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2015

12-11

UW SYMPHONY

David Alexander Rahbee, conductor

with faculty guest artist

Cyndia Sieden, soprano

Friday, December 11, 2015
7:30 pm – Meany Theater

PROGRAM CD # 17,337

1 Symphony in d minor.....24:29.....Robert Schumann (1810-1856)
(original 1841 version of Symphony no. 4 in d minor, op. 120)

- I. Andante con moto - Allegro di molto
- II. Romanza: Andante
- III. Scherzo: Presto
- IV. Largo - Finale: Allegro vivace

INTERMISSION

2 remarks, Rahbee 6:35

3 Luonnotar, op. 70.....8:30.....Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)
(given in celebration of Sibelius's 150th birthday on December 8th)

Cyndia Sieden, soprano

4 remarks, Rahbee 8:37

5 Death and Transfiguration, op. 24.....21:45.....Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

Text for Sibelius: *Luonnotar*, op. 70, taken from the Kalevala, the national saga of Finland.

Olipa impi, ilman tyttö Kave Luonnotar korea.
Ouostui elämätään,
Aina, yksin ollessansa avaroilla autioilla.
Laskeusi lainehille,
Aalto impeä ajeli.
Vuotta seitsemän sataa
Vieri impi veen emona
Uppi luotehet, etelät
Uppi kaikki ilman rannat.
Tuli suuri tuulen puuska
Meren kouhuille kohotti.
Voi, poloinen, päiviäni!
Parempi olisi ollut ilman impenä elää.
Oi, Ukko, ylijumala, käy tänne kutsuttaissa!
Tuli sotka, suora lintu,
Lenti kaikki ilman rannat
Lenti luotehet, etelät
Ei löyä pesänsioa.
Ei! Ei! Ei!
Teenkö tuulehem tupani, alloillen asuinsiani?
Tuuli kaatavi, tuuli kaatavi,
Aalto viepi asuinsiani.
Niin silloin veen emonen
Nosti polvea lainehesta.
Siihen sorsa laativi pesänsä Alkoi hautoa.
Impi tuntevi tulistuvaksi
Järkytti jäsenehensä.
Pesä vierähti vetehen
Katkieli kappaleiksi
Muuttuivat munat kaunoisiksi
Munasen yläinen puoli
Yläiseksi taivahaksi,
Yläpuoli valkeaista
Kuuksi kummottamahan;
Mi kirjajaista tähiksi taivaalle,
Ne tähiksi taivaalle.

There was a beautiful maiden of the air,
Luonnotar, a daughter of nature,
who grew tired of her life,
of always being alone in the vast plains of the sky.
She descended into the sea,
where the waves impregnated her.
For seven hundred years she drifted about as the water
mother,
swimming north-west,
swimming south, to all the shores under the skies.
Then a tremendous gust of wind threw her up on the
foamy waves.
Oh, poor me, and my life!
It would have been better to remain the Virgin of the Air.
O, mighty Ukko, supreme god,
pass here by the one who implores you!
A gull appeared, an agile bird.
It flew to all the shores of the skies,
it flew north-west, it flew south,
unable to find a place for nesting.
No! No! No!
Must I build my house in the wind,
my living quarters on the waves?
The wind would knock down my house,
the waves would carry away my nest.
At that moment the water mother lifted her knee out of the
waves.
There the gull made its nest, and started hatching.
The maiden felt an ardent fire shaking her limbs.
The nest fell into the water and broke into pieces.
But the eggs changed into things of beauty:
the top of the shell became the firmament;
the upper part of the egg white the shining moon;
and the speckles turned into stars in the sky.
The stars in the sky.

Robert Schumann, *Symphony in d minor* (original 1841 version of *Symphony No. 4 in d minor*, op. 120).

After several years of composing solely for piano and, later, for voice, Robert Schumann focused on symphonic composition in 1840 and 1841. He explored several styles within the medium, including a "grand symphony" in the style of Beethoven, Schumann's *Symphony No. 1*, the "Spring Symphony." He planned his next symphony to be a cross between grand sonata, symphony, and concerto; and sought to create a coherent, large-scale work without having to resort to traditional forms and exact repetition of themes. In the *D Minor*, Schumann reconfigures the symphonic form, transforming the core motivic material and creating something more like a series of character pieces. The symphony is presented as a whole, without pause between movements.

The rehearsals with the Leipzig Gewandhaus orchestra in early December, 1841, went well, and Schumann was well-pleased with his work. The première performance, however, attracted no publishers, and Schumann later revised the work heavily for an 1851 publication. The original version of the *D Minor* has had many admirers, particularly Johannes Brahms. The problems encountered at the symphony's debut were probably programmatic: while Robert Schumann's works were presented, and his wife Clara performed admirably at the piano, most of the audience was there to see Franz Liszt. After the concluding work—a double-piano arrangement of Liszt's *Hexaméron*, featuring Liszt and Clara Schumann—it's likely few audience members remembered much of the *D Minor*, which Brahms heralded as "bright and spontaneous, expressed with corresponding ease and grace."

Jean Sibelius, *Luonnotar*, op. 70 (1913).

Jean Sibelius's *Luonnotar* is a symphonic poem for soprano and orchestra, the text based on a creation myth from the *Kalevala*, a nineteenth-century epic poem by Finnish doctor, linguist, and writer Elias Lönnrot. Lönnrot was an avid scholar of folk legends, and the *Kalevala* is a compilation of Karelian and Finnish folk tales and mythology. In the legends, Luonnotar, daughter of the Sky, descended to the Earth's ocean. She swam for hundreds of years; spotting a beautiful bird, she raised her knee so that the bird could land. The bird nested and laid eggs on Luonnotar's knee, but the eggs grew too warm, and Luonnotar flinched from the heat. The eggs broke: the shells became the land and the sky, the egg whites the moon and stars, and the egg yolk became the sun.

Sibelius had planned a project based on the Luonnotar story as far back as 1894, when he had considered it as an opera scenario. In 1905–06, he composed a symphonic poem on the creation myth that includes Luonnotar, but at the last moment he changed the title to *Pohjolan tytär* (*Pohjola's Daughter*). *Luonnotar*, op. 70, was completed in 1913, and premièred at the Gloucester Music Festival (UK), during one of Sibelius's many international tours in the years leading up to World War I.

Richard Strauss, *Death and Transfiguration*, op. 24 (1889).

The genre known as the symphonic poem, developed and popularized during the nineteenth century, typically is a single-movement work for orchestra that depicts a story taken from a poem, novel, or painting. *Luonnotar* is an exception to this rule, having a vocal soloist; but so is *Death and*

Transfiguration, since Richard Strauss chose not to depict a particular plot, but rather a generalized idea. In 1894 he extended a kind of explanation

for *Death and Transfiguration*, which he said presented "in the form of a tone poem the dying hours of a man who had striven toward the highest idealistic aims, maybe indeed those of an artist." He then offered this plot: "The sick man lies in bed, asleep, with heavy, irregular breathing; friendly dreams conjure a smile on the features of the deeply suffering man; he wakes up; he is once more racked with horrible agonies; his limbs shake with fever—as the attack passes and the pains leave off, his thoughts wander through his past life; his childhood passes before him, the time of his youth with its strivings and passions and then, as the pains already begin to return, there appears to him the fruit of his life's path, the conception, the ideal that he has sought to realize, to present artistically, but that he has not been able to complete, since it is not for man to be able to accomplish such things. The hour of death approaches, the soul leaves the body in order to find gloriously achieved in everlasting space those things that could not be fulfilled here below."

While some biographers have suggested the symphonic poem was autobiographical, Strauss insisted it was "purely a product of the imagination." Strauss quoted the ascending "transfiguration" theme of Op. 24 in later works, such as the symphonic poem *Ein Heldenleben*. Perhaps most notably, the motive is also heard at the conclusion of *Four Last Songs*, as the soprano presents her final line, "Is this perhaps death?"

American soprano **Cyndia Sieden** moves easily among the Baroque, classical, romantic and contemporary repertoires to worldwide acclaim. In addition, her performances and recordings of his works affirm her status as one of the sovereign Mozart interpreters of the present day.

Highlights of 2011 included performances in Morton Feldman's monodrama *Neither* for New York City Opera, Ariadne in Wolfgang Rihm's *Dionysos* at the Netherlands Opera and Soprano I in Luigi Nono's *Prometeo* at the Salzburg and Berlin Festivals. In contrast to these knotty modern works, she returned to Blondchen in Mozart's *Abduction* with Frans Brüggen and the Orchestra of the 18th Century at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and on tour throughout Holland.

Sieden has starred at most of the world's great opera houses, including the Munich Bayerische Staatsoper, the New York Met, Paris's Opéra Bastille, the Wiener Staatsoper, Barcelona's Gran Teatre de Liceu, Brussels's La Monnaie, and London's Covent Garden and English National, as well as in Beijing and Australia. Her highly-praised Metropolitan Opera debut was as Berg's *Lulu*, and her success quickly led to reengagement in 2008 for *Die Zauberflöte*'s Queen of the Night, one of her signature roles.

She is a brilliantly idiomatic interpreter of the works of Richard Strauss. She frequently performs Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Munich, Japan, Vienna), as well as Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier* (Paris Châtelet) and Aminta in *Die schweigsame Frau* (Palermo and Munich).

Her performances in the high-flying role of Ariel in the premiere of Thomas Adès's *The Tempest* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, ignited rave reviews and an astonished public. She has garnered

equal enthusiasm and devotion for her Queen of the Night in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and Blondchen in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, all over the world. Other specialties are Cunegonde in Leonard Bernstein's *Candide*, and the operas of Handel.

Sieden is much in demand for Orff's *Carmina Burana*, the oratorios and masses of Handel, Mozart, and Haydn, and works of Bach, Strauss and Mahler. She has sung with many of the most renowned symphony orchestras in the world, including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Atlanta Symphony, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the London Symphony Orchestra, and at New York's Mostly Mozart Festival. In addition, her Lieder recitals are always highly-anticipated events.

Cyndia Sieden was born in California, USA, and received her first vocal instruction there. The significant milestone in her studies was work with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf in master classes in Carmel Valley, CA in 1982. Schwarzkopf then invited Sieden to become her private student, and also to work with her in master classes at the 1983 Salzburg Mozarteum. Sieden sang in the culminating concert/competition and won first place, the springboard for her first professional engagements.

In 1984, Cyndia Sieden made her European debut in *Il Barbiere* at the Bavarian State Opera; her American debut also took place in 1984, in *La Fille du Regiment*, in Tampa, Florida.

David Alexander Rahbee is currently Senior Artist in Residence at the University of Washington School of Music in Seattle, where he is director of orchestral activities and teaches conducting. He is recipient of the American-Austrian Foundation's 2003 Herbert von Karajan Fellowship for Young Conductors, the 2005 International Richard-Wagner-Verband Stipend, and the Acanthes Centre in Paris in 2007.

Dr. Rahbee has appeared in concert with orchestras such as the RTE National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Kammerphilharmonie Berlin-Brandenburg, Orchestre de la Francophonie, Orchesterakademie der Bochumer Symphoniker, the Dresden Hochschule orchestra, Grand Harmonie, the Boston New Music Initiative, Seattle Modern Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica de Loja (Ecuador), Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra, Savaria Symphony Orchestra (Hungary), Seattle Modern Orchestra, Cool Opera of Norway (members of the Stavanger Symphony), Schönbrunner Schloss Orchester (Vienna), the Whatcom Symphony Orchestra, the Kennett Symphony, and the Divertimento Ensemble of Milan. He collaborated twice with the Seattle Symphony in 2015, as off-stage conductor for Ives' Fourth Symphony (recorded live), and as guest conductor for their Native Lands project. He has collaborated with several prominent soloists such as violinists Sarah Chang, David Chan (concertmaster of MET opera orchestra), and Joseph Lin (Juilliard String Quartet). He has been a guest rehearsal conductor for numerous young orchestras, such as the New England Conservatory Symphony Orchestra, The Symphony Orchestras of the Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music at Chapman University, and the Vienna University of Technology orchestra, the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras (BYSO), and Rhode Island Philharmonic Youth Orchestras (RIPYO). He has also served of faculty of the Pierre Monteux School as Conducting Associate, and has been resident conductor of the Atlantic Music Festival in Maine.

Dr. Rahbee was an assistant at the Vienna State opera from 2002-2010. As part of his fellowship and residency at the 2003 Salzburg Festival, Dr. Rahbee was assistant conductor of the International Attergau Institute Orchestra, where he worked with members of the Vienna Philharmonic. He has been selected to actively participate in masterclasses with prominent conductors such as Kurt Masur, Sir Colin Davis, Jorma Panula, Zdeněk Mácal, Peter Eötvös, Zoltán Peskó, and Helmut Rilling, and counts Nikolaus Harnoncourt to be among his most influential mentors. From 1997-2001, David Rahbee was conductor of the Fidelio Chamber Orchestra in Cambridge, Massachusetts, selecting its talented young members from Harvard University, the New England Conservatory, and Boston University. From 1997 to 2000, he served as assistant conductor of the Atlantic Symphony Orchestra (formerly known as the Hingham Symphony) in Massachusetts.

Dr. Rahbee's principal conducting teachers were Charles Bruck and Michael Jinbo at the Pierre Monteux School. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree in violin and composition from Indiana University, a Master of Music degree from the New England Conservatory in orchestral conducting, and a Doctorate of Musical Arts from the University of Montreal in orchestral conducting. He has also participated in post-graduate conducting classes at the Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, Vienna. His arrangements of various music for brass are published by Warwick Musics, and his articles on the music of Gustav Mahler have appeared in journals of the International Gustav Mahler Gesellschaft, among others. Dr. Rahbee was a semi-finalist in the American Prize for Conducting, in the category of Orchestral Programming at the university level for the 2013-14 school year.

The UW Symphony is made up of music majors as well as students from departments all across campus. They rehearse three times per week, and perform at least two concerts per quarter. Under the leadership of Dr. Rahbee since the fall of 2013, the UW Symphony has performed over sixty pieces, spanning from the early baroque through contemporary, and collaborated with faculty soloists, as well as members of the Seattle Symphony and other local organizations. Each year, the orchestra has the opportunity to work with two Grammy award-winning artists: Ludovic Morlot (Affiliate Professor of Conducting and Seattle Symphony Music Director) and Stephen Stubbs (Senior Artist in Residence). Other yearly collaborations include a fully staged opera on period instruments with Pacific MusicWorks, as well as a performance with the combined university choirs. Concerts are given in Meany Theater, as well as various other locations on campus, and occasionally at Benaroya Hall. From time to time during the school year, the orchestra may split up into smaller groups under the title UW Chamber Orchestras.

Do you play an orchestral instrument? Are you a UW student? Students interested in joining the UW Symphony or Campus Philharmonia Orchestras may email Dr. Rahbee at darahbee@uw.edu. New enrollment occurs each quarter on a space-available basis.

NEXT CONCERT:

Michael Gibbs and Bill Frisell with the UW Symphony and Jazz Studies Faculty
Thursday, January 14, 2016 - 7:30pm, Meany Theater

UW Symphony

David Alexander Rahbee, music director and conductor

Abbie Naze and Tigran Arakelyan, assistant conductors

Jonathan Kuehn, orchestra assistant

FLUTE

Natalie Ham – S, Doctorate - Music Performance

Sabrina Bounds – Sc, Music Performance

Joyce Lee – Si, Music Performance

Leanna Keith, Masters - Music Performance

Laura Colmenares, Music Performance

OBOE

James Phillips - * Music Performance and
Biochemistry

Megan Bernovich, Communication and
Comparative literature

ENGLISH HORN

Anne Goldberg – G

CLARINET

Mo Yan – Sc, Music Education/Performance

Alexander Tu – Si, S, Music Performance

Ethan Waikley, Undecided

BASS CLARINET

David Bissell – G

BASSOON

Jamael Smith - * Music Performance

Lucas Zeiter, Music Performance, Psychology

CONTRABASSOON

David Wall, Music Performance

HORN

Matthew Anderson – S, Doctorate - Music
Performance

Renee Millar – Sc, Si, Masters - Music Performance

Kelly Brown, Music Performance and Mathematics

Nate Lloyd, Music Performance

Evan Wang, Electrical Engineering

TRUMPET

Elizabeth Solon - * Music Performance

Gabriel Palmer - Music Performance

Schuyler Asplin, Jazz Performance

TROMBONE

Elizabeth McDaniel - * Masters - Music Performance

Luke Allen, Music Performance

BASS TROMBONE

Terry Paananen – G

TUBA

Andy Abel - * Music Performance

TIMPANI

Evan Berge – Music Performance and Political
Science

PERCUSSION

David Gaskey, Medicine

Lauren Wessels - * Master of Music – Performance

Nicole Chang, Music Performance

1st VIOLIN

Heather Borrer – C, Music Performance and Biochemistry
Judith Kim, Music Performance and Physics
Cordelia Ilton, Undeclared
Frank Liu, Electrical and Computer Engineering
Blanca Viña, Undecided
Matthew Cancio, Speech and Hearing
Katherine Wang, Pre-science
Vicki Wahlstrom, Neurobiology
Theodore Timbrook, Business administration
Clara Orndorff, Engineering
Nikita Morozov, Computer science and HCDE
Allion Salvador – G

2nd VIOLIN

Anastasia Nicolov - * Music Performance and Bioengineering
Jonathan Ramos, Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology
Yelizaveta Mikhaylova, Law, Society and Justice
Danniel Zhou, Public Administration
Jonathan Kuehn, Atmospheric science
Nathan Hwang, Biochemistry
Rachel Joe, Biology
Nate Lempko, Finance and International Business
Hayley Boyd, Undeclared
Jonathan Park, Art and Science

VIOLA

Emmeran Pokorny – Si, S, Music Performance
Yi Zhou – Sc, Masters - Music Performance
Rebecca Putnam, Music Performance
Jerry Bi, Undecided
Emily Hennings, Biology
Brian Dang, English
Edwin Li, Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering

CELLO

Melissa Kersh – Si, Cello Performance and Computer Science
Isabella Kodama – S, Music Performance
Hajung Yuk – Sc, Molecular and Cellular Biology and Cello Performance
Yun En Tsai, Music Performance
Grace Kim, Psychology
Brandon Kawaguchi, Music Performance and Pre-engineering
Amanda Kuo, Music Performance
Jonas Chen, Finance and Pre-dental
Thomas Zadrozny, International Studies and History
Frances Kato, Materials Science & Engineering

BASS

Patrick Aubryn - * Doctor of Musical Arts - Performance
Ramon Salumbides, Music Performance
Darian Woller, Music Performance
Tyler Cigich, Music Performance
Brad Gaylor, Civil Engineering
Tyler Rath – G
Atilla Kiss – G

Concertmaster – C

Principal - *
Guest – G
Schumann Principal – Sc
Strauss Principal – S
Sibelius Principal – Si



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