

The Washington Metropolitan
Philharmonic
presents

Johannes
Brahms

Sergei
Rachmaninoff

Johann
Sebastian
Bach

Featuring the NOVA
Community Chorus

CASUAL CONCERT 3PM DECEMBER 2
CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY

CONCERT PERFORMANCE 3PM DECEMBER 9
BISHOP IRETON H.S

2:15pm Pre Concert Discussion with Sheyna Burt

Join Sheyna in the back hall at the
Church of the Ehipany or upstairs at
Bishop Ireton H.S.!

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Upcoming Concerts

Saturday, February 2 at 3 pm: Church of the Epiphany (DC)

Sunday, February 10 at 3 pm: Bishop Ireton H.S. (Alexandria)

- ☞ Franz Joseph Haydn: Double Concerto (for Violin and Piano)
featuring violinist Zino Bogachek and pianist Anna Balakerskaia
- ☞ Sergei Prokofiev: Symphony No. 1, Op. 25 (Classical Symphony)
- ☞ Christopher Weiss (winner of the 2012 Composition Competition): I
Have Felt To Soar

Saturday, February 2 at 3 pm: Church of the Epiphany (DC)

Sunday, February 10 at 3 pm: Bishop Ireton H.S. (Alexandria)

- ☞ Ludwig van Beethoven: Overture to Fidelio, Op. 72c
- ☞ Benjamin Britten: Cantata academica, Carmen basiliense, Op. 62
with NOVA Community Chorus
- ☞ Edward MacDowell: Piano Concerto No. 2, Op. 23 in D Minor
featuring pianist Thomas Pandolfi
- ☞ James Kazik: Symphony (World Premiere)

Saturday, February 2 at 3 pm: Church of the Epiphany (DC)

Sunday, February 10 at 3 pm: Bishop Ireton H.S. (Alexandria)

- ☞ William McDaniel: Allegro (World Premiere)
- ☞ Ludwig van Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 4, Op. 58 in G major
with pianist William McDaniel
- ☞ Ottorino Respighi: The Fountains of Rome
- ☞ Unique work by Christopher Weiss (winner of the 2012
Composition Competition)

Thank you!

- ◆ David Beck for maintaining WMPA's data base and mail list,
- ◆ Angela Anderson for assisting in the WMPA Office and with concert brochures,
- ◆ The Washington Post, Alexandria Gazette and Mount Vernon Voice for the free listing of our concerts,
- ◆ John Reiser for the wonderful recordings he produces of our many concerts,
- ◆ Bishop Ireton and The Church of the Epiphany for their support as our primary venues

Program

Johannes Brahms: Variations on a Theme by Haydn with Pianist Sylvia Hong.

Thema. Chorale St. Antoni. Andante

Variation I. Poco più animato

Variation II. Più vivace

Variation III. Con moto

Variation IV. Andante con moto

Variation V. Vivace

Variation VI. Vivace

Variation VII. Grazioso

Variation VIII. Presto non troppo

Finale. Andante

Johann Sebastian Bach: Magnificat, BWV 243, in D Major with NOVA Community Chorus

1. Magnificat
Chorus, orchestra and continuo*
2. Et exultavit
Soprano II solo, violins and violas
3. Quia respexit . . .
Soprano I solo, oboe d'amore
4. omnes generationes
Chorus, orchestra
5. Quia fecit
Bass solo
6. Et misericordia
Alto and tenor soli, flutes, violin and violas

7. Fecit potentiam
Chorus, orchestra
8. Deposuit potentes
Tenor solo, violins
9. Esurientes implevit
Alto solo, flutes
10. Suscepit Israel
Sopranos I, II and alto soli, oboes
11. Sicut locutus
Chorus
12. Gloria Patri
Chorus, orchestra

*Continuo performs in all sections

Magnificat



1. Coro

Magnificat anima mea Dominum.

2. Aria - Sopran II

Et exsultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.

3. Aria - Sopran I

Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae; ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent

4. Coro

Omnes generationes.

5. Aria - Bass

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est, et sanctum nomen eius.

6. Aria (Duetto) - Alt, Tenor

Et misericordia a progenie in progenies timentibus eum.

7. Coro

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo, dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.

8. Aria - Tenor

Deposuit potentes de sede et exaltavit humiles.

9. Aria - Alt

Esurientes implevit bonis et divites dimisit inanes.

10. Aria (Terzetto) - Sopran I, Sopran II, Alt

Suscepit Israel puerum suum recordatus misericordiae suae.

11. Coro

Sicut locutus est ad Patres nostros, Abraham et semini eius in saecula.

12. Coro

Gloria Patri, gloria Filio, gloria et Spiritui Sancto!

1. Chorus

My soul doth magnify the Lord.

2. Aria - Soprano II

And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.

3. Aria - Soprano I

For he had regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden. For behold, from henceforth shall call me blessed

4. Chorus

All generations.

5. Aria - Bass

For he that is mighty hath magnified me, and holy is his name.

6. Aria - Alto, Tenor

And mercy is on them that fear him throughout all generations.

7. Chorus

He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

8. Aria - Tenor

He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek.

9. Aria - Alto

He hath filled the hungry with good things and the rich he hath sent empty away.

10. Aria (Trio) - Sopran I, Sopran II, Alto

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel.

11. Chorus

As he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.

12. Chorus

Glory be to the Father, glory be to the Son, and glory be to the Holy Ghost!
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Sergei Rachmaninoff: Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini

with pianist

Sylvia Hong

Introduction: Allegro vivace

Variation I (Precedente) Tema:

L'istesso tempo

Variation 2: L'istesso tempo

Variation 3: L'istesso tempo

Variation 4: Più vivo

Variation 5: Tempo precedente

Variation 6: L'istesso tempo

Variation 7: Meno mosso,
a tempo moderato

Variation 8: Tempo I

Variation 9: L'istesso tempo

Variation 10: L'istesso tempo

Variation 11: Moderato

Variation 12: Tempo di minuetto
(D minor)

Variation 13: Allegro (D minor)

Variation 14: L'istesso tempo (F major)

Variation 15: Più vivo scherzando
(F major)

Variation 16: Allegretto (B flat minor)

Variation 17: (Allegretto) (B flat minor)

Variation 18: Andante cantabile
(D flat major)

Variation 19: A tempo vivace

Variation 20: Un poco più vivo

Variation 21: Un poco più vivo

Variation 22: Marziale.

Un poco più vivo (Alla breve)

Variation 23: L'istesso tempo

Variation 24: A tempo un poco
meno mosso



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Most of WMPA's funding comes from earned income and individual and corporate donations. Please consider supporting WMPA by making a donation, volunteering, or participating in one of our many fundraising trips and activities.

WMPA's Music Director and Conductor Ulysses S. James



graduated with honors from Brown University in 1958 with a Bachelor's Degree in Music. He studied with the Principal Trombonist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra as an undergraduate, and attended the graduate program at Tanglewood the summer following graduation. Accepted at both New England Conservatory and Indiana University as a Master Degree candidate, Mr. James elected to pursue an alternate career. The draft notified him that they had other plans, so he joined the Navy. He served as a Regular Naval Officer for twenty years retiring as a CDR in 1979 (13 Vietnam campaigns, 5

Navy Commendation Medals, Surface Warfare specialty, Organization Development subspecialty, USNPG School - M.S. in Computer Systems Management). Upon retirement, the call to return to music was irresistible. He became a serious student of the Cello. However, conducting opportunities became available, and he became the Conductor and Music Director of what is now Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic and Washington Metropolitan Youth Orchestra in 1984. Both orchestras developed from small neighborhood string ensembles to metropolitan wide symphonic orchestras. He relinquished the Youth Orchestra to his long-time colleague Dr. Henry Sgrecci in May, 2011, and has continued as Music Director of Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Association and Conductor of Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic.

For the past 22 years, he has hosted a weekly summer chamber music series for local professional and amateur musicians at The Lyceum in Alexandria, VA. In 2006 he initiated a regional composition competition to encourage deserving, emerging composers. The winner is given the opportunity to have his or her work performed by the Philharmonic. Currently scores are requested from composers in the entire Eastern United States. In 2008 an orchestra for middle school musicians, the Washington Metropolitan Concert Orchestra, was added to the Association. It is currently about thirty members strong and is continuing to grow.

mes has conducted in Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center Concert Hall and Terrace Theater, Avery Fischer Hall and Strathmore Concert Hall. He was awarded Mount Vernon District Citizen of the Year and Region 4 (Alexandria) Honored Mentor for May the Month of Children (7th-12th Grade) in 2002.

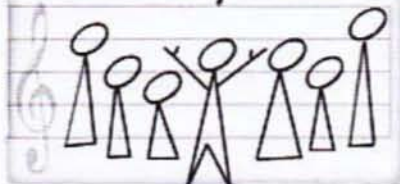
For the past three years he has served as President of the Alexandria Arts Forum and received the prestigious 2012 Alex Award for exceptional contributions to the enhancement of the quality of artistic opportunities in the community.



Pianist Sylvia Hong, known to audiences as a pianist of imagination and virtuosity, made her debut with the Mount Vernon Orchestra at the age of 16 as 1st prize winner of the National Russian Competition. Since then she has performed in Italy, Korea, England, and her native United States, in such venues as New York's Steinway Hall, and the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. Highlights of recent seasons include a performance of Beethoven's Concerto #3 with the Mokpo Symphony, a concert tour of Korea playing duo piano concerts with husband Michael Rector, and two appearances at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC.

Sylvia credits much of her success to her principal teachers—Lydia Frumkin of Oberlin Conservatory, Lee Kum-Sing of the Vancouver Academy of Music, and Benjamin Pasternack of the Peabody Conservatory. She has honed her skills with performance and study at musical festivals in Bowdoin, New Paltz, Casalmaggiore, Holland, and Las Vegas. She has performed in the master classes of Julian Martin, Yoheved Kaplinsky, Martin Canin, Mario Delli Ponti, Vladimir Feltsman, and Susan Starr. Since 2011 she has served as Assistant Professor of Piano at Belhaven University in Jackson, Mississippi.

NOVA Community Chorus



NOVA COMMUNITY CHORUS is a one hundred-voice ensemble that combines singers from the NVCC Music Program and the surrounding community. The chorus has distinguished itself both locally and internationally. It performs regularly with the Alexandria Band, the Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic and the Alexandria Symphony. Special engagements in past years have included Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and the National Theater. The chorus toured Spain

and performed at the 1992 World's Fair in Seville. The chorus has sung in England (2006), at the Leipzig International Choral Festival in Germany (2008) and in France (2010). Recent performances include the Verdi Requiem with the Alexandria Symphony and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Songs of Sunset (Delius) and Chichester Psalms (Bernstein) with the Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic.

Soprano

Antonio, Therese
Besser, Karen
Bozhich, Elizabeth
Brown, Cathy
Brown, Sara Dudley
Calzado-Esponda, Jessi
Clark, Lisa
Connors, Pat
Dubas, Claire
Fitzgerald, Marya
Gilbertson, Carter
Gonzales, Felicia
Gossman, Cindy
Harrison, Margaret

Jensen, Lene
LaGoe, Terri
Lowrey, Barbara
McKenzie, Phyllis
Mitchell, Joanna
Peralta, Jamaica
Robb, Judith
Russell, Mary Lee
Rynn, Maria
Schottman, Althea
Smith, Lisa
Wood, Nancy Ruth
Worku, Selamit
Yee, Mary

Alto

Arnold, Terry
Banas-Jones, Halina
Brigida, Arlene
Briscoe, Ellie
Bull, Elizabeth
Cantrell, Kate
Cohen, Bette
Evans, Martha
Flagg, Pat
Hambley, Holly
Hawkins, Izola
Herndon, Ruth
Hirschauer, Amy
Lombardi, Joyce

Mealing, Summer
Newman, Tyra
Peetz, Deborah
Pelenberg, Carol
Ratcliffe, Vicki
Reilly, Annette
Roningen, Jane
Uri, Carol
Wade, Barbara
White, Grace
Young, Cynthia

Tenor

Connors, John
DeGeiso, Chris
DeSouza, Paulo
Donlan, Tom
Ellis, Chuck
Gavert, Ray
Gerbracht, Bob
Goldschmidt, Larry

Herndon, Estee
Jarvis, Mike
Kouzougian, Kris
Meyer, Bill
Moore, Jerry
Reilly, Bill
Robles, Francisco
Schottman, Fred
Thomas, Alex

Bass

Brown, Bill
Bunner, Alan
Burke, Michael
Carnahan, Larry
Clark, Bob
Clark, John
Cohen, Bernie
Gans, Walter
Handley, Lock

Kelly, Patrick
Kennedy, Richard
King, Nick
Krause, Alan
Lombardi, Ray
Munger, Tom
Relton, Matthew Rich, Steven
Russell, Will



Mark Whitmire is Director of NOVA Community Chorus and Professor of Music at Northern Virginia Community College. Dr. Whitmire has received numerous grants and awards, including a scholarship for post-graduate studies at the Britten-Pears School in England (where he studied with Sir Peter Pears), and a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for research and writing on the music of Benjamin Britten. He was named "Outstanding Faculty of the Year" by the college in 1999 and

2010, and in 2004 he was awarded the "President's Sabbatical," the highest honor given by the college. He has been conductor-in-residence at Gloucester Cathedral, Westminster Abbey and Canterbury Cathedral in England. In 2008 he conducted performances in Leipzig, Germany, including a performance at the famed Gewandhaus. In summer 2010 he led a choral tour of France, conducting performances at Chartres Cathedral, Rouen Cathedral, La Madeleine (Paris) and Notre Dame. In June 2012 Dr. Whitmire will lead a choir tour of Italy, including performances at San Marco Basilica (Venice) and St. Peter's Basilica (Rome). Dr. Whitmire attended Abilene Christian University, the University of Texas, and the University of Maryland, where he received the Doctor of Musical Arts degree.

Baritone Aurelius Gori is an acclaimed soloist and recitalist based in



Washington, DC whose singing has been hailed as "splendidly lyrical" by the Washington Post. A 1990-91 Fulbright scholar, he studied at the Hochschule für Musik in Munich and was a 1991 semifinalist in the International Belvedere Competition in Vienna shortly before returning to the University of Maryland to complete his Doctorate. University of Maryland to complete his Doctorate.

Dr. Gori has appeared as a soloist with the NSO, the Fairfax Symphony, the Amherst (New York) Symphony and the North York Symphony in Toronto, Canada. He has performed with numerous local choral societies including many performances with the NOVA Community Chorus, including the baritone solos in a gala performance of Carl Orff's Carmina Burana at the dedication of the Rachel Schlesinger Performing Arts Center in Alexandria, Virginia. Although he has sung many concert and operatic roles, his deepest musical love is for the art song, and in this medium he premiered several compositions by his friend American composer, Marshall Ocker (1926-2004) including Trilogy for Baritone on the Vienna Modern Masters label (VMM 2030). He maintains a large voice studio, and is currently on the faculties of Frederick Community College, Northern Virginia Community College-Alexandria and Washington Bible College in Lanham, Maryland. He feels especially privileged when granted the opportunity to perform with his wife, mezzo-soprano Grace Gori.



Mezzo-soprano Grace Gori, is an acclaimed performer in both the concert and operatic repertoire. Her opera credits include Carmen with the Eldbrooke Artists Series, Cherubino in Annapolis Opera's The Marriage of Figaro, Tessa in The Gondoliers with the Washington Savoyards, and Dorabella in Così fan tutte goes Hollywood and the Third Lady in a lively, production of Mozart's The Magic Flute with the In Series.

1994 graduate of the University of Maryland's Maryland Opera Studio, Ms. Gori earned her Bachelor's degree at the Indiana University School of Music in Bloomington, Indiana and was a student at the Munich, Germany Hochschule für Musik during 1990 and 1991. Ms. Gori has been a featured soloist with the Cathedral Choral Society, the New Dominion Chorale, the Washington Bach Consort Noon Cantata Series, the McLean Choral Society and the Washington Women's Chorus. In 1999-2000, she made her solo debut at the Kennedy Center Concert Hall with the Master Chorale of Washington and in 2004, Ms. Gori sang her first role with the Washington National Opera as the Third Madrigale in Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*. Last December, she returned to the Kennedy Center Concert Hall as the mezzo soloist in the A Holiday Celebration Messiah Sing-Along concert. Later this season, Ms. Gori will be heard in the InSeries' new production *Mozart's Leading Ladies* and as La Ciesca in the American Center for Puccini Studies' concert production of *Gianni Schicchi*. In addition to her performing career, she is on faculty at the Washington Conservatory of Music and maintains an active private voice studio in Kensington, Maryland.



Soprano Terri LaGoe performs regularly with the NOVA Community Chorus and has sung soprano solos in the chorus' joint performances with the Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Orchestra of Handel's Messiah, Bach's Magnificat, Hayden's Lord Nelson Mass, Schubert's Mass in G, and Brahms' German Requiem, among others. Most recently, Ms. LaGoe sang Schubert's lieder, *Auf dem Strom*, on WMPO's summer chamber music series at the Lyceum.

Ms. LaGoe and other members of the NOVA chorus traveled to Leipzig in July of 2008 where they performed in the Great Hall of the renowned Gewandhaus, and other historic locations. Ms. LaGoe is also a long-term member and frequent soloist with Philomela, a 14-voice women's vocal ensemble that has performed at many prestigious venues including the Lyceum, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, the White House, and the Smithsonian, and she is soloist/section leader at Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill in Alexandria, where she sang under the direction of Philip Cave from 2004-2008. Ms. LaGoe studies with soprano Kathy Kessler Price of Kansas City and DC, and has recently also joined the studio of Chrissellene Petropolous in Columbia, Maryland. When not pursuing her passion for singing, Ms. LaGoe is employed as director of membership and operations at Worldwide ERC



Tenor Patrick Cook, described by the Washington Post as "imposing and promising", is earning praise for his performances across the country in venues including The Kennedy Center and Carnegie Hall. Upcoming performances include role debuts as Bacchus/Ariadne auf Naxos and Don Ottavio/Don Giovanni with Hub Opera Ensemble and the title

role in Idomeneo with the Maryland Opera Studio.

Recent operatic performances include *Messenger/Aida* with Annapolis Opera, *The Essential Wagner* with The Washington Chorus at the Kennedy Center, *Bentley Drummle/Miss Havisham's Fire and Man* with Old Luggage/Postcard from Morocco and *Luigi/Il tabarro* with the Maryland Opera Studio, *Spoletta/Tosca* with Annapolis Opera, and *Bois-Rose/Les Huguenots* with Bard SummerScape. As a studio artist with the Wolf Trap Opera Company, Cook performed roles in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and *L'Etoile*. As part of Osvaldo Golijov and Dawn Upshaw's Composing Song Workshop, Cook debuted at Carnegie Hall in *Scenes from Dog Days* by David T. Little. Cook appears regularly as a recitalist, chamber musician and concert soloist performing with the U.S. Naval Academy Glee Club, Annapolis Symphony Orchestra and Washington DC Wagner Society. In 2011, Cook performed for President Obama's Town Hall meeting in College Park, MD. Cook is a 2011 and 2010 DC District Winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. A graduate of the Baltimore School for the Arts, Cook holds a Master of Music degree from Bard Conservatory and a Bachelor of Music degree from The Juilliard School. Cook is a doctoral candidate in the Maryland Opera Studio at the University of Maryland and studies with Gran Wilson.

Philharmonic

First Violin

Timothy Kidder,
Concertmaster
Sheyna Burt
Sean Ganous
Michelle Kanter Cohen
Jennifer Lavallee
Cheryl Stickley

Second Violin

Slavica Ilic, Principal
Kendra Chambers
Rebecca Edelstein
Kosh Kempter
Maurice McCreary
Winnie Nahm
Allison Richards
Jane Thell

Viola

Donald Harrington,
Principal
Sarah Bento
Elva Cala
Carol Gunlicks
Dennis Murphy

Harp

Heidi Sturniolo, Principal

Cello

Joseph Hong, Principal
David Bates
Heejung Jung
Kathryn Kleppinger
Amy Medearis
Taryn Wood

Bass

Kim Johnson, Principal
Scott Freeman
Raymond Irving

Flute

Lynn Ann Zimmerman-
Bell, Principal
Susan Brockman

Piccolo

Crystal Safarian

Oboe

Mary Padilla, Principal
Jane Hughes

English Horn

Bess Crimmins

Clarinet

Rogelio Garza, Principal
David Spigelthal

Bassoon

Walter Wynn, Principal
Mary Dugan

Contrabassoon

David Bell

Horn

Kevin Illick, Principal
Tiffany Hitz
Wendy Chinn
Lisa Motley

Trumpet

Brett Lemley, Principal
Anthony Daniel
Mark Davis

Trombone

Kirsten Warfield, Principal
Rob Skanse
Graydon Barnum

Tuba

Brent Gossett, Principal

Timpani

Bruce Davies, Principal

Percussion

Paul Durning, Principal

Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Opus 56a- Johannes Brahms

Born May 7, 1833 in Hamburg, Germany Died April 3, 1897 in Vienna,
Austria

This work was first performed on November 2, 1873, by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra with Brahms conducting. It is scored for woodwinds in pairs with added piccolo, four horns, two trumpets, timpani, percussion, and strings.

In 1853 Robert Schumann lauded the twenty-year-old Johannes Brahms as the "young eagle" among composers. The two young composers became close friends, but the connection was not to last. On February 27, 1854, Schumann attempted suicide by jumping into the wintry Rhine River during an episode of mental illness brought on by advanced syphilis. He was sent to an asylum where he lived out the remaining two years of his life isolated from his loved ones, including his beloved wife, Clara.

Brahms's rise to notoriety was due largely to Robert Schumann's laudatory 1853 review of the young composer in his gazette *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, and the two composers became friends. However, Brahms gained much more than a career from his association with Schumann - he fell in love with Schumann's wife, Clara. Also a phenomenal pianist and composer, she found herself alone with several children after Robert entered an asylum for treatment of syphilitic insanity. Brahms moved in to help her maintain the household, but there is no reason to suspect any impropriety. Perhaps it was hypersensitivity to public opinion that prevented their relationship from developing into marriage after Robert's death in 1856. Much is unclear about their friendship, as they destroyed most of their correspondences, fueling ample speculation about the nature of their relationship.

Another advantage of Brahms's affiliation with the Schumanns was the numerous professional friendships that developed with the leading musicians of the day and the opportunities these associations provided. During Johannes Brahms' lean years, he accepted a tour engagement as accompanist with Hungarian violinist Eduard Remenyi. Traveling throughout the continent, Brahms developed close associations with Franz Liszt, violinist Joseph Joachim, and many others. After moving to Vienna in the 1860s, Brahms developed a deep friendship with Karl Ferdinand

Pohl, the librarian of Vienna's Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde. Pohl was writing a biography on the great Austrian composer, Franz Joseph Haydn, and had located some period manuscripts for small wind ensemble. Since Brahms was also well-known as a music historian, Pohl asked him in 1870 to view the pages and help identify them. The composer believed them to be the work of Haydn, although history has shown him to be wrong (they are thought to be by Ignaz Pleyel, but that, too, is uncertain).

One theme from the manuscripts, the St. Antoni Chorale, captivated Brahms. This two-part structure was complex enough to stand on its own, but simple enough to permit the composer to ornament it in theme-and-variations form. Finally, in 1873, during a vacation in Tutzing, Bavaria, he composed a set of eight variations and a finale based on the chorale. The original version for two pianos was simultaneously orchestrated. It was his first major work for orchestra and cemented his reputation across Europe.

Variations on a Theme by Haydn opens with a straightforward statement of the chorale theme by the oboes, bassoons, horns, and low stings. It retains the character of the original instrumentation for wind ensemble. The first variation, *poco più animato*, follows the structure of the chorale. In fact, the harmonies are hardly changed, but the soaring violin lines against triplets in violas and cellos put the unmistakable signature of Brahms on the work. Marked *più vivace*, the second variation is stormy with dotted rhythms and strong dynamic contrasts. The placid third variation begins with the melody in the oboes, but it shifts to the strings. It is a perfect example of Brahms's lyrical and tender side. Shifting suddenly to a minor key, the melancholy fourth variation is reminiscent of a symphonic second movement. Brahms launches into the vivace fifth variation with the mercurial approach of a Mendelssohn scherzo, but the chorale framework is still quite discernible. Horns begin the sixth variation with a bucolic hunting character, but the orchestra bursts forth in a brilliant blaze of tumult. The gentle and innocent seventh variation allows the melody to be traded between the flutes and and dramatic movement builds to include the entire orchestra. The finale uses much the same approach, but the mood is shifted from ominous to majestic. After Brahms builds to a grand climax, the chorale theme returns in a magnificent statement that guaranteed the composer a place in the musical pantheon.

Magnificat in D major, BWV 243

- Johann Sebastian Bach

Born March 21, 1685 in Eisenach, Germany;
Leipzig, Germany

Died July 28, 1750 in

This work was premiered on July 2, 1733, at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, Germany. It is scored for Soprano 1, Soprano 2, Alto, Tenor, and Bass soloists, SSATB Chorus, two flutes, two oboes, two oboes d'amore, three trumpets, timpani, and strings. Continuo keyboard parts are usually played on organ.

While touring Germany in 2010 Friends of WMPA attended at Bach organ recital at Thomaskirche which features a statue of Bach See back page.

J.S. Bach was, above all, a working musician – an organist and teacher attempting to earn enough compensation through his craft to feed his family. The vast number of his compositions came from an immediate need for music in his workplace. He traveled to five cities and a variety of duties.

His first position was in the town of Arnstadt in 1703, where he served as organist at the Neue Kirche. In 1707 Bach moved to Mühlhausen, accepting a position as organist in the church of St. Blasius, a job for which he received the same rate of pay, but much more prestige. Before the year ended, he had married his cousin, Maria Barbara.

The following year, the couple moved to the city of Weimar, where Bach accepted his first court position, as organist to Duke Wilhelm Ernst – a job he would retain for nine years. At Weimar he was promoted to the position of Kapellmeister in 1714. Of Bach and his wife's six children born in Weimar, four of them survived infancy – two of which, Wilhelm Friedemann and Carl Philipp Emanuel, became composers.

In 1717 he accepted the position of court music director in Cöthen. It was here that Maria Barbara died unexpectedly in July of 1720 while Bach was out of town on business. He married again sometime before the summer of 1722, this time to Anna Magdalena Wilke, the daughter of the court

trumpeter of the town of Zeiss. She was a gifted singer whose voice Bach must have known.

In 1723 the Bach family moved to Leipzig where Sebastian took on the grueling duties of Kantor at the Thomasschule – a position bestowed upon him by the city, for which he also directed civic musical activities. He was in charge of all music at four Leipzig churches – Thomaskirche, Nikolaikirche, Petrikerche, and Mattäeikirche – and answered to city council, which had the authority to demand music for any occasion they saw fit. Bach was also director of the choirs for all four churches – three of which sang polyphonic music. Conveniently, the Thomasschule provided choirboys, so recruitment was never a problem. In 1729 Bach assumed the duties of directing the collegium musicum, a group of university students and professional musicians who gave public concerts on a weekly basis, some of them at the local coffee house. He held this position periodically until 1741. Bach's last years in Leipzig were marked by worsening eyesight, probably due to diabetes. He died in late July of 1750 in total blindness after failed surgery that no doubt expedited his decline. The same surgeon would later have the same effect on Handel. Bach left an estate of much less value than would befit a person of his musical and cultural importance. Musically, Bach's choice of compositional genres followed the needs of his employers. In Arnstadt, Mühlhausen, and his earliest years at Weimar, he composed a large number of works for organ. Later in his Weimar tenure and in Cöthen, instrumental works prevail often showing the influence of various Italian composers in which Bach had taken interest– among them Vivaldi, Corelli, and Albinoni. In Leipzig, Bach's responsibilities with the choir led to the cantata cycles and his large sacred choral works. Increasingly interested in large musical forms, he also composed some of his more important instrumental music in Leipzig – including the Musical Offering and his unfinished Art of the Fugue.

Bach's Magnificat in D dates from his Leipzig period in 1733. It was the second setting of the text (Luke 1:46-55), the first of which was composed ten years earlier for a Christmas service. The 1733 version was from the Feast of the Visitation, which took place at the evening service on July 2, 1733. Parts of the first setting were included in the second version. Bach's choice of instrumentation is deserving of mention. The use of both flutes and oboes indicates that this work was for a major celebration, as the two were not often used together. The same is true of the trumpets, which were

used only for significant events that included a large enough group of players and singers to counterbalance their volume.

The Magnificat opens with a festive and majestic introduction that includes the entire orchestra. Sixteenth-note motor-rhythms prevail and the trumpets are given characteristic runs of great difficulty. The chorus enters in imitative voice pairings that restate the melodic germs of the introduction. This highly contrapuntal introduction ends with an orchestral restatement of the opening material.

"Et exultavit spiritus meus" for Soprano II solo with strings and continuo reflects the rejoicing spirit of the text. The placid Soprano I aria "Quia respexit humilitatem" is in a two-part form and is scored for the especially warm sound of the oboe d'amore and continuo. It leads directly to the chorus "Omnes generations," which is again scored for orchestra (without trumpets). This movement is contrapuntal and returns to the mood of the opening chorus. "Quia fecit mihi magna," scored simply for bass soloist and continuo, is animated yet reserved and shows the flexibility of the bass voice. In contrast, "Et misericordia" for alto and tenor soloists with flutes, strings, and continuo is heavier in character and explores the expressive possibilities of the soloists. The chorus "Fecit potentiam," this time with trumpets added, returns to the festive character of the previous choruses. "Deposuit potentes" for tenor, violins, and continuo leads to the playful aria "Esurientes implevit bonis" for alto, flutes, and continuo with its long phrases for the soloist and imitative interplay for the flutes. The oboes and the women of the chorus are given the dramatic chorus "Suscepit Israel," followed by the full chorus in the brisk "Sicut locutus est."

Bach's finale, "Gloria Patri," begins with a majestic choral announcement followed by imitative cascading triplets. The final measures return to the stately musical material of the first movement with a benediction befitting this festive masterpiece.

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Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Opus 43

- Sergei Rachmaninoff

Born April 1, 1873, in Oneg, Russia Died March 28, 1943, in Beverly Hills, California

The work was given its premiere on November 7, 1934, in Baltimore, by the Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Leopold Stokowski with Rachmaninoff as soloist. It is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, and strings.

Born into an aristocratic family in Tsarist Russia, Sergei Rachmaninoff led a varied life. His first compositional successes were piano pieces he composed for his numerous recital appearances. The piano figures prominently in his output with four concerti, two sonatas, the Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini and numerous smaller works for piano solo. As his fame as a soloist spread throughout the world and his music reached a larger audience, his reputation as a composer grew. Always a proponent of the Romantic style, Rachmaninoff's music is filled with longing melodies and lush harmonies – an idiom he retained long after more experimental techniques became the norm. Rachmaninoff developed a personal idiom of keyboard writing patterned somewhat after Chopin and Liszt but strongly individual and drawn from his own tendencies as a pianist. His large works for piano and orchestra are characterized by their rich beauty, as well as great technical brilliance and difficulty.

The young composer had to overcome several emotional hurdles, but none was as troublesome as the one he faced in his mid-twenties. Despite his great promise as the leader of a new generation of Russian composers, the harsh reception of his First Symphony (1897) could not have been more brutal. The depression that ensued caused an unusually dry period in Rachmaninoff's compositional output. After three years, he decided to seek help, eventually settling on hypnosis. The composer received considerable relief with Dr. Nicolai Dahl and was so grateful he dedicated the Second Piano Concerto to the hypnotist. However, the idea of composing another symphony simply terrified Rachmaninoff. Balancing this fear with the void he felt by not composing for orchestra, Rachmaninoff decided on another approach to restore his creative flow – seclusion. In 1906 he left his conducting position with the Bolshoi Opera and went to Germany. In an isolated house near

Dresden, he immersed himself in composition. The first work he wrote was the Second Symphony. .

Rachmaninoff's creative life continued to be successful for nearly two decades. New works poured from his pen, but the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 changed everything. Rachmaninoff and his family fled Russia again, eventually settling in California. His career also took a new direction as he had to perform as a full-time concert pianist in order to earn a living. Rachmaninoff's frequency of new works dropped from several each year before the war to just five works between 1918 and his death in 1943. Undoubtedly, the most popular of these is the Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini from 1934.

The Rhapsody is a set of twenty-four variations on Nicolò Paganini's Twenty-Fourth Caprice from 1805. Although the work is not designated as a piano concerto, it behaves like one with the variations organized to produce the illusion of the customary three-movement fast-slow-fast concerto framework. Paganini's theme appears only after a fleeting introduction and the first variation – itself a fragmented version of the theme. Rachmaninoff's rapid-fire approach presents presents one variation after another, each exploring a different feature of the original melody. Perhaps the most notable occurrence is the use of the Dies Irae (Day of wrath) chant from the Latin Requiem Mass of the Roman Catholic liturgy. For Rachmaninoff, this theme represents the darker side of superstition and hearkens back to the many legends surrounding the lanky, dark, and mysterious figure of the devilishly virtuosic Paganini.

The middle section of the Rhapsody begins with an ethereal cadenza, giving way to one of Rachmaninoff's most beloved melodies. Lush and romantic, the eighteenth variation begins with the piano alone, but is joined by the orchestra and builds gradually to a breathtaking and emotional fortissimo. With the next variation comes a brisk tempo and the start of Rachmaninoff's final movement. As in the early part of the work, the variations proceed quickly. As the theme gradually reassembles from its fragmentation, so returns the Dies Irae chant in the brass, this time fortissimo. The Rhapsody ends with one final concise gesture, reminiscent of the beginning.

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Every year Friends of WMPA travel to Europe to enjoy music and see the sights. Our next trip will be to the Dalmatian Coast of Croatia and Montenegro in September 2013. For more information email Travel Advisor Judy Borisky Metzger, judyb@brownelltravel.com.



While touring Germany in 2010 Friends of WMPA attended a recital of Bach organ works at Thomaskirche which features the statue of Bach at the entrance as shown left.

The *Magnificat* in D was premiered on July 2, 1733, at the church where Bach was its Kantor.

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