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Ein deutsches Requiem

Op. 45

Johannes Brahms

1833-1897

Alexandria Choral Society

Brian Gendron, conductor

with

Angeli Ferrette, *soprano*Zachary Burgess, *baritone*Tracy Ann Cowden and Erica Ann Sipes, *pianists*

- I. Selig sind, die da Leid tragen chorus
- II. Denn alles Fleisch, es ist wie Gras chorus
- III. Herr, lehre doch mich Mr. Burgess and chorus
- IV. Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen chorus
- V. Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit Ms. Ferrette and chorus
- VI. Denn wir haben hie keine bleibende Statt Mr. Burgess and chorus
- VII. Selig sind die Toten chorus

Please silence all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices.

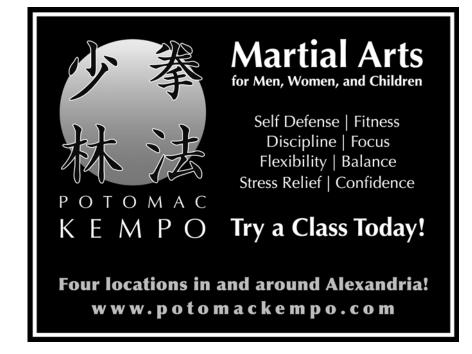
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Sunday, October 23, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. at Saint Luke Catholic Church 7001 Georgetown Pike, McLean, VA 22101

Schütz: Requiem Purcell: Rejoice in the Lord Alway Britten: Rejoice in the Lamb Mendelssohn: Psalms Renaissance Motets

Sunday, December 11, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center 4915 East Campus Drive, Alexandria, VA 22311

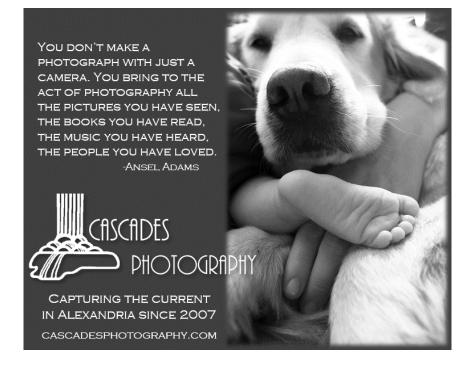
Vivaldi: Gloria Charpentier: Messe de Minuit pour Noël French Noëls arr. Beveridge J. S. Bach: Magnificat

Sunday, April 23, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center 4915 East Campus Drive, Alexandria, VA 22311

Opera and Operetta Favorites

J. Strauss: Act II of Die Fledermaus

Gilbert and Sullivan: Operettas



TEXT AND TRANSLATION

1. Chorus

Matthew 5:4; Psalm 126:5,6

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

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

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

Those who sow with tears will reap with joy. They go forth and weep, bearing precious seeds, and return rejoicing, bringing their sheaves.

2. Chorus

1 Peter 1:24; James 5:7.8a; 1 Peter 1:25; Isaiah 35: 10

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

und die Blume abgefallen.

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.

Aber des Herrn Wort bleibet in Ewigkeit.

Die Erlöseten des Herrn werden wieder kommen.

und gen Zion kommen mit Jauchzen; ewige Freude wird über ihrem Haupte sein:

Freude und Wonne werden sie ergreifen

und Schmerz und Seufzen wird weg müssen.

For all flesh is like the grass, and all the magnificence of mortals is like the flowers of the grass. The grass has dried up, and the flower has fallen away.

So now be patient, dear friends, until the life hereafter. Behold, a husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth and is patient until he receives the morning rain and evening rain.

But the word of the Lord endures forever.

The redeemed of the Lord will return

and come to Zion with shouts of joy; eternal joy will be upon their heads,

joy and delight will overcome them

and sorrow and sighing will have to depart.

3. Baritone Solo and Chorus

Psalm 39: 4-7; Wisdom of Solomon 3:1

Herr, lehre doch mich. daß ein Ende mit mir haben muß. Lord, teach me that there must be an end of me, 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, Ah, how insignificant all mortals are, 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.

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

and that my life will finish, and I must pass away.

> Behold, my days here are but a handbreadth before you, and my life is as nothing before you. and yet they live so confidently.

They go about like a phantom and create so much vain disquiet;

they gather things and know not who will receive them.

Now, Lord, in whom shall I find

consolation? I trust in you.

The souls of the righteous are

in God's hands,

and no torment touches them.

4. Chorus

Psalm 84: 1, 2, 4

Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen, Herr Zebaoth!

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.

How lovely are your dwellings.

O Lord of Hosts!

Meine Seele verlanget und sehnet sich My soul yearns and longs for the courts of the Lord; my body and soul rejoice in the living God.

Blessed are those who dwell in your

house.

those who praise you forevermore.

5. Soprano Solo and Chorus

John 16: 22; Isaiah 66: 13; Ecclesiasticus 51: 35

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

Sehet mich an:

ich habe eine kleine Zeit Mühe und Arbeit gehabt,

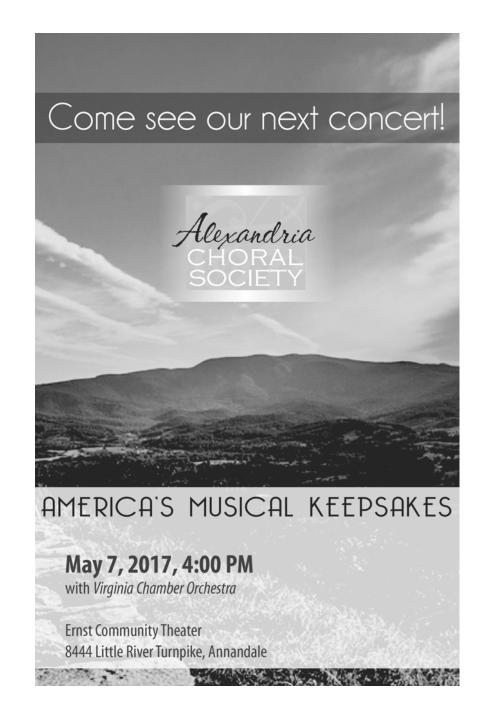
und habe großen Trost funden.

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

Look upon me:

I have toiled and labored a brief time,

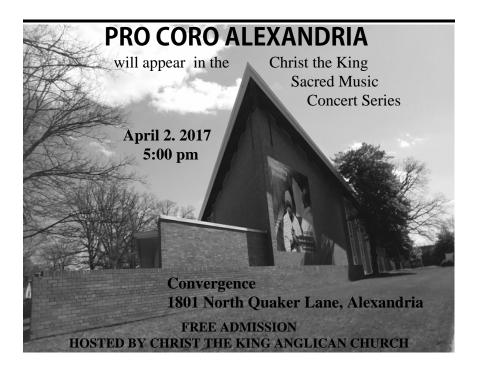
and now I have found great comfort.



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Ich will euch trösten, wie einen seine Mutter tröstet. I want to comfort you, as one is comforted by his mother.

6. Chorus and Baritone Solo

Hebrews 13: 14: Corinthians 15: 51, 52, 54, 55: Revelation 4: 11

Denn wir haben hie keine bleibende

For here we have no permanent place,

Statt.

sondern die zukünftige suchen wir.

but we seek the one to come.

Siehe, ich sage euch ein Geheimnis: Wir werden nicht alle entschlafen. wir werden aber alle verwandelt Werden:

Behold, I tell you a mystery: we will not all die. but we will all be transformed,

und dasselbige plötzlich in einem Augenblick,

and transformed suddenly, in an instant,

zu der Zeit der letzten Posaune. Denn es wird die Posaune schallen und die Toten werden auferstehen unverweslich.

at the time of the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will rise up incorruptible,

und wir verwandelt werden. Dann wird erfüllet werden das Wort, das geschrieben steht: and we will be transformed. Then will be fulfilled the word that is written:

Der Tod ist verschlungen in den Sieg. Tod, wo ist dein Stachel? Hölle, wo ist dein Sieg?

"Death is swallowed up in victory. Death, where is your sting? Hell, where is your victory?"

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.

Lord, you are worthy to receive praise and honor and might, for you have created all things, and by your will they have their being and are created.

7. Chorus

Revelation 14: 13

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

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yea, the Spirit says that they may rest from their labor, for their works follow after them.

PROGRAM NOTES

Johannes Brahms was a prolific composer in many musical media, but probably his best-known choral work is *Ein deutsches Requiem*. Born in Hamburg in 1833, Brahms gave his first solo concert as a pianist at the age of 15, by which time he was already composing extensively. His life was spent as both a performer and a composer; he was also dedicated to research in the field of early music. At one point he wrote to Clara Schumann that he had mastered all types of canonic technique.

Texts were very important to Brahms, both in which ones he chose and how he created music for them. Although he was not particularly devout, he had studied the Bible from his earliest years, and showed great sensitivity in his selection of Biblical texts for many of his choral works. Heinz Becker, whose extensive essay on Brahms appears in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, describes the German Requiem as "confessional," and says it "... suppressed the eschatological objectives of the Christian faith in favour of a pious orientation to this world." He quotes Brahms as having said of himself, "Life steals more from one than does death."

The texts for *Ein deutsches Requiem* were selected by Brahms himself, and Becker describes them as "... non-denominational, centring [sic] round faith in the Resurrection rather than fear of the Day of Judgement." They are taken from both the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha in the German language Luther Bible.

The work has been described as "humanist" and Brahms himself, when criticized for insufficient focus on what Becker refers to as "the spirit of Good Friday," said that the word "deutsches" referred to the language, and that he would gladly have called it "Ein menschliches Requiem" – a human Requiem.

The authors of *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repretoire*, *Volume II: German Texts* observe that Brahms often used a structure in which "... a statement of misery, affliction, or sadness is followed by uplifting and comforting words, usually from somewhere else in the Bible." They comment that this may be seen in movements 2, 3, 5, and 6. Movement 4 reflects "happiness in the contemplation of heaven" and movements 1 and 7 offer hope and comfort for, respectively, the living and the dead.

Each of its seven sections has its own character, and the work as a whole reflects Brahms' continuing interest in early music, using texts that Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672) had chosen for his own German Requiem, and showing the influence of Handel (1685-1759) in his choral technique.

The *Requiem* was written over a period of eleven years, beginning in 1857. Although the finished work has what may be considered a symmetrical structure (note that the first and last movements both begin with the word "blessed"), movements 1-4 and 6 were composed first, with the seventh added in 1866 and the fifth, inspired and motivated by the death of his mother, in 1868.

The fourth and central movement, "Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen," is probably the most familiar to general audiences, due to its popularity as an

In Memoriam

Marcela Ayerbe Burson 1938 – 2015



wife, mom, abuelita ACS supporter



Alexandria Choral Society is holding a Spring2ACTion event on April 5th!

We are excited to participate with all the other organizations involved,
and we ask you to make us one of your choices
as you support local non-profits in this community-wide giving day.
You can help ACS continue to build recognition
and share fantastic classical choral works.

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Spring2ACTion.org/alexandria-choral-society.

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Natalie Treat

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Annandale High School Bittersweet Catering Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Route 1 Buick Mimi Stevens anthem in churches, whether sung in German or in English translation. It is the only one "... completely unburdened by any reference to death."

Originally scored for chorus, soloists, and orchestra, Brahms later created a four-hand piano version which may be used when a full orchestra is not available. Sometimes called the "London Version" because it was used for the first complete British performance in 1871, this is the scoring that is being used for this concert. Although the original orchestral score may provide a more varied sonority, it is in the end the human voice, and the words Brahms has given to the choir and soloists, that make this work one of the great achievements of nineteenth-century musical composition.

~ Mimi Stevens



Johannes Brahms

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Founded in 1970, the **Alexandria Choral Society** aspires to enhance the cultural life of the city of Alexandria and surrounding communities by presenting engaging musical programs at the highest artistic level. ACS ensembles consistently offer meaningful and exciting musical experiences to both singers and audiences through diverse repertoire, education, community outreach, and performance excellence.



Brian Gendron serves as Artistic Director of the Alexandria Choral Society. Since he joined the organization in 2009, the choir has shared the stage with the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra for Mozart's Requiem, Orff's Carmina Burana, Verdi's Messa da Requiem, Holst's The Planets, and the world premiere of Kim Allen Kluge's River Poem. They have presented Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, Brahms' Schicksalslied, Haydn's The Creation, Pärt's Berliner Messe, and Vivaldi's Gloria, and have led Handel's Messiah at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Pro Coro

Alexandria, a chamber choir founded in 2012 as the organization's outreach ensemble, premiered Truman Harris and David Teie's ... again and ever again with Eclipse Chamber Orchestra. They have also collaborated with Virginia Chamber Orchestra and performed at the National Gallery of Art.

With a great passion for choral-orchestral repertoire, Gendron was on the podium for Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Beethoven's *Mass in C*, Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass*, and Mozart's *Coronation Mass*. He prepared Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* for the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra and Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* for the New River Valley Symphony. Gendron conducted the Kansas City Baroque Consortium in a performance of Handel's *Dixit Dominus*, and led a series of concerts featuring the cantatas of J.S. Bach, as well as his *Mass in B minor*.

Previously, Gendron served as Artistic Director of the Grammy Award winning Maryland Boy Choir, who appeared at the Music Center at Strathmore and Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, as well as in concert performances of Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* with Mariinsky Opera and Puccini's *La Bohème* with Baltimore Concert Opera. His previous teaching appointments include Conductor-in-Residence at Hollins University and Director of Choral Activities at Virginia Tech. His university ensembles appeared in Carnegie Hall, Brooklyn Academy of Music's Howard Gilman Opera Theater, and the Washington National Cathedral.

Gendron served as Chorus Master for Opera Roanoke productions of Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, Britten's *Noye's Fludde*, Verdi's *Macbeth* and *Otello*, and Beethoven's *Fidelio*. He also joined the American Opera Theater

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team for Charpentier's *David et Jonathas*, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Blow's *Venus and Adonis*, and a staged production of Handel's *Messiah*. Gendron conducted the world premiere of Sean Pflueger's *Children in the Mist* for Riverbend Opera and was Music Director for Michael Gordon's *Lightning at Our Feet*, which was co-produced by Virginia Tech Theater Arts and New York City's Ridge Theater.

Gendron earned degrees from Central Michigan University and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has presented interest sessions and conducted invitational performances for the American Choral Directors Association, Virginia Music Educators Association, and Virginia Music Teachers Association. Gendron currently leads the choirs at St. James Catholic Church in Falls Church, Virginia.



Washington, DC, native **Angeli Ferrette** has performed across the US and abroad, appearing in concert, oratorio and opera. Ms. Ferrette collaborated with Maestro Robert Schafer in the City Choir of Washington's debut performance as the 2nd lady in Handel's *Solomon. The Washington Post* described her performance as "electric".

She was one of the finalists in The National Association of Negro Musicians (NANM) – Ben Holt Memorial Branch Competition, the Harlem Opera Theatre Competition, the Rochester Oratorio Society

Competition, and semi-finalist in the Classical Singer Competition. She is a recipient of NANM's Award of Artistic Excellence. She is also a recipient of the Life Time Member Award by the Coalition for African Americans in the Performing Arts and currently serves on the board of the NANM – Ben Holt Memorial Branch. She received her education at the University of Northern Iowa and The Peabody Conservatory and is currently pursuing an MBA at Trinity University of Washington, DC.

Acclaimed for his "musical chops and sensibilities" (DC Theatre Scene), bass-baritone **Zachary Burgess** is starting to gain traction in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area as an emerging artist. He has most recently received First Prize in the Vocal Arts DC "Art Song Discovery Competition" just before making his second appearance at the Embassy of Austria this season portraying the role of Dr. Bartolo from Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*. Mr. Burgess made his third appearance with D.C. Public Opera portraying the role of Guglielmo from



Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. He has also covered the role of Prospero in the world premier of *The Tempest* with The Shakespeare Concerts in Boston, immediately after having appeared with the Alexandria Choral Society portraying both Raphael and Adam in *The Creation*.

In the past Mr. Burgess has been an Emerging Artist with the Green Mountain Opera Festival, and performed in the 2014 inaugural season debut of D.C. Public Opera. He is an alumnus of the CoOPERAtive Program, SongFest, as well as the Crescendo Summer Institute where his portrayal of Leporello in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* was recorded and broadcast on regional Hungarian TV. He has also appeared at The Boston Conservatory, Opera del West, and Eastman Opera Theatre. Equally at home with oratorio and concert repertoire, Mr. Burgess holds his Bachelor of Music from the Boston Conservatory and his Master of Music from the Eastman School of Music.



Pianist **Tracy Cowden**'s professional life centers around making music with others, whether in duos, chamber music, or orchestral settings. In her position as associate professor of piano and vocal coach at Virginia Tech, she shares her love of ensemble music through frequent performances with visiting artists and colleagues, and by mentoring undergraduates in solo and collaborative performance.

Ms. Cowden's recent concerts feature a wide range of music and partners, from the music of Jane Austen's

songbook with soprano Julianne Baird, to klezmer-influenced music with clarinetist Alexander Fiterstein and cellist Nick Cannelakis, to American fiddle music with violinist Mark O'Connor. She is the chair of the music program in the School of Performing Arts at Virginia Tech, where she has been honored for her work as a teacher with a Certificate of Teaching Excellence. Also active as a clinician and lecturer, she has presented master classes and workshops on topics related to collaborative music-making and creative programming across the country. She holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music and Western Michigan University.

Erica Ann Sipes, pianist, received her bachelor's and master's degrees in piano performance from the Eastman School of Music. She has been an adjunct faculty member at Radford University and has freelanced as a piano collaborator and coach in Michigan, Idaho, and Virginia. She has also performed with the Roanoke Symphony on occasion and has performed as a piano soloist with the New River Valley Symphony.



In the summer of 2012 Ms. Sipes officially launched her own business as a practice coach, offering coachings, workshops, planning sessions, and practice boot-camps for anyone that could use some help with practicing. She is also a prominent blogger, writing frequently about her views on performing, learning music, and the classical music world in general. Her blog, "Beyond the Notes" can be found at http://ericaannsipes.blogspot.com.

Alexandria Choral Society

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