

University Symphony Orchestra

2011–12 Season

68th Concert

Sunday 9 October 2011

Chenery Auditorium, Kalamazoo

3:00 p.m.

BRUCE UCHIMURA, Conductor

MAYUMI KANAGAWA, Violin Soloist

Johannes Brahms
1833–1897

Academic Festival Overture Opus 80

Johannes Brahms

Violin Concerto in D Major Opus 77

I. Allegro non troppo

II. Adagio

III. Allegro giocoso, ma non troppo vivace

Mayumi Kanagawa, Violin

intermission

Serge Rachmaninoff
1873–1943

Symphony Number 2 in E Minor Opus 27

I. Largo – Allegro moderato

II. Allegro molto

III. Adagio

IV. Allegro vivace

The University Symphony Orchestra would like to thank Andrew Koehler, Tom Evans, and Stephanie Hovnanian for their expertise. For information on upcoming Orchestra events and concerts, visit our website, www.wmich.edu/music/orchestra or join our Facebook page.



PROGRAM NOTES

Brahms, *Academic Festival Overture*

Johannes Brahms usually shunned the spotlight. He was a modest man with a deep respect for musical tradition. He preferred to make his points with the content of his music rather than with superficial elements (title, form, extra musical references etc.) that can sometimes dominate the musical effect of the piece. Reluctantly, Brahms was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Breslau in 1879 and was enticed to compose a piece as a gesture of gratitude for the award. The finished product, which Brahms premiered and conducted in 1881 at a special convocation, was the *Academic Festival Overture*. It is one of his shorter orchestral masterpieces.

As usual, Brahms masterfully combines appealing expressive elements of sound and orchestration with a collection of college related "drinking songs" and other tunes. The ten minute work features one of Brahms' largest orchestras including contra bassoon, piccolo, percussion instruments, and a full brass section. There is a wide range of musical characterizations in the songs he chose to use. The light hearted *Fuchslied (Was kommt dort von der Hoh?)* is played by the bassoons and syncopated strings and the majestic *Gaudeamus igitur* gets a regal full orchestra setting at the end of the work.

Brahms, *Violin Concerto in D Major*

Johannes Brahms composed for and dedicated to his only violin concerto, for the violin virtuoso, Joseph Joachim who dominated the musical scene of the times. Joachim premiered the Concerto in 1879 along with the Beethoven *Violin Concerto in D Major* on the same program. Brahms remarked "that's a lot of D major on one program." Nevertheless, Joachim insisted on presenting one old concerto and one new one on the same program. Side by side the listener can hear many similarities as well as the mastery of each of the composers.

Both Beethoven and Brahms chose to use the Violin as soloist and chamber musician. The solo

violin parts are formidable in both cases but are constantly intertwined with the instruments of the orchestra. In the penetratingly beautiful Adagio (second movement) of the Brahms concerto, the solo oboe presents the principal theme while the violin soloist waits and listens. Moreover, Brahms uses the violin soloist in the first two movements to provide atmosphere and color and also trades off duties in presenting the dominant musical motives. It is not until the third and final movement that the violin solo is able to play the fun loving folk theme by itself.

Proportionally, the epic first movement is longer than both second and third movements combined. This was a preferred formula used by many composers (Tchaikovsky) as well as using the key of D major because of the tuning of the violin strings. As with all of Brahms orchestral compositions, there is a specific musical effect for every note that he wrote. The performers only see simple notations on a page and must be able to translate and interpret these into the intended sound. Musical elements such as pitches, harmony, rhythm, dynamics and textures are essentially very simple in themselves. However in the organizational and creative hands of a master composer they become alive with various moods, emotions and characters. Brahms was one of the few composers that are able to fuse intellectual accomplishment with the raw emotional impact of music.

Rachmaninoff, *Symphony Number 2 in E Minor*

The legendary Russian pianist Sergei Rachmaninoff was also a first rate and prolific composer who wrote many memorable orchestral works. Composed in 1906–7 and premiered in 1908 with Rachmaninoff conducting, his *Symphony Number 2 in E minor Opus 27* was well received by audiences and critics alike. It is an epic work in the favored Russian symphonic style of "never ending and beautiful flow melody" and motivic relationships between movements. Though the piece is lengthy, one never gets the sense of boredom that often accompanies works of this magnitude. Rachmaninoff masterfully

MAYUMI KANAGAWA

combines contrasting themes/motives with interesting orchestral textures to sustain the listener.

The brooding first movement begins with a slow Adagio that presents and develops one of the principal motives of the symphony. In the Allegro section, the music takes on a particularly "Russian" melodic sound and harmonic progression. The development uses "waves" of sound that start calmly and build to torrential proportions. The movement ends with a resounding low E in the celli and bass sections.

The second movement Scherzo promotes the folk spirit of the Russian culture. Both the main melodic motive announced by the horns, and accompanying rhythms are energetic and lively. The middle section contains an interesting but hectic fugue that Rachmaninoff uses to create a sense of urgency that cries out for the return of the principal subject.

The clarinet presents a very extended and beautiful solo as the material for the poetic and tuneful third movement Adagio. This movement is considered the heart and soul of the symphony by many.

Rachmaninoff saves his fireworks for the Finale: Allegro vivace. The last movement is full of life and brings back all of the principal motives of all the movements including a true Russian "never ending and beautiful flow" of melody.

The School of Music is pleased to partner with the Stulberg International String Competition in offering its participants concerto performance opportunities. This collaboration not only strengthens our community but shares in the occasion to honor Julius Stulberg, who was a member of WMU's music faculty from 1945–72 and conductor of the University Symphony from 1945–68. We look forward to future possibilities that lie ahead with our mutual cooperation.

Seventeen-year-old violinist Mayumi Kanagawa is a senior at the Crossroads School for Arts and Sciences, and an Academy student at the Colburn School in Los Angeles, California, where she studies with Robert Lipsett and Arnold Steinhardt. First prize winner of the 2011 Irving M. Klein Competition in San Francisco, she was also a silver medalist at the 2011 Stulberg International Competition. Kanagawa has won top prizes in the Thomas & Evon Cooper, Corpus Christi, and Connecticut International Competitions, and soloed with the New West Symphony, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Culver City, and Torrance Symphonies.

Kanagawa's former teachers include Yoshiko Nakura and Masao Kawasaki, with whom she studied in the Juilliard Pre-College Division; she has studied chamber music with Arnold Steinhardt, Endre Granat, and Guillaume Sutre, among others. Currently concertmistress of the Crossroads Chamber Orchestra and co-concertmistress of the American Youth Symphony under Maestro Alexander Treger, Kanagawa has participated and performed in the New York String Orchestra Seminar, International Musician's Seminar in Prussia Cove, England, the Encore School for Strings, Ishikawa Music Academy, the Aspen Music Festival, and the Verbier Festival Academy.

UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Bruce Uchimura, Conductor

Violin I

- ① Youyang Qu, Concertmaster, Beijing, CHINA
- ① Yumhali Garcia, Mexico City, MEXICO
- ① Ishtar Hernandez, Miami FL
- Abderrahman Anzaldua, Chihuahua, MEXICO
- Philip Oja, Royal Oak
- Charlotte Munn-Wood, South Bend IN
- ①② Shu Wang, Beijing CHINA
- Audrey Jansma, Fremont
- ② Erin Zuchniewicz, Novi
- ③ Ariele Macadangdang, Kalamazoo

Violin II

- ② Melissa Taddie, Principal, Strongsville OH
- Naomi Droge, Ada
- Hyun Young Kim, Livonia
- Joseph Haroney, Dexter
- Veronica Cieri, Dearborn
- Anne Rhode, Farmington Hills
- Rachel Keck, Portage
- Brandon Pacheco, Mount Morris
- ④ Josephine Isaac, Alto
- Ann Vornsand, Lake in the Hills IL

Viola

- Daniel Cortes, Principal, Winter Garden FL
- Sean Brennan, Wixom
- Mark Kleyn, Jenison
- Kristin Benes, Downers Grove IL
- Jonathan Boyd, Farmington Hills
- ② Laura Boekeloo, Portage
- Rebecca Dube, Ray Township
- Sara Sulecki, Dearborn
- Rachael Eid-Ries, Grand Rapids
- Connor Shannon, Holland

Cello

- Zachary Boyt, Co-Principal, Traverse City
- Warren Oja, Co-Principal, Royal Oak
- ⑤ Willis Koa, West Bloomfield
- Sam Boase-Miller, Galesburg
- Kevin Irving, Grosse Pointe Farms
- ⑥ Sara Saarela, Cadillac
- Carrie Brannen, Wyoming
- Irving Angulo, Santo Domingo, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
- Matthew Heyboer, Holland
- Katie Nicholls, Beverly Hills
- Allyson Perez, Santo Domingo, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
- Taylor Crow, Saint Joseph
- Brittany Harris, Rochester

Double Bass

- Brett Armstrong, Principal, Grand Rapids
- Thalea Davis, Conley GA
- Andrew Rose, Kalamazoo
- Jeffery Utter, Canton NY
- Joe Willard, Royal Oak
- Steven Fernandez, Farmington Hills
- Craig Kowalsky, Commerce
- Mark Mehringer, Farmington Hills
- Justin Waalkes, Grand Rapids
- Mike Horrigan, Grand Rapids

Flute

- Sandra Fernandez, Guayaquil, EQUADOR
- * Stephanie Marzolf, Battle Creek
- Jory King, Westland

Oboe

- Jarred Small, Principal, Fraser
- Kayla Pingel, Farmington
- Sara Harris, English Horn, Clinton MD

Clarinet

- Ben Werne, Principal, Jasper IN
- Danny Mui, Macomb
- ⑦ Margaret Albrecht, Beverly Hills
- Kristyn Macqueen, Rockford

Bassoon

- Jason Ostrander, Principal, Oscoda
- Josh Hart, Mattawan
- Marco Juarez, Kalamazoo (assisting)

Trumpet

- Ross Wixon, Glenn Dale MD
- Adam Stowe, Clarklake
- ⑧ Bonni Lee Beebe, Paw Paw
- Mason Henderson, South Bend IN

Horn

- Paul Clifton, Co-Principal, Howell
- Jancie Philippus, Co-Principal, San Benito TX
- Luke Walton, Palmyra NY
- ⑧ Karin Yamaguchi, Novi

Trombone

- Nate Musch, Principal, Ann Arbor
- Erik Dancy, Kalamazoo

Bass Trombone

- Derek Lyp, Lambertville

Tuba

- Travis Netzer, Aberdeen SD

Timpani

- Will Alderman, Co-Principal, Plainwell
- Chris Guthrie, Co-Principal, Portage

Percussion

- Will Alderman, Principal, Plainwell
- Ryan Jonker, Kalamazoo
- Kellen King, Bay City

Orchestra Staff

- Sam Boase-Miller, Manager
- Paul Clifton, Librarian

- ① KSO/WMU Artist Scholar
- ② Rhea Yeager Fetzer Scholar
- ③ Julius & Esther Stulberg Scholar
- ④ Michael Listiak Scholar
- ⑤ Herbert Butler Scholar
- ⑥ Carroll Haas Scholar
- ⑦ Tucky & Charles Elliott Scholar
- ⑧ Russell Brown Scholar

* Member of Sigma Alpha Iota music fraternity for women