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PYO Music Institute  
Louis Scaglione • *Music Director*  
Presents

PHILADELPHIA  
YOUTH  
ORCHESTRA

Louis Scaglione • Conductor



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Sunday • November 19, 2023 • 3:00 p.m.

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The Kimmel Center for Performing Arts • Verizon Hall



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## GET INVOLVED!

Whether you support the PYO Music Institute as a musician, an audience member, or a donor, we welcome and appreciate your involvement – and we thank you for sharing in our belief in the power and merit of great music education.

### Audition

The PYO Music Institute hosts auditions for the upcoming season in both June and September. Application forms, audition schedules, and FAQs are available at [pyomusic.org/audition](http://pyomusic.org/audition)

### Attend

Concert and ticket prices vary by performance. For specific ticket and venue information for all upcoming events, please visit [pyomusic.org/events](http://pyomusic.org/events)

### Support

Your investment in the PYO Music Institute ensures access to high-caliber music education for hundreds of talented young musicians. From our students who are picking up an instrument for the very first time, to those preparing for conservatory auditions, your support is invaluable in their musical and personal journeys. Please consider a generous, tax-deductible gift to the PYO Music Institute. Please visit [pyomusic.org/support](http://pyomusic.org/support) for more information and to make a gift, or call the PYOMI office at **215-545-0502**.

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## A LETTER FROM MAESTRO LOUIS SCAGLIONE

Dear Friends,

Music has the power to transform lives, and lives have the power to transform music. Today's performance is a testament to that. We celebrate the extraordinary dedication and growth of our young musicians and honor the memory of a dear friend, David R. McShane (1941-2023).

The young musicians before you have collectively rehearsed over 35 hours for this performance, not to mention countless hours growing in their craft through personal practice time and weekly lessons. Their dedication to this music is commendable; even more so, I commend them for the disciplines they are instilling that will reap lifetime benefits. You, as the audience, now have the opportunity to enjoy the rewards of their work through their superb music-making.

Today's performance is also a tribute to the memory of an exceptional individual, David R. McShane, a long-time trustee of the PYO Music Institute who served for 16 years. Because of Mr. McShane's unwavering commitment to PYOMI, he established the David R. McShane Endowment Fund, which was our first. Mr. McShane saw the value of developing a solid financial base for the future of the organization, and over 13 years consistently contributed to the endowment. He also provided great leadership and direction as a trustee—his presence is missed.

Mr. McShane's legacy extended beyond the boardroom; he was a man known for his infectious laughter, quick wit, and generosity to many. An avid dog lover, he found joy in the company of his canine companions and many other animal friends at his home at Paxson Hill Farm in New Hope, Pennsylvania.

Mr. McShane's support for the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra Music Institute was profound. His contributions will resonate for generations, continuing the legacy of musical excellence and education at the PYO Music Institute.

We honor his memory with our performance today. In particular, the "Nimrod" variation from Elgar's *Enigma Variations* offers a moving tribute to someone who was our loyal friend and supporter, just as Elgar did in his honoring of his friend A.E. Jaeger through this composition.

Thank you for being here today. We hope you enjoy the concert.

With sincerest appreciation,



**Louis Scaglione,**  
*President & Music Director*



Pictured (left-to-right): Jim Matour (Past Board Chair), David R. McShane

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## PHILADELPHIA YOUTH ORCHESTRA

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Philadelphia Youth Orchestra Music Institute  
Louis Scaglione • *Music Director*

*Presents*

Philadelphia Youth Orchestra  
Louis Scaglione • *Conductor*  
Verizon Hall, The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

Sunday, November 19, 2023 • 3:00 p.m.

This concert is made possible by our Presenting Sponsor **Republic Bank**  
*Today's performance is presented in memory of David R. McShane*

### PROGRAM

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 73	Johannes Brahms
I. Allegro non troppo	
II. Adagio non troppo	
III. Allegretto grazioso	
IV. Allegro con spirito	

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### INTERMISSION

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Variations on an Original Theme, "Enigma" Op. 36	Edward Elgar
Theme: Andante	
Variation I. L'istesso tempo, "C.A.E."	
Variation II. Allegro, "H.D.S-P."	
Variation III. Allegretto, "R.B.T."	
Variation IV. Allegro di molto, "W.M.B."	
Variation V. Moderato, "R.P.A."	
Variation VI. Andantino, "Ysobel"	
Variation VII. Presto, "Troyte"	
Variation VIII. Allegretto, "W.N."	
Variation IX. Adagio, "Nimrod"	
Variation X. Intermezzo: Allegretto, "Dorabella"	
Variation XI. Allegro di molto, "G.R.S."	
Variation XII. Andante, "B.G.N."	
Variation XIII. Romanza: Moderato, " * * * "	
Variation XIV. Finale: Allegro Presto, "E.D.U."	

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*Latecomers will not be seated until an appropriate time in the concert. The use of photographic and recording equipment is strictly prohibited. As a courtesy to the performers and fellow concert-goers, please silence all cell phones prior to the performance.*

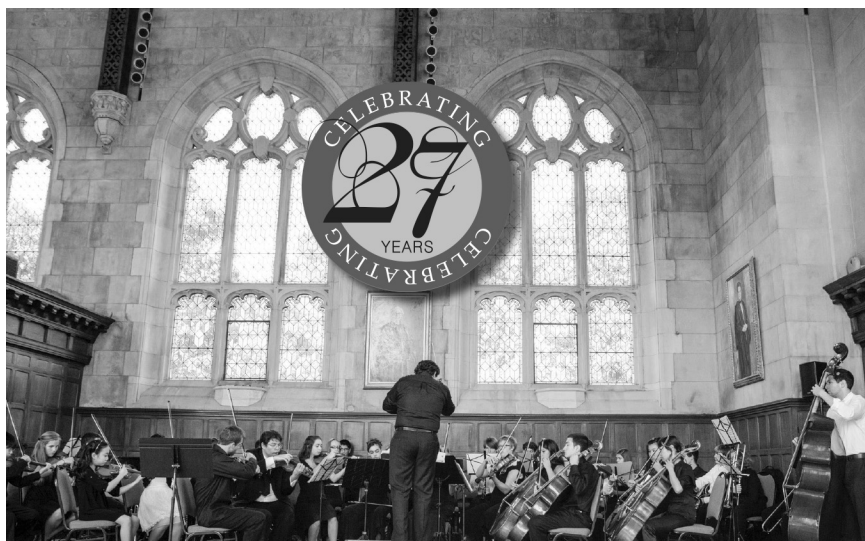


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**PHILADELPHIA YOUTH ORCHESTRA • 2023–2024**

**Louis Scaglione**, *Music Director & Conductor*

**Violin I**

Gabriela Salvador-Riera, *Concertmaster*

Miro Raj, *Associate Concertmaster*

Kai Freeman, *Assistant Concertmaster*

Vivian Ma

Grace Lipinski

Cyrano Rosentrater

Rishab Das

Adam Elbohy

Daniel Huang

Brooklyn Jang

Elise Hwang

Hannah Han

Hannah Adams

Ryannah Blackman

Natalie Chen

Therese Gasser

Ivan Wong

Jacob Wurst

Yiguo Zhang

Suri Ahn

**Violin II**

Ritsu Nakagawa, *Principal*

Heather Lee, *Associate Principal*

Adelle Sullivan-Cozza, *Assistant Principal*

Kyle Xie

Emily Gelok

Lauren Wu

Josiah Mendenhall

Emilie Xie

Megan Chan

David Ma

Julie Zheng

Molly Coleman

Ian Lin

Andrew Lu

Shloka Bhattacharyya

Ryan Ye

Kyle Chen

Victoria Fan

Nicholas Hartman

Liam Gately

Darby Ko

**Viola**

Lucas Lauprasert, *Principal*

Kyle Sonon, *Associate Principal*

Livia Kam, *Assistant Principal*

Hannah Y. Lee

Karlis Graufelds

Shinnyom David Park

Justine Sullivan-Cozza

Helen Zheng

Brooklyn Vasquez

Tanav Gowda

Hannah Lee

**Violoncello**

Kwanchi Loo, *Principal*

Alexander Steketee, *Associate Principal*

Samuel Cao, *Assistant Principal*

Andrew Li

Winston Hewitt

Kwanyun Loo

Hayden Kang

Peter Moon

Julio Martin-Navas

Elena Chang

Kealia Grace Smith

Daniel Loza

Jessica Wang

Victoria Mitchell

Mauricio Gonzalez

Emily Zheng

Julian Ladd

Jace Cocola

**Double Bass**

Gaurav Kakarla, *Principal*

Aram Karpch, *Associate Principal*

Luke Halpern, *Assistant Principal*

Milan Merchant

Micah Sommons

Adelyn Kelly

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**PHILADELPHIA YOUTH ORCHESTRA • 2023–2024****Flute/Piccolo**

Samantha Bedenko  
Jessica Hou  
Jianna Kim  
Sabrina Stemetzki  
Kevin Yuan\*

**Oboe/English Horn**

Artemis Drake  
Sarah Li\*  
Liliana Ortiz

**Clarinet/Bass Clarinet**

Jeremy Green\*  
Alexander Kang  
Christian Lee  
Botong Li  
Kevin Zhu

**Bassoon**

Jason Xi\*  
Edmund Xie

**French Horn**

Evan Bretz\*  
William Czartoryski  
Charles Krieg  
Quinn Milliken  
Leila Myers

**Trumpet**

Noah Howington  
Frederick Kerby  
Zimo Liu  
Joshua Yamamoto\*

**Trombone**

Yi-En Ho  
Javid Labenski  
Nicholas Mahoney\*

**Tuba**

Niklas Umland\*

**Percussion**

Jared Griffith  
Joseph Fiore\*  
Ian Kohn  
Austin Snavely  
Sydney Vance

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**PHILADELPHIA YOUTH ORCHESTRA • 2023-2024****Louis Scaglione*****President & Music Director***

Maestro Louis Scaglione has spent over 35 years developing his craft as a musician, educator, conductor, and administrative executive. His career has afforded him extensive experience in orchestral, choral, and opera literature, as well as in education and executive administration. Known nationally, he has established himself within the greater Delaware Valley region as an esteemed and well-respected colleague. He has also developed sound relations with many arts, educational, and cultural organizations and institutions.

His professional career began in 1993 when he moved to Philadelphia from Champaign, Illinois, where he attended the University of Illinois having received his Bachelor of Science in Music Education and had advanced studies in piano performance, vocal coaching, opera, and choral music. He completed his Master of Music in 1996 from Temple University. At Temple University, he was awarded a fellowship and teaching assistantship, and his primary assignment was to assist the Temple Opera Theater's efforts to rebuild its program and serve as Assistant Conductor and Chorus Master.

For the past 27 years, he has worked with PYO Music Institute (PYOMI) and he is currently President, CEO, and Music Director. Celebrating its 84th anniversary, PYO Music Institute has grown exponentially during his tenure and under his direction to include nine program divisions serving over 500 students a year drawn from over 21 counties in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. His work relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion through PYO Music Institute's nationally recognized orchestral music learning pathway has garnered attention and funding from major foundation sources both regionally and nationally. PYO Music

Institute's program divisions are directed by some of the top music professionals from the region. PYO Music Institute's program divisions attract the very best students from a diverse population who seek extraordinary music education and the pursuit of music excellence, while building a strong sense of character, discipline, commitment, and maturity.

He has devoted his career to music education and the instruction of music at the highest levels. During his time with PYO Music Institute, he has conducted many major works from the orchestra literature cannon, as well as choral-orchestral masterworks. He has collaborated with many soloists, both instrumental and vocal, as well as distinguished choral societies including the Mendelssohn Club Chorus (Philadelphia) and the Choral Society of Montgomery County (Pennsylvania). He established PYO's highly regarded concert series at the Kimmel Cultural Campus and PYO Music Institute's performances have been featured in a broadcast series on 90.1 WRTI-FM. He has taken the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra on five international concert tours during his tenure. Through his work with PYO Music Institute, he has earned the respect of Philadelphia's greater professional community, and he has distinguished himself as a highly regarded musician, educator, and conductor in the region.

Additionally, Maestro Scaglione's involvement with the greater Philadelphia cultural and social community has included service as a member of several non-profit boards. Philanthropy is paramount to Maestro Scaglione, and he teaches his students the importance of "giving-back" to one's community through one's talents.

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**PYO Music Institute • 2023-2024****Louis Scaglione,**  
*President & Music Director*

The Philadelphia Youth Orchestra Music Institute is the tri-state region's premier youth orchestra organization for gifted, young, classical musicians, and one of the oldest and most highly regarded youth orchestra organizations in the United States. For 84 years, the PYO Music Institute has been providing professional-caliber musical experiences to young instrumentalists, while thrilling audiences in the Greater Philadelphia region and across the globe.

The organization has nine program divisions: Philadelphia Youth Orchestra (PYO), Philadelphia Young Artists Orchestra (PYAO), Young Musicians Debut Orchestra (YMDO), Bravo Brass, Prysm Strings, Pizzicato Players, Philadelphia Youth Jazz Orchestra (PYJO), Philadelphia Youth Symphonic Band (PYSB), and Tune Up Philly - Orchestral Pathways Program. Ranging in age from 5 to 21 years, the musicians of the PYO Music Institute come from a 70-mile radius of Philadelphia encompassing nearly 20 counties within Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. Through advanced orchestra repertoire, students are challenged to perform at the highest levels, to strive for advanced musicianship, and to achieve superior technical, musical, and personal application. Former PYOMI musicians currently hold chairs in most of the top 20 professional orchestras in the United States, with 12 PYOMI alumni currently serving in The Philadelphia Orchestra.

Extraordinary artistic leadership is a hallmark of the PYO Music Institute. Adolph Sorian (1940-1941), J.W.F. Leman (1941-1952), William R. Smith (1952-1954), and Joseph Primavera (1954-2005) served as Music Directors, with Maestro Primavera having had the extraordinary distinction of being the longest-serving active conductor of any orchestra in the world. Louis Scaglione, appointed in 1997 by Maestro Primavera and the PYOMI Board of Trustees, continues the legacy of leadership, currently serving as the PYO Music Institute's President, CEO and Music Director.

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## PHILADELPHIA YOUTH ORCHESTRA • 2023–2024

### **Philadelphia Youth Orchestra**

Philadelphia Youth Orchestra, having been presented on tour in over twenty countries, is one of the most well-recognized youth orchestra programs in the nation. It provides the region's most advanced classical instrumental music students with unparalleled training and performance opportunities with world renowned soloists under the direction of Maestro Louis Scaglione, one of the leading youth orchestra conductors in the country. In addition to the opportunity to showcase their talents through high-profile radio broadcasts on WRTI 90.1 and live performances in Verizon Hall of The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, members learn character-building life skills and supplement their collegiate and conservatory applications, making them strong candidates for acceptance into the most prestigious universities and conservatories around the world.

### **Philadelphia Young Artists Orchestra**

Philadelphia Young Artists Orchestra challenges advanced students through rehearsal and performance of sophisticated symphonic repertoire and through musical discipline. PYAO further provides the opportunity to achieve advanced ensemble proficiencies with a highly experienced professional conductor. PYAO students work with master teachers from The Philadelphia Orchestra in sectional rehearsals; have the opportunity to participate in an annual concerto competition; and perform in high profile professional venues throughout the Greater Philadelphia region, including the Perelman Theater and Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. Rosalind Erwin, a graduate of The New School of Music and Temple University, studied conducting with Joseph Barone, and was mentored by Ricardo Muti, Leonard Slatkin, and David Zinman. She is currently

Music Director and Conductor of the Drexel University Symphony Orchestra, former Music Director of the Pottstown Symphony Orchestra, and has extensive experience conducting in Europe. She is a master teacher and is a highly sought-after clinician and guest conductor.

### **Young Musicians Debut Orchestra**

Young Musicians Debut Orchestra is a beginning to intermediate-level full symphonic orchestra that provides most students with their first introduction to large orchestral playing. Through standard orchestral literature, students are challenged to hone their talents for listening, blending, balancing, and making music within the full orchestral context. YMDO prepares its members for participation in Philadelphia Young Artists Orchestra, and eventually, Philadelphia Youth Orchestra, as students advance through PYOMI's distinguished orchestra education continuum and pathway. Kenneth Bean, a graduate of Oberlin Conservatory and Jackson State University, is also Assistant Conductor of the Princeton Symphony Orchestra; Conductor of the Youth Orchestra of Central Jersey, Symphonic Orchestra; and Assistant Conductor of Symphony in C. He currently teaches at the Kinhaven Music School and previously taught at the Luzerne Music Center. Mr. Bean maintains an active freelance trumpet career and serves as Associate Director of the Primavera Fund.

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**PYO Music Institute • 2023-2024**
**Bravo Brass**

Bravo Brass, the only year-round brass ensemble in the Philadelphia area and one of only three in the country and under the direction of Paul Bryan, offers the highest level of individual and ensemble training opportunities for the most accomplished young brass musicians in the area. In addition to the opportunity to showcase their talents through multiple live performances throughout the year, members have distinguished themselves and gained acceptance to some of the most competitive and prestigious institutions for music and higher learning around the globe. Paul Bryan serves as an administrator at the Curtis Institute of Music. An accomplished trombonist and teacher, he also holds positions as Music Director of Symphony in C's Summer Symphony Camp and Head Conductor of the Young Artist Summer Program at Curtis.

**Prysm Strings**

Prysm Strings offers unparalleled, personalized small group instruction and educational support for beginning to intermediate string students, under the direction of Gloria dePasquale. With performance opportunities alongside the program's faculty, Prysm Strings also provides members with peer mentors from the senior ensembles of the PYO Music Institute. Gloria dePasquale, Cellist for The Philadelphia Orchestra (1977-2022) was hired by Eugene Ormandy and served four and a half decades under ensuing artistic leadership, including Riccardo Muti, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Christoph Eschenbach, Charles Dutoit, and Yannick Nézet-Séguin. She was cellist of the dePasquale String Quartet and dePasquale Trio. She is senior artistic and educational advisor to PYO and designs and oversees the PYOMI College and Conservatory Audition Preparation program.

Mrs. dePasquale has served on the Board of the League of American Orchestras, The Philadelphia Orchestra Association, and the President's Council at New England Conservatory.

**Tune Up Philly -  
Orchestral Pathways Program**

Tune Up Philly provides Philadelphia's children living in challenging social and economic conditions with access to immersive, after-school music education and performance opportunities. Tune Up Philly focuses on building community through music among peers at each of its school- and community center-based sites, and bringing these students together to experience the joy and benefits of playing together in large ensembles. An award-winning educator, classical recording artist, and nationally performed composer, Mr. Smith holds degrees from Mannes College of Music and The Juilliard School. He has helped hundreds of families and leading cultural institutions use intensive performing arts education opportunities to engage communities and foster success. Mr. Smith has implemented innovative and successful music education programming, created long-lasting community partnerships among institutions of varying disciplines and genres, and developed mentorship training for conservatory and college graduates.

**Pizzicato Players**

Under the direction of Paul Smith, Pizzicato Players is a new and expanded educational offering of the PYO Music Institute for plucked string instruments. Pizzicato Players strives to create a home to develop critical and large ensemble skills and ensemble experience with conductors and acoustically favorable settings to highlight and nurture plucked instruments which are increasingly used in contemporary settings and throughout conservatories worldwide.



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**PYO Music Institute • 2023-2024****Philadelphia Youth Symphonic Band**

The Philadelphia Youth Symphonic Band, a new program division of the Institute, provides advanced instrumental music students access to training, musical and personal development, and performance opportunities through high-level wind band repertoire. PYSB provides the opportunity to work with highly experienced professional conductors, musicians, and teachers; and to perform in professional venues throughout the greater Philadelphia region. Patrick Bailey, Director and Conductor of the PYSB, currently serves as Director & Conductor of the Drexel University Concert Band program and is a tenured faculty member in the Pennsbury School District's internationally recognized instrumental music program.

**Philadelphia Youth Jazz Orchestra**

The Philadelphia Youth Jazz Orchestra, a new program division of the Institute, provides advanced instrumental music students access to training, musical and personal development, and performance opportunities through professional-level jazz orchestra repertoire. PYJO offers the chance to work with world-renowned and highly experienced professional conductors, musicians, and teachers; and to perform in professional venues throughout the greater Philadelphia region. Justin Faulkner, the Director, and Conductor of the PYJO, currently holds the drum chair in the Grammy Award Winning/Six-Time Grammy Nominated Branford Marsalis Quartet. He is an Artist in Residence at Temple University's Boyer College of Music and Dance, is a Governor of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Recording Academy, and creative consultant for the Clef Club of Jazz and Performing Arts.

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**PYO Music Institute • 2023-2024**
**JOHANNES BRHAMS**

*Born: Hamburg, Germany, 7 May 1833*

*Died: Vienna, Austria, 3 April 1897*

**Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 73**

Brahms' Second Symphony is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, and divided strings.

**Duration:** 40 minutes

**Parallel Events/1877**

U.S. Congress determines 1876 Presidential Election, awarding Florida's electoral votes to Rutherford B. Hayes, who becomes the 19th U.S. President without winning the popular vote

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U.S. at war with Native American tribes

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*Washington Post* publishes its first newspaper

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Bell Telephone Company is founded

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Tchaikovsky's ballet *Swan Lake* premieres

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Thomas Edison makes first recording of human voice and invents phonograph

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John Wanamaker opens first U.S. department store in Philadelphia

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Thomas Edison makes first recording of human voice and invents phonograph

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Entrepreneur Cornelius Vanderbilt and Mormon leader Brigham Young die

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Mexican revolutionary rebel Pancho Villa is born

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Catcher's mask first worn in baseball

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First National League Baseball game is played

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**About the Composer**

After Beethoven left the world nine great symphonies, very few composers attempted to rise to the challenge of

writing a symphony. As a result, most composers produced works that were less structured than a symphony and more programmatic such as operas or tone poems. In the immediate post-Beethoven world, the majority of composers followed the leadership of opera composer Richard Wagner, who led the movement of a new German school of composing. More exotic instruments such as the tuba and English horn were used in the orchestra, the number of strings tripled, and the overall sound took on larger-than-life images and intensities.

Composers throughout the world followed this new movement, what is referred to today as the Romantic Era (1820-1900). Started by Beethoven, the Romantic Period is principally focused on the will, dreams, hopes, disappointments, fears, or any emotion or desire of the writer. The art and the artist are inseparable, where in the previous eras of Mozart and Haydn (Classical) or Bach and Handel (Baroque), artistic output was simply another occupation not prone to personal passions or influences.

While very much a German composer, Johannes Brahms rejected this new way of thinking. The son of a mediocre musician, Brahms embraced the more structured forms of the Classical era, including Beethoven who was the bridge between the Classical and Romantic periods. Above all else, Brahms hated wearing his heart on his sleeve and tried to avoid using music as a means to paint pictures or tell stories. He preferred more intangible works. Even Brahms' funeral mass, *German Requiem* (his first major success), avoided the liturgical text that traditionally employed the words from the funeral mass. Instead, Brahms used the texts from the more poetic *Beatitudes* and suggested that death is

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## PROGRAM NOTES

more concerned about consoling the living than the one who died (“Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted.”)

Yet in a sense Brahms was more of the Romantic Era than most of those who branded him an anti-Romanticist. In nearly every work Brahms wrote, he composed from personal experience, especially heartache. Romantic artists seemed to not only embody their works, they are plagued with an “inner demon,” as Beethoven called it, which aided their plight to express themselves artistically.

Beethoven lost his hearing, Tchaikovsky struggled as a homosexual with serious bouts of depression, and Robert Schumann went insane. Looking at Brahms’ life and music, it is clear he suffered from a more common and perhaps more painful demon – loneliness. Ironically and tragically, Brahms loved the wife of one of his greatest supporters and closest friends – Robert Schumann. Clara Schumann happened to be one of the world’s finest pianists and the first major woman virtuoso performers.

After Robert Schumann’s death in 1856, Brahms and Clara decided to go their separate ways, but their friendship remained the deepest and only emotional anchor Brahms ever knew. Artistically, the heartache and anguish sowed the seeds of several major compositions, many of which took years to complete.

As a craftsman, Brahms was a perfectionist and he sought to refine and finish every moment of music to absolute perfection. He offered advice to a fellow musician saying, “Go over it and over it again and again until there is not a bar you could improve on....Whether it is beautiful also is an entirely different matter, but perfect it must be.” Unlike Beethoven, Brahms really did not have a steady patter of evolution

and progress in his works. Rather, Brahms seemed complete as an artist from the start. Robert Schumann observed in a now famous article that Brahms was one of “music’s mysteries in arriving fully armed, like Athena from the head of Zeus.”

As a result, Brahms became the heir-apparent to Beethoven even before Brahms completed his first of only four symphonies. Brahms surpassed his contemporaries in his ability to control the intertwining melodic lines coupled with richly expressive harmonies. Yet all of this was framed in the methodical and structured styles of his immediate predecessors, like Beethoven, Mozart, and Haydn. Brahms’ imaginative skill to phrase a musical line with the seemingly perfect orchestral timbres and colors is unprecedented, even today.

Brahms’ published works include the *Variations on a Theme of Haydn*, the *Academic Festival Overture*, the *Tragic Overture*, concertos for piano, violin, and cello, sonatas for piano, violin, cello and clarinet, piano trios, quartets and a quintet, string quartets, many works for solo piano, organ preludes, many songs, vocal quartets and duets (*Liebeslieder Waltzes*, *Zigeunerlieder*), choral works (*German Requiem*, *Alto Rhapsody*, *Nanie*, *Gesang der Parzen*, *Schicksalslied*), and four perfect symphonies.

### About the Work

Admiration is a powerful thing. Brahms was so awed by the works of Beethoven that Brahms was burdened by the legacy of Beethoven’s symphonies, saying “I shall never compose a symphony. You have no idea how it feels to be dogged by Beethoven’s footsteps; to hear behind you the tramp of a giant like Beethoven.” It did not help Brahms that twenty years

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## PROGRAM NOTES

earlier his close friend and composer Robert Schumann published an article suggesting Brahms would be the heir to Beethoven, saying that “if Brahms directs his magic wand where the massed power in chorus and orchestra might lend him their strength, we can look forward to even more wondrous glimpses into the secret world of the spirits.” At the time of Schumann’s proclamation, Brahms had yet to write anything for orchestra.

The precocious prodigy Mozart composed his first symphony at the age of nine; Mendelssohn was 15; Schubert was 16; Haydn was 25; Beethoven was 29; and Schumann reached the ripe old age of 31 before composing his first symphony. Brahms unveiled his first symphony to the public at the age of 43; however, unlike the previous composers mentioned, Brahms’ first attempt immediately entered the mainstream of the symphonic repertoire.

With the agony of his *First Symphony* behind him, Brahms launched into his *Second Symphony* with considerable speed. Composed during the summer of 1877, Brahms attributed the surroundings of a relaxing Austrian resort village to the new work’s quick birth. Moreover, Brahms’ *Second Symphony* musically and emotionally resembles Beethoven’s nature-inspired *Pastoral Symphony*. Brahms’ *First* (in C minor) and Beethoven’s *Fifth* (also in C minor) both suggest a heroic theme, and both Brahms and Beethoven took considerable time to create these works. Then, after the two C minor symphonies of storm and stress, each produced, in a short time, a work which offered deliberate contrast to the previous epic works. The result (Beethoven’s *Pastoral Symphony* and Brahms’ *Symphony No. 2*) implies a “return to nature.”

For all its outward simplicity, Brahms’

*Second Symphony* conceals unexpected depths of seriousness and introspection and is one of the most rigorously organized of all of the composer’s works. For example, almost all of the *Second Symphony*’s thematic material grows from the simple three-note figure that is heard by the cellos and basses in the opening measures. The three-note figure undergoes several transformations that lead to the violins taking on the flowing, reflective theme. The three-note figure also becomes the basis of the secondary theme of unfulfillable longing played by the lower strings.

Brahms, who often used the cellos for his most expressive music, opens the second movement with the dark voices of the cellos in one of the most sorrowful movements that is amazingly not in a minor key. The horn, flutes, and oboes then take up the cellos’ song, reshaping it into a much more expansive theme. The most uncanny and incredible thing about the second movement is its ability to tug on our heartstrings in a way that is so introspective without ever sounding melancholy, almost like a “good cry.”

The delicately scored third movement alternates between two faster episodes of exceptional grace and lightness, and again relates back to the open three notes of the first movement. A solo oboe over the plucking of strings introduces a folk-like tune to open the movement in a relatively stately yet dancing rhythm until it is transformed into energetic variations punctuated by a few breathless pauses. The result is almost a naïve charm and intimacy, and at the world premiere performance the delighted Viennese audience demanded (and received) an encore of this movement.

Following a consciously restrained opening of the final movement, the *Finale* takes shape with an exuberant outburst. The

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## PROGRAM NOTES

energetic movement presents, develops, alters, and reconfigures three principal themes in rapid succession. Contrasting manic energy with a broad, hymn-like melody there is an inevitable sense of motion that provides the undercurrent for the entire movement until the music builds confidently into a blazing fanfare ending the *Second Symphony* with sheer exhilaration virtually unparalleled among Brahms' other works. While it is Brahms' most intricately organized movement he ever created, most attempts to analyze this movement are usually swept away by the blaze of D major sunlight that overwhelms the entire movement and simply abounds in joy.

With an odd sense of humor, Brahms teased his friends saying that his "new symphony is so melancholy that you will not be able to bear it." His *Second Symphony*, of course, is nothing of the kind and today is still thought of as one of the most reflective and uplifting works Brahms or any composer has ever created. Yet, the *Second Symphony* is much more than that. The composer's ability to orchestrate many textures from a relatively limited orchestral force is brilliant – from soft and tender melodies to sprightly dancing tunes, to his trademark sonorous strings. The skill to essentially shape the entire work from a mere three-note figure shows not only Brahms' limitless imagination, but perfection of his craft – the theme that permeates all of Brahms' works.

### SIR EDWARD ELGAR

*Born: Broadheath, England, 2 June 1857*

*Died: Worcester, England, 23 February 1934*

### Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 36 ("Enigma")

Elgar's *Enigma Variations* is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns,

three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, triangle, cymbals, optional organ, and divided strings.

**Duration:** 35 minutes

*Dedicated "To my friends pictured within," the Enigma Variations premiered on 19 June 1899 in St. James Hall in London.*

### Parallel Events/1899

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Spanish American War ends

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Anglo-Boer War begins

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First international radio transmission

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Monet paints first *Lily Pond* series

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Sibelius' *First Symphony* premieres

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Composer Johann Strauss, Jr. dies

---

Jack Dempsey becomes the heavyweight champ

---

Jazz singer Nat "King" Cole, Baseball great Jackie Robinson, author J.D. Salinger, and humorist Andy Rooney are born

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Actors Humphrey Bogart, Fred Astaire, James Cagney, jazz legend Duke Ellington, film maker Alfred Hitchcock, gangster Al Capone, and writers Ernest Hemingway, Vladimir Nabokov, Hart Crane, and E.B. White are born

Following the completion of Elgar's heart-wrenching Cello Concerto and after several successful decades as a composer, this self-taught musician composer was never to find again the music that had come with the years of his marriage in a pre-war world. The thirty years that Elgar did compose were chiefly devoted towards symphonic compositions. In all, his complete artistic output included large choral oratorios and cantatas, orchestral overtures, two completed symphonies, variations, marches (including the well-known *Pomp and Circumstance Marches*), a violin concerto, and a cello concerto.

What captivated Elgar's musical thought more than anything else was the process of

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## PROGRAM NOTES

artistic self-discovery through the most abstract of musical terms; meaning to understand himself through music as a true autonomous language. The most noted example are his popular *First Symphony* and the stirring *Enigma Variations*, which still puzzles listeners today.

Initially, Elgar's *Enigma Variations* contained two puzzles for the listener and scholar. The first is the identity of each of the "friends pictured within," to whom the work is dedicated. All of the fourteen variations are titled with people's initials, with the exception of Variation XIII which is titled using three asterisks (some suggest they refer to an old flame of Elgar's). In a note to his friend, A.J. Jaeger (the subject of Variation IX), Elgar did explain the individual movements and answered this initial puzzle in the *Enigma Variations*.

The variations appear in this sequence with these individuals in mind:

**Variation I: "C.A.E."** Dedicated to Caroline Alice Elgar, the composer's loving spouse and his most trusted professional advisor.

**Variation II: "H.D.S.-P."** Named for Hew David Steuart-Powell, an amateur pianist who was a frequent chamber music partner with Elgar.

**Variation III: "R.B.T."** Named for Richard Baxter Townshend, a popular actor who enjoyed mimicking and whose voice rose in pitch during excited performances.

**Variation IV: "W.M.B."** Depicts William Meath Baker, a country squire, barking orders to his guests and making a brisk exit.

**Variation V: "R.P.A."** Named for poet Matthew Arnold's son Richard, good-natured, but given to daydreaming and mood changes.

**Variation VI: "Ysobel"** Named for Miss Isabel Fitton, an amateur violist and student of Elgar's, who always had trouble crossing from one string to another.

**Variation VII: "Troyte"** Written for Arthur Troyte Griffith, an architect, who was high spirited, argumentative, and persistently unsuccessful in his attempts to play the piano.

**Variation VIII: "W.N."** Named for Miss Winifred Norbury, a music-lover, charming, graceful, and a nonstop talker.

**Variation IX: "Nimrod"** Named for the great-grandson of the Biblical Noah, who was noted as a hunter. It is a moving testimonial to Elgar's closest friend, A.J. Jaeger. "This Variation is a record of a long summer evening talk," wrote Elgar, "when my friend grew nobly eloquent (as only he could be) on the grandeur of Beethoven, and especially of his slow movements."

**Variation X: "Dorabella" (*Intermezzo*)** Describes Miss Dora Penny, Mrs. Richard Powell, a vivacious young woman with a curious speech pattern which Elgar tried to imitate in this movement.

**Variation XI: "G.R.S."** Named for George Robertson Sinclair, organist of Hereford Cathedral, walking his bulldog, Dan, who is heard barking as he jumps into the Wye River to fetch a stick.

**Variation XII: "B.G.N."** Pays homage to Basil G. Nevinson, an amateur cellist who played trios with Elgar and H.D.S.-P.

**Variation XIII: "\*\*\*\*"** Caroline Alice Elgar inserted the asterisks to cloak the identity of presumably Mary Lygon, perhaps an old flame of Elgar's. Lygon had just set sail for Australia and her ocean trip is symbolized by a theme from Mendelssohn's *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*. The solo sound of the timpani with wooden ticks suggests the distant rumble of ship's engines.

## PROGRAM NOTES

**Variation XIV: “E.D.U.”** Depicts a self-portrait, of which Elgar uses his nickname “Eduo,” given by his wife. Elgar notes:

*Written at a time when friends were dubious and generally discouraging as to the composer’s musical future, this variation is merely intended to show what E.D.U. intended to do. References are made to two great influences upon the life of the composer, C.A.E. and Nimrod. The whole work is summed up in the triumphant broad presentation of the theme in a major key.*

The second and more significant enigma is musical. Elgar never fully explains in words or music the origins of the variations. Some have speculated that the original theme derives from *Auld Lang Syne* or *Rule Britannia* or a theme from Mozart’s opera *Così fan tutte*. After the premiere of the *Enigma Variations*, Elgar’s friend A.J. Jaeger wrote in *The Musical Times*:

*Here is an English musician who has something to say and knows how to say it in his own individual and beautiful way... He writes as he feels, there is no affectation or make-believe. Effortless originality combined with thorough savoir-faire and, most important of all, beauty of theme, warmth and feeling are his credentials, and they should open to him the hearts of all who have faith in the future of our English art and appreciate beautiful music wherever it is met.”*

Elgar refused to reveal the answer to the musical enigma; however, he did state that “the Variations should stand simply as a piece of music. The enigma I will not explain.” We are left with something that is only answered in the abstract language of music.

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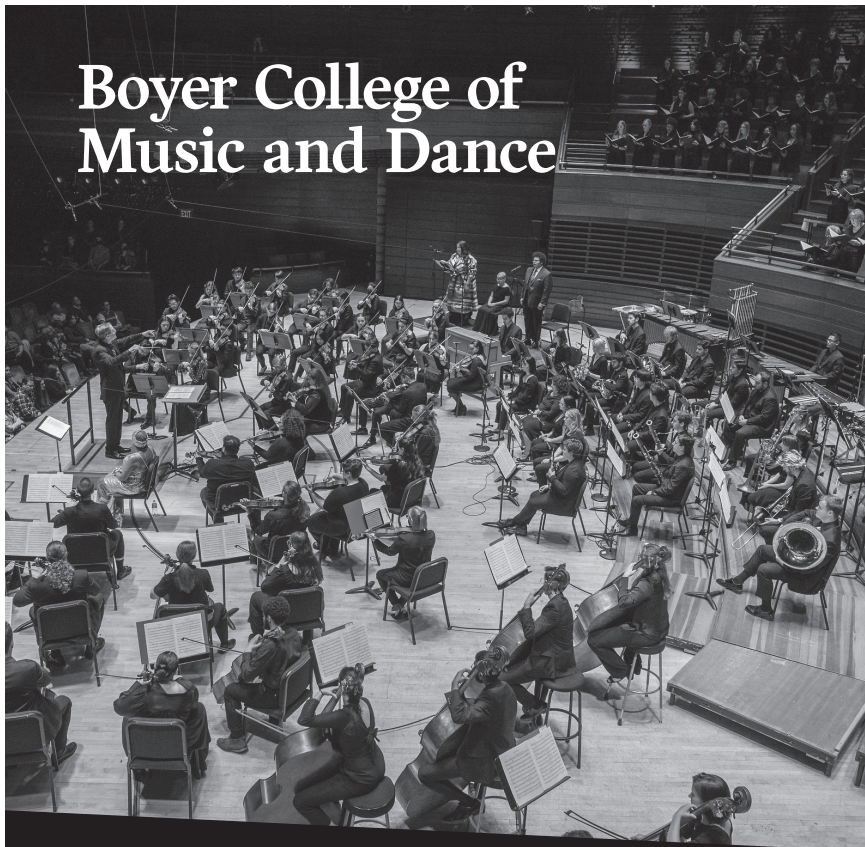
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