

CSO  
October 2019

Newsletter

CSO 60<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY

IN THIS ISSUE

## Rachmaninov 4, Schubert 4, Brahms Requiem, CSO 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday

October program is quite special, with the seldom performed Rachmaninov's 4<sup>th</sup> piano concerto, Schubert 4<sup>th</sup> symphony "Tragic", Brahms monumental German Requiem and finally the orchestra celebration of its 60<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### Rachmaninov's 4<sup>th</sup> concerto

The concert on the 5<sup>th</sup> opens with Mozart's Marriage of Figaro overture, a notable success that remains one of the most performed operas of all time. Afterwards virtuoso **Wael Farouk** will interpret the last and least

performed of Rachmaninov's concerti. It is considered among his ultimate songs of exiles with both its romantic and jazz reminiscences.

A perfect conclusion is Dvorak 7<sup>th</sup> symphony whose lovely melodies don't disappoint. There are plenty of those trademark sunlit passages, with warm-hearted lyrical themes throughout. But there's also a darker side to this symphony with a sense of tragedy alongside the rustic bird song and horn calls. Columbian conductor **Juan Montoya** is at the podium.



**Wael Farouk**

Will be Piano soloist in Rachmaninov 4<sup>th</sup> concerto on 5<sup>th</sup>

## A Romantic Affair

Conductor **Hisham Gabr** is inviting us to a romantic night on the 12<sup>th</sup> featuring 2 great composers whose premature death was among the greatest musical tragedies since Mozart: Schubert & Mendelssohn whose "Midsummer Night's Dream" Overture will provide a sneak peek into some of the best themes you can expect to hear from a 16 years old composer!

His Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64, to be interpreted by soloist **Hassan Sharara**, is one of the most lyrical and flowing works of its type and one of the most frequently performed of all violin concerti. It premiered in Leipzig on March 13, 1845.

Mendelssohn used the standard classical structures for the piece, but he made adaptations to better suit both his own tastes and the changing times. These changes include an almost instant introduction of the solo instrument and, until then unusual, a written-out



solo cadenza; these were usually improvised by the soloist. Evidence from Mendelssohn's correspondence suggests that he connected the movements into an uninterrupted span of music because he, as a performer, found mid-composition applause to be distracting. It is in part because of Mendelssohn that the modern tradition of holding applause to the end of a work came to be standard practice.

Schubert himself subtitled his 4<sup>th</sup> Symphony 'Tragic'. although the introduction to the first movement does have the sense of gloom and tragedy about it, whether the rest of the symphony has

much tragedy in it is questionable. Why did Schubert name it such if the music really isn't all that tragic? Some have conjectured he did it to try and attract a publisher, but no one really knows why. Perhaps it was on account of the introduction to the first movement, a departure from his first three symphonies. The 4<sup>th</sup> symphony is the first symphony he wrote in a minor key, and he was about 19 years old when he wrote it in the years 1815-1816. Like so much of Schubert's music, the 4<sup>th</sup> symphony had to wait a long time for its premiere, in 1849 in Leipzig.

# Brahms masterwork: Ein Deutsches Requiem

“A German Requiem,” it appears, has become something of an anthem for our time, with grand social and political reverberations. Yet, for its composer, the work arose from deeply personal motives. The idea of a requiem seems to have occurred to the young artist in 1854, after a suicide attempt by his newfound compositional father figure, Robert Schumann, who died in 1856. According to an early biographer, Max Kalbeck, Brahms discovered the title “Ein Deutsches Requiem” among manuscripts left by Schumann.

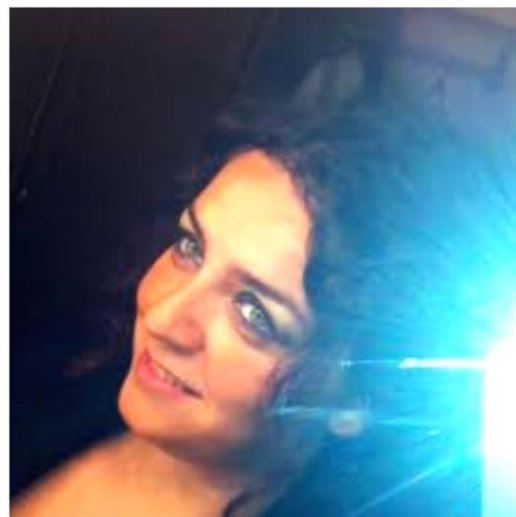
A false start on this work resulted instead in Brahms’s First Piano Concerto, of 1857-58, and the requiem idea came to fruition only after the death of his mother in 1865. “A German Requiem,” in six movements for baritone soloist, chorus and orchestra, had its premiere in 1868, but even then, Brahms returned to the work, adding a seventh movement, for soprano, with the words “I will

comfort you as one whom his own mother comforteth.”

Brahms assembled the texts himself from Luther’s German translation of the Bible, bypassing the standard liturgical requiem text, with its fearsome Dies Irae, so vividly set by other composers. Rather than dwelling on the judgment of the deceased, he seemed intent on consoling those left behind. It was Brahms who originated the term “human requiem,” in a letter to Clara Schumann, Robert’s widow and, by then, Brahms’s intimate. This human focus, as well as the work’s freedom from angry religious judgment, makes it easy to seize on in our more vaguely spiritual time.

For its performance on the 19<sup>th</sup> A Cappella Choir under **Maya Gvineria** join forces with Potsdamer Oratorien Chor led by **Johannes Lang** under music director **Ahmed El Saedi**. The soloists are **Dina Iskander** soprano, and **Reda El Wakil** baritone.

## THE SOLOISTS



**Dina Iskander**  
Soprano



**Reda ElWakil**  
Baritone

# 60 Years Celebration of Cairo Symphony Orchestra

Join the CSO on the 28th for the celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> birthday under its music director and principal conductor **Ahmed El Saedi**.

This special gala will start with the Festive overture by Ahmed El Saedi, a jubilee Egyptian work.

Tchaikovsky suite from his famous and very popular ballet Swan Lake as performed today typically consists of six numbers, the first and last containing the work's famous music associated with Odette and the swans. The second number is the carefree but spirited waltz from Act I, played in the ballet to accompany the "Arrival of the Guests."

Carpriccio Espagnol is often lauded for its orchestration, which features a large percussion section and many special techniques and articulations. Despite the critical praise, Rimsky-Korsakov was annoyed that the other aspects of the piece were being ignored: The change of timbres, the felicitous choice of melodic

designs and brief virtuoso cadenzas for most instruments solo.

Of everything Beethoven composed, the Choral fantasia is one of his most intriguing works. Indeed, you could easily believe the Choral Fantasia to be a piano sonata, given the expansive solo passage at the start. On top of that, the structure is a little strange: what exactly led Beethoven to split it into just two movements? The duration is also puzzling. With such a grand title, coupled with the fact that Beethoven is known for writing large-scale symphonies and concertos, audience might wonder why it was all done and dusted in little over twenty minutes. It will be interpreted by pianist **Yasser Mokhtar** and soloists **Mona Rafla & Dalia Farouk** sopranos, **Hisham El Guindy & Amr Medhat** tenors, **Jolie Faizy** mezzo-soprano and **Reda El Wakil** bass-baritone, accompanied in by A Cappella choir under Choir Master **May Gvineria**.

## THE SOLOIST



**Yasser Mokhtar**

Piano

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