahler
(1860-1911)

For some in our audience, the name Gustav Mahler may not be familiar, and so a few biographical facts may be helpful. Mahler (1860-1911) was the second of twelve children born into a poor Jewish family in Czechoslovakia, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. As a child he haunted the local military garrison to hear the military band, and was equally fascinated by the sounds of nature, of birds and brooks and thunderstorms, and even of street musicians, all of which he incorporated into his music.

Mahler was admitted into the prestigious Vienna Conservatory, a rare achievement for a Jew of that time and place. At a young age he succeeded in building a remarkable reputation throughout Europe both as a conductor and director of opera, and then as an outstanding symphonic conductor. In later years he became music director, an artistic responsibility much more demanding than that of conductor, of renowned orchestras, including the Metropolitan Opera as well as what was to become under his leadership, the New York Philharmonic. Mahler was at the uncontested summit of the world of music.

His earliest compositions date from his adolescence and eventually became the material of his later symphonies and song cycles. Today, Mahler's music has become part of the standard repertory. But despite his brilliant success as music director, success as a composer eluded him throughout much of his life and for years afterward — a severe blow. But Mahler's confidence in his creativity was unshaken. His reaction: "My time will come," he stated with full faith in his music.

The breakthrough occurred about half a century after his death, the result of the persistent efforts of the charismatic Leonard Bernstein, the Music Director of the New York Philharmonic. This was the orchestra that Mahler had transformed into the world-class orchestra it has been for years.

Mahler the man, as composer and music director, was a total perfectionist, never compromising, always unyielding in his principles, *totally* devoted to creating and performing music. He was never a person to have dinner or to share a bottle of wine with. He had two children — God only knows where he found the time or interest — and worked himself to death as well as the musicians under him. No detail was unworthy of his intense (or excessive) attention — a truly difficult person.

He composed nine or ten symphonies (depending on how one categorizes his music), several strikingly beautiful song cycles, but no concertos, sonatas, operas, etc. His symphonies are vast, profound, dealing only with themes such as life, death, destiny, human purpose, etc. — no time for musical small talk. The symphonies are long, huge in concept; philosophic and religious

in theme, at times grim, infused with a unique grandeur, requiring at times tremendous orchestras, numerous singers, vast choruses.

The first symphony is *relatively* short (for Mahler) but somewhat lengthier than those of this period. It varies from cheerful direct enjoyment of nature to the overwhelmingly apocalyptic. Born Jewish, Mahler converted for reasons of professional convenience and advancement, and this first symphony is not religious in any particular sectarian manner. It takes as its themes, as in all his symphonies, all of nature, all of reality, the entire universe.

Began in 1883 and subtitled the *Titan*, the symphony premiered in Budapest under Mahler himself. The audience found it “perplexing” — it would take years before the audiences became receptive.

The long introduction of the opening movement is mysteriously suspenseful, slow in taking shape. Cuckoo and other bird songs are heard constantly, developing magically into the main melody — tuneful exuberant music, expressing the joy of being alive and close to nature. The second movement is a simple heavy-footed but graceful peasant dance. The third movement is a parody of a funeral march suggestive of the tune *Frère Jacques*; it depicts the funeral procession of the hunter as the animals of the forest accompany his coffin. The music takes on many shapes including the street music of an organ grinder transformed into a sublime melody. The funeral march is heard throughout in the background, followed by a magnificent stew of all the previous tunes and melodies.

The final movement begins explosively, representing Heaven and Hell. The music is martial, dynamic, overpowering: a war is being waged succeeded by heavenly peace and serenity — music of majestic proportions, constantly accompanied by an almost inaudible nervous tension in the background. The conclusion is pure grandeur, life finally triumphant with the return of the songs of the birds. An electrifying experience.

Yes, Mahler’s time has come.

DAVID KAPLAN

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