

a revision of the first), the other three no longer carried their initial appeal. Further, according to Hubert Daschner ("Music for the Stage," from *Ludwig van Beethoven: Bicentennial Edition, 1770–1970*), "[The fourth overture] is an entirely new and independent composition." Romain Rolland, the author of *Beethoven the Creator*, states: "The drama to which they [the audiences] are introduced is just hinted at discreetly, in the most attenuated form—a few adagio bars of meditation, of prayer (that have no touch of anguish about them, no tragic shadow) at the commencement and at the end,...then a brilliant, scintillating *presto* that is almost a *rondo* à la Weber. Let us accept this introduction, but without enthusiasm. The drama being what it is,...this is the only one possible."

Composed during one of Beethoven's most phenomenal periods of musical growth (1804–1807), the *Concerto in D major, Op. 61, for Violin and Orchestra* was written for a violinist of superior talent by the name of Franz Clement. However, it was dedicated to Beethoven's friend Stephan von Breuning, in hopes of mending a strained relationship. Beethoven also transcribed this work as a piano concerto for Breuning's wife. The opening movement (*Allegro ma non troppo*), following the outline of the sonata-allegro form (exposition, development, and recapitulation), was greatly enlarged and developed by Beethoven into a model that set the standard for future concertos. The extended *tutti* (eighty-eight bars long) introduces all of the materials later taken up and embellished by the soloist. The sum and substance of the second movement (*Larghetto*) is a mournful chant that resides in the key of G major. Its form suggests that of a theme with variations. The finale (*Rondo*), sporting a hunting call with two episodes and a refrain, is bold, vivacious, and suave, bringing the concerto to a scintillating conclusion.

Although he took some twenty years to write his *First Symphony*, Brahms completed his *Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73*, in about fourteen months, from the autumn of 1876 to the summer of 1877. The bright spirit and youthfulness evident in this *Second Symphony* are far from the dark, draconian and yet incomparable music found in the *First Symphony*. Further, as cited by writer Peter Latham: "In reality this work, in a warm D major, is the sunniest, the most gentle,

[and] the easiest to approach of all his [Brahms'] symphonies. It has been called Brahms' '*Pastoral*,' and the title, though without authority, is not inapposite." A three-note figure opens the first movement in the cellos and the basses, followed by a delectable phrase from the horns. All the ideas germinated within the opening theme are elaborated upon by the cellos and violas and then repeated by the flutes, until a waltzlike melody enters as the second theme. After some well-developed contrapuntal passages in the expansive development section, the two themes return in the recapitulation, which leads to a coda that provides the French horn with an ideal solo. The movement ends ethereally with a munificent lyricism that is eloquently stated by the woodwinds.

Two themes also dominate the second movement, presented in ABA format. The mood of the first theme is bucolic, reminiscent of the previous movement, and is aired by the cellos and then relinquished to the wind instruments (flutes, oboes, and horn). The second theme is of a similar nature, but performed only by the flutes and oboes. In twelve-eight time, the B section offers a beguiling contrast with its syncopated rhythms.

The third movement (*Allegretto grazioso*) is one of Brahms' most inspired creations. Its setting is an ABACA format with two trios, with the scoring designed for a small orchestra. Other intriguing features are the changing of meters in the two trios as well as the fluctuation between major and minor modes.

The fourth movement (*Allegro con spirito*) afforded Brahms the opportunity to apply his considerable and masterful knowledge of counterpoint. Beginning with a lucent melody for strings that is Haydnesque in nature and carried forth by the full orchestra, this movement inspired Latham to write: "Never are Haydn and Brahms so close...and that, no doubt, is why, at [the] end of the exposition (five bars after 'F' in the score) we catch a brief allusion to the finale of Haydn's *London Symphony*."

Program notes on the music by Elmer Booze

The Fifty-ninth Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2387th Concert

NATIONAL GALLERY ORCHESTRA

GEORGE MANOS, conductor

AARON ROSAND, violinist

Sunday Evening, 3 June 2001
Seven O'clock
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

