many summer programs, including the Marrowstone Music Festival in Washington state and the Encore Summer Music Program in Pennsylvania.

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THE UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY

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Jonathan Pasternack, *assistant conductor*

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Mary Theodore
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Young Jae Lee
Vilde Aaslid
Janet Utterback
Subir Baksi
Jonathan Aldrich
Tamara Tarbet
Robin Proebsting

VIOLIN II
Yu-Ling Cheng
Nicolas Addington
Karen Halliburton
Mio Yabuki
Ashley Bacon
Robin Enders
Meredith Vaughan

VIOLA
Lisa Killinger
Kerrick Sasaki
Colin Todd
Brianna Atwell
Alexis Schultz
Gabe Su
Mary Carson
Sharon Olsen

VIOLONCELLO
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Tricia Barry
Chia-chuan Juan
Jacob Humphrey
Danna Birdsall
Joshua Mikus-Mahoney

VIOLONCELLO (cont.)
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Audrey Story
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Erin Lally
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Ashley Cragun
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ENGLISH HORN
Sarah Bahauddin

CLARINET
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Ben Fowler

BASS CLARINET
Mark Oesterle

BASSOON
Tracy Bergemann
Bryson Conley

FRENCH HORN
Aaron Beck
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TRUMPET
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Josh Pfeiffer
Byron Rice
Nick Roumanada
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TROMBONE
Aaron Riggio
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BASS TROMBONE
Robert Hendrickson

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Kevin Pih

TIMPANI
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PERCUSSION
Everett Blindheim
Dan Brecht-Haddad
Douglas Maiwurm

HARP
Christie Isler

School of Music University of Washington

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University of Washington
THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

presents

THE UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY

Peter Erös, *conductor*

with Faculty Guest Artist

Helen Callus, *viola*

February 17, 2000 8:00 PM Meany Theater

PROGRAM

CD-13,637

[1] Siegfried Idyll........(19:24)........ RICHARD WAGNER
(1813-1883)

[2] Concerto for Viola and Orchestra........(22:00) BÉLA BARTÓK
(1881-1945)
I. Moderato: lento parlando
II. Adagio religioso; allegretto
III. Allegro vivace

INTERMISSION

CD-13,638

Symphony in d minor....(40:30)........CÉSAR FRANCK
(1822-1890)
[1] *I. Lento; Allegro non troppo*
[2] *II. Allegretto*
[3] *III. Allegro non troppo*

From its title one would guess that Wagner's *SIEGFRIED IDYLL* was, like *Siegfried's Rhine Journey,* connected to the hero of his mighty *Ring* tetralogy and perhaps drawn from the third part of that work, itself entitled *Siegfried.* A logical assumption, perhaps, but only partly correct. In fact we were never supposed to hear this music; it was a very private piece, composed for a family event. Only Wagner's constant lack of funds persuaded him to sell the score to a publisher for a little ready cash. Its original title was *Tribschen Idyll* (the Siegfried in question was Wagner's infant son; thereby hangs a tale.

During a period when he had temporarily broken off work on *The Ring* to create the single (but mighty) operas *Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Meistersinger*, Wagner's strongest proponent was the conductor and pianist Hans von Bülow; but Wagner was closer still to Bülow's wife Cosima, Franz Liszt's intelligent and vivacious daughter. On the day of the first orchestral rehearsal for Tristan, with Bülow conducting, Cosima gave birth to a daughter named Isolde! Though Isolde was registered as Bülow's daughter, Wagner was known to have been the father. The couple had another daughter before Bülow, unable to take further scandal, gave her a divorce. On June 6, 1869, she bore a son, Siegfried. The following August, after her divorce from Bülow, she and Wagner married.

After leaving Munich, Wagner moved to a small house in Geneva, where Cosima joined him in November 1868. They gave this house the nickname 'Tribschen,' and it was here, in quiet surroundings far from the artistic world, that they first lived together publicly as husband and wife. And it was there that Wagner prepared for his new wife an exquisite present for her thirty-third birthday, which fell on Christmas Day 1870. He assembled the players, rehearsed it privately without Cosima's learning anything of his plans. Cosima's diary entry for December 25 tells the tale:

"...When I woke up I heard a sound. It grew louder, I could no longer imagine myself in a...dream, music was sounding, and what music! After it had died away, R. [Richard] came...in to me with the five children [she had two by Bülow in addition to the three with Wagner] and put into my hands the score of his "Symphonie Birthday Greeting." I was...in tears, but so, too, was the whole household; R. had set up his orchestra on the stairs...and thus consecrated our Tribschen forever!"

The Siegfried Idyll is Wagner's most popular orchestral work, and his most intimate. It is tranquil and introspective, a clear reflection of the contentment he found in his newly-established home with Cosima. It has long been thought that the quiet opening for strings uses material that Wagner had intended to put into an unfinished string quartet, but recent research has demonstrated that the theme in question was never planned in four parts (as a string quartet would be) but in five or six, and that Wagner therefore probably intended it from the first for his opera Siegfried, where it is part of the final duet between Siegfried and Brünnhilde ("Ewig war ich"). Then, when planning the birthday surprise after the birth of his own Siegfried, Wagner naturally enough drew upon music already connected in his own mind with the hero. Other themes in the piece come from a German nursery rhyme and a few ideas from his opera *Siegfried*, Wagner created a loving, gentle orchestral lullaby for a miniature orchestra.

Both Wagner and Cosima felt that this work was something connected to the intimacy of their marriage, so it was with some pain that Wagner, in a time of financial difficulty, sent it off to a publisher in November 1877. Cosima was saddened, but resigned. She confided to her diary, "The secret treasure is to become public property." It was her loss, but definitely our gain.

On January 22, 1945, the distinguished violist William Primrose wrote to Bartók asking him to compose a concerto. In an interview in 1970, Primrose recalled, "When I commissioned it, Bartók—if you can believe it—was an obscure composer. He was generally known to musicians, and he was reviled by the public. Aside from performances of the Concerto for Orchestra given by the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Koussevitzky, I don't recall many other performances of Bartók's works. When I commissioned the concerto, most people thought I had made a big mistake, including people in my manager's office. Who on earth was going to ask me to play a concerto by Béla Bartók? I paid him what he asked, $1000, and I played the concerto well over a hundred times for fairly respectable fees. So it was almost like getting in on the ground floor in investing in Xerox or the Polaroid camera."

The bulk of the work on the concerto was accomplished at Saranac Lake, where the Bartóks spent their summer vacation. When he returned to his small New York apartment in the autumn, the composer wrote to Primrose, "I am very glad to be able to tell you that your Viola Concerto is ready in draft, so that only the score has to be written, which means a purely mechanical work, so to speak. If nothing happens I can be through in five to six weeks, that is I can send you a copy of the orchestral score in the second half of October, and a few weeks afterwards a copy (or if you wish more copies) of the piano score. Many interesting problems arose in composing this work. The orchestration will be rather transparent, more transparent than in the Violin Concerto. Also the somber, more masculine character of your instrument executed some influence on the general character of the work."

"If nothing happens?" Unfortunately, something did happen. On September 21, Bartók received a visit from his friend, composer Tibor Serly. Serly, who knew about the Viola Concerto, was surprised to see Bartók working on a totally different piece, the Third Piano Concerto. " I asked him, 'What about the Viola Concerto?' He pointed toward the other side of the bed, where another pile of manuscripts lay. That was evidently the Viola Concerto." The morning after Serly's visit, Bartók was taken to the hospital. He died five days later, leaving the final 17 measures of the Piano Concerto unscored and leaving the entire Viola Concerto in a fragmentary state. It fell to Serly to complete both pieces.

Serly received the sketches of the Viola Concerto in 1947. He worked two years on the difficult task of assembling a complete piece. In the preface to the published score, he explained the challenges he faced. "First there was the problem of deciphering the manuscript itself. Bartók wrote his sketches on odd, loose sheets of music paper that happened to be on hand at the moment, some of which had parts of other sketches already on them. Bits of material that came to

his mind were jotted down without regard for their sequence. The pages were not numbered nor the separation of movements indicated. The greatest difficulty encountered was deciphering his correction of notes, for Bartók, instead of erasing, grafted his improvements onto the original notes."

"The next problem involved the matter of completing harmonies and other adornments, which he had reduced to a form of shorthand. For, as Bartók observed in his letter [to Primrose], 'Most probably some passages will prove uncomfortable or unplayable.' Finally, except for Bartók's statement that 'the orchestration will be rather transparent,' there were virtually no indications of the instrumentation. Strangely, this part presented the least difficulty, for the leading voices and contrapuntal lines upon which the background is composed were clearly indicated in the manuscript."

Hungarian musicologist Janos Kovacs has compared Serly's score with Bartók's sketches, resulting in considerable controversy concerning what Serly actually did. The "odd, loose sheets" Serly mentions turn out to be only 13 pages, unnumbered to be sure but, given the completeness of the solo part and much of the accompaniment in short score, easily placed in sequence. The randomly jotted "bits of material" appear on only one page. Most of Serly's work was orchestration, which he dismissed as presenting "the least difficulty." In fact, it is extremely problematic to orchestrate a viola concerto so that the solo line will not be covered. Bartók gave very few clues, most of which Serly ignored. Yet Serly was able to accomplish a very clean and clear scoring. The question of Serly's faithfulness to Bartók's surmised intentions will surely continue to be debated by scholars, while violists will continue to perform Serly's completion to the delight of audiences.

In order to appreciate why César Franck's *SYMPHONY IN D MINOR* was a failure at its first performance, it is necessary to understand the musical climate in Paris in the 1880s. There were essentially three factions. The general public was interested nearly exclusively in opera, often of the most trivial type. The progressives, who included Franck and his students, were excited by the radical new music of Wagner and Liszt. The Paris Conservatoire, at which Franck was a professor, represented the musical establishment. Through their teaching and their control over what was performed at the Conservatoire, the faculty composers sought to uphold the symphonic tradition of Beethoven and Haydn. Since he taught not composition but organ at the Conservatoire, Franck was considered an outsider. The composition faculty could not sympathize with his interest in Wagnerian harmonies, despite the current rage in Paris for Wagner's music, especially among the younger composers. Franck's D Minor Symphony (actually not his only one: 50 years earlier he had composed a large G major symphony, which was performed in 1841) owes allegiance to both traditions. Its symphonic form is Beethovenian while its harmonic language is Wagnerian.

In his maturity Wagner wrote music dramas, not symphonies. Thus his popular appeal in France was understandable, since opera dominated French musical life in the second half of the nineteenth century. Most of the French Wagnerians—including Franck's pupils Vincent D'Indy and Henri Duparc, plus the young Emmanuel Chabrier, who decided to become a composer upon hearing a performance of the Bayreuth master's *Tristan und Isolde*—composed operas, programmatic music, and vocal music. They, like Wagner, understood the intensities of chromaticism and modulation as means to express specific emotions. But could a symphony with no story, with no text, be an appropriate vehicle for Wagnerian harmonies? According to the Parisian musical establishment, the answer was a resounding no. A symphony was supposed to follow the model set down by Beethoven (and carved in granite in Conservatoire theory classes). An orchestral work in three rather than the traditional four movements, which used Wagnerian harmonies and modulations, and whose form was loose and rhapsodic—this was no symphony at all in the eyes and ears of the guardians of tradition. No matter that Franck thoroughly used and extended Beethoven's principle of thematic consistency, no matter that the D Minor Symphony adhered to the outlines of classical form: The work was destined to be condemned.

It might have been strategically wiser for Franck to have had the symphony performed outside the Conservatoire, away from the reactionaries on the faculty and the conservatives in the subscription audience. Conductor Charles Lamoureux, who had included in his own concerts many of the Wagnerian works of Franck's students, at first refused to conduct the symphony, presumably because it was cast in symphonic form rather than in the Wagner-Liszt tradition of music dramas and symphonic poems. "Let [Franck] take it to the Conservatoire." Lamoureux proclaimed, "That is the sanctuary of the symphony."

Franck did just that. The first performance was given by the orchestra of the Paris Conservatoire. The audience of conservatives and pedants thought they knew what a symphony was supposed to sound like, and Franck's new piece did not come close to their ideal. Thus they dismissed it, often for the silliest of reasons.

Composer Vincent d'Indy recalled, "The performance was quite against the wishes of most members of the famous orchestra, and was only pushed through thanks to the benevolent obstinacy of the conductor, Jules Garcin. The subscribers could make neither head nor tail of it, and the musical authorities were much in the same position. I inquired of one of them—a professor at the Conservatoire, and a kind of factotum on the committee—what he thought of the work. "That a symphony?" he replied in contemptuous tones. "But, my dear sir, who ever heard of writing for the English horn in a symphony? Just mention a single symphony by Haydn or Beethoven introducing the English horn. There, well, you see—your Franck's music may be whatever you please, but it will certainly never be a symphony." That was the attitude of the Conservatoire in the year of grace 1889." (This 'learned' professor was apparently unacquainted with Haydn's Symphony Number 22, which has two English horns, nor with Saint-Saëns' Second Symphony, which also includes one in its orchestra.)

Other pedantic criticisms included that of composer Charles Gounod, who was overheard saying "It is the assertion of impotence pushed to the lengths of dogma." Also, Conservatoire composition professor Ambroise Thomas asked

how a symphony could be in D minor "when the principal theme at the ninth bar goes into D-flat, at the 10th C-flat, at the 21st F-sharp minor, at the twenty-fifth B-flat minor, at the 26th C minor, at the 39th E-flat major, and at the 49th F minor?" Actually, this criticism is misleading, since these keys are merely touched upon briefly, while the main keys of the movement are quite traditional: The second theme starts in F major and the recapitulation, which begins in D minor, presents the second theme in D major.

Franck's problem was more political than musical. Outside his circle of devoted students and admirers, he was virtually unknown. As one unkind critic put it, "Why play this symphony here? Who is this Mr. Franck? A professor of harmonium, I believe." The composer was recognized, if at all, as an organ teacher who in his spare time created pieces that were rarely performed. In fact, up to the age of 57 he had written only a handful of substantial works. Almost all his music that is known today was composed in the last six years of his life. Thus, the D Minor Symphony greeted an audience that was both suspicious of the composer's credentials and skeptical of his aesthetics, even before the first note was sounded. The concert subscribers assumed there must be a good reason why the 66-year-old composer of the work they were about to hear was not established either as a Conservatoire composer or as the creator of popular operatic works.

So great was the prejudice against the symphony that, at the dress rehearsal, Franck's loyal students had to surround him to protect him from the vocal criticisms of other faculty members and students at the Conservatoire. The composer's wife could not bring herself to attend the concert and witness the expected derision. At the actual premiere, reactions were mixed. The public was bewildered, the Conservatoire professors were hostile, and the critics were divided, but Franck's circle of disciples was enchanted.

Tastes change, however. Before too many years passed, Franck and his school became the conservative establishment in France, against which still younger composers rebelled. The Symphony in D Minor was then seen as an upholder of tradition, because it utilized polyphony, classical forms, and Wagnerian harmonies—musical values that the younger generation sought to overthrow. This generation (which included Debussy, Ravel, and Satie) cultivated an indigenous French musical language that had little to do with either Wagner or his French counterparts.

Yet, the music of Franck continued to attract an ever-wider public, especially as it was vigorously promoted and defended by the composer's former pupils. As historian Paul Henry Lang explains, "The ecstatic yet sensuous and disquieting quality of Franck's music pleased the over-refined aural senses of the public, no longer capable of subsisting on diatonic harmonic logic; at the same time they beheld the saintly devotion of the man, his indifference to success and financial returns, his apostolic zealousness to move a public indifferent to pure music, and his love of the faithful disciples gathered around him. Franck has been at once perhaps the most overrated and the most calumniated of composers."

In the century since the premiere of the symphony, opinions of it have continued to vacillate. Some writers have praised its vitality, while others have criticized its looseness of form (perhaps traceable to Franck's background as an organ improviser) and its squareness of phrase structure. The Symphony in D Minor has enjoyed periods of enormous popularity with conductors, orchestras, and audiences, and it has suffered periods of neglect. But latter-day musicians and music lovers judge the work by its intrinsic merit, something that seems not to have occurred to its first listeners. They were too caught up in the typically French polemics for and against the symphony and its composer to hear its inherent beauty.

HELEN CALLUS joined the faculty of the University of Washington at the age of 26 and is currently Assistant Professor of Viola. She has been praised by critics nationwide and pursues a busy career as a teacher, solo recitalist and chamber music artist. In 1998 she was invited to join the critically acclaimed Bridge Ensemble Piano Quartet, described by critics as ranking "in the top echelon of today's chamber music groups." The *Seattle Times* was moved to remark that "no where else on disc can you find quartet playing better than The Bridge Ensemble."

Ms. Callus was born in Britain and obtained her degrees from the Royal Academy of Music, London and the Peabody Institute of Music of Johns Hopkins University, Maryland, where she studied with Paul Coletti and was his teaching assistant. Ms. Callus has received many prestigious scholarships and is a Countess of Munster of London award winner. She has won numerous competitions in the United States and the United Kingdom, including a special prize at the Lionel Tertis International Viola Competition and Congress. A regular artist on TV and radio, Ms. Callus has appeared on national programs such as St. Paul Sunday, Minnesota Public Radio, and National Public Radio's "Performance Today."

Helen Callus has performed extensively throughout Europe with esteemed artists in many major concert halls. In London she has appeared at such venues as The Royal Festival Hall, The Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Wigmore Hall. Other international performances have taken her to Russia, Germany, Switzerland, Holland and Canada. As a guest solo and chamber music artist, she has performed at festivals across the U.S. in many major cities, including New York, Baltimore, Chicago, Philadelphia, Portland, Seattle and San Francisco.

She is currently president of the Seattle chapter of the American Viola Society and is guest faculty with the Seattle Youth Orchestras, the Academy of Music Northwest and the Seattle Conservatory. Callus recently joined the advisory panel of the Seattle Young Artists Music Festival and has served as an adjudicator for such organizations as ASTA. As the founding director of B.R.A.T.S (Bratche Resources and Teaching in the Schools) which has received numerous grants, she has continued her commitment to teaching and outreach programs in the high schools. She has been invited to give master classes in schools and colleges throughout the U.S. and has also served on the faculties of