

Ein Deutsches Requiem

A German Requiem

Opus 45

Johannes Brahms

The Bucks County Choral Society

Thomas Lloyd, *Artistic Director*

The Riverside Symphonia

Jane Kamp, *soprano*

David Arnold, *baritone*

March 23, 2001 - 8 p.m.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church
Doylestown, Pennsylvania

March 25, 2001 - 4 p.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church
Lansdale, Pennsylvania

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from Penn Color, Inc., Doylestown.**

The Mission of the Bucks County Choral Society is
*to influence and enrich the choral experience for
ourselves and our audience through skillful and
artistic performance.*

This concert series is sponsored by a grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency, which is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts.

A German Requiem: *Some historical background*

A young man's requiem

When Brahms started writing his *Requiem*, he was not an old man drawing on the wisdom of maturity, but a young man in his twenties, almost unknown and at the beginning of his career as a composer. In fact it was the *Requiem* itself that first brought him wide acclaim, becoming before long the cornerstone of the repertoire it has remained to this day. No one had asked him to write a requiem, it wasn't dedicated to the memory of any particular person, and since Brahms was a very private person himself, we don't know for sure the source of his inspiration.

Inspired by personal loss?

We do know that he began writing the music that later became his requiem soon after the attempted suicide of Robert Schumann, following which the master composer was committed to an asylum where he died two years later. Schumann was an important mentor to Brahms and the first influential composer of the time to proclaim his genius, even before he had written any of his major works.

We also know that Brahms' mother, a seamstress who had always supported her son's musical dreams beyond what others thought was practical, died shortly *before* he finished his requiem, nine years after Schumann's death. In this case, however, Brahms allowed himself to say, in a weak moment (denied later) that he had in fact "thought of his mother" when writing the fifth movement. He did not present this movement to his publisher until after the *Requiem's* first performance, which has led some to conjecture that it was not a completely new movement, but one that was such an unusually personal statement for him that he held it back until it was clear the rest of the work would be accepted.

A "Human" Requiem

But Brahms' reticence was not just a matter of personal idiosyncrasy. He wanted his *Requiem* to speak to people across the broad spectrum of human experience, not just his own. He selected his own texts from Luther's bible rather than following any liturgical rubric. Brahms even extended his desire for inclusiveness to the point of avoiding texts that explicitly invoked the name of Jesus. This may have reflected his concern about the growing anti-Semitism in the Vienna of his day and his closeness to a number of Jewish musicians, including his first teacher, Eduard Marxsen, and the great violinist Joseph Joachim, with whom he performed extensively.

His thoughts are summed up in a remark Brahms made to Carl Reintaler, the organist who prepared the choir for the first performance of the *Requiem*, saying, "I will admit that I could happily omit the 'German' and simply call it a 'Human' [Requiem]." While Brahms distanced himself from religious orthodoxy, calling himself an agnostic (literally "one who doesn't know"), his choice and arrangement of texts show an intimate knowledge of the Bible and a deeply probing spiritual intellect. This is

music of a composer who has just arrived at full command of his unique musical gifts, and who has lived long enough to experience profound loss while yet being young enough to hope.

The music itself

One of the most remarkable aspects of Brahms' *Requiem* that sets it apart from the great Latin requiems of Mozart, Berlioz, and Verdi, is the preponderance of music expressing outright joy, consolation, and the confidence that one's life and labor are ultimately not in vain. Even the famously dark passages of the opening movement, with their rich sounds of the lower strings (the violins sit out this movement completely!) are in a *major* key rather than the mournful minor harmonies that might be expected. The steady pulse of the low cellos and string basses underneath sounds like a heartbeat determined never to stop.

When the hushed sound of the chorus finally comes in on top of this rich, warm cushion of sound, the words are not "Eternal rest grant unto them" but "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." This is not music to pray for the dead, but *to comfort the living*, to keep them from losing hope in the midst of great sorrow.

Music of Celebration

In fact, there are many passages in this *Requiem* that are quite dance-like in character, beginning right in the opening movement, where the the weeping of the present (*Sie gehen hin und weinen...* "They who go forth and weep...") yields to the vision of future rejoicing (*...kommen mit Freuden* "...shall return with joy"). Towards the end of the second movement, the chorus becomes even more caught up in celebration, singing that the dead themselves will "come rejoicing" (*kommen mit Jauchzen*) with "eternal joy" (*ewige Freude*) upon their heads. This life-affirming exuberance is brought to its apex in the *Requiem's* two grand fugues, one at the end of the third movement and the other at the end of the sixth.

Marches of despair

Despite the surprisingly hopeful tone of much of this music, there are many passages that express great sorrow and struggle as well. In particular, there are two "marches" (also not quite the kind of music you would expect to find in a "requiem") that convey a bleak sense of human despair and futility.

The first of these marches, coming at the beginning of the second movement, has three beats per bar rather than the two we would normally expect in a march. But the heaviness of the third beat of each bar suggests the limping of the wounded on an aimless trek with no end in sight. The singers intone the text *Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras* ("then all people are as grass..."), first in subdued tones, and then, after a terrifying build-up in the orchestra, in full cry, perhaps with as much anger as resignation.

In the third movement, this anger becomes desperation as the chorus cries *Wes soll ich mich trösten?* (“with whom shall I find comfort?”), deliberately echoing a similarly pivotal moment in the last movement of Beethoven’s great 9th Symphony. Brahms’ subsequent plea, *Ich hoffe auf dich* (“I hope in thee”), which immediately precedes the first of the great fugues, is one of the most glorious passages in the whole *Requiem*.

The second march comes at the beginning of the sixth movement. Now in regular duple time, the marchers still seem to wander hopelessly along, saying “we have no resting place.” But they also sing with great anticipation about the future (*die zukünftige*) – the baritone responds to their yearning by announcing that in the end, we shall be transformed (*alle verwandelt werden*). The chorus answers by singing a second triple meter march with an accent on each third beat. However, unlike the dirge at the beginning of the second movement, the tempo here is fast, and the mood defiant as the choir cries out: *Tod, wo ist dein Stachel!* (“Death, where is thy sting?”).

“How lovely is thy dwelling-place”

This longing for a resting place, for comfort, consolation, wholeness, for *home*, is most powerfully realized in the central fourth movement, the famous *Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen*. Surrounded by movements of monumental stature, Brahms addresses this text from Psalm 84 with music of directness and simple lyricism that make it the spiritual heart of his Requiem as well its best known movement. Here again we find music of elation (*Die loben dich immerdar!*, “They praise thee evermore”).

This music also serves to prepare us for the intimacy of the fifth movement, *Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit* (“You have now sorrow”) as the soprano soloist embodies the comforting voice of a mother, singing “I will comfort you like one who by his mother is comforted” (*wie einen seinen Mutter tröstet*).

The Requiem comes to a transcendent close

The grand fugue of the sixth movement (*Herr, du bist würdig* “Lord, thou art worthy”) leads directly into the last movement, which begins with what could be considered the final “march” of the *Requiem*, the victorious procession of the souls of the departed into the heavenly kingdom. First the sopranos and then the basses lead the way with a soaring melodic line over the full, rich sound of the whole string section, now including the violins. It is only here that Brahms at last is ready to set the words *Selig sind die toten* (“Blessed are the dead”) to the same music which comforted the mourners at the very beginning of the *Requiem*. – Thomas Lloyd

I. Chorus

Selig sind, die da Leid tragen,
denn sie sollen getröstet werden.

Matthew 5:4

Die mit Tränen säen,
werden mit Freuden ernten.
Sie gehen hin und weinen
und tragen edlen Samen,
und kommen mit Freuden
und bringen ihre Garben.

Psalm 126:5, 6

Blessed are they who mourn,
for they shall be comforted.

They that sow in tears
shall reap in joy.
They go forth and weep,
bearing precious seed,
and return with rejoicing,
bringing their sheaves with them.

II. Chorus

Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras
und alle Herrlichkeit des Menschen
wie des Grases Blumen.
Das Gras ist verdorret
und die Blume abgefallen.

1 Peter 1:24, 25

So seid nun geduldig, lieben Brüder,
bis auf die Zukunft des Herrn.
Siehe, ein Ackermann wartet
auf die köstliche Frucht der Erde
und ist geduldig darüber,
bis er empfahe
den Morgenregen und Abendregen.
So seid geduldig.

Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras
und alle Herrlichkeit des Menschen
wie des Grases Blumen.
Das Gras ist verdorret
und die Blume abgefallen.
Aber des Herrn Wort
bleibet in Ewigkeit.

James 5:7

Die Erlöseten des Herrn
werden wiederkommen,
und gen Zion kommen mit Jauchzen;
Freude, ewige Freude,
wird über ihrem Haupte sein;
Freude und Wonne werden sie ergreifen,
und Schmerz und Seufzen
wird weg müssen.

Isaiah 35:10

For all flesh is as grass,
and all the pretension of man
is as the flower of grass.
The grass withereth,
and the flower falleth away.

Be patient therefore, brethren,
until the coming of the Lord.
Behold, the farmer waiteth
for the precious fruit of the earth,
and hath long patience for it,
until he receive
the morning and evening rain.
Be ye also patient.
For all flesh is as grass,
and all the glory of man
is as the flower of the grass.
The grass withereth,
and the flower falleth away.
But the word of the Lord
endureth in eternity.

The redeemed of the Lord
shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
and eternal joy
shall be upon their heads:
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing
shall flee away

III. Chorus with Baritone Solo

Herr, lehre doch mich,
daß ein Ende mit mir haben muß,
und mein Leben ein Ziel hat,
und ich davon muß.
Siehe, meine Tage sind
einer Hand breit vor Dir,
und mein Leben ist wie nichts vor Dir.
Ach, wie gar nichts sind alle Menschen,
die doch so sicher leben.
Sie gehen daher wie ein Schemen,
und machen ihnen viel
vergebliche Unruhe;
sie sammeln und wissen nicht,
wer es kriegen wird.
Nun Herr, wes soll ich mich trösten?
Ich hoffe auf Dich.

Psalm 39:5-8

Der Gerechten Seelen
sind in Gottes Hand
und keine Qual rühret sie an.

Wisdom of Solomon 3:1

IV. Chorus

Wie lieblich sind Deine Wohnungen,
Herr Zebaoth!
Meine Seele verlanget und sehnet sich
nach den Vorhöfen des Herrn;
Mein Leib und Seele freuen sich
in dem lebendigen Gott.
Wohl denen, die in Deinem Hause
wohnen, die loben Dich immerdar.

Psalm 84:1-2, 4

V. Chorus with Soprano Solo

Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit;
aber ich will euch wiedersehen,
und euer Herz soll sich freuen,
und eure Freude soll niemand
von euch nehmen.

John 16:22

Ich will euch trösten,
wie einen seine Mutter tröstet.

Isaiah 66:13

Sehet mich an:
Ich habe eine kleine Zeit
Mühe und Arbeit gehabt
und habe großen Trost gefunden

Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) 51:27

Lord, make me to know
the measure of my days,
that my life has an end
though I must perish.
Behold, my days are
as an handbreadth before Thee,
and my life is as nothing before Thee.
For mankind lives in vanity,
But their lives are a vain show.
They go forth like a shadow
and all their vain noises come to nothing.
They heap up riches, and know not
who shall inherit them.
And now, Lord, with whom
shall I find comfort?
My hope is in Thee.

The souls of the righteous
are in God's hand
and no torment shall disturb them.

How lovely is Thy dwelling place,
O Lord of hosts!
My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth
for the courts of the Lord:
My body and soul rejoice
for the living God.
Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house:
they praise Thee evermore.

Ye now have sorrow;
but I shall see you again,
and your heart shall rejoice,
and your joy shall no one
take from you.

Thee will I comfort
as one whom a mother comforts.

Look on me:
for a short time I have had
sorrow and labour
and have found great comfort

VI. Chorus with Baritone Solo

Denn wir haben hie keine
bleibende Statt,
sondern die zukünftige suchen wir.

Hebrews 13:14

Siehe, ich sage euch ein Geheimnis:
Wir werden nicht alle entschlafen,
wir werden aber alle verwandelt werden;
und dasselbige plötzlich
in einem Augenblick,
zu der Zeit der letzten Posaune.
Denn es wird die Posaune schallen
und die Toten
werden auferstehen unverweslich;
und wir werden verwandelt werden.
Dann wird erfüllet werden das Wort,
das geschrieben steht:
Der Tod ist verschlungen in den Sieg.
Tod, wo ist dein Stachel?
Hölle, wo ist dein Sieg?

1 Corinthians 15:51, 52, 54, 55

Herr, du bist würdig
zu nehmen Preis und Ehre und Kraft,
denn du hast alle Dinge erschaffen,
und durch deinen Willen
haben sie das Wesen
und sind geschaffen.

Revelation 4:11

VII. Chorus

Selig sind die Toten,
die in dem Herrn sterben,
von nun an.
Ja der Geist spricht,
daß sie ruhen von ihrer Arbeit;
denn ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach.

Revelation 14:13b.

*Out of courtesy to the performers, please refrain from using
cameras or sound recorders.*

For here we have no
abiding place,
but we seek the one to come.

Behold, I tell you a mystery:
We shall not all sleep,
but we shall all be changed,
in a moment, in the twinkling
of an eye,
at the time of the last trumpet;
For the trumpet shall sound,
and the dead
shall be raised incorruptible,
and we shall be changed.
Then shall be brought to pass the saying
that is written:
Death is swallowed up in victory.
Death, where is thy sting?
Hell, where is thy victory?

Thou art worthy, Lord,
to receive glory and honor and power:
for Thou hast created all things,
and through Thy will
were they created
and have their being

Blessed are the dead
who die in the Lord
from henceforth:
Yea, the Spirit saith,
that they rest from their labours;
for their works shall follow after them.

The Musicians

Thomas Lloyd, *Artistic Director*

Thomas Lloyd, in his first season with the Choral Society, is the Director of the Choral and Vocal Studies Program for Haverford and Bryn Mawr Colleges, where he directs two choirs, and teaches conducting, voice, and music history. He holds a doctorate in conducting from the University of Illinois, along with graduate degrees from the Yale School of Music (in voice and opera) and Yale Divinity School, following his undergraduate work at the Oberlin Conservatory as a performance major in bassoon. He has also studied at the Tanglewood, Blossom, and Salzburg festivals. Tom is active as a tenor soloist, performing recently with the Davidsbund Chamber Players and the Mendelssohn Club. He has a special interest in collaborative performances with ensembles from diverse musical traditions, and looks forward to working with a number of the area's musical talents this year. Tom lives in Haverford Township with his wife, Jane Kamp, and their son Jeremy, 10, and daughter Devin, 7.

Jane Kamp, *soprano*

Jane Kamp has performed extensively as a soprano soloist in opera, concert and recital, in collaborations with such artists as John Moriarity, Leonard Slatkin, Richard Gaddes, the Opera Theater of St. Louis and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. She has performed a wide range of repertoire including contemporary works such as Andrea Clearfield's *Gaia* for soprano and chamber ensemble and the leading role of Natalia Petrovna in Lee Hoiby's *A Month in the Country*, as well as standard works such as Haydn's *The Creation* and Orff's *Carmina Burana*. She has studied under Grace Hunter, Alberta Maisiello, and Richard Hughes and holds degrees from the St. Louis Conservatory and Boston Conservatory.

David Arnold, *baritone*

David Arnold made his professional debut in 1983 with the Metropolitan Opera as Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. He has since been active in symphonic music as a soloist with the Boston Symphony, including four seasons with them in their Carnegie Hall series. Mr. Arnold has performed major works with the orchestras of Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco, Baltimore, Detroit, Atlanta, Houston, St. Louis and others. He has won acclaim in opera performances across the nation including the Philadelphia Academy of Music, the New York City Opera, the Opera Company of Boston, the Virginia Opera and the Tulsa Opera. He appears regularly with the Boheme Opera Company of New Jersey. Performing abroad, Mr. Arnold has appeared with the Spoleto Festival in Italy, toured Germany, Austria and Yugoslavia, and has performed with the Holland Festival in Amsterdam, L'Opera de Montreal, L'Opera de Quebec, the Bath Opera Company in

England, the Singapore Orchestra, and the Israel Philharmonic. Mr. Arnold has released several recordings, most recently Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, recorded at Trinity Cathedral in Portland, Oregon and Paul Moravec's *Songs of Love and War*, recorded with the Dessoff Choirs in New York City.

The Riverside Symphonia

The Riverside Symphonia is a professional orchestra serving the region in and around the bordering towns of Lambertville, New Jersey and New Hope, Pennsylvania that embraces the philosophy of providing the community with first-class music at prices within the reach of all. The Symphonia presents a classical series, pops series and mini chamber series for a total of 15 concerts, which draw an annual audience of over 12,000 attendees.

Riverside Symphonia Music Director and Conductor, Mariusz Smolij, is a recognized leader in the international music community, has been named one of the "Ten Most Promising Conductors" by the American Symphony Orchestra League and was recently appointed Resident Conductor of the Houston Symphony. Each year, the Riverside Symphonia presents a delightful program of concerts featuring distinguished guest performers and conductors in the beautiful and acoustically excellent Church of St. John the Evangelist in Lambertville. The Symphonia performs a notable combination of master works from Baroque to 20th century as well as less familiar works and world premieres.

The Riverside Symphonia is committed to giving back to the community that has supported it so generously. The Symphonia spends about twenty percent of its operating budget on programs for children, schools, senior citizens and community service organizations.

Among these programs is the Caprio Young Artists Competition, open to New Jersey and Pennsylvania musicians twenty-two years of age or younger. The Riverside Symphonia also presents children's concerts, family concerts, open dress rehearsals, senior citizen outreach, and collaborations with other organizations serving the community, including Hunterdon County Youth Ballet, schools, churches, senior centers, scouts, youth groups and local businesses.

This community's strong tradition of support for the arts and the fact that the Riverside Symphonia fills a unique role here have both been factors in the Symphonia's success in building a loyal following.

The Bucks County Choral Society

The Bucks County Choral Society is in its 28th season. Since its organization in 1972, the Society has established itself as the premier choral ensemble in the area. The volunteer choir performs an extensive repertoire of music from classical to contemporary, including locally composed pieces and works especially commissioned for the group. The choir received the coveted Lifetime Achievement Award for the Arts in Bucks County in 1993, has made four tours of Europe, and performed twice at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., most recently in February 2000. The choir also performed at the American Choral Directors Association convention and at the Mann Music Center for the 1998 Inaugural Marion Anderson Award Gala. The choir is involved in community outreach, presenting a "Kids and the Choral Society" concert, recognizing the top singer at the Bucks County High School Chorus Festival, providing financial aid to Bucks County students attending Summer Vocal Workshops at Westminster Choir College, and presenting free pre-concert lectures for audiences. Under the new direction of Thomas Lloyd, the choir looks forward to building on this rich, spirited tradition, and continuing in its mission "to influence and enrich the choral experience".

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Visit the Choral Society web site at
www.buckschoral.org

Bucks County Choral Society

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Paul Daniels	<i>Telford</i>	Bill Moore	<i>New Britain</i>
Roger Dean	<i>Doylestown</i>	Lois Moore	<i>New Britain</i>
Deborah DiMicco	<i>Newtown</i>	Christie Moore	<i>New Britain</i>
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The Riverside Symphonia

Mariusz Smolij, *Music Director*

Violin I	Cello	Contrabassoon
Ruo Tao, <i>concertmaster</i>	Jodi Beder	Louis Nolemi
Amy Hamilton	Betsy Loughran	Horn
Michelle Brazier	Jennie Lorenzo	Sarah Hussey
Mariko Kumoro	Sarah Yoon	Jill Van Nostrand
Christine Haarvig	Sue Lerner	Donald Spaulding
Larry Shiller	Bass	Joseph Caminiti
Saeromi Yoon	Joanne Bates	Trumpet
Leslie Miesbauer	Mark Seidenberg	Scott McIntosh
Violin II	Piccolo	Barbara Prugh
Carmina Gagliardi	Jennifer Borkowski	Trombone
Elzbieta Winnicka	Flute	Steve Austin
Wolfgang Tsoutsouris	Jan Holms	Lars Wendt
Julie Bailey	Katherine McClure	Michael Purdy
James Banks	Oboe	Tuba
Michael Berry	Lynne Cohen	Scott Force
Viola	David Schast	Timpani
Lisa Hammell	Clarinet	William Trigg
Ning Mu	Tony Pasquale	Harp
Marcia Hanjain	Osiris Molina	Joanne Hansen
Laura Muller	Bassoon	Organ (3/25)
	Brian Kershner	Eric Gombert
	J. D. Ferrigno	Personnel Manager
		James Neglia

BCMEA Award

Congratulations to Ryan Guth, a junior at Council Rock High School, who won top honors at the Bucks County Music Educators Association Festival on March 3. Ryan, who sang first chair baritone at the festival, competed with the other first chair vocalists for a cash award sponsored by the Bucks County Choral Society. BCCS Artistic Director Thomas Lloyd presented the award to Ryan at the festival dinner.

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Future Events

Benefit Song Recital and Dinner

On Friday, May 4 and Sunday, May 6, BCCS Artistic Director Thomas Lloyd, tenor and his wife Jane Kamp, soprano, will present an informal song recital at the home of William and Shirley Piercy in Furlong. If you would like to receive an invitation to this benefit, please call Shirley Piercy at 215-598-0783.

Choral Concert

BCCS Artistic Director Thomas Lloyd will conduct the 30-voice Chamber Singers of Haverford and Bryn Mawr Colleges in a special concert on Sunday, April 22, at 7:00 p.m. at St. John's Lutheran Church in Sumneytown. The program, entitled "Crossing Boundaries," will include Ward Swingle's arrangement of Bach's "Little Fugue in G," settings of Walt Whitman poems by the Kings' Singers' Bob Chilcott, romantic English part songs by the German refugee composer Hans Gal, unpublished songs from Venezuela, and traditional spirituals by William Dawson and Moses Hogan. No tickets are required; a free-will offering will be taken at the door. For information, call 610-896-1006.

Carmina Burana

The Choral Society will present a special performance of Carl Orff's Carmina Burana with orchestra and featured soprano soloist Susan Whitenack on Saturday, July 28 at the Solebury High School Auditorium as part of the New Hope Arts Commission Summer 2001 Festival. Tickets will be available through the Arts Commission.