

"PASSION"

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2005 – 8:00 PM
MEANY HALL

ORCHESTRA SEATTLE
George Shangrow, Conductor

PROGRAM

RICHARD WAGNER (1813-1883)

Dawn and Farewell from the Prologue to *Die Götterdämmerung*

Sara Hedgpeth, soprano (Brünnhilde)

Stephen Rumph, tenor (Siegfried)

LUDWIG van BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

Piano Concerto No. 4 in G Major, Op. 58

Allegro moderato

Andante con moto

Rondo (Vivace)

Mark Salman, piano

RICHARD WAGNER (1813-1883)

Immolation Scene from *Die Götterdämmerung*

Sara Hedgpeth, soprano (Brünnhilde)

- Intermission -

IGOR STRAVINSKY (1882-1955)

Firebird Suite (1919 version)

Introduction

Dance of the Firebird

Dance of the Princesses

Infernal Dance of King Kastchei

Finale

Please disconnect signal watches, pagers and cellular telephones. Thank you.
Use of cameras and recording equipment is not permitted in the concert hall.

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** *concertmaster*

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Please join us for two fun, festive, and hopefully fruitful, fundraising events (please note date changes). The Orchestra Seattle-Seattle Chamber Singers *Chamber Music Marathon* returns again this year to the University Village Barnes and Noble, March 11-13, for an entire weekend of chamber music in all its glory – instrumental and vocal ensembles, noted soloists and certainly some memorable surprise appearances.

Join us Friday evening, May 6th, at Townhall Seattle for an “*Ode to an Auction*,” featuring some outstanding Silent and live auction items, joyous entertainment, food, wine, and much, much more.

Both events raise funds to help us sustain the incredible music that Orchestra Seattle-Seattle Chamber Singers creates. For more information, check out the OSSCS website: www.osscs.org or call 206 682.5208.

Richard Wagner: *Götterdämmerung* - Prologue

BRÜNNHILDE:

Zu neuen Taten, teurer Helde,
wie liebt' ich dich, liess ich dich nicht?
Ein einzig' Sorgen lässt mich säumen:
dass dir zu wenig mein Wert gewann!
Was Götter mich wiesen, gab ich dir:
heiliger Runen reichen Hort;
doch meiner Stärke magdlichen Stamm

SIEGRIED:

Mehr gabst du, Wunderfrau, als ich zu wahren weiss:
nicht zürne, wenn dein Lehren mich unbelehret liess!
Ein Wissen doch wahr' ich wohl: dass mir Brünnhilde lebt;
eine Lehre lernst' ich leicht: Brünnhildes zu gedenken!

BRÜN: Willst du mir Minne schenken, gedenke deiner nur,
gedenke deiner Taten: gedenk' des wilden Feuers,
das furchtlos du durchschrittest, da den Fels es rings umbrann. —

SIEG: Brünnhilde zu gewinnen!

BRÜN: Gedenk' der beschildeten Frau, die in tiefem Schlaf du fandest,
der den festen Helm du erbrachst. —

SIEG: Brünnhilde zu erwecken!

BRÜN: Gedenk' der Eide, die uns einen; gedenk' der Treue, die wir tragen;
gedenk' der Liebe, der wir leben:
Brünnhilde brennt dann ewig heilig dir in der Brust! —

SIEG: Lass ich, Liebste, dich hier in der Lohe heiliger Hut;
zum Tausche deiner Runen reich' ich dir diesen Ring.
Was der Taten je ich schuf, des Tugend schliesst er ein.
Ich erschlug einen wilden Wurm, der grimmig lang' ihn bewacht.
Nun wahre du seine Kraft als Weihegruss meiner Treu'!

BRÜN: Ihn geiz' ich als einziges Gut!
Für den Ring nimm nun auch mein Ross!
Ging sein Lauf mit mir einst kühn durch die Lüfte, -
mit mir verlor es die mächt'ge Art;
über Wolken hin auf blitzenden Wettern
nicht mehr schwingt es sich mutig des Wegs;
doch wohin du ihn führst, - sei es durchs Feuer -
grauenlos folgt dir Grane; denn dir, o Helde,
soll er gehorchen! Du hüt' ihn wohl;
er hört dein Wort: o bringe Grane oft Brünnhildes Gruss!

SIEG: Durch deine Tugend allein soll so ich Taten noch wirken?
Meine Kämpfe kiesest du, meine Siege kehren zu dir:
auf deines Rosses Rücken, in deines Schildes Schirm,
nicht Siegfried acht' ich mich mehr, ich bin nur Brünnhildes Arm.

BRÜN: O wäre Brünnhild' deine Seele!

SIEG: Durch sie entbrennt mir der Mut.

BRÜN: So wärest du Siegfried und Brünnhild'?

SIEG: Wo ich bin, bergen sich beide.

BRÜN: So verödet mein Felsensaal?

SIEG: Vereint, fasst er uns zwei!

BRÜN: O heilige Götter! Hehre Geschlechter!
Weidet eu'r Aug' an dem weihvollen Paar!
Getrennt - wer will es scheiden?
Geschieden - trennt es sich nie!

SIEG: Heil dir, Brünnhilde, prangender Stern!
Heil, strahlende Liebe!

BRÜN: Heil dir, Siegfried, siegendes Licht!
Heil, strahlendes Leben!

BEIDE: Heil! Heil!

BRÜNNHILDE:

How would I love you if I did not let you go forth to new deeds, dear hero?
One anxiety alone makes me hesitate that I was too meager a reward for you!
What the gods taught me I have given you - a rich hoard of holy runes;
but of the strength of my maidenly inheritance I was bereft by the hero to
whom now I bow. Drained of knowledge but full of desire; rich in love but
deprived of strength; do not despise the poor creature who can grudge you
nothing but give no more!

SIEGFRIED:

More you gave me, wondrous woman, than I know how to husband: do not
be angry if your teaching has left me still untutored!
Yet one thing I have grasped - that Brünnhilde lives for me;
one lesson I have easily learned - to think of Brünnhilde!

BRÜN: If you would reward me with love, think only of yourself,
think of your deeds: think of the ferocious fire
through which you fearlessly forced a way when it flamed around the rock.

SIEG: To win Brünnhilde!

BRÜN: Think of the woman beneath the shield whom you found fast asleep,
and whose tight-fitting helmet you tore off.

SIEG: To waken Brünnhilde!

BRÜN: Think of the vows that unite us; think of our mutual trust;
think of the love in which we live:
then Brünnhilde will burn forever like a sacred flame in your breast!

SIEG: I must leave you here, my dearest, in the sacred custody of the fire;
in return for your tuition I give you this ring.
Within it resides the virtue of whatever deeds I wrought.
I slew a savage dragon who grimly had long guarded it.
Now take its power into your keeping as the pledge of my troth!

BRÜN: I prize this as my sole possession!
Now for the ring take my horse!
He used with me boldly to run his course through the air,-
and with me lost his mighty power;
far above the clouds in thunder and lightning no more
will he make his valiant way; but wherever you lead him -
even through the fire - Grane fearlessly will follow you;
for, my hero, he will obey you!
Care for him well; he will heed your words;
often give Grane Brünnhilde's greeting!

SIEG: Shall I then perform further deeds of valour through your virtue
alone? You select my combats, my triumphs reflect on you;
astride your steed, aheltered by your shield,
I can no longer count myself Siegfried, I am but Brünnhilde's arm.

BRÜN: Could Brünnhilde but be your soul!

SIEG: My spirit is kindled by her.

BRÜN: Then you would be Siegfried and Brünnhilde.

SIEG: Wherever I am shall we both be found.

BRÜN: Then my rocky home will be uninhabited?

SIEG: It will hold us both, since we are one.

BRÜN: O sacred gods! Supreme beings!
Feast your eyes on this dedicated pair!
Apart, who shall separate us?
Separate, we shall never part!

SIEG: Hail, Brünnhilde, radiant star!
Hail, resplendent love!

BRÜN: Hail, Siegfried, victorious light!
Hail, resplendent life!

BOTH: Hail! hail!

Richard Wagner: *Götterdämmerung* - Immolation Scene (Act III, Scene 3)

BRÜNNHILDE

Starke Scheite schichtet mir dort am Rande des Rheins zuhauf!
Hoch und hell lodre die Glut,
die den edlen Leib des hehrsten Helden verzehrt.
Sein Ross führet daher, dass mit mir dem Recken es folge:
denn des Helden heiligste Ehre zu teilen, verlangt mein eigener Leib.
Vollbringt Brünnhildes Wunsch!

Wie Sonne lauter strahlt mir sein Licht:
der Reinste war er, der mich verriet!
Die Gattin trügend, - treu dem Freunde,
- von der eignen Trauten - einzig ihm teuer -
schied er sich durch sein Schwert.
Echter als er schwur keiner Eide;
treuer als er hielt keiner Verträge;
lautrer als er liebte kein anderer:
und doch, alle Eide, alle Verträge,
die treueste Liebe - trog keiner wie er! -

Wisst ihr, wie das ward?

O ihr, der Eide ewige Hüter!
Lenkt euren Blick auf mein blühendes Leid:
erschaut eure ewige Schuld!
Meine Klage hör', du hehrster Gott!
Durch seine tapferste Tat, dir so tauglich erwünscht,
weihetest du den, der sie gewirkt, dem Fluche, dem du verfielst:
mich musste der Reinste verraten, dass wissend würde ein Weib!

Weiss ich nun, was dir frommt? -

Alles, alles, alles weiss ich, - alles ward mir nun frei!
Auch deine Raben hör' ich rauschen;
mit bang ersehnter Botschaft
send' ich die beiden nun heim Ruhe, ruhe, du Gott! -

Mein Erbe nun nehm' ich zu eigen. -
Verfluchter Reif! Furchtbarer Ring!

Dein Gold fass' ich und geb' es nun fort.
Der Wassertiefe weise Schwestern,
des Rheines schwimmende Töchter,
euch dank' ich redlichen Rat.
Was ihr begehrt, ich geb' es euch:
aus meiner Asche nehmt es zu eigen!
Das Feuer, das mich verbrennt,
rein'ge vom Fluche den Ring!
Ihr in der Flut löset ihn auf,
und lauter bewahrt das lichte Gold,
das euch zum Unheil geraubt.

Fliegt heim, ihr Raben!
Raunt es eurem Herren, was hier am Rhein ihr gehört!
An Brünnhildes Felsen fährt vorbei! -
Der dort noch lodert, weiset Loge nach Walhall!
Denn der Götter Ende dämmert nun auf.
So - werf' ich den Brand in Walhalls prangende Burg.

Grane, mein Ross! Sei mir gegrüsst!
Weisst du auch, mein Freund, wohin ich dich führe?
Im Feuer leuchtend, liegt dort dein Herr,
Siegfried, mein seliger Held.
Dem Freunde zu folgen, wieherst du freudig?
Lockt dich zu ihm die lachende Lohe?
Fühl' meine Brust auch, wie sie entbrennt;
helles Feuer das Herz mir erfasst,
ihn zu umschlingen, umschlossen von ihm,
in mächtigster Minne vermählt ihm zu sein!

Heiajoho! Grane! Grüss' deinen Herren!
Siegfried! Siegfried! Sieh!

Selig grüsst dich dein Weib!

Stack stout logs for me in piles there by the shore of the Rhine!
High and bright let a fire blaze,
which shall consume the noble body of the mighty hero.
Lead here his horse, that with me it may follow the warrior;
for my own body longs to share the hero's holiest honour.
Fulfil Brünnhilde's request.

Like sunlight his clear radiance shines on me:
he was the purest, he who betrayed me!
Deceiving his wife, loyal to his friend,
with his sword he separated himself
from his own true love, alone dear to him.
No man more honest ever took an oath;
none more true made treaty;
none was more pure in love;
and yet none so betrayed all oaths,
all treaties, his truest love!

Do you know why this was?

O you, heavenly custodian of oaths!
Turn your gaze on my great grief,
see your everlasting guilt!
Hear my lament, mighty god!
Through his most doughty deed, that you rightly desired,
you sacrificed him who wrought it to the curse which had fallen on you:
this innocent betrayed me so that I should become a woman of wisdom!

Do I know now what is your will?

Everything, everything, everything I know, all is now clear to me!
I hear your ravens stirring too;
with dreaded desired tidings I now send them both home.
Rest, rest now, o god!

Now I take up my inheritance.
Accursed ring, terrible ring,

I take your gold and now I give it away.
Wise sisters of the water's depths,
you swimming daughters of the Rhine,
I thank you for your good counsel.
I give you what you crave:
from my ashes take it for your own!
The fire that consumes me shall cleanse
the ring from the curse!
You in the water,
wash it away and keep pure the gleaming gold
that was disastrously stolen from you.

Fly home, you ravens!
Recount to your master what you have heard here by the Rhine!
Pass by Brünnhilde's rock: direct Loge,
who still blazes there, to Valhalla;
for the end of the gods is nigh.
Thus do I throw this torch at Valhalla's vaulting towers.

Grane, my steed, greetings!
Do you too know, my friend, where I am leading you?
Radiant in the fire, there lies your lord,
Siegfried, my blessed hero.
Are you neighing for joy to follow your friend?
Do the laughing flames lure you to him?
Feel my bosom too, how it burns;
a bright fire fastens on my heart to embrace him,
enfolded in his arms, to be one with him in the intensity of love!

Heiajoho! Grane! Greet your master!
Siegfried! Siegfried! See!

Your wife joyfully greets you!

Program Notes

Firebird- Stravinsky "The most exquisite marvel of equilibrium between sounds, movements and forms"

- Henri Ghéon in *Nouvelle Revue Française*.

A composer of diverse styles, Stravinsky's compositions reflect both the composer's personality and the evolution of the times.

Igor Stravinsky was born in Oranienbaum, Russia in 1882. He was brought up in a musical home with opera and ballet being a major part of his childhood. He began his law studies at St. Petersburg University in 1901, but his main focus seemed to be studying composition with Rimsky-Korsakov. During this time, he composed *Scherzo fantastique* and *Fireworks*. The latter work impressed the director of the Ballets Russes, Sergei Diaghilev, so much so that he commissioned a large-scale ballet from Stravinsky. It was through this commission that *The Firebird* was created. *The Firebird* was composed between December 1909 and May 1910 and was premiered at the Opera Paris on June 25, 1910. The instant popularity of the work resulted in the publication of two suites, the first in 1911 for a very large orchestra and one in 1919. The relationship with Diaghilev also yielded the composing of *Petrouchka* and *The Rite of Spring* after the success of *The Firebird*.

Stravinsky used an amalgamation of Russian fairy tales for the inspiration, representing both the Romantic interests in the supernatural and the nationalistic trends in the arts of that time. The fabulist plot tells a story of Kashchei, the evil green-taloned ogre, and the Firebird, who represents goodness. Kashchei and The Firebird compete for the soul of the young prince Ivan Tserich. Prince Ivan wishes to free the thirteen princesses from Kashchei's clutches with the help of the Firebird. Stravinsky was able to depict good and evil with the use of an old idea from Rimsky-Korsakov. He used structured chromatics to represent evil and magic and diatonics and folk song melodies for the representation of good and human qualities. The scenario of the ballet was a very traditional sequence of dances linked by *pas d'action*, much like *Swan Lake*.

The music, although now understood to be formulaic, was new to both the orchestral players and the dancers. Stravinsky had to attend the orchestra rehearsals to explain the music to the bewildered players, and at the first rehearsal, the dancers missed their entrances because of the distraction of the new sonorities they were hearing. Perhaps it was the orchestration more than the actual compositional techniques that were unusual at this time. Stravinsky employed brilliant glissando harmonics in the strings, seen by some as an attempt to outdo his teacher in orchestral effects. The color and energy of this work, as well as his other two Diaghilev ballets, have made Stravinsky one of the greatest musical figures of the twentieth century.

Piano Concerto no. 4, op. 58 – Ludwig van Beethoven

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) studied at an early age with his father, a tenor at the court of Elector of Bonn. Beethoven's father was strict and violent and, in turn, made much of Beethoven's youth very painful. At age 11, Beethoven was removed from school to study music exclusively and learned to play the organ, piano, violin, and viola. He also began composing. He was 12 when his music was first published and 14 when he was appointed second organist in the Electoral chapel in Bonn. He continued in there, as well as numerous other musical engagements in the city, until 1792 when he settled permanently in Vienna. There he began his work on the Fourth Piano Concerto.

The earliest concept sketch for the opening theme of the first movement appeared in the *Eroica* sketchbook in 1804. Beethoven waited until after *Lenore* was completed to focus fully on the fourth concerto (1805-6). When completed, he had challenges trying to find a soloist for a premiere public performance. The first soloist complained that the music was too difficult to learn quickly, the second soloist agreed, but in the end played another Beethoven concerto in its place. In the end, Beethoven himself played the solo part at a concert at the *Akademie* on December 22, 1808, along with the Fifth and Sixth symphonies, parts of the C major Mass and the *Choral Fantasy*. This work, along with the "Archduke" Piano Trio, "Hammerklavier" Piano Sonata, and other works, is dedicated to Beethoven's friend, student and patron, Archduke Rudolph of Austria.

The Fourth Piano Concerto leads the piano concerto genre into a new phase of complete consistency of thought, feeling, beauty and sensitivity. Beethoven accentuates the feeling of lightness and grace by setting the concerto in G major, a key often used by him for lighter chamber music and piano sonatas. The key element in this work is serenity, and that mood is established from the beginning by the serene solo piano opening.

There has been some discussion about the slow movement's relationship to the legend of Orpheus. Nineteenth-century theorist Adolf Bernhard Marx described the scene of Orpheus confronting the shade of Hell and later as Orpheus taming the wild beasts with his lyre. Although there is no evidence of programmatic inspiration for this movement, Carl Czerny states, "There is no doubt that in many of his most beautiful works, Beethoven was inspired by similar visions or pictures from his reading or from his own lively imagination." Beethoven sets the solo piano against the strings in a dialogue fashion. As the movement progresses, it becomes obvious that the piano is winning the argument and the strings are reduced to timid, pizzicato utterances. The final movement, a rondo in G major, brings the opposing forces back together with an abundance of energy. There is a striking beginning in C major that makes the listener question which tonality will prevail to the final cadence. In the end, the graceful G major triumphs.

Brünnhilde's Immolation from *Götterdämmerung* – Richard Wagner

Richard Wagner (1813-1883) was an innovator in harmony and structure. He created compositions in which many elements of the arts were brought together for a single purpose in his own type of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or "universal artwork". He developed the use of the *Leitmotiv* (leading motive) as a unifying musical principle. This technique used the interweaving of melodies or fragments of melody associated with specific characters, incidents or ideas in the drama. Wagner's characters address the philosophical issues that Wagner considered vital to society: the tension between good and evil, between physical and spiritual and between selfishness and redemptive love.

Near the end of the 1840's, Wagner began work on his cycle of four musical dramas titled, "Der Ring des Nibelungen" (The Ring of the Nibelungs). This cycle, comprised of "Das Rheingold," "Die Walküre," "Siegfried," and "Die Götterdämmerung," took twenty-two years for Wagner to complete. The premiere performance was in August 1876 at the Festspielhaus in Bayreuth. The Ring Cycle is viewed as one of the most influential achievements in Western music.

Götterdämmerung (Twilight of the Gods) was written in 1876. The main theme of the opera is Siegfried and Brünnhilde's doom and the downfall of the Gods. In Act III, the concluding portion of the final scene tells the story of Brünnhilde's Immolation. Earlier in the opera, Siegfried is lured into destructive actions and forgets his Brünnhilde and seeks to marry Gutrune, the half-sister of the villainous Hagen. This enrages Brünnhilde and she plots with Hagen to kill Siegfried. In true opera style, Siegfried is completely unaware of this plot and is killed. As a result of his death, Brünnhilde regains her former wisdom and makes a funeral pyre for Siegfried, but in the end also rides into her own fiery death on her Valkyries' steed, Grane. There are numerous *leitmotiv* throughout this scene, representing the twilight of the Gods, the redemptive love of Brünnhilde and Siegfried, magic fire, Rhinemaidens, Siegfried, Valhalla and Walküre. They are placed strategically with the plot of the scene and enhance the passion and personal connection with the drama. Wagner had great difficulty writing the final verses for Brünnhilde's immolation. He wrote six different sketches that each focused on different philosophical stances before deciding to have her accept her reunion in death with Siegfried. This ending truly represents the redemptive quality of woman's love and sacrifice.

Wagner used the Ring Cycle to seek self-understanding. With that personal journey, he has created an immense musical world for the listener that transforms the outer world of nature and also the inner world of the human soul.

-notes by Heather MacLaughlin Garbes

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