

The Piccolo Spoleto Festival Presents

Johannes Brahms

Ein deutsches Requiem

(German Requiem)

Scott Bennett, Conductor

St. Gregory
Choir
& Friends
of Grace
Episcopal
Church,
Charleston

Esther
Williams
Soprano

Art
Bumgardner
Baritone



The
Piccolo
Spoleto
Festival
Orchestra

Donald
Portnoy,
Director

Friday, June 4

6.00 pm

Saturday, June 5

2.00 pm

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

in the City of Charleston, South Carolina

Grace Episcopal Church invites you to visit..

Gifts of Grace

Our book and gift shop
will be open before and after today's performance
in the parish hall next door.

The Grace Church Tea Room & Church Mouse Boutique

Saturday, June 5, and Monday–Friday, June 7–11

Delicious luncheon fare and homemade desserts
served 11:30 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

Shop in the Boutique from 10:30 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

All proceeds go to local charities

About the Venue

Founded in 1846, Grace Episcopal Church was consecrated 1848. The Gothic Revival sanctuary designed by Edward Brickell White is rich in religious symbolism, featuring unique stained glass windows from the late 19th and 20th centuries. The building survived a Union artillery shell in 1864 and almost irreparable damage in the 1886 earthquake, as well as a major hurricane in 1911 and Hurricane Hugo in 1989. By 2005, nature and time had left the building with serious structural issues that are being addressed through the “Saving Grace” campaign.

Text

I. Chorus

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

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. Petrus 1:24)

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. (Jakobus 5:7)

Aber des Herrn Wort bleibt in Ewigkeit. (1. Petrus 1:25a)

Die Erlöseten des Herrn werden wiederkommen 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. (Jesaja 35:10)

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. (Matthew 5:4)

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. They that go forth and weep, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them. (Psalm 126:5–6)

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall have comfort.

For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower thereof falleth away. (1 Peter 1:24)

Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and has long patience for it, until he receive the morning and evening rain (James 5:7)

But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. (1 Peter 1:25)

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)

III. Baritone Solo 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 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. (Weisheit 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 84:2.3.5)

V. Soprano Solo and Chorus

Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit; aber ich will euch wiedersehen und euer Herz soll sich freuen, und eure Freude soll niemand von euch nehmen. (Johannes 16:22)

Sehet mich an. Ich habe eine kleine Zeit Mühe und Arbeit gehabt und habe großen Trost funden. (Jesus Sirach 51:35)

Ich will euch trösten, wie einen seine Mutter tröstet. (Jesaja 66:13a)

Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is: that I may know how frail I am.

Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee.

Surely every man walks in a vain show: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heaps up riches, and knows not who shall gather them.

And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee.

(Psalm 39:4–7)

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God and there shall no torment touch them. (Wisdom of Solomon 3:1)

How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, yea, even faints for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh cries out for the living God.

Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will always be praising thee. (Psalm 84:1, 2, 4)

And 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)

Look upon me; ye know that for a little time labor and sorrow were mine, but at the last I have found comfort. (Ecclesiasticus 51:35)

Yea, I will comfort you, as one whom his own mother comforteth. (Isaiah 66:13)

VI. Baritone Solo and Chorus

Denn wir haben hie keine bleibende Statt, sondern die zukünftige suchen wir. (Hebräer 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. Korinther 15:51–52.54b–55)

Herr, du bist würdig zu nehmen Preis und Ehre und Kraft, denn du hast alle Dinge geschaffen, und durch deinen Willen haben sie das Wesen und sind geschaffen. (Offenbarung 4:11)

VII. Chorus

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. (Offenbarung 14:13b)

For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. (Hebrews 13:14)

Behold, I show 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 trump: 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. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? (1 Corinthians 15:31–35, 54–55)

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. (Revelation 4:11)

Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord, from henceforth. Yea, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them. (Revelation 14:13)

Piccolo Spoleto Festival Orchestra

Donald Portnoy, Director

VIOLIN I

Micah Gangwer, Concertmaster
Kevin Rogers
Essena Setaro
Katherine Anne Okesson
Neil Casey

VIOLIN II

Andrea Krafft
Andrew Lynn
Brian Rawls
Sarah Land

VIOLA

Maja Celanovic
Rachel Sanders
Ruth Goldsmith

CELLO

Tzu-Ying Liao
Kristian Ring
Justin Vaughan

BASS

Jonathan Burns
Ed Allman

FLUTE

Nave Graham
Lauren Remmers
Regina Helcher Yost

OBOE

Melanie Pozdol
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Jacob Adelman
Anne Holmi
Brandon Nichols

TRUMPET

John Bryant
Oswaldo Zapata Correa

TROMBONE

Kate Jenkins
Daniel Beckley

TUBA

Mathew Tuk

BASS TROMBONE

Tom Joyce

PERCUSSION

Kenny Kominic

St. Gregory Choir and Friends

Scott Bennett, Conductor

SOPRANO

Inga Agrest
Lynn Barber
Jodi Bennett
Marsha Callahan
Sarah Christian
Mary Moser*
Kitty Rice
Karen Rider
Mary Rudisill
Laura Schroeder
Jean Wade
Esther Williams

ALTO

Mary Beth Berry
Bobbie Bonnet*
Karen Bostick
Mary Elizabeth Canaday
Barbara Christie
Christina Demos*
Julie Fenimore*
Ruth Goldsmith
Kay Hunter
Elsie Kohlenberg
Thu Leshar
Ansley Lucas
Camille Reynolds
Martha Rudisill
Terry Ritchen
Char Stricklin
Anna Lee Turner

TENOR

Wayne French
Chris Greene*
Bob Hill*
Caroline von Nathusius
Brian Scholtens
Alex Schroeder
Stephen Spaulding
Curtis Worthington*

BASS

Art Bumgardner*
Bill Christian
Barry Goldsmith
Lee Kohlenberg
Bob Ramella
Ed Ritchen
Jason Roberson
John Schroeder
Steve Skardon
Sam Stafford
Derek Wade

*Denotes guest singer

The choir and I would like to express our deepest appreciation to Caroline von Nathusius, who agreed to serve as our German coach. We could not have presented this program without her help. Many thanks, Caroline!

Johannes Brahms
Ein Deutsches Requiem
Program Notes


The word “requiem” traditionally refers to the Roman Catholic Mass for the Dead, the opening introit of which begins with the Latin phrase “Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine” (“Grant them eternal rest, O Lord”), the first word of the service lending itself as a title to the whole. Many composers, of course, had written settings of the Requiem, but these were liturgical works, settings of the Latin text of the Catholic service, intended for actual use in a service as a prayer for the soul of the deceased. Brahms, however, conceived the extraordinary idea of creating his own text, carefully selecting Biblical passages that would not correspond to the funeral liturgy of any church, but would nonetheless represent a deeply felt response to the central problem of human existence. And to distinguish his work from the Catholic Mass for the Dead, he called it *Ein deutsches Requiem* (“A German Requiem”).

It is not clear where Brahms got the idea for an original, non-liturgical choral piece of this sort. His close friend and mentor Robert Schumann left a sketchbook in which he outlined works that he intended some day to compose; one of these contained the title “Ein deutsches Requiem,” and Brahms may well have encountered it when helping Clara Schu-


mann after her husband’s death in July 1856 (though years later he could not recall ever having seen it). Still, Schumann’s death had a powerful impact on the younger man, and he began working on a composition to relieve the melancholy that loomed over him at the loss of his friend. Already, about 1854, long before Brahms had any thought of writing a large choral piece, he had worked on music that he intended to make into a symphony in D minor; eventually it became his First Piano Concerto. One theme originally intended for the aborted symphony and finally rejected, ultimately resurfaced as the beginning of the second movement of the *German Requiem*, a movement composed between 1857 and 1859. It became part of a larger plan in the fall of 1861, when Brahms included it as part of a planned cantata in four movements for which he worked out the text. But there it remained, without further progress, for four years. Then, on 2 February 1865, Brahms received in Vienna an urgent telegram from his brother Fritz in Hamburg: “If you want to see our mother once again, come immediately.” He went north immediately, but his mother had suffered a stroke, and by the time Johannes arrived, she was no more. This event haunted and depressed him. Typically he turned to creative work to exorcise the thought of death. Within two months

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he had completed the first, second, and fourth movements of the Requiem. Then Brahms's heavy concert touring schedule – alone and with the violinist Joachim – intervened. It took until August 1866 to complete the remainder of the work, with the exception of the fifth movement.




By September Brahms had played the score for Clara Schumann, who was and remained his life-long confidante and sounding board. She wrote in her diary, "Johannes has been playing me some magnificent movements out of a Requiem of his own and a string quartet in C minor. The Requiem delighted me even more, however. It is full of tender and again daring thoughts. I cannot feel clear as to how it will sound, but in myself it sounds glorious."




The Requiem was originally intended to consist of six movements. The first three were performed in Vienna, with Johannes Herbeck conducting, on 1 December 1867, in a concert devoted to the memory of Schubert. The results were equivocal. Some of the audience heartily approved, but most of the Viennese found it too austere for their taste – especially the third movement, which was actually booed (though the fault was partly that of the timpanist, who played so loudly in the extended fugue that he drowned everyone else out!). Theodor Billroth, the medical man and chamber music player who was rapidly becoming one of Brahms's closest friends, noted that the austerity of Brahms's music,

his avoidance of sensuous audience-pleasing tricks, seemed to have almost an ethical point. "His Requiem is so nobly spiritual and so Protestant-Bachish that it was difficult to make it go down here. The hissing and clapping became really violent; it was a party conflict. In the end the applause conquered.



The entire six-movement work received its first performance under the composer's baton in Bremen Cathedral on Good Friday, 10 April 1868. Here Brahms achieved the first great triumph of his life – and for that reason no doubt the sweetest. But the score was still not finished. Soon after the premiere, he added the fifth movement, with soprano solo, which, as its text indicates, is clearly a tribute to his mother's memory. The Requiem thus stood finished as we know it today; that version was first heard in Leipzig on 18 February 1869, when Carl Reinecke conducted. In this final form the piece quickly attained the rank of a classic; it was heard in Germany twenty times within the first year.



Brahms himself brilliantly assembled the text of his *German Requiem* from Luther's translation of the Bible – from the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha. He may have worked partly from memory, since he sometimes departed from details of Luther's words (the text printed here is the one that Brahms set". He was apparently determined to create a universal text, one that would not follow any

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particular liturgy, and he avoided even any reference to the words “Jesus” or “Christ” (though some English translations of the work undo him in that point). The composer’s intention is indicated by a letter he wrote to the director of music at the Bremen Cathedral, where the work had its premiere, in which he explained that “German” referred only to the language in which the work was sung; he would have gladly called it “A *Human* Requiem.” Brahms is concerned to capture a universal human experience rather than a narrow doctrinal one and to address the living, the bereaved, rather than the dead. The music achieves a symphonic breadth and strength that marks an important turning point in his work, while at the same time underlining the expressive significance of his text. At every point we encounter the classically minded composer, whose power comes not from theatrical display but rather

from carefully balanced control of harmony and rhythm, melody, and tone color.

Steven Ledbetter

(Robert Shaw’s recording of *Ein Deutsches Requiem* with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, 1984)

Brahms’s choral masterpiece truly represents one of those rare poignant emotional experiences – not to mention the staggering stamina and technical prowess required of the singers – that only a musical expression of text could birth. A monumental masterpiece matched only by its depth of expression.

Scott Bennett



Piccolo Spoleto

Piccolo Spoleto

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