

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN



CHURCH IN GERMANTOWN

Brahms Festival Concert

Johannes Brahms: *Schicksalslied* & *Geistliches Lied*

Robert Schumann: *Requiem* & *Widmung*

Clara Schumann: *Sechs Lieder*

Sunday *at* 4 PM | **March 17, 2019**

Germantown Oratorio Choir

F. Anthony Thurman MUSIC DIRECTOR

Gayle Martin PIANO & Ted W. Barr ORGAN

35 WEST CHELTEN AVENUE | PHILADELPHIA

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Welcome!

Thank you for your attendance at this Brahms Festival Concert by the Germantown Oratorio Choir. Founded in 1910 as a community outreach program of The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown, the choir performs seasonally and rehearses weekly October–December, and January–March. Members of the choir, representing a wide diversity of age, socioeconomic, racial, and educational backgrounds, are drawn from throughout the Delaware Valley. The semi-professional choir unites volunteers and professional musicians working side by side toward a common goal of musical excellence while promoting classical music to an under-served community.

Today's concert program is organized around the life of Brahms, his close relationship with the Schumanns, and the bicentennial of Clara Schumann's birth. There is much folklore surrounding the intertwined lives of the three famous nineteenth-century composers. Brahms, the youngest of the three, was not only a student of Robert Schumann but also a close family friend who lived in the Schumann home for a period of time. Robert's praise for his young student catapulted Brahms into a successful and respected musical career.

When Robert fell ill and subsequently died, Brahms stepped in to assist Clara with household affairs. Brahms, who never married, is reported by music historians to have fallen in love with Clara. Whether Brahms was also in love with the Schumann's daughter, Julie, to whom he dedicated the *Alto Rhapsody*, remains open for speculation. Brahms and Clara remained only as friends until her death in 1896; he died in 1897.

Clara, one of the finest concert pianists and composers of her day, was the first to perform the music of Brahms publicly. As the primary breadwinner in the family, she supported the household through her concert career and by editing her

husband's works for publication. Although her compositional opportunities were limited while Robert's flourished, the similarities of musical style between her writing and his might make one wonder who composed what. This is clearly evident in Clara's *Sechs Lieder* compared to Robert's *Lieder*.

Robert Schumann's *Requiem*, composed in 1852, was his final work. Unlike the Brahms *Requiem*, which focuses on faith in the Resurrection as opposed to fear of the Last Judgment, Schumann followed the Catholic liturgy for a Mass for the dead. Schumann must have composed the work for himself, as he attempted suicide in 1854 and spent the last two years of his life in a mental asylum.

The concert program also includes Brahms's *Schicksalslied*, which he began composing along with the *Alto Rhapsody*, after the premiere of his *Requiem* in 1868. After his *Requiem*, the *Schicksalslied* is his largest choral work and like the *Requiem*, is based on the theme of human destiny. The first two verses of the Hölderlin poem portray the restful realm of the gods while the final deals with the uncertainty of life.

On behalf of The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown, I extend heartfelt gratitude to all those who have made this concert possible: the sponsors, advertisers, and friends of music listed in the program; and especially the soloists, instrumentalists, and choir who have rehearsed this extraordinary and difficult music over the past three months. Thank you!

F. Anthony Thurman, DMA
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Brahms Festival Concert
The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown
P H I L A D E L P H I A
Sunday Afternoon at 4 p.m. | March 17, 2019

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This concert is being Internet livestreamed and can be replayed on demand:
www.fpcgermantown.org/Brahms-2019.

Welcome

The Rev. Rebecca Segers

Geistliches Lied (Sacred Song), Op. 30

Johannes Brahms
(1833–1897)

Requiem, Op. 148

Robert Schumann
(1810–1856)

Evelyn Santiago SOPRANO | Margaret Mezzacappa MEZZO SOPRANO
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Widmung (Dedication)

Robert Schumann
(1810–1856)
arr. Franz Liszt

Gayle Martin

THE LINDA LEUBE MEMORIAL CONCERT PIANO

Sechs Lieder (Six Songs), Op. 13

Clara Schumann
(1819–1896)
arr. Virginia Davidson

The Ladies of the Oratorio Choir
Rebecca Hughes SOPRANO

Schicksalslied (Song of Destiny), Op. 54

Johannes Brahms

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TEXTS

Geistliches Lied (Sacred Song)

Let nothing ever grieve thee, distress thee, nor fret thee; heed God's good will, my soul, be still, compose thee. Why brood all day in sorrow? Tomorrow will bring thee God's help benign and grace sublime in mercy. Be true in all endeavor, and ever do bravely; what God decrees brings joy and peace, he'll stay thee. Amen.

Text: Paul Flemming (1609-1640)

Translation: Walter E. Buszin

Requiem

REQUIEM

Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

TE DECET HYMNUS

A hymn, O God, becometh thee in Zion and a vow shall be paid to thee in Jerusalem. Hear my prayer. All flesh shall come before you. Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.

LIBE SCRIPTUS

The written book shall be brought in which all is contained whereby the world shall be judged. When the judge takes his seat all that is hidden shall appear. Nothing will remain unavenged. What shall I, a wretch, say then? To which protector shall I appeal when even the just man is barely safe? King of awful majesty, you freely save those worthy of salvation. Save me, source of

pity. Remember, gentle Jesus, that I am the reason for your time on earth, do not cast me out on that day. Seeking me, you sank down wearily, you saved me by enduring the cross, such travail must not be in vain. Righteous judge of vengeance, award the gift of forgiveness before the day of reckoning. I groan as one guilty, my face blushes with guilt; spare the suppliant, O God.

QUI MARIAM ABSOLVISTI

Thou who didst absolve Mary and hear the prayer of the thief hast given me hope, too. My prayers are not worthy, but thou, O good one, show mercy, lest I burn in everlasting fire, give me a place among the sheep, and separate me from the goats, placing me on thy right hand. When the damned are confounded and consigned to keen flames, call me with the blessed. I pray, suppliant and kneeling, a heart as contrite as ashes; take thou my ending into thy care. That day is one of weeping, on which shall rise again from the ashes the guilty man, to be judged. Therefore spare this one, O God, merciful Lord Jesus: Give them rest. Amen.

HOSTIAS

Lord, in praise we offer you sacrifices and prayers, accept them on behalf of those who we remember this day.

SANCTUS

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts! Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!



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TEXTS

BENEDICTUS

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant them eternal rest. Let everlasting light shine upon them, Lord, with thy saints for ever, for thou art merciful. Grant them eternal rest, Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them, for thou art merciful.

Sechs Lieder (Six Songs)

1. ICH STAND IN DUNKLEN TRÄUMEN

I stood as in a dark dream, gazing at her portrait, and, behold, the beloved face mysteriously came alive. A lovely smile played around her lips and her eyes sparkled with tears of sadness. Then tears flowed down my cheeks. Oh, I cannot believe that I have lost you forever.

Text: Heinrich Heine (1797-1856)

Translation: Elisabeth Watson

2. SIE LIEBTEN SICH BEIDE

They loved each other, yet would not confess to it. They looked at each other like enemies, yet they were melting with love. They finally parted and only saw each other sometimes in their dreams. They had long since died, but were hardly aware of it.

Text: Heinrich Heine (1797-1856)

Translation: Elisabeth Watson

3. LIEBESZAUBER

Love sat like a nightingale in the rose-bush and sang. The wonderfully sweet melody floated through the woods. As it sounded, the perfume of a thousand flowers rose in the air, the treetops rustled softly, and the breezes grew calm; The brooks which had splashed down from the heights grew silent. The deer stood still as in a dream and listened to the lovely sound. Brighter and ever brighter the sun poured its light on flowers, woods, and valleys till they were bathed in a golden red glow. As I wandered along my road I also heard the melody, and, Oh, all the songs I have sung since that day have been but its echo.

Text: Emanuel Geibel (1815-1884)

Translation: Watson

4. DER MOND KOMMT STILL GEGANZEN

The moon rises quietly with its golden glow and lovingly puts the weary earth to sleep. The breezes carry to the sleepers a thousand thoughts of love arising from devoted hearts. Down in the valley, lights sparkle in the windows of my love's house, but I stand alone in the dark and look out into the world.

Text: Geibel

Translation: Watson



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TEXTS

5. ICH HAB' IN DEINEM AUGE

I saw the light of eternal love in your eyes and heavenly rose blooming on your cheeks. But when that light died out and the roses faded, their reflections remained, every bright, in my heart. Never will I see your cheeks without the roses, or look into your eyes without receiving that beam of love.

Text: Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866)

Translation: Watson

everlasting. But we have been fated to find on earth no repose. They vanish, they falter, our suffering, sorrowing brothers; blindfold from hour to hour they are driven like water is dash'd 'gainst the rocks by the tempest, darkly the unknown lures us below.

Text: Friedrich Hölderlin (1770-1843)

Translation: Natalia Macfarren (1826-1916)

6. DIE STILLE LOTOSBLUME

The silent lotus flower rises out of the blue lake. Her leaves glimmer and sparkle, her blossom is white as snow. The moon pours all its golden rays from heaven down into her lap. A white swan circles the flower on the lake, singing so sweetly, so softly. He gazes upon her and pours himself into his soft, sweet song. Oh flower, lovely flower, can you understand his song?

Text: Geibel

Translation: Watson

Schicksalslied (Song of Destiny)

Ye tread on pathways of light, thro' fields of azure, spirits beyond the skies. Soft balmy breezes lightly fan your white robes like the fingers that wake the harp's blest and benign inspiration. Free from fate, like a babe in its slumber, the heav'nly spirits breathe; in their hearts, like the rosebud enfolded, burns the flame divine forever enshrind, and their vision celestial gazes serene on light

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Thank you!

FEATURED PERFORMERS

TED BARR joins Gayle Martin in piano duo performances in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania and has given organ recitals in New York City, Princeton, Washington, Chicago, and at Cologne Cathedral. A Kentucky native, Ted is a graduate of Westminster Choir College and has taught on the faculties of Westminster, Rutgers, and Wagner College in New York City. He offers private instruction in organ, piano, and voice in Cherry Hill. His students have performed on Broadway, with major symphony orchestras and opera companies, and in the world's largest churches and cathedrals.

REBECCA HUGHES, soprano, is a regular participant in the Germantown Oratorio Choir. She has performed at the Mann Music Center, the Kimmel Center, the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, and twice in Rider University's voice seminar in Florence, Italy. The Upper Darby native is a graduate of Temple University where she majored in voice and was a student of Benita Valente.

GAYLE MARTIN achieved international prominence as sole American laureate of the sixth International Tchaikovsky Piano Competition in Moscow—the third American woman ever to reach the finals. A native Texan, she was one of the last students of the famous pedagogue, Mme. Rosina Lhevinne at the Juilliard School. Gayle has presented solo recitals and performed as concerto soloist with orchestras around the world. Her latest CD recording, *To Keep the Dark Away*, has received rave reviews and is available on Amazon.com. "This is an infinitely rewarding disc that demands repeated listening to get the most out of it." (Fanfare Magazine)

MARGARET MEZZACAPPA, mezzo soprano, rose to prominence in the opera world as the Grand Prize Winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions in 2012. She is a first prize winner of the Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation International Vocal Competition and recipient of the George London Award. A graduate of Philadelphia's Academy of Vocal Arts, the Ohio native has performed with Opera Philadelphia, Opera New Jersey, San Francisco Opera, the Philadelphia Orchestra, Columbus Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, and with the Germantown Oratorio Choir & Orchestra.

DUGAN MORGRIDGE, tenor, is active as a soloist and ensemble singer in the greater Philadelphia area. In addition to the Germantown Oratorio Choir, he appears this season as a soloist with Philomusica Chorale, Haverford College Orchestra and Chorale, and the Archdiocesan Choir of Philadelphia. He was a core member of the Philadelphia Singers for ten years. Dugan began his musical training as a boy chorister at the Little Church Around the Corner in New York City and earned degrees from the New England Conservatory and Temple University.

ROBERT PHILLIPS, baritone, performs with numerous choral organizations throughout the greater Philadelphia region and with Opera Philadelphia. The Swarthmore native studied at the Tanglewood Institute Summer Program for Young Artists and continued his vocal studies at Westminster Choir College in Princeton. He was a core member of the Philadelphia Singers, a founding member of The Crossing in Chestnut Hill, and enjoyed a long association with the Spoleto Festival of Two Worlds in Italy.

EVELYN SANTIAGO, soprano, is winner of the Metropolitan Opera District Auditions in Puerto Rico and a frequent soloist with Opera Philadelphia's mainstage productions and community outreach performances. Equally at home on the concert stage, Ms. Santiago has been soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Lancaster Symphony, the Germantown Oratorio Choir & Orchestra, the Symphonic Orchestra of Bayamon (Puerto Rico), and Philomusica Chorale.

F. ANTHONY THURMAN is music director at The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown and has conducted church choirs, choral societies, and community choruses in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky. He holds a doctor of musical arts degree from the Manhattan School of Music and has enjoyed a distinguished national and international career as organ soloist, having performed hundreds of recitals from coast to coast in the U.S. and abroad. He is recorded on *Historic Organs of Louisville* (Raven, 1996), has been heard on American Public Media's *Pipedreams*, and made his Kimmel Center debut in 2017 as organist for the Opera Philadelphia chorus.

Germantown Oratorio Choir

F. Anthony Thurman MUSIC DIRECTOR

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