Beaverton Symphony Orchestra

Fall Concert 2015

7:30pm Friday, October 30, 2015

3:00pm Sunday, November 1, 2015

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Beaverton Symphony Orchestra

Travis Hatton, Music Director

Salvador Brotons b. 1959	Catalan Rhapsody No.2 for Orchestra, Op. 86 presented with the collaboration of the Institut Ramon Llull for Catalan Language and Culture
Richard Wagner 1813-1883	Overture to Tannhäuser (1845)

Intermission

Johannes Brahms 1833 –1897	Symphony No. 1 in c minor, Op. 68 Un poco sostenuto – Allegro – Meno Allegro Andante sostenuto Un poco allegretto e grazioso Adagio – Piú andante -- Allegro non troppo

Program Notes by Hugh Ferguson

Northwest Composer Spotlight:
***Catalan Rhapsody No. 2 for Orchestra, Op. 86,* by Salvador Brotons**

Dr. Salvador Brotons, the latest in the series of Northwest Composers being featured by the Beaverton Symphony Orchestra, was born into a family of musicians in Barcelona, Spain. He studied flute with his father and continued his studies at the Barcelona Conservatory of Music, obtaining superior titles in flute, composition and orchestra conducting. In 1985 he was awarded a Fulbright scholarship and moved to the United States where he received his Doctorate in Music from Florida State University.

He has been the Conductor and Music Director of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra (WA) since 1991. He is also the Conductor and Music Director of the Vallès Symphony Orchestra in his native Barcelona and the Balearic Islands Symphony Orchestra in Palma de Mallorca.

His *Catalan Rhapsody No. 2 for Orchestra, Op. 86* is brisk, accessible, and colorful, designed to give multiple instruments their moments to shine. Opening with a pulsing roll of the tympani, a march by the lower brass instruments follows, with a quick crescendo. The English horn, bassoon, clarinet, and oboe each gets the spotlight in turn. Later, the piccolo sounds a duet with the glockenspiel. Later still, the English horn and glockenspiel engage in a dialogue. In all, it's a melodious and lively showpiece with a resounding finale.

The Polarity of Wagner and Brahms

Wagner never wrote a symphony. Brahms never wrote an opera. Yet they created a polarity in nineteenth century music whose vestiges are still discernible today.

The controversy was basically a disagreement over the use of Beethoven's magnificent heritage. Each had his own ideas about the way to go forward. Wagner believed that the expressive possibilities of absolute music had been exhausted in Beethoven's symphonies — although he elected to put Beethoven's orchestral language to use in the service of his own dramas. Brahms, on the other hand, believed that there was much more to be accomplished within the structures that Beethoven had so thoroughly exploited.

Richard Wagner, the man who Transformed Opera:
Overture to Tannhauser

Richard Wagner was just thirty when, in 1843, he was appointed music director of the Dresden Opera. The diminutive (5' 5") maestro, whose formal musical education consisted of little more than six months of tutelage in theory and counterpoint, had won the post on the strength of his opera *Rienzi,* which he had produced the previous year.

As a child, he had had greater exposure to the theater than to music. His stepfather was an actor; a brother and two sisters were actively engaged on the stage. His earliest interests were literary, even to the point of translating Homer and writing a tragedy modeled after Shakespeare. It wasn't until he heard a Beethoven symphony at age 14 that his passion for music was awakened. He began studying music theory on his own. At 18 he took courses briefly at the

University of Leipzig but soon left to study under private tutors, and to immerse himself further in the symphonies of Beethoven. Uninterested in mastering any particular musical instrument, he instead focused on composition and conducting. At age 20, he landed a post as chorus master at the Wurzburg opera theatre. He was soon busy writing operas, two of which were produced before *Rienzi.*

Rienzi was the last conventional opera Wagner ever wrote. Operas of that day consisted essentially of semi-sung *recitatives* which moved the story forward, punctuated by arias, duets, choruses and ballets that broke the narrative in order to exploit the emotional content of the plot's pivotal points.

But Wagner — with supreme self-confidence and a towering sense of mission — was determined to improve upon that form. He would merge the two elements: the music would flow continuously from the beginning of a scene to the end. "Set" pieces would be very rare, and there would be no recitatives or arias in the usual sense.

It would take him years to perfect this new form, but after *Rienzi* the process was clearly underway. *The Flying Dutchman,* produced in Dresden on January 2, 1843, showed his determination to sacrifice all considerations of traditional form and symmetrical construction to the dramatic demands of the story. Two years later, on October, 19, 1845, *Tannhäuser* carried his principles even further.

The next year he wrote *Lohengrin,* and after that, he ceased calling his productions "operas." He would henceforth call them "music-dramas."

Wagner based the plot of *Tannhäuser* on the medieval legend of a noble poet-musician who spends an erotic year cavorting lasciviously with the goddess Venus in the underground caverns of her mountain, known as "Venusberg" before, finally satiated, joining a group of penitent pilgrims going to Rome. He pledges to renounce his carnal pursuits in favor of his beloved and saintly Elizabeth, but in the end his libido gets the better of him. (The libretto originally carried the title, "Mountain of Venus," but was renamed, reportedly, "to thwart lascivious comment.")

The success of the opera was not immediate. It carried still farther the principles introduced in *The Flying Dutchman*, and these principles were not yet understood by either the public or the critics. Yet by the third performance the audience was won over. Wagner continued to revise it, staged it again in Dresden in 1846 and 1847, and within a decade it had been introduced into the repertoires of the major European opera houses.

In 1861, Wagner took *Tannhäuser* to Paris. He revised it to open with an extended version of the wild bacchanal, in order to give more opportunities to the dancers, and to meet the expectations of Paris audiences, who demanded a ballet — in the second act — without fail. It opened after 164 rehearsals. But when the Parisians found that their ballet came not in the second act, but at the show's beginning, they caused such a series of uproars that *Tannhäuser* was withdrawn after only three performances.

By this time, the overture had become a popular concert piece. A kind of synopsis of the action, it interweaves major elements from the opera: the Pilgrims' Chorus, the siren song of Venus, *Tannhäuser's* hymn to the goddess of love, and musical depictions of the Venusberg's

revelries.

The opera itself has become a perennial favorite, its current run at the Metropolitan Opera in New York — where it is being dubbed as "Wagner's early masterpiece" — ending this October 31. Referring to its "superhuman demands" on the cast, the *New Yorker* describes its "seamless transitions [and] voluptuous, boundary-pushing approach to harmonies" as "a portrait of Wagner the composer entering mid-career."

Wagner went on to perfect his "music-dramas," his technique culminating in *The Ring of the Niebelungen,* a cycle comprised of four full-length music-dramas. In 1876 he witnessed the opening of his own opera house, the *Festspeilhaus (Festival Theater)* in Bayreuth, where productions of his works are still staged today. Along the way, his revolutionary changes in composing style and philosophy had become an object of controversy among serious musicians. He, Liszt, and Berlioz became known as the leaders of a "New German Music," based on the belief that absolute music had nowhere to go after Beethoven. Not everyone agreed. Great music, some believed, could still be written following the principles espoused by Beethoven. And a man named Brahms was out to prove it.

Johannes Brahms, Beethoven's Successor: *Symphony No. 1 in c minor, Op. 68.*

It's not clear when Brahms began composing his First Symphony. He himself said he had been working on it for twenty-one years, which would have meant he started in 1856. What is certain, however, is that he had begun it at least as early as 1862, and that he labored long and hard to perfect it before its premiere on November 4, 1876. And even then, he kept working on it.

Meanwhile, three months earlier, Wagner's festival theater had opened at Bayreuth. Wagner had confidently declared that the expressive possibilities of absolute music had been exhausted by the symphonies of Beethoven. Yet here, in the form of Brahms' First Symphony, was an apparent refutation of that declaration.

Johannes Brahms was born on May 7, 1833 — just two weeks before Wagner's 20th birthday. Whereas Wagner was unskilled at any particular instrument, Brahms early became a tremendously accomplished pianist — a fact that won him early acceptance among some of the leading musicians of his day.

An incident illustrating this reportedly took place in the summer of 1853, when Brahms was on tour with the Hungarian violinist Eduard Remenyi (whose introduction to Roma music resulted in Brahms' famous *Hungarian Dances*). They were about to play Beethoven's "Kreutzer Sonata" when they found the piano to be half a tone below the true pitch. It was no problem for Brahms, though. He played the accompaniment from memory, transposing it as he did so from A to B-flat. This so astonished the widely respected and well-connected violinist Joseph Joachim that he arranged for Brahms to meet with Franz Liszt and Robert Schumann.

Nothing came of the meeting with Liszt, but when Brahms played a few of his piano compositions for Schumann and his wife Clara, they were electrified. Schumann wrote an article praising the young, unknown, unpublished musician as "the Chosen One," the "young eagle," the "great composer of the future," who had "burst upon us fully equipped as Minerva sprung from the head of Jupiter."

It was strong stuff, coming as it did from one of Europe's most influential composers and writers on music. Suddenly, Brahms was being exalted above older and more experienced artists, and — by implication — above the whole "futuristic" movement of Liszt and Wagner.

Brahms' extraordinary skill at transposing had been honed years earlier when he was studying under a master of the classical principles of composition named Eduard Marxson. Marxson schooled the teen-ager until he was able to transpose to any key all the fugues of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*. He also immersed him in the music of Bach and Beethoven as the only examples worthy enough to be followed.

Now, through connections with the Schumanns, Brahms landed a post as Director of Court Concerts of the small German principality of Lippe-Detmold. During the four years he was there (1854-58) he composed his Piano Concerto in D Minor. The history of its composition is an example of Brahms' painstaking methodology: He had first cast it as a gigantic sonata for two pianos, next as a purely orchestral symphony, and finally as the Concerto. But despite the labors he had bestowed on its creation, its performance in January of 1859 with Brahms at the keyboard was, in Brahms' words, "a brilliant and decided-failure." It was hissed, and the critics attacked it savagely.

Wagner, Liszt, and other leaders of the "New German" movement had been continuing their attack — in prose as well as in music — on the idea that classical forms were any longer worth pursuing. In doing so they had in effect been attacking Brahms, who had emerged as the leader of the classicists. The hissing of the concerto, and the vicious attacks by critics, were seen as fueled by New German sentiments.

In an attempt to push back, Brahms, together with Joachim and other musicians of similar outlook, published, in 1860, a "proclamation" that declared that the principals of the "New German" school were "contrary to the innermost spirit of music." The battle lines were drawn.

It would be another sixteen years before Brahms completed his first symphony. The certainty that he would be compared to Beethoven weighed heavily on him the whole time. "You have no idea," he said, "what it's like to hear the footsteps of a giant like that behind you."

The C Minor Symphony begins with an outburst of dissonance by full orchestra over pounding timpani. Musical ideas are stated, developed, and restated in the Allegro section that follows.

The second and third movements are lighter in tone and tension. The slow movement, Andante sostenuto, is one of gentle lyricism. A long violin solo recalls some of Beethoven's later works: the late quartets and *Missa Solemnis*. The third, scherzo-like movement, maintains its easy spirit despite its complex rhythms and interwoven textures.

In the fourth movement, many have heard a theme reminiscent of the "Ode to Joy" theme of Beethoven's Ninth. When the likeness was pointed out to him, Brahms simply said, "Any ass can see that."

When it was introduced in 1876, Hans von Bulow, conductor and pianist and ardent supporter of Brahms, christened it the "Tenth Symphony" and declared that Brahms deserved to be ranked with Bach and Beethoven. Thus was born the "Three B's" of classical music. In 1895, a German festival featured his works beside those of Bach and Beethoven. But the clearest

demonstration that Brahms deserves his status as one of music's immortals is his enduring popularity with audiences, which continues to this day.

And as for Wagner's prediction that there was no future for music in the footsteps of Beethoven, we have the opinion of Arnold Schoenberg, who is said to have seen Brahms as "a forerunner of modernism, whose commitment to structure provided a way forward from the dead-end to which Wagner's unfettered chromaticism was bound to lead."

Coda: Passions Behind the Scenes

Music historians call it "The War of the Romantics" because Brahms and Wagner are considered romantic composers. But the term also suggests that both men were driven by passions beyond the merely musical.

In Brahms' case, there is much to indicate that he was in love with Clara Schumann, whom he befriended during the last years of her husband's life. Their correspondence spanned many years, and Brahms never married.

In Wagner's case, the passions were far more manifest.

The story is best organized around the focal point of the virtuoso pianist and celebrated conductor Hans von Bulow, who, before becoming Brahms' greatest propagandist, had been an indefatigable champion of Wagner. Bulow thus was, in a sense, at the center of things.

Bulow had begun piano lessons at the age of nine with Friedrich Wieck, whose daughter Clara married Robert Schumann. Later he studied with Liszt. Liszt introduced him to Wagner, and Bulow became an enthusiastic Wagner supporter. He married Liszt's daughter Cosima in 1857, and found in her a perceptive interpreter of Wagner's ideals. Drawing ever closer to Wagner himself, Bulow brought into production, and conducted, the immensely successful premieres of Tristan und Isolde and Die Meistersinger, in 1865 and 1868. But meanwhile, Cosima had begun an affair with Wagner, an affair that produced a daughter Isolde in 1865, and Eva two years later. Bülow, however, continuing his labors on behalf of Wagner's stage productions, refused a divorce. Only after the birth of Siegfried in 1869 did he relent. They divorced in July, 1870. Cosima and Wagner married in August. Bülow never spoke to Wagner again.

Once recovered, Bülow threw himself wholeheartedly into the propagation of Brahms's music, producing the C Minor Symphony ("the Tenth") on his extensive tours, and loudly proclaiming the gospel of the "three B's."

It is said that without Cosima's contributions, the completion of the Ring would have been beyond Wagner's energies. On his death in 1883, she assumed management of the Bayreuth festivals, directing them for more than twenty years. Siegfried made his conducting debut there in 1896, and assumed management in 1907.

The Orchestra

Violin I
Rachael Susman, *Concertmaster*
David Abbott
Kathy Boulton
Susan Booth Larson
Anne Haberkern
Pamela Jacobsen
Jonathan Novack
Sarah Novack
Kris Oliveira
Spencer Shao
Sarah Brody Webb
Sohyun Westin
Regan Wylie

Violin II
Heather Case, *Principal*
Barbara Baker
Elle Hohn
Andrea Irvin-Jones
Andrew Keating
Tom Lee
Christina Reynolds
Laura Semrau
Andrew Shu
Barbie Steinhurst
Nancy Vink

Viola
Bev Gibson, *Principal*
Deborah Baxter
Jane Brown
Ray Bunkofske
Cynthia Eby
Erin Gordenier
Stephanie Gregory
Lindsey Lane
Adele Larson
Charlie VanDemarr

Cello
Marcy England, *Principal*
Allen Dobbins
Holly Hutchason
David Keyes
Michelle McDowell
Sue McDowell
Ann Neuman
Marny Pierce
Brian P. Roberts

Bass
Veronika Zeisset, *Principal*
Allen Bodin
Arick Gouwerok
Nahdia Jenkins
Vytas Nagisetty

Flute
Kathy Burroughs, *Principal*
Linda Hartig
Jerry Pritchard

Clarinet
Don Barnes, *Principal*
Milt Monnier

Oboe
Sharon Ross, *Principal*
Gordon Davis

English Horn
Celeste Martinez

Bassoon
Tricia Gabrielson, *Principal*
Nancy Pierce

French Horn
Kippe Spear, *Principal*
Jennifer Anderson
Audrey Garbacik
Kurt Heichelheim

Trumpet
Mayne Mihacsi, *Principal*
Jason Bills
Norm Schwisow

Trombone
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Upcoming BSO Events

Please save the dates for 2015-2016 season, pick up our save the date card in the lobby, sign up for email updates at our website, www.beavertonsymphony.org, and follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

Winter Concert
Friday January 15, 2016 at 7:30 pm
Sunday January 17, 2016 at 3:00 pm
Maurice Ravel Mother Goose Suite
Henri Vieuxtemps Concerto No. 2 for Cello and Orchestra with Diane Chaplin, cello
Franz Schubert Symphony No. 9 in C Major, D. 944

Spring Concert
Friday March 11, 2016 at 7:30 pm
Sunday March 13, 2016 at 3:00 pm
Igor Stravinsky Suite No. 2 for Small Orchestra
Franz Liszt Concerto No. 1 for Piano and Orchestra with Eloise Kim, piano
Gustav Holst The Planets

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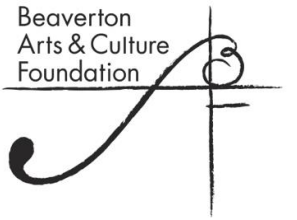

Travis Hatton, Music Director

Travis Hatton's versatile conducting career spans a broad range of musical organizations around the world. He has led opera and ballet companies throughout Europe and America, and has appeared as a guest conductor with orchestras in Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and in Boston, Tennessee, Indiana, California, Alaska, Colorado, Washington, Oregon and Texas. He holds a Bachelors of Music degree (awarded Magna Cum Laude) in Music Theory and Composition from the University of the Pacific and a Masters of Music degree in Orchestral Conducting from the New England Conservatory of Music.

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