

JOHANNES BRAHMS EIN DEUTSCHES REQUIEM

GRAEME LANGAGER CONDUCTOR
TRACY DAHL SOPRANO
RUSSELL BRAUN BARITONE
UNIVERSITY SINGERS
CHORAL UNION
UBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

HYEJUNG JUN CONDUCTOR, CHORAL UNION JAELEM BHATE CONDUCTOR, UBC SYMPHONY JONATHAN GIRARD DIRECTOR OF ORCHESTRAL ACTIVITIES

SATURDAY DECEMBER 3RD, 2022 | 7:30^{PM}
THE CHAN CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

EIN DEUTSCHES REQUIEM

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

I. CHORUS

Selig sind, die da Leid tragen | Blessed are they that mourn

II. CHORUS

Denn alles Fleisch, es ist wie Gras | Behold, all flesh is as the grass

III. BARITONE & CHORUS

Herr, lehre doch mich | Lord, teach me to measure my days

IV. CHORUS

Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen | How lovely are thy dwellings

V. SOPRANO & CHORUS

Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit | Ye now have sorrow

VI. CHORUS

Denn wir haben hie keine bleibende Statt | For we have no abiding city

VII. CHORUS

Selig sind die Toten | Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord

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JONATHAN GIRARD DIRECTOR OF ORCHESTRAL ACTIVITIES

We would like to acknowledge that we are on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people.

PROGRAM NOTES

Compiled by Zachary Manlapid

Johannes Brahms (1833-97) had a very close relationship with both Robert and Clara Schumann. Initially introduced to them through their mutual friend, violinist Joseph Joachim, a 20-year-old Brahms impressed Robert Schumann enough for him to feature this young composer in his publication Neue Zeitschrift für Musik as the proper heir to Beethoven. This grand proclamation however only added to Brahms' anxiety of perfection – nevertheless, this encounter established his close relationship to both of the Schumanns. It was only five months later on February 27, 1854, that Robert Schumann attempted suicide before being dragged out of the Rhine. He was never the same again - suffering from depression and supposedly bipolar disorder. Brahms rushed to their home at first notice of the news, becoming an emotional confidant to Clara. Two years later in 1856, Robert passed away – leaving behind a list of projects with one of them being a German Requiem. Brahms only found out about this coincidence well into writing his own version but was touched by the similar idea of his late colleague. Brahms started to work on his idea of a requiem written in the vernacular language of German instead of the traditional Latin, but the death of his mother in 1865 seemed to provide enough momentum for Brahms to finish the project. The first three movements were performed in 1866 but was poorly received as the timpanist misread the dynamic markings in the third movement during the fugue, and covered the orchestra's sound. A later performance of six of the seven movements in 1868 with the instrumentalists reading the proper dynamics marked a huge success for the work. The final movement (the fifth movement) was added later that year, completing the work.

The title *Ein Deutsches Requiem* is a misnomer – Brahms would later say that "Ein Menschen Requiem", or "Requiem for Man "would have been a better fit as this is a requiem for the people left behind on Earth instead of comforting and praying for the dead. This concept shaped all of Brahms' choices, from the choice of text to the narrative of the composition. Brahms compiled the libretto himself using the German Luther Bible – choosing passages that appealed to him and how he wanted to comfort the living and the dead. This requiem, in many ways, is for Brahms himself as he is left behind by the two closest and influential people in his life.

The requiem opens with low French horn sustained tones and a pulsing pedal F in the double basses. Out of this funeral march comes a series of melodies out of the low strings, initially rising but ultimately descending. This group of mourning celli and violas seem to recount the life of their dearly departed, unable to process what to do with their grief as they keep overlapping in a descending melody until the choir plainly calls out "Selig sind" or "Blessed are they." This angelic choral melody is built upon an ascending fourth, comforting as the choir continues with "Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted." The movement then becomes a

dialogue of the orchestra processing their grief with the comfort of the choir. Listen as the intro is recapped after supposedly cadencing in the new key of Db Major, but the low strings chromatically descend to give us F Major again. This second iteration has more choral parts singing over the original instrumental section – the choir taking on the grief of the instruments sympathetically. Once the recapped section cadences again, the key of Db Major actually sticks before the choir brings us back to F Major – taking on the melodic content that the orchestra had provided and bringing everyone to acceptance of the death.

The second movement is this slow, awkward march in 3|4 in Bb minor, the relative minor to Db Major, with the low strings beginning with the interval of the ascending fourth – both calling back to the previous movement. The winds and strings play a thickly voiced descending melodic section before this long extended rising melodic section. This two-part long phrase is repeated with the choir (sans soprano) singing a stepwise motion melody low in their tessitura – "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass" – creating this inevitable march towards death that is for everyone. The descending melody then appears in F Major with a tonic F pedal in the low strings, another call back to the first movement, and crescendos before the choir melody appears again, this time up the octave with the sopranos added marked **f**. The music suddenly transitions to a "B" section in Db major with a sweet, chorale-like section. The entire "A" section is then repeated before a lively, more triumphant "C" section with huge fanfare-like rhythms and melodies in both the brass and the choir.

The third movement movement is a bass solo "Herr lehre doch mich" ("Lord, make me to know") comprised of three parts – the first part is its own contained ternary form. The movement moves from D Minor to D Major, as the bass solo is talking to God and leaving the fate of the deceased in His hands. Once the movement moves into the 4|2 section, the choir starts a traditional fugue with a D pedal point in the low strings, representing the immortality and inevitability of God and His power. The fermata over the very last note punctuates this sentiment as well.

The fourth movement fourth movement in Eb Major begins with the flute and clarinet introducing this sweet descending and ascending melody, which the melody in the sopranos after inverts with the same intervals. Underneath is this flowing, legato motor in the strings that propels the movement forward – painting "How lovely are thy dwelling places" to comfort the living. The invertible counterpoint in the voices once the articulation changes in the strings with marked staccati is the fanfare of the heavens as the choir states "they praise you forever."

The fifth movement, "Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit," is the only one that features the soprano. This text features a peculiar line "[I will console you, as one is consoled by his mother.]" It is as if Brahms wrote this movement about his mother, the lead instigating death for the completion of the requiem. His mother-figure and emotional life partner Clara Schumann who comforted Brahms throughout his life is also read into the mother-like soprano soloist consoling the listeners.

The sixth movement fulfills the content of the Sequence in the liturgical requiem – specifically the "Dies Irae" or "Day of wrath" where the trumpet sounds the resurrection of the dead. In Brahms' version he indicated a "Posaune" or trombone. The bass soloist is featured again in this movement and is our emotional guide through this battle against hell and death itself. Right before the text "[For the trombone shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed,]" the entire orchestra and choir crescendo from the p section of the entire opening with the strings playing descending 16th notes before chromatically rising to the fanfare section – as if they descended into the pits of hell and brought the dead up to be awoken. This happens several times before the movement features another fugue to honor God and all of His creation.

The last movement becomes the symmetrical bookend of the entire requiem. Mimicking the opening text "[Blessed are they who mourn]" we now have "[Blessed are the dead.]" The F pedal is back in the low strings but now there is a legato, stepwise rising melody in the strings as if they were carrying the souls of the dead to heaven. This opening section modulates to A Major, just like the first movement, before going back to F Major. The coda of the piece restates the ending of the first movement with the new text blessing those who "[die in the Lord]" — bringing us full circle on this journey of grief and comfort for the living that allows for them to pray for the souls of the dead.

Text and Translation

Brahms's Ein deutsches Requiem (A German Requiem)

Chorus

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

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

- 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 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

He that goes forth and weeps, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

— Psalm 126:5–6

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. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower thereof falls away.

— I Peter 1:24

So seid nun geduldig, lieben Bru der, bis auf die Zukunft des Herrn. Siehe ein Ackermann wartet auf die ko stliche Frucht der Erde und ist geduldig daru ber, bis er empfahe den Morgenregen und Abendregen. So seid geduldig. Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husband waits for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receives the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient.

— James 5:7-8

Aber des Herrn Wort bleibet in Ewigkeit.

But the word of the Lord endures forever.

— I Peter 1:25

Die Erlo seten des Herrn werden wiederkommen, und gen Zion kommen mit Jauchzen; Freude, ewige Freude wird u ber ihrem Haupte sein; Freude und Wonne werden Sie ergreifen, und Schmerz und Seufzen wird weg mu ssen.

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

- Isaiah 35:10

Baritone and Chorus

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 Handbreit 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 tro sten? Ich hoffe auf dich.

Der Gerechten Seelen sind in Gottes Hand, und keine Qual ru hret sie an. Lord, teach me that there must be an end of me, and my life has a term, and I must go hence.

Behold, my days are a handbreadth before thee, and my life is as nothing before Thee:

Ah, what vain things are all men, that yet live so sure of themselves. They go about like a shadow, and make themselves much useless anxiety; they amass possessions, and know not who will enjoy them.

Now, Lord, in what shall I find solace? My hope is in Thee.

-- Psalm 39:4-7

The souls of the righteous are in God's hand,
And no pain touches them.

- Wisdom 3:1

Chorus

Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen, Herr Zebaoth!

Meine Seele verlanget und sehnet sich nach den Vorho fen des Herrn:

mein Leib und Seele freuen sich in dem lebendigen Gott. Wohl denen, die in deinem Hause wohnen, die loben dich immerdar! How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul desires, yea, even longs for the courts of the Lord:

my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will still be praising Thee.

- Psalm 84:1-2, 4

Soprano and Chorus

Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit; aber ich will euch wieder sehen und euer Herz soll sich freuen, und eure Freude soll niemand von euch nehmen. Ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

— John 16:22

Ich will euch tro sten, wie einen seine Mutter tro stet.

I will comfort you, as one whom his mother comforts.

— Isaiah 66:13

Sehet mich an: ich habe eine kleine Zeit Mu he und Arbeit gehabt und habe großen Trost funden. Behold me: I have for a little while had tribulation and labor, and have found great comfort.

— Ecclesiasticus 51:35

Baritone and Chorus

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

Siehe, ich sage euch ein Geheimnis. Wir werden nicht alle entschlafen, wir werden aber alle verwandelt werden; und dasselbige plo tzlich in einem Augenblick, zu der Zeit der letzten Posaune.

For here have we no enduring city, but we seek one to come.

— Hebrews 13:14

Behold, I shew 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 last trumpet: Denn es wird die Posaune schallen und die Toten werden auferstehen unverweslich, und wir werden verwandelt werden. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Dann wird erfu llet werden das Wort, das geschrieben steht: Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written:

Der Tod ist verschlungen in den Sieg. Tod, wo ist dein Stachel? Ho lle, wo ist dein Sieg? Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

— I Corinthians 15:51–52, 54–55

Herr, du bist wu rdig,zu nehmen Preis und Ehre und Kraft, denn du hast alle Dinge erschaffen und durch deinen Willen haben sie das Wesen und sind geschaffen. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.

- Revelation 4:11

Chorus

Selig sind die Toten, die in dem Herrn sterben, von nun an. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth.

Ja, der Geist spricht, daß sie ruhen von ihrer Arbeit; denn ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach. Yea, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.

- Revelation 14:13



Graeme Langager is Director of Choral Activities at the University of British Columbia School of Music. As is a passionate and dynamic conductor, Langager is sought-after as a clinician, adjudicator, educator and guest conductor. He has performed throughout Europe and across North America, appearing in such venues as St. Mark's in Venice, St. Peter's in the Vatican, St. Steven's in Vienna, Carnegie Hall in New York and in cathedrals and concert halls in Spain, Italy, France, Austria and the Czech Republic. Langager's choirs have also performed at numerous choral conferences, including: NCCO

(National Collegiate Choral Organization), ACDA-AR (American Choral Directors Association Conference, Arkansas), IAJE (International Association of Jazz Educators), MENC/NAfME (National Association for Music Education), and the Montreux and North Sea Jazz Festivals. Langager served as the artistic director and conductor of the acclaimed Phoenix Chamber Choir in Vancouver from 2012-2018, during which the choir released 3 CDs, performed with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Andrea Bocelli, and was privileged to be invited to perform at Canada's Podium Conference in 2016 showcasing the best choirs in the country.

Langager was born into a musical family, singing and playing instruments from an early age. He received the doctoral degree in choral conducting from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and the master of music degree from California State University, Long Beach. Langager also holds a degree in Jazz Studies. He has taught for more than 20 years in universities and colleges in the United States and Canada, and is also active as a composer and arranger.



Renowned for his luminous voice "capable of the most powerful explosions as well as the gentlest covered notes" (Toronto Star) baritone **Russell Braun** rightfully claims his place on the concert, opera and recital stages of the world. His intelligent and thoughtful portrayals of Chou Enlai, Billy Budd, Prince Andrei, Figaro, Papageno, Count Almaviva, Don Giovanni, Pelléas, Eugene Onegin, and The Traveller have captivated audiences. Highlights of the 2022/23 season include Mandryka Arabella for Deutsche Oper

Berlin and his return to Festival d'Aix-en-Provence. On the concert platform, he will perform Mendelssohn Elijah with the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and Brahms Ein Deutsches Requiem with Atlanta Symphony Orchestra



Active in both classical and jazz genres, **Jaelem Bhate** is a conductor, composer and proponent of reinvention and accessibility and works to reimagine the role of instrumental music in the 21st century. He was named to CBC's hot 30 under 30 classical musicians in 2019 and is a board member of Orchestras Canada; the association representing Canadian orchestras. As a conductor, Jaelem founded Symphony 21; an ensemble and registered charity focused on producing concerts in non-traditional spaces for non-traditional

audiences while simultaneously breaking down barriers racial, gender, and socio-economic. Jaelem was also named music director of the Vancouver Brass Collective in 2019. Guest engagements include the Vancouver and Winnipeg Symphony Orchestras after winning the RBC Emerging Conductor competition in 2019, along with invitations to Italy, Romania, Portugal and Bulgaria. In 2022, he'll lead the Guelph Symphony as a candidate for their new Artistic Director. He will also return to the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, where he was a conducting fellow in 2022, as a guest assistant in 2023. An advocate for new music, he has conducted over 20 world premieres, the majority of them by diverse, Canadian composers. In the 2022/23 season as a conductor, he will record a new operetta by Canadian composer Katerina Gimon with Re:Naissance Opera, and a studio album with the Vancouver Brass Collective.

Jaelem holds a MMus in orchestral conducting and BMus in percussion performance from UBC where he studied with Dr. Jonathan Girard and Vern Griffiths respectively. He has furthered his conducting studies with Alexander Shelley with the National Arts Centre Orchestra, Bramwell Tovey, Boris Brott as a two time assistant of the National Academy Orchestra of Canada, Gerard Schwarz as a fellow at the Eastern Music Festival, Neil Varon, Paul Nadler, and Christian Macelaru at the Cabrillo Festival as associate conductor, and counts Dr. Robert Taylor as an early conducting mentor. Jaelem studied composition with Fred Stride, and has furthered his education with Jocelyn Morlock, Edward Top, Rufus Reid, John Clayton, and the late Ron Miles.



Canada's premiere coloratura soprano, **Tracy Dahl**, has appeared throughout her career with such esteemed opera companies as the Metropolitan, San Francisco, Houston Grand, Santa Fe and Calgary operas; the Canadian Opera Company, Pacific Opera Victoria, Teatro alla Scala (Milan) and the Théâtre du Châtelet (Paris). The "incredible Canadian soprano," known for her agility and vocal range, values education alongside her impressive performing career as a Professor of Voice at the University of Manitoba. During the 2017-18 season Ms. Dahl also served on the faculty of the San Francisco Opera.

CHORAL UNION

Jeon Mok, collaborative pianist

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Eshantha Peiris, collaborative pianist * denotes Graduate Teaching Assistants

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Horn

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Trombone

Ella Buonassisi* Vancouver, BC; BMus '25

Shiqing Liu Nanjing, China; BMus '23

Bass Trombone

Gerald Rogers Lethbridge, AB; MMus '23

Tuba

Anna Bosgra*
Calgary, AB; MMus '23

Timpani

Yueyi Liu (UE)* Shanghai, China; DMA '25

Harp

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Sacha Flichy Paris, France; DMPS '24

Organ

Isaac Howie Vancouver, BC; BMus '25

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