



# CONCERTS AT FIRST

PRESENTS



## BRAHMS HAS MANY FACES

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2022

3PM



CONCERTS AT FIRST

Artistic Director: Brad Schultz

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[www.concertsatfirsteugene.com](http://www.concertsatfirsteugene.com) Marlene Barkhurst

# PROGRAM



Sonata No. 1 for Clarinet and Piano, op. 120

Johannes Brahms  
(1833-1897)

- I. Allegro appassionato
- II. Andante un poco adagio
- III. Allegretto grazioso
- IV. Vivace

Anthony Aguayo, clarinet  
Michelle Sulaiman, piano

Organ Chorales, op. 122

O Welt, ich muß dich lassen	(O World, I Now Must Leave Thee)
Herzlich tut mich erfreuen	(The Day of Resurrection)
Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen	(Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming)
Herzlich tut mich verlangen	(O Sacred Head, Now Wounded)
O Welt, ich muß dich lassen	

Brad Schultz, organ

Sonata No 1. for Cello and Piano, op.38

- I. Allegro non troppo
- II. Allegretto quasi menuetto
- III. Allegro

Elizabeth Donovan, cello  
Michelle Sulaiman, piano

# NOTES

Writing in the 1880s it was first Hans von Bulow to elevate Johannes Brahms to such a level of esteem as one of the 'three B's'. "My key signature is E-flat major," Bulow said (roughly translated), and those three b's (flats) are Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms."

We know the composer to be incredibly cerebral, yet accessible. Trite, yet reflective. Humorous and profound at the same time. As our own Eugene Concert Choir is in the midst of preparations of Brahms's sublime *Requiem*, to be presented at the Hult Center in May and again at Carnegie Hall in June, we offer a look at the textless Brahms: instrumental music that touches the heart and soul.

Brahms had already unofficially retired from composing by 1890, but a chance encounter with clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld and his captivating performance of works for the instrument by Weber and Mozart inspired two new sonatas for clarinet and piano, as well as two chamber pieces. The works for clarinet, which premiered publicly in 1895, are the last chamber pieces Brahms would write.

The op. 122 chorale preludes for organ mark both the composer's most lasting contribution to the organ repertoire and the final pieces Brahms would write. They number eleven in total, all relatively short, and all based on Lutheran chorale melodies appropriate for the various seasons of the liturgical year. Today you will hear four of the latter pieces in the collection, including a piece for the Easter season, Advent, Holy Week, and culminating in Brahms's interpretation of the chorale "O World, I Now Must Leave Thee," believed to be the very final piece Brahms wrote.

Composed between 1862 and 1865, Brahms modeled his first Cello Sonata as a homage to Johann Sebastian Bach, including reference to *The Art of Fugue* in his first movement. The composer makes clear that the piano "should be a partner – often a leading, often a watchful and considerate partner – but it should under no circumstances assume a purely accompanying role." Premiered by cellist Josef Gänsbacher with Brahms at the piano, the cellist often complained that he could not hear himself play over the piano. Brahms's response: "Lucky for you, too."

## TODAY'S PERFORMERS

Clarinetist **Anthony Aguayo** has "the musical and personal ideas to really be one of the next great voices on the clarinet scene," according to Stephanie Zelnick. Anthony is currently a DMA Candidate in Clarinet Performance and is the Graduate Instructor of Clarinet at the University of Oregon, where he studies with Wonkak Kim. Mr. Aguayo holds an M.M. degree from Colorado State University where he studied with Wesley Ferreira.

Mr. Aguayo is an active educator, recitalist, and chamber musician. He has served as a guest artist and clinician at numerous universities throughout the western United States. He was invited to perform at the ClarinetFest®2019 and 2021 conferences, and will perform at the 2022 conference in Reno, NV. In 2019, he and Wonkak Kim gave the premiere performance of "Time and Space" for two clarinets by GyungEun Lee. As a strong advocate for new music, Mr. Aguayo has both commissioned and premiered over 20 works. His clarinet and saxophone duo, Chyornii & Dorado, recorded 5 newly commissioned works and released them on their debut album *Black and Gold*, in 2019; the album can now be heard on all major streaming platforms. For more information, please visit: [anthonyaguayo.com](http://anthonyaguayo.com)

**Dr. Elizabeth Donovan** is an active teacher and performer. She recently completed her Doctorate at the University of Oregon, studying with Steve Pologe. Elizabeth is currently a faculty member at Linn-Benton Community College and runs her own private cello studio.

Elizabeth completed her Bachelors at Penn State University and her Masters at Florida State University, where she studied with Kim Cook and Greg Sauer, respectively. She also spent two summers at Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival. She enjoys collaborating across a variety of genres with artists of all sorts. Most recently, Elizabeth collaborated with Broadway singer and YouTuber Erynne Hollens on a recording and music video from the artist's original musical, "Milagro". In her free time, Dr. Donovan runs long distances, rock climbs, tries to take care of way too many plants, and enjoys all of the outdoor spaces, food, and beer that Oregon has to offer.

Indonesian pianist **Michelle Sulaiman** is currently a DMA candidate at the University of Oregon, under the tutelage of Dr. Claire Wachter. She has previously studied under Dr. Dean Kramer and Dr. Pauline Bjorem. On top of her piano studies, Michelle is also working on her MA in Musicology. In 2019, she was named the winner of the Eugene Symphony Guild Young Artist Competition and Oregon MTNA Young Artist Competition.

**Brad Schultz** is on the music staff at First United Methodist Church in Eugene, where he also oversees direction of the Concerts at First Music & Arts Series. He is also the accompanist for the Eugene Concert Choir and serves as Dean of the Eugene Area Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. He is a doctoral student in Musicology at the University of Oregon, working on a dissertation that explores the music of Dutch composer Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck.

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Ron and Pamela Swisher have been faithful supporters of Concert at First for several years. They retired to Eugene in 2016 having both resided in here for short sabbaticals in previous years.

Ron Swisher graduated from UO and taught for 40 years at the Oregon Institute of Technology.

Pamela Swisher was a pharmacist in Klamath Falls and an organist at First Presbyterian Church for 35 years. She presently is the assistant organist at St Mary's Episcopal Church and a member-at-large in the Eugene Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Both enjoy music in their community and find Concerts at First to be enjoyable, varied and of high quality.

Concerts at First relies on the generosity of Ron and Pamela and other "Friends of Concerts at First" to fulfill our mission: bringing high caliber, affordable music performances for the entire community to enjoy. Your donations are tax deductible, and help ensure the continuity of this series for years to come. Financial gifts of any size are always welcome, as well as donations in memory or in honor of a loved one. See Artistic Director Brad Schultz for more information, or visit [www.concertsatfirsteugene.com](http://www.concertsatfirsteugene.com).



## CONCERTS AT FIRST UPCOMING EVENTS

### Sunday, March 6, 3pm: The Portland Percussion Group

Since their 2011 formation, PPG has commissioned over 60 new works for percussion ensemble and is a mainstay in the Portland new music scene. Don't miss their innovative sounds in our grand space!

### Sunday, April 3, 3pm: David Rogers

A regular favorite on our series, David returns with a program for lute and guitar including classical works by Kapsperger, Bach, and others, jazz works by Chick Corea, Carla Bley, Steven Kuhn, and Ralph Towner, as well as original compositions.

### Friday, May 6, 7pm: Eynne Hollens & Friends

Start your Mother's Day weekend with Eynne as she presents a concert featuring music by strong women and influences. A portion of the proceeds benefit the Hope and Safety Alliance and their work in assisting survivors of domestic and sexual violence in Lane County.



## MUSIC AT FIRST

Worship every Sunday at 10am: Online and In-person

Sanctuary (Vocal) Choir Wednesdays 6:30-8pm

Handbell Choir Thursdays 5:45-7pm

Praise Ensemble Wednesdays 7pm



## FIRST FESTIVAL CHOIR

All are welcome to join in the rehearsal, preparation, and performance of Franz Liszt's *Via Crucis* as part of the commemoration of Good Friday at First. Rehearsals are Wednesdays at 6:30 on March 23 & 30, April 6 & 13 with a performance at 7pm on Friday, April 15. All singers must be masked and vaccinated against COVID-19. See Brad Schultz for more information, or plan to join us at our first rehearsal on March 23.

## FRIENDS OF CONCERTS AT FIRST

The Friends of Concerts at First believe in our mission to present affordable live concerts featuring world-class musicians and the finest repertoire of sacred and classical music for the cultural enrichment, education and enjoyment of all. If you would like to help us grow, we will happily receive your tax-deductible donation in the offering basket, by mail with the accompanying form, or on our website. (NOTE: **Please make your check payable to Concerts at First**).

We are grateful to the following individuals for their commitment to our 21st and 22nd seasons:

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