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Student Ensemble: Symphony Orchestra. 100th Birthday Celebration of Alberto Ginastera

Guillermo Scarabino, Guest Conductor

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Illinois State University Symphony Orchestra

100th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF ALBERTO GINASTERA

Guillermo Scarabino, Guest Conductor

Center for the Performing Arts
April 17, 2016
Sunday Evening
7:00 p.m.

This is the one hundred and seventy-fourth program of the 2015-2016 season.
Program

Please silence all electronics for the duration of the concert. Thank you.

Pampeana No. 3, Pastoral Symphony (1954)  
I. Adagio Contemplativo  
II. Impetuosoamente  
III. Largo con poetica esaltazione

Alberto Ginastera  
(1916-1983)

Award Presentation

Symphony No. 4 (1885)  
I. Allegro non troppo  
II. Andante moderato  
III. Allegro giocoso  
IV. Allegro energico e passionato

Johannes Brahms  
(1833-1897)
PAMPEANA No. 3 – PASTORAL SYMPHONY

Pampeana No. 3 is scored for piccolo, two flutes, oboe, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, piano, celesta, and strings.

The performance time is seventeen minutes.

Concerning his Pampeana No. 3 of 1954, Argentinean composer Alberto Ginastera wrote, “Every time I have gone across the Pampa or when I spent a season there, my mind was invaded by different and changing impressions, gay or melancholy, full of euphoria or calmness, produced probably by the Pampa’s unlimited immensity and by the transforming aspects of the country during the course of the day. The same feelings, aroused by the contemplation of ‘that immensity,’ as Hernandez calls the Pampa in Martín Fierro, have been perceived also by painters like Pedro Figari or writers like Richardo Güiraldes. The latter in Don Domingo Sombra says: ‘Over the earth, suddenly darkened, a huge sun appeared and I felt as an exultant man full of life’s happiness’; and when he speaks of the night’s mystery and tranquility, he says: ‘I exhaled deeply the breath of the sleepy fields. The dark night was serene, enlivened by lights bright as the sparkles of a noisy fire.’ And further on, he writes: ‘Above us the starry sky seemed an immense eye full of the dreams’ bright sands.’

Notes by Dr. Richard E. Rodda

SYMPHONY No. 4

Brahms’s Fourth Symphony was written in 1885 when he was fifty-two and starting to think of retirement and the time that remained. The symphony is a summation of its composer’s learning and technique, but for all its complexities it cuts as close to the heart as music can. One imagines that this is the work Brahms always wanted to write, a work in which form and function are balanced, in which technique opens new paths to expression, allowing him to voice his deepest convictions about all the unnamables that shape destiny. If any of Brahms’s music conveys a worldview, this is it.

Listen to the first sighs in the strings. The voice is at once resigned and searching and its broad phrases are transformed for a moment into a nervous figure in the winds before growing into a lament of deep yearning. Throughout this movement, the nervous and the keening will alternate, and they fuse in the odd episode that sounds as though Brahms had entered the world of the tango, where dance steps offer a staccato accompaniment to long sighing lines. By the end of the movement, all this has changed. A chapter that began with music saturated in regret has taken on resolve. The broad probing phrases of the opening bars are compressed into projectiles of energy, gathering momentum until they erupt in a cataclysmic climax.

The summons of a horn call begins the Andante moderato, outlining a figure that the winds take up, a pacing, tentative melody of closely spaced intervals, a melody that fails to range far from where it starts—we are still recovering from the upheaval in which the first movement ended. Soon, however, the possibilities of warmth in this theme are revealed, and the high strings enter to transform carefully ventured steps into a high-temperature flow of gloriously confident forward movement. Staccato bursts end this, but their energy dissipates quickly, and in their place comes one of Brahms’s most miraculously expansive creations. Even when those staccato jabs are later reprised in a more tortured form, the answer is the same. The opening movement was tragedy on an epic scale. The second movement is the response, offered in more human proportions. The great song at the heart of this andante serves as a calmative to the stunned and anguished music that precedes it.

The aggressively upbeat scherzo seems initially out of place, given what comes immediately before and after, and yet it is utterly apt. We need some relief from the unremitting seriousness of the first two movements, and here Brahms supplies it. His humor, though, also has a crueler side. For this happy music will be followed by what, in 1885, was the most uncompromising, pessimistic conclusion ever heard in a symphony.
In his first two symphonies, Brahms had followed Beethoven's model, ending each of those works in the affirmative. In his Third Symphony, he made an entirely novel ending, choosing to finish quietly. He followed that venture into new territory by going even farther in the Fourth Symphony. Here, in the finale, he wrote music not simply personal and not simply contemporary, but music that looked into the future, toward a century that would validate his apprehensions.

The irony is that Brahms's vehicle for conveying this vision was an ancient musical form. Brahms the traditionalist was fascinated with the music of Bach and Handel. In his studies of the Baroque he familiarized himself with forms such as the passacaglia, a set of variations over a recurrent bass. He was especially taken with one he found in a cantata listed in the Bach catalogue as No. 150, a cantata whose very title lends meaning to this movement of the symphony, Nach Dir, Herr, verlanget mich—"I long to be near you, Lord." Brahms was no conventional churchgoer, and though he may not have acknowledged any one deity as "Lord," he had a sense of powers beyond the human. On the theme from Nach Dir, Herr—the eight chords that begin the finale—he builds his case: thirty-two variations that define a world.

Brahms presents a constantly evolving drama, one that wastes no time covering ground already explored but that continues its explorations ever more deeply. He offers no happy ending—in fact, the end comes almost before we know it. As in life. And if we never know whether Brahms nears his "Lord," whoever or whatever that might be, the answer is not important. The road to understanding is filled with detours and washed-out bridges, and we only hope we can negotiate the obstacles with grace. We may discard schedules and itineraries, but we don't quite abandon the conviction that one day we may arrive at the destination. As we head there, we can be grateful for a traveling companion like Johannes Brahms.

Notes by Larry Rothe (San Francisco Symphony)

Biographical Notes

Guillermo Scarabino, graduated in Composition from the University of Rosario (Argentina), obtaining a M.A. in Music Theory at the Eastman School of Music (U.S.A.). There he studied Conducting under Laszlo Halasz and later attended courses given by Igor Markevitch and Hans Swarowsky.

On returning to Argentina he became an active member of his country's busy musical life. His debut at the Teatro Colón was praised by the reviews as "the revelation of 1973 in the field of young Argentine conductors" (Panorama, Buenos Aires). The same year he started his international career conducting Uruguay’s SODRE Symphony Orchestra. Since then he has guest conducted in several countries of the Americas and Europe.

In his country he has been Music Director of the symphony orchestras of Mar del Plata and Mendoza and a staff conductor of the Teatro Colón’s Academic Orchestra. While in Mendoza he conducted numerous opera and ballet performances. Furthermore he taught at the Mendoza Summer Conducting Courses for students from several Latin-American countries and also at the International Summer Academy of Concepción, Chile, and at Venezuela’s Inter-American Conducting Courses, held under the patronage of the Organization of American States. He lectured at Washington D.C.'s Catholic University and taught seminars at Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais Federal Universities (Brazil), Penn State and South Carolina Universities (U.S.A.)

Mr. Scarabino received scholarships and awards from private and public institutions of Argentina, U.S.A., Spain, Brazil, France, the United Kingdom and Germany. He holds a chair at Argentina’s National Academy of Fine Arts and is at present Director of Artistic Production of Buenos Aires’ Teatro Colón.
Reviews

Great success of Argentine conductor Guillermo Scarabino... An expert in searching instrumental effects, his skill was confirmed by the refined reading of the splendid Petrushka Suite... Scarabino masters his business... (O. de Greiff, EL TIEMPO, Bogotá).

...an excellent interpreter of this century's music... Everything sounds incredibly logical and perfectly ensembled. His conducting was brilliant (R. Blanco Villalba, TRIBUNA MUSICAL, Buenos Aires). The program was closed by Dvorak's rhapsodic Symphony # 8... A beautiful rendering by Scarabino, who made the instruments sing with intense expressive vitality; he bestowed warmth, passion and grandeur upon the Adagio, delicately revealed the third movement and achieved the required glitter from the Finale (F. Heinlein, EL MERCURIO, Santiago de Chile).

...he conducted the whole program with a firm hand and an impressive knowledge... We point it out again: Guillermo Scarabino at the podium is a full guarantee for any symphony orchestra. (N. Cabrera, CLARIN, Buenos Aires).

...a big gun... the Festival Orchestra played very well for Scarabino throughout a demanding evening... The program closed with a revealing account of the Second Symphony by Lester Trimble... (P. Hume, THE WASHINGTON POST, Washington, D.C.).

Scarabino achieved a high, unquestionable quality level. He is a precise, cultivated, refined, perfectionist conductor. (P. Camps, CLARIN, Buenos Aires).

...he disclosed decisive evidence of noble musicianship, lofty interpretive insight and high ranking ability... In regard to the Dvorak Symphony we may speak simply of a memorable reading... Therefore the unusually long and enthusiastic ovation the audience granted the conductor and the orchestra. (A. E. Giménez, LA NACION, Buenos Aires).

The work was crisp and precise, the attacks perfect under guest conductor Scarabino, the effect delightful. (L. W. T., THE TICO TIMES, San José de Costa Rica).

The conductor's endeavours frequently achieved clean, crystal-like textures, as well as thrilling contrasts. (C. Poblete Varas, EL MERCURIO, Valparaiso).

Scarabino’s baton shaped matters with clarity and assurance. (E. Stevanovitch, BUENOS AIRES HERALD, Buenos Aires).

Scarabino showed a solid conducting, achieving strong, undeniably musical versions. (F. Silva Morvan, EL NACIONAL, Caracas).

The Argentine conductor arrived at an exactly phrased and dynamically balanced version... his reading referred us to a score possessing classical equilibrium and diaphanous beauty. (R. Ulloa Barrenechea, LA NACION, San José de Costa Rica).

It was a beautiful concert... Scarabino is a sound musician to whom the orchestra responded with integral solidity... his version of Schumann’s Rhenish Symphony was tonally balanced from the powerful initial theme, through the delicacies of the second and third movements, up to the solemnities of the fourth movement and the luminous Finale. ([H.D., EL PAIS, Montevideo). With a precise baton, Scarabino built the piece [Tim Ewer’s Altiplano] towards its animated climax, kept the rippling inner voices in place and allowed the haunting close to make its full impact. (J. Allison, THE TIMES, London)

The Argentine conductor continually drew top-class playing from these youngsters. They twanged out 12-note Ginastera with the ease one might bring to Ellington or McCartney. (R. Dunnett, THE INDEPENDENT, London)

As should happen in any good performance of this music (and this one rated high) [Britten’s War Requiem] I was left speechless at the end, with tears in my eyes. […] Surely he has never done something better than this perfectly rehearsed, expressive but contained performance, in which every
element was not only intellectually understood but also communicated to the artists and the public.
(Paul Bardin, for BUENOS AIRES HERALD, Buenos Aires.

At his Teatro Colón appearances he has given proof of his excellent technical gifts and highly esteemed qualities as an interpreter. The artistic outcome of his concerts has been always worth applause. (E. Valenti Ferro, LOS DIRECTORES, Ediciones de Arte Gaglianone, Buenos Aires).
Illinois State University Symphony Orchestra

VIOLIN I
Wen-Chi Chiu, concertmaster
Kyla Gwyn
Rachael Miller
Lisa Ourada
Hannah Kehe
Charlea Schueller
Mike Priller
Liz Fansler
Nathan Quiroz
Johannes Krohn

VIOLIN II
Asa Church, principal
Praneeth Madoori
Jillian Forbes
Andrada Pteanc
Atsuko Masuyama
Jessica Zavala
Kelsey Buckley
Rishik Kumar
Justin Wagner
Lauren Irby
Laura Polett

VIOLA
Abigail Dreher, principal
Alex Foote
Sarah Williams
Desiree Hunter
Regina Vendetti
Alexander Daniell
Breann Laermans

CELLO
Christine Cicha, co-principal
Mavi Goydy Rios, co-principal
Monica Sliva
Ryan Koranda
Eric Friel
Larkin Babbitt
Elise Oppegaard
Miranda Mata
Bader Semakieh
Jeffrey Smudde

DOUBLE BASS
Ana Miller, principal
Katy Balk
Daniel Dallstream
Leah Daugherty
Greg Clough
Tabitha Staples

FLUTE
Pam Schuett, co-principal
Daniel Gallagher, co-principal
Alexandra Clay
Kalie Grable

OBOE
David Merz, principal
Samantha Rizzi

CLARINET
Brian Do
Beth Hildenbrand
Nuvee Thammiyasakul

BASSOON
Veronica Dapper, principal
Katy Reed
Arturo Montaño Jr., contrabassoon

HORN
Jack Gordon, principal
Jordyn Shultz
Leah Young
Hannah Deitsch
Connor Bowman

TRUMPET
Sean Hack, principal
Nicole Gillotti
Clinton Linkmeyer

TROMBONE
Jordan Harvey, co-principal
Aaron Gradberg, co-principal
Mason Riedel, bass trombone

TUBA
Jacob Hilton, principal

TIMPANI/PERCUSION
Mallory Konstans, principal
James McHenry
Rei Shorten
Hsiang-Ying Hou

HARP
Hannah Kehe, principal

PIANO
Luis Solis, principal

STAFF
Noam Aviel, Assistant Conductor, Manager/Librarian
Johannes Krohn, Assistant Conductor, Manager/Librarian

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