2012-2013 Season
La Jolla Symphony & Chorus
Mandeville Auditorium
December 8-9, 2012

STEVEN SCHICK
Music Director

DAVID CHASE
Choral Director
DARK / BRIGHT
Saturday, December 8, 2012, 7:30pm | Sunday, December 9, 2012, 2:00pm
Mandeville Auditorium, UCSD

Steven Schick conducting

HANDEL
Entrance of the Queen of Sheba from Solomon

BRAHMS
Nänie, Opus 82

SCHOENBERG
Five Pieces for Orchestra, Opus 16
Premonitions
Yesteryears
Summer Morning by a Lake (Colors)
Peripetia
The Obligatory Recitative

INTERMISSION

DALLAPICCOLA
Piccola musica notturna

BRAHMS
Triumphlied, Opus 55
Halleluja! Heil und Preis
Lobet unsren Gott, alle seine Knechte
Und ich sahe den Himmel aufgetan

Anthony Whitson-Martini, baritone

Unauthorized flash photography and audio/video recording are prohibited during this performance.
No texting or cell phone use of any kind allowed.

We gratefully acknowledge our underwriters for this concert
Michael & Nancy Kaehr
FROM THE CONDUCTOR

As Marvin Gaye said, "believe half of what you see and none of what you hear." I am not convinced that the smoothest voice in Motown was really making a comment on the relative perceptual acuity of eyes over ears, but I think it's fair to say that a contemporary psyche usually privileges visual over auditory stimulus. And I think there is an argument to be made that sight has become steadily more important over the past few centuries. All is not lost for the art of listening, however. Most emotional contact comes through the ears (a mother sings to her squalling child; she does not send a reassuring text message!) And ultimately evolution has left our ears wide open — R. Murray Shaffer and others have pointed out that we humans do not have "earlids."

But often the eyes do seem to have it, even in the world of music. In fact much of the language we use to describe sound has been imported from the world of sight. We speak of musical color, of tone painting, of tempos that are brilliant, or of harmonies that are dusky. Beethoven was a composer of the "enlightenment." Pérotin was from the "dark ages." Composers like Olivier Messiaen and Alexander Scriabin explicitly refer to specific colors in their scores. And in the first years of the 21st century it was hard to find a piece of new music premiered in Brooklyn that did not feature a seemingly obligatory video.

This concert, "Dark/Bright," is our comment on the role of the eyes in music. In one way it is a simple juxtaposition of works featuring darker instrumental tones with those featuring brilliant colors. In this scheme Brahms' well-named Triumphlied and Handel's lively Entrance of the Queen of Sheba are distinctly the latter while his Nânie and Luigi Dallapiccola's Una Piccola Musica Notturna (A Little Night Music) comprise the former. Arnold Schoenberg's classic study of instrumental color — his Five Pieces for Orchestra — is all of the above. This work is a kaleidoscopic portrayal of contrasting colors of all hues. At the very center is "Farben" (Colors), a movement of such remarkable connection to the visual world that the melodies threading through this music are not made of changing notes, but rather of changing instrumental colors. Schoenberg called this strategy "Klangfarbenmelodie" (tone color melody), and it became a reliable template for late 20th-century composers whose music relied heavily on strategies imported from the visual arts from Morton Feldman to John Luther Adams.

We'll also connect this concert to our season-long artsian inspiration, Wallace Stegner's novel "Angle of Repose." One of the sad lessons of this novel is that while 19th-century Americans looked to the outdoors to find light and color, their early 21st-century cousins stay inside for the same reason. A century and a half ago many indoor spaces were dimly lit, walls were often coated with layers of soot from fires and cooking, and judging by contemporary exhibitions of period furniture and quilting the color palette of the 19th century was sophisticated but muted by today's...
standards. Yet outdoors there were wildflowers, sunsets, lightning storms, insects, and rainbows. Those natural colors still exist today, but how can they compete with plasma screens and track lighting? And judging by the number of people I see glued to their smartphones on my regular walks through Torrey Pines State Park, it seems we’re pretty keen on exporting the brightness of our artificially lit indoor life to the outdoors. Never mind the long-term damage we’re doing to our retinas, a technology that makes a spring flower or dewy cactus look dull has got a lot to atone for!

Increasingly we’ll need art to remind us of a pre-technological world of color and light. In this way both Stegner’s novel and the music we will hear today treat dark and bright as qualities of memory. And like real memory—that which is rich and well masticated by use—the colors in these works are sophisticated, surprising, and sometimes contradictory. From its title alone we’d expect the Dallapiccola to be a dark and somber piece, but instead we find a transparent beauty that reminds us more of Mozart’s “night music” than of Bartók’s. And the Brahms Triumphlied is bright all right, but the insistence of its celebratory tone seems almost a little manic, overly bright as it were. But I don’t see these small contradictions as problems. Rather they are frictions that reveal the complexity of the auditory world.

For concrete imagery nothing beats the visual: it is immediate, persuasive, and categorical. We use our eyes to connect us to things. But to connect ourselves to other people and to an emotional world of shades and shadows; the luminous and the obscure, we have sound and ultimately music. Marvin Gaye was right about at least one important thing. When there’s deep emotion at play, you’re more likely to hear it through the grapevine than see it on the Internet.

A Special Thanks to
Robert Whitley
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STEVEN SCHICK conductor

For more than 30 years Steven Schick has championed contemporary music as a percussionist and teacher by commissioning and premiering more than 100 new works. Schick is a professor of music at the University of California, San Diego and in 2008 was awarded the title of Distinguished Professor by the UCSD Academic Senate.

Schick was one of the original members and percussionist of the Bang on a Can All-Stars of New York City (1992-2002). He has served as artistic director of the Centre International de Percussion de Genève in Geneva, Switzerland, and as consulting artist in percussion at the Manhattan School of Music. Schick is founder and artistic director of the acclaimed percussion group, red fish blue fish, a UCSD ensemble composed of his graduate percussion students that performs regularly throughout San Diego and has toured internationally. He also is founding artistic director (June 2009) of “Roots & Rhizomes”—an annual international course for percussionists hosted by the Banff Center for the Arts in Canada.

As a percussion soloist, Schick has appeared in Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, The Royal Albert Hall (London), Centre Pompidou (Paris), The Sydney Opera House and Disney Hall among many other national and international venues.

Schick is a frequent guest conductor with the International Contemporary Ensemble (Chicago and New York City), and in 2011 he was appointed artistic director and conductor of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. Schick has been music director and conductor of the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus since 2007.
PROGRAM NOTES by Eric Bromberger

ENTRANCE OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA FROM SOLOMON

GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL

Born February 23, 1685, Halle
Died April 14, 1759, London

Handel had hoped to make a career as an opera composer in London, but it was not to be. Changing popular tastes cut seriously into the audience for the sort of Italian opera seria Handel wrote, and in 1737 the composer suffered a debilitating stroke. When he was able to resume work, he turned to the oratorio and infused that old form with vitality and new dramatic possibilities. His oratorio Messiah (1742) remains his most famous, but through the decade of the 1740s he produced a steady process of great oratorios, including Samson, Semele, Belshazzar, Judas Maccabeus, Joshua, and Solomon.

Solomon, written in the spring of 1748, was premiered in London on March 17, 1749. Its three acts tell of various incidents in Solomon's life, the third being a depiction of the visit of the Queen of Sheba to his court. He shows her his temple and palace and puts on a series of entertainments, while she in turn gives him gifts and pays tribute to his accomplishments as the oratorio ends triumphantly.

The three-minute Sinfonia that introduces the third act has become famous under the title Entrance of the Queen of Sheba, a title that did not originate with Handel. In the oratorio this music functions simply as an overture—its energy and good spirits provide the lead-in for the Queen of Sheba's entrance and first aria, "From Arabia's spicy shores." On its own, however, the Sinfonia enjoys a well-deserved life in the concert hall, where it has become a popular opening work. Handel alternates two themes: a bustling idea for strings built on a steady patter of sixteenth-notes and a slightly-syncopated second idea introduced by a pair of oboes. So infectious is the energetic main theme that it remains to charm the memory long after the music itself has ended.

NÄNIE, OPUS 82

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Born May 7, 1833, Hamburg
Died April 3, 1897, Vienna

In the summer of 1867 Brahms met the Austrian painter Anselm Feuerbach, and the two became friends. The handsome, flamboyant Feuerbach and the increasingly-rotund Brahms made a strange pair, and it was not an untroubled relationship (none of Brahms' friendships was easy). But Brahms admired the classical subjects and grand scale of Feuerbach's paintings, and the two—so different in many ways—found that they had much in common. The painter actually talked the normally-reluctant composer into sitting for a portrait, but they quarreled in the course of those sittings, and Feuerbach reportedly turned the portrait to the wall and refused to continue with it. Nevertheless, when Feuerbach—reeling from critical attacks and the effects of a nervous breakdown—died suddenly in Venice at age fifty in January 1880, Brahms felt the loss and resolved to write a piece in his memory.

But it took an effort to find a proper text, and Brahms considered many different texts before settling on Schiller's Nänie. A noenia (Latin), a type of lament sung by parents on the death of a child, goes back to Roman times. Schiller appropriates the title and general thrust of the form, but his brief poem speaks specifically to the transience of beauty and—by extension—of all living things: the first line of the poem translates "Even Beauty must die!" Schiller's many references to classical figures in Nänie—all of whom died young—doubtless made the poem seem all the more right to Brahms for a memorial to a painter
of classical subjects. He began work on Nänie during the summer of 1880, but Schiller's poem—particularly its meter—gave him problems. In a letter to his friend Theodor Billroth, Brahms noted: "Incidentally, if the piece does not please you, reflect upon the fact that hexameter makes a rhythm which is quite difficult for a musician." Brahms completed the score the following summer at Pressbaum, just as he was finishing work on his Second Piano Concerto.

Brahms' lament for Feuerbach does not agonize. Instead, the tone is almost consoling—the music opens calmly with a long oboe solo that Brahms marks dolce espressivo. This beautifully-shaded solo, flickering between major and minor keys, establishes the mood for the entire piece as it leads directly to the entrance of the chorus. Brahms' choral writing in Nänie has often been remarked: the different voices enter in turn, yet these entrances form neither a fugue nor a canon (as some have described it). Instead, the overlapping choral parts create a complex—and very beautiful—web of polyphonic sound. The opening section recalls the deaths of youths from antiquity—Eurydice, Adonis, Achilles—and reaches a climax at the description of the gates of Troy.

Brahms shifts to F-sharp major for the middle section, beginning "Aber sie steigt" (curiously for a lament, Nänie remains in major keys throughout). This central section, in which Brahms uses the harp to great effect, deals largely with the lament itself. In the final section Brahms returns to the music from the opening, but the return is not literal and is somewhat abbreviated. Nänie reaches what might be called its "moral" on the lines beginning "Auch ein Klaglied": "Even to be an elegy in the mouth of the beloved is glorious." At the end, Brahms makes a telling adjustment of the text. He does not want to end with Schiller's final line, with its frightening descent into the underworld, so he circles back to reaffirm the importance of being remembered in a song of lament and brings Nänie to a consoling close in D major on the word "herrlich."

Brahms himself conducted the premiere of Nänie, which took place in Zurich on December 6, 1881. When the score was published the following year, Brahms dedicated it to Feuerbach's stepmother. It was exactly the right gesture for a noenia, and she was deeply grateful.
FIVE PIECES FOR ORCHESTRA, OPUS 16

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG
Born September 13, 1874, Vienna
Died July 13, 1951, Los Angeles

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Schoenberg moved away from traditional tonality and toward a new harmonic language based on what he called "the emancipation of dissonance," in which no single note (or key) would be granted more importance than another. His Five Pieces for Orchestra, composed in the summer of 1909, are his first atonal works for orchestra: they have no key signatures, nor any implied "home" keys. These five brief movements may be thought of as "mood" pieces—each generates a particular atmosphere, which Schoenberg suggests with slightly coy titles for the movements. Throughout, the emphasis is on instrumental color; melodies tend to be fragmentary, with the line leaping from section to section and acquiring different colors as it proceeds. Taking note of the fragmented melodic line, the importance of individual voices, and the changing colors of this music, one critic has suggested that they require "an orchestra of soloists."

The evocative (but somewhat cryptic) titles for the movements may be taken as suggestions only—Schoenberg did not intend this as program music. The violent Premonitions contrasts two brief motifs: a quick figure for lower strings heard immediately and a swirling clarinet figure. These two theme-fragments are manipulated in many different ways over a powerful ostinato from the strings. By contrast, Yesteryears seems gentle, even nostalgic. It is based on the solo cello's opening figure, which is then transformed as it passes through the orchestra. Schoenberg called the third movement Summer Morning by a Lake but later made a parenthetical addition—(Colors). He told his students that this almost-static music depicts the concentric rings made by tossing stones into a still lake. The music consists of one chord that repeats constantly, changing colors and taking on a continually-evolving character as it proceeds. In the score, Schoenberg directs the conductor: "The change of chords in this piece has to be executed with the greatest subtlety, avoiding accentuation of entering instruments, so that only the difference in color becomes noticeable." This movement is one of the earliest examples of Klangfarbenmelodie ("tone color melody"), in which shifting instrumental color becomes more important than shifting pitch; it is a concept that Schoenberg's student Anton Webern would explore much more fully in his music. Schoenberg marked the fourth movement Perpetua, a term from Greek drama suggesting a sudden reversal of fortune, and this movement, the briefest of the five, is based on sharp contrasts. Schoenberg called the last movement The Obligatory Recitative, but no one has the slightest idea what that means. It is in a three-beat meter that seems to evoke the rhythms of Viennese dances, but the music—and its manipulation of thematic fragments—swirls violently around that waltz-rhythm.

The Five Pieces for Orchestra exist in several versions: Schoenberg's original version of 1909 for huge orchestra, his re-scoring for chamber orchestra made in 1919 for a performance at his Society for Private Performances in Vienna, and a revision of the original version for normal-sized symphony orchestra, made in 1949 while he was living in Los Angeles. At these concerts, the 1949 edition is performed.

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Any discussion of this music must begin with its title. *Piccola musica notturna* is the Italian translation of *Eine kleine Nachtmusik,* and in English Mozart’s title has been variously rendered as *A Little Serenade* or more literally *A Little Night-Music.* All of these titles come into play as we listen to this music.

Dallapiccola composed it in 1954 on a commission from the conductor Hermann Scherchen, taking his inspiration from the poem *Noche de verano* (“Summer Night”) by the Spanish poet Manuel Machado (1874-1947). In that brief poem, the speaker contemplates an empty town square on a silent summer night. Around him, the acacias and houses and towers are lit by the bright moon, which casts black shadows on the sand of the square. The narrator walks across that silent square, feeling “like a phantom” in the darkness.

And so the brief *Piccola musica notturna* might be described as a nocturne for orchestra, a mood-piece that tries to capture the atmosphere of Machado’s poem. It does that very successfully — this has become one of Dallapiccola’s most-frequently performed and recorded compositions, and audiences respond to its sultry, lonely atmosphere. That popularity becomes all the more surprising when one realizes that this is a twelve-tone composition. As a young man, Dallapiccola had been drawn to the serial techniques of Schoenberg and his followers, and he had attempted to adopt their methods as his own. But another powerful influence on the young man had been Debussy, whose evanescent harmonies and haunting sounds had so overpowered the young Dallapiccola that he stopped composing for several years while he tried to absorb the influence of the French composer fully. Both these influences can be felt in *Piccola musica notturna.*

As in any nocturne, the atmosphere here is subdued. Dallapiccola’s marking is “Very tranquil, but without dragging,” and this music moves slowly but steadily into the night. Dallapiccola’s use of serial techniques is somewhat free — while he employs tone-rows, his concern is to maintain a lyrical line, and he allows himself some repetition of notes within his rows. Textures are generally lean here. There are occasional tutti outbursts, but the writing for orchestra is often soloistic, and it comes as no surprise to learn that Dallapiccola has prepared a chamber version of this piece. Listeners might best approach this music by listening not for its tone-rows but for Dallapiccola’s carefully-achieved sense of an almost haunted atmosphere, one in which the listener might well feel himself a “phantom” as he crosses the moonlit square on a silent summer night.
Nänie
By Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805)

Even Beauty must die; that which
overcomes men and gods

Does not touch the iron breast of
the Stygian Zeus.¹

Only once did love soften the ruler
of shadows.

And then, at the very threshold,
he sternly called back his gift.²

Aphrodite could not staunch the wound
of the beautiful youth

which the boar savagely ripped in
his delicate body.³

Nor could the immortal mother
save the godlike hero,

when he, falling at the Scaean gate,
fulfilled his destiny.⁴

But she ascends from the sea with
all the daughters of Nereus.⁵

and raises the lament for her

glorified son.

Behold, the gods weep,
and all the goddesses, too.

that Beauty must pass away,
that the Perfect must die.

To be even a song of lamentation in the
mouth of the beloved is splendid.

for the Common goes down
to Orcus unsung.

Auch das Schöne muss sterben!
Das Menschen und Götter bezwinget.

Nicht die ehere Brüst ruhrt es
des stygischen Zeus.

Einmal nur erweichte die Liebe
den Schattenbeherrscher,

Und an der Schwelle noch, streng,
rief er zurück sein Geschenk.

Nicht stillt Aphrodite dem schönen
Knaben die Wunde,

Die in den zierlichen Leib grausam
der Eber geritzt.

Nicht errettet den göttlichen Held
die unsterbliche Mutter,

Wenn er, am skäischen Tor fallend,
sein Schicksal erfüllt.

Aber sie steigt aus dem Meer mit
allen Töchtern des Nereus,

Und die Klage hebt an um den

verherrlichten Sohn.

Siehe da weinen die Götter,
es weinen die Göttinnen alle,

Dass das Schöne vergeht,
dass das Vollkommene stirbt.

Auch ein Klagelied zu sein im Mund
der Geliebten, ist herrlich,

Denn das Germeine geht klanglos
zum Orkus hinab.

¹ Hades, the ruler of the Underworld, beyond the River Styx.
² Orpheus was allowed to leave the Underworld with his beloved wife Eurydice,
   but when he looked back at her once before reaching the surface, he lost her again forever.
³ Adonis, loved by Aphrodite, found his death in a boar hunt.
⁴ Achilles, son of the sea-nymph Thetis, who died at the hands of Paris before the gates of Troy.
⁵ The father of Thetis and the other sea-nymphs.
Triumphlied (Song of Triumph)
From The Revelation of St. John 19
By Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

No. 1
Alleluia! Salvation and glory,
honour and power
unto the Lord our God,
for true and righteous
are his judgements.

No. 2
Praise our God, all ye his servants,
and ye that fear him,
both small and great.
Alleluia! For the Lord God
omnipotent reigneth.
Let us be glad and rejoice,
and give honour to him.

No. 3
And I saw heaven opened,
and behold, a white horse;
and he that sat upon him was called
Faithful and True,
and in righteousness he doth
judge and make war.
And he treadeth the winepress
of the fierceness and wrath
of Almighty God!
And he has on his vesture
and on his thigh
a name written:
King of Kings,
and Lord of Lords.
Alleluia, Amen!

Nr. 1
Halleluja! Heil und Preis,
Ehre und Kraft
sei Gott unserem Herrn,
denn wahrhaftig und gerecht
sind seine Gerichte.

Nr. 2
Lobet unsern Gott, alle seine Knechte,
und die ihn fürchten,
beide Kleine und Grosse.
Halleluja! Denn der allmächtige Gott
hat das Reich eingenommen.
Lasst uns freuen und fröhlich sein,
und ihm die Ehre geben.

Nr. 3
Und ich sahe den Himmel aufgethan;
und siehe, ein weisses Pferd,
und der darauf sass, hiess
Treu und Wahrhaftig,
und richtet und streitet
mit Gerechtigkeit.
Und er tritt die Kelter des Weins
des grimmigen Zorns
des allmächtigen Gottes!
Und hat einen Namen geschrieben
auf seinem Kleide,
und auf seiner Hüfte, also:
ein König aller Könige,
und ein Herr aller Herrn.
Halleluja, Amen!
TRIUMPHLIED, OPUS 55

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Brahms greeted the Franco-Prussian War and Bismarck's unification of Germany with an enthusiasm that bordered on rapture. For Brahms and many others, the new German nation symbolized stability, strength, and culture after the ravages of the French Revolution, the Reign of Terror, the Napoleonic Wars, and the decline of the Holy Roman Empire. When war broke out in 1870, the composer—then 37—considered enlisting in the Prussian army, but wisely gave up that idea. Throughout his life, however, Brahms idolized Bismarck: on the wall of his apartment in Vienna, he kept a bas-relief of the German chancellor, crowned with laurel.

In the heady months after the German victory, Brahms composed a brief movement for double chorus and orchestra that he titled Triumphlied. Drawing his text from Chapter 19 of the Book of Revelation and editing it carefully, he composed this "Song of Triumph" during the winter of 1870-71, and it was performed in Bremen on April 7, 1871, on a concert given in commemoration of the war dead. That concert included a performance of A German Requiem, and in that context this ebullient movement seemed a dramatic counterweight to the contemplative Requiem. But Brahms was not done with this music, and during the summer of 1871 he completed it by adding two more movements. The new work became a song of praise and triumph that, by quoting from the Bible, celebrated the Prussian military victory and the creation of the new German nation.

Brahms had a specific model for this music, Handel's Dettingen Te Deum, composed to celebrate another military victory over the French, this time at the hands of British troops in 1743. The Viennese composers (Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, and others) had been astonished by Handel's works for chorus and orchestra, with their grand sonorities, contrapuntal imagination, and interweaving of solo and choral parts, and in Triumphlied Brahms set out to write the same sort of musical celebration that Handel had composed over a century earlier. Brahms' use of double chorus spreads the vocal line over eight parts, and he contrasts the sound of these choruses with a baritone soloist in the final movement. Combined with the huge orchestra, these forces make some of the grandest sounds Brahms ever created, and it is no surprise that Triumphlied was an instant success, particularly in German-speaking countries.

Brahms' marking for the first movement is "lively and solemnly," and this D-major setting rings out grandly on brass fanfares and the rhythm of the word "Hallelujah!" Brahms drew his text here from Revelations 19:1-2, which celebrates the victory over Babylon, but he cut the line that follows: "he has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication." That line is an oblique but unmistakable reference to France, a country Brahms despised, and while he may have excised that line, Brahms composed music here that matched those words exactly (Brahms' biographers note that the composer took particular delight in pointing this out to his friends).

ANTHONY WHITSON-MARTINI baritone

Anthony Whitson-Martini is already distinguishing himself as a "young and talented baritone" who is "easy on the eyes and the ears." Mr. Whitson-Martini has performed as Baron Zeta (Die Lustige Witwe), Nardo (La finta giardiniera), Papageno (Die Zauberflöte scenes); Patrick (Mame) with San Diego Lyric Opera; and as a Chorister with San Diego Opera (Moby Dick). He has received multiple prestigious awards from the Carmel Vocal Competition (2nd Place), Mondavi Vocal Competition (Finalist), and the LJS&C Young Artists Competition (Most Promising). He has also performed as a soloist with Point Loma Choral Union (Messiah, Missa Criolla, & Chichester Psalms), is the soloist at the Christian Science Church, Rancho Bernardo, and is looking forward to performing as a soloist in Handel's Messiah with the La Jolla Symphony Chorus at St. Elizabeth Seton Church in December. Mr. Whitson-Martini is finishing his B.A. in Music at Point Loma Nazarene University.
Brahms moves to G major at the noble beginning of the second movement, another hymn of praise, but the music erupts on the sound of drums and trumpet fanfares in the central “Hallelujah” in D major. The tempo slows for the quiet conclusion, sung by antiphonal choruses. The final movement returns to the key and festive manner of the first. Brahms’ marking is once again Lebhaft (“lively”), and the image here of the heroic rider on a white horse symbolizes the vision of a heroic future that Brahms foresaw. With its dotted rhythms, canonic writing, grand “Hallelujahs,” and joyous outpourings, this movement seems particularly close to the spirit of Handel, and it drives to a majestic close on a final resounding “Hallelujah.”

Triumphlied was one of Brahms’ most popular works during his lifetime, but by the time of World War I it had passed out of public consciousness (and out of concert halls), and it is seldom performed today. This music, which celebrates the creation of a new nation and its leaders, offers some of Brahms’ most powerful writing for chorus and orchestra. In its grandeur, festive tone, public character, and skillful counterpoint, Triumphlied is unlike anything else he ever wrote.