

09-10 STYLARUM LEGENDS

DAYTON
PHILHARMONIC
ENGAGE. ENJOY. EMERGE

FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 2010
PROGRAM
"ROMANTICISM UNBOUND"

SCHUMANN
Symphony No. 3,
Rhenish

STRAUSS
*Death &
Transfiguration*



CLASSICAL CONNECTIONS

SCHUMANN & STRAUSS

WELCOME

We've paired composers for Classical Connections several times before: Vaughan Williams and Stravinsky in March 2003; Richard Strauss and William Bolcom in May 2003; Debussy and Ravel in October 2004; Brahms and Schoenberg in September 2005.

Time for another two-headed program. Strauss is back, this time paired with Robert Schumann. We'll use this combination of very different composers to illuminate the breadth of 19th century German romanticism. Schumann, a member of the first post-Beethoven generation, represents the beginning of the movement, its links to Beethoven and the Classical Style, and its emphasis on personal communication of intimate feelings. Strauss, who wrote

romantic-style music into the middle of the 20th century, represents its end, its foreshadowing of modernism, and its emphasis on large-scale statements of grand philosophical ideas.

Contrasting portraits? You bet! Looking at Schumann and Strauss together lets us explore the diverse and sometimes contradictory strains of the Romantic Style. This yields a more complete picture of romanticism in music than would a look at either composer in isolation. It also lets us enjoy some of the

most beautiful, most poetic, most rousing, and most inspiring music ever written.

And is it pure chance that our concert is just three months shy of the Schumann bicentennial? Not at all. Happy 200th birthday Robert!

Neal Gittleman
Music Director, Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra



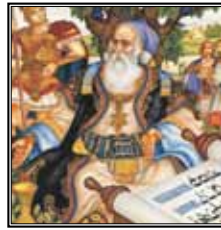


PORTRAITS
ROBERT SCHUMANN
 - & -
RICHARD STRAUSS
 - or -
**Are You an Innie
 or an Outie?**

When did romantic music start? The earliest rumblings of romanticism in Western classical music go back to 1806, the year of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Schubert was writing songs in a romantic vein by 1815. A case can be made that Beethoven's Ninth (1827) was the first romantic symphony. And from 1830 (the year of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*) there was no doubt that the Classical Style of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven had been supplanted by something new and very different.

Identifying the end of the Romantic Era is harder. Something new was afoot as early as 1895 (the year of Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*). Stravinsky's 1913

Rite of Spring was meant to kill off romanticism for good. But Richard Strauss kept writing in the Romantic Style into the middle of the mid-20th century and one can even argue (I've argued myself) that romanticism isn't entirely dead even today, in the age of Philip Glass, Elliott Carter, Prince, Kanye West and Britney Spears.



RABBI HILLEL

The great Jewish rabbi Hillel is said to have summarized the Torah this way: "Love your neighbor as yourself. The rest is commentary." Here's a Hillel-style summary of 19th century romanticism: "Love, nature, art, emotion. The rest is commentary."



"WANDERER ABOVE THE SEA OF FOG" PAINTING BY CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH EXPRESSES THE ROMANTIC DICHOTOMY OF MASTERY OVER A LANDSCAPE AND, YET, THE INSIGNIFICANCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL WITHIN IT

Romantics believed that art exists to communicate emotional states of being. This is the most fundamental distinction between the classical and romantic esthetics. Classicists saw the world as a rational place, a perfect machine set into motion by a divine

watchmaker, with intricate, machine-like perfection as the highest manifestation of beauty. Romantics took a radically different view. They saw the world as a mystical place, a world of strange, powerful, irrational forces, with surrender to the mystery of those forces as the highest manifestation of beauty.



MOZART (1756-1791) CLASSICAL ERA EXEMPLAR

Classical-Style music was often emotional, but emotion was not the music's essence. It was a by-product of the perfect machine-like workings of the musical tones. Romantic-Style music was the opposite. It was all about emotion. The perfectly balanced rules of melody, harmony, and counterpoint that defined the Classical Style no longer mattered. All that mattered was moving the performer and listener and evoking in them the emotions that drove the composer to write in the first place.

Though all romantics shared the love/nature/art/emotion quartet, these tenets manifested themselves differently in each composer. I divide the romantics into introverts and extroverts (the "innies" and "outies" of this essay's title). Robert Schumann and Richard Strauss make such a fascinating pair for our March concert because in them we have the perfect innie (Schumann) matched with the perfect outie (Strauss).



ROBERT SCHUMANN, VIENNA, MARCH 1839

Schumann addresses the listener in an intimate, private language. It's one-on-one communication. His quintessential musical form is the song: a short, simple piece of music in which a single person (the singer) communicates with a single listener. The emotional content of the music is tied up in the connection between the singer's melody, the poetry of the text, and subtle support and commentary from the piano accompaniment. Schumann's music is scaled to an intimate room, where a small circle of like-minded friends hear the composer's music and share the composer's emotions.



RICHARD STRAUSS IN LONDON, 1903

Strauss addresses the listener in an expansive, public language. It's communication from one (the composer) to the many (the concert hall audience). His quintessential musical forms are the symphonic-poem — a large-scale work that translates poetic imagery into sound — and the opera — a large-scale work that communicates human emotion through a complex blend of singing, instrumental music, drama, and stagecraft. Strauss's music is scaled for the vast spaces of the concert hall and the opera house, where a large, varied audience comes to experience something grand and extravagant.



COLOGNE CATHEDRAL

Schumann's Third Symphony is a large-scale work for the concert hall. But within the symphonic form Schumann still gravitates towards an intimate mode of address. His inspiration came from a personal mystical experience as Schumann witnessed a solemn religious rite in Cologne Cathedral in 1845. The large outer movements are grand musical statements with a strong resemblance to the Beethoven of the Third and Fifth Symphonies, straddling the stylistic divide

between classical and romantic. The smaller-scale inner movements — an easy-going peasant dance and a sweet song-like intermezzo — are pure romanticism, innie style.



WHAT'S BEYOND THE DOORS OF PERCEPTION?
ROMANTIC MUSIC ISN'T AFRAID TO LOOK.

Death and Transfiguration was the second of Strauss's six symphonic poems, a musical form that Franz Liszt invented in 1847 to merge the Beethovenian symphony with descriptive romantic poetry. His inspiration may have come from a bout of illness in 1888. *Death and Transfiguration* tells the story of a sick man in his death throes, who revisits memories from his life, struggles against his illness, dies, then undergoes a mystical post-mortem transfiguration that unites his soul with the universe.

The Schumann-innie/Strauss-outie conceit is a gross simplification. Schumann was capable of grand theatrical effects and Strauss wrote intimate songs. But one was a reserved introvert, the other a bossy extrovert. Each composer's music reflects its author's character. But each composer's music is thoroughly romantic.

And absolutely beautiful.

Domestic Bliss

For all their differences, Robert Schumann and Richard Strauss share one fascinating attribute. Each composer wove the story of his love life into his music.

Schumann's story is more dramatic. Schumann was



18 when he met 11-year-old pianist Clara Wieck, the daughter of his piano teacher. As Clara grew older, Robert became smitten with his fellow student. Clara's father tried to block the lovers, who eventually won the right to wed only after a lengthy, messy court case that granted Clara the right to marry

without her father's consent.

Strauss met his future wife, Pauline de Anha, when she was an aspiring opera singer in Munich. They met, he began coaching her and helping develop her career, and five years later they married. They remained professional and personal partners until his death in 1949.

Clara Wieck (and later, Clara Schumann) appears in Schumann's music in a series of musical ciphers based on her name. Schumann filled his music with five-note melodic figures that C-L-A-R-A could read as hidden love messages. During the years of their secret romance, Schumann would often compose new solo piano pieces for her, filled with Clara-motifs. She would play those pieces for her father in her lessons — so the "love notes" had to be well hidden!

Strauss worked his life with Pauline into his music on several occasions: First, in the 1898 symphonic poem *Ein Heldenleben (A Hero's Life)*, where Pauline, personified by a solo violin, appears as the hero's partner — sometimes shrill, sometimes mercurial, but always loved. She



appeared again five years later in *Sinfonia Domestica*, an over-the-top four-movement symphony portraying a day in the Strauss household. Finally, in 1924, Strauss built his opera *Intermezzo*

around the tale of a rough patch in their marriage. The sets were even designed to look like the interior of the Strauss home! Somehow, Pauline put up with all this public-ization of their private lives, and we got some great music in the bargain.

They say that all politics is local. With Schumann and Strauss, I guess all music is personal!

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ROBERT SCHUMANN ~ RICHARD STRAUSS *Lives & Times*

- 1810 -

June 8, Schumann is born in Zwickhau, Saxony, to author August Schumann and amateur singer Johanne Schumann (née Schnabel).

- 1817 -

Schumann's first music lessons.

- 1840 -

Schumann wins a court case against his piano teacher Friederich Wieck, allowing him to marry Wieck's daughter Clara, seven years his junior.

- 1850 -

Schumann composes *Symphony No. 3, Rhenish*.

- 1854 -

Schumann attempts suicide and is voluntarily hospitalized in an asylum. He is never released.

- 1864 -

June 11, Strauss born in Munich to horn virtuoso Franz Joseph Strauss and Josephine Pschorr Strauss, daughter of a wealthy beer baron.

- 1865 -

July 29, Schumann dies of starvation (perhaps self-inflicted) and tertiary syphilis.

- 1881 -

Strauss writes first mature work, a *Wind Serenade*.

- 1885 -

Strauss gets a job at the Meiningen Opera, the start of a long career as an opera conductor.

- 1889 -

Strauss completes *Death and Transfiguration*.

- 1909 -

Strauss composes *Der Rosenkavalier*, one of the most popular operas of the 20th century.

- 1949 -

September 8, Strauss dies of heart disease in Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

- 1810 -

Krupp arms factory opens in Essen, Germany. Simón Bolívar participates in Venezuelan revolt against Spain.

- 1817 -

Construction begins on Erie Canal.

- 1840 -

Unification of Upper and Lower Canada. Birth of Thomas Hardy. Construction begins on Houses of Parliament in London.

- 1850 -

R. W. Bunsen produces his gas burner.

- 1854 -

Gadsden Purchase adds Arizona and New Mexico to U.S. Henry David Thoreau writes *Walden*.

- 1864 -

Gen. Sherman's march through Georgia. Louis Pasteur invents pasteurization. Tolstoy begins writing *War and Peace*.

- 1865 -

End of U.S. Civil War. Assassination of Abraham Lincoln. Gregor Mendel states laws of heredity.

- 1881 -

Monet paints *Sunshine and Snow*.

- 1885 -

First hydroelectric power generated at Niagara Falls. John Fox introduces golf to the U.S.

- 1889 -

First Ascot Gold Cup horse race.

- 1909 -

William Howard Taft becomes 27th U.S. President. Robert Peary reaches the North Pole.

- 1949 -

Mao Zedong founds Peoples Republic of China. William Faulkner wins Nobel Prize for Literature.



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