



The Ensemble

Patrick McDonough, Artistic Director

Love, Laughter & Truth

Vancouver: October 21, 2016, 7:00p

Eugene: October 22, 2016, 7:00p

Portland: October 23, 2016, 3:00p

theEnsembleOregon.org

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Patrick McDonough, Artistic Director

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Love, Laughter & Truth

Liebeslieder Walzer, Op.52 Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

1. Rede, Mädchen, allzu liebes
2. Am Gesteine rauscht die Flut
3. O die Frauen, o die Frauen
4. Wie des Abends schöne Röte
5. Die grüne Hopfenranke
6. Ein kleiner, hübscher Vogel

Songs of Love and Life.....Lisa Ann Marsh

- II. Green Emblem
- III. The Barn of my Darkness

Catherine van der Salm, Ann van Bever, Chris Engbretson

Liebeslieder Walzer, Op.52 Brahms

7. Wohl schön bewandt war es vorehe
8. Wenn so lind dein Auge mir
9. Am Donaustrande, da steht ein Haus
10. O wie sanft die Quelle sich
11. Nein, es ist nicht auszukommen
12. Schlosser auf! und mache Schlösser

When You Are Old Jeff Winslow

Tim O'Brien, Susan McDaniel

Liebeslieder Walzer, Op.52 Brahms

13. Vögelein durchrauscht die Luft
14. Sieh, wie ist die Welle klar
15. Nachtigall, sie singt so schön
16. Ein dunkler Schacht ist Liebe
17. Nicht wandle, mein Licht, dort aussen
18. Es bebet das Gesträuche

Songs of God and Laughter Theresa Koon

1. First He Looked Confused
2. Why Mira Can't Go Back To Her Old House
3. Beautiful Hands
4. Damn Thirsty
5. Then Winks
6. You Were Brave

Laura Beckel Thoreson, Bruce Dunn, Susan McDaniel, Chris Engbretson

Neue Liebeslieder Walzer, Op.65 Brahms

7. Vom Gebirge, Well auf Well
8. Weiche Gräser im Revier
9. Nagen am Herzen
10. Ich kose süß mit der und der
11. Alles, alles in den Wind
15. Zum Schluß: Nun, ihr Musen, genug!

Catherine van der Salm
Soprano

Laura Beckel Thoreson
Alto

Nicholas Ertsgaard
Tenor

Tim O'Brien
Baritone

Susan McDaniel
Piano

Chris Engbretson
Piano

Ann van Bever
Oboe

Bruce Dunn
Trumpet

“The city’s top small
vocal ensemble”
~Oregon Arts Watch

Biographies and Notes

Lisa Ann Marsh is a member of *Cascadia Composers* and a founding member of *Crazy Jane Composers*. Her solo piano and chamber works are frequently performed in the Portland area. Her music is inspired by the beauty of the natural world, the complexity of human emotions, and the artists she collaborates with. Recent chamber works include trios and quartets for winds, strings, percussion, and piano. Ms. Marsh is pianist with the Marsh-Titterington Piano Duo and former Principal Keyboard with the *Columbia Symphony Orchestra*. She is a member of the piano faculty at Portland State University where she also directs the wellness program for musicians.

Jeff Winslow, a fourth-generation Oregonian, seeks the musical heart of natural and psychological landscapes, with emphasis on vocal and piano works. He is a founding member of *Cascadia Composers* and serves on the board as secretary/treasurer. His work has been performed by *fEARnoMUSIC*, *Portland Vocal Consort*, and *Resonance Ensemble*, and also at *Cascadia Composers*, *Seventh Species*, *Cherry Blossom Musical Arts*, and *Oregon Bach Festival* concerts, often with the composer at the piano. A recent piano work, *Lied ohne Worte (lieber mit Ligeti)* received honorable mention from the *Friends and Enemies of New Music*, a New York-based composers' group. He studied music and electronics at the University of California at Berkeley.

Theresa Koon studied voice and composition at the University of Victoria BC on a Full Fellowship Grant which led to a Masters Degree in Music. She received a CETA grant as a composer and performer with *Stonesoup Theatre* in Portland, and has held posts as composer and music arranger with several regional theaters. Theresa is familiar to northwest audiences as a singer and actress with many local theater companies and orchestras. She has performed and directed with the *Thuringer Landestheater*, *Opera Nova*, *Arizona Opera*, and *the Wesley Balk Institute for New Music Theater*. Theresa has founded and arranged music for two performing groups: *dADa* and *Opera for the Hesitant*, and has produced two recordings on the *ZigZag Sound* label. Theresa teaches voice at PCC and in her private vocal studio, and offers courses in Vocal Music Appreciation for *Friends of Chamber Music*.

Liebeslieder Walzer: Johannes Brahms

When the sixty-one year old Brahms came to visit Clara Schumann in 1894, her grandson, Ferdinand, described him in amusing terms:

“At dinner I saw him for the first time in a long while — a corpulent little gentleman, with a full beard beginning to turn gray. The very odd mustache is fiery red on one side and gray on the other. His voice is unusually high and clear and sounds as if it were cracked...The most wonderful thing about [him] is his peculiarly blue eyes. He wears his hair rather low over the back of the coat collar, closely cut on each side. Occasionally he wears a *pince-nez*.”

By this time, Brahms had known the Schumanns for over forty years, and his relationship with them was a complex one to say the least. Robert and Clara had taken Brahms in during the autumn of 1853 and helped the young composer become established. Brahms had watched as tertiary neurosyphilis had destroyed Robert's sanity, and he had fallen in love with Clara in the aftermath of her husband's death. Brahms and Clara had carried on a friendship for the ensuing decades, and the nature of this relationship has been cause for a great deal of voyeuristic speculation, some of it scholarly, some of it...well, not.

The relationship has been described as, “a sizzling mess that left [Brahms’s] life in chaos and filled his music with longing,” scholars have wondered aloud and in print, “Did they or didn’t they...?”, and nearly every piece of Brahms’s music has been mined for hidden references to the composer’s repressed love for his late mentor’s wife. The *Liebeslieder Walzer* are no exception.

Composed in two sets between 1869 and 1875, nearly a quarter-century before the visit Ferdinand recounted, the waltzes reflect Brahms’s fascination with Schubert’s *Ländler* (a triple-meter dance popular throughout the Eastern Alps). In 1869 he also published arrangements of 20 of Schubert’s dances, also for piano four hands. The *Liebeslieder Walzer* (also for piano four hands) closely resemble these *ländler*, and the influence of this arrangement project on them is audible.

Brahms’s texts are culled from a poetry anthology edited by Georg Friedrich Daumer called *Polydora: ein weltpoetisches Liederbuch* (Polydora: a Songbook of World Poetry). It is a compilation of poetry from a variety of worldwide traditions selected, translated, or (frequently) invented out of whole cloth by Daumer. The *Liebeslieder* poems are all “translations” by Daumer except one, the gorgeous concluding piece of opus 65, *Zum Schluß*, for which Brahms resorted to Goethe.

The modern world is familiar with both sets of *Liebeslieder* waltzes as large choral works, chiefly on the basis of a very popular 1966 recording by the Robert Shaw Chorale. Brahms’s original vision, however, was more than likely a quartet of solo voices, since Brahms specifies “4 singing voices” and not “choir” as he did with works more obviously intended for choir. However, since the opus 52 set is marked, “For piano Four Hands (singing *ad libitum*)” it isn’t clear that Brahms had a specific number of voices in mind.

But, what about Clara? Are these pieces, indeed shot through with Brahms’s repressed, unrequited, or otherwise distorted love for her? It’s probably an unanswerable question, but happily, we do know at the least that she enjoyed them. In her diary of July 16th, 1869, she wrote:

Johannes brought me, at the beginning of this month, some charming waltzes for four hands and four voices, sometimes two and two, sometimes all four together, with very pretty, mostly folklike texts...They are extraordinarily attractive (charming even without the voices) and I play them with great joy.

Finally, it’s evident too that Brahms himself liked these pieces. In a letter to his publisher, he said, “I must confess that it was the first time I smiled at the sight of a printed work – of mine! I will risk being called an ass if our *Liebeslieder* don’t give pleasure to a few people.”

Songs of Love and Life: Lisa Ann Marsh

Green Emblem is a gentle reminder of the breath of spring. *The Barn of My Darkness* takes unexpected turns from idyllic animal husbandry to the shrieks of animals being slaughtered for food. This song set for soprano, oboe, and piano was composed in 2013 using poems by Deborah Buchanan.

When You Are Old: Jeff Winslow

When You Are Old, like many of William Butler Yeats’s poems, is addressed to the magnificent Irish actress and agitator Maud Gonne, for whom he carried a torch much of his life. He imagines her, beauty long faded, contemplating her long-ago rejection of him with regret. Like all great works, the poem admits a wide variety of interpretation. If you believe Yeats is being disingenuous at “a little

sadly”, you may prefer a bitterer one than mine. I raise the possibility, but mostly present the story from her side. Extended piano interludes could be reminiscences of times of passion and tenderness for either one. As usual, I include a few obscure references to musically and topically relevant works I admire, especially near the end.

Songs of God and Laughter: Theresa Koon

This work consists of six linked pieces whose texts are English translations of mystic poetry from the Sufi and Hindu traditions. The original poems date from the 12th and 13th centuries A.D. The translators include the well-known poet Robert Bly and Daniel Ladinsky, who has several volumes of translations of Sufi mystic poets.

Rede, Mädchen, allzu liebes,
das mir in die Brust, die kühle,
hat geschleudert mit dem Blicke
diese wilden Glutgefühle!

*Speak, girl whom I love all too well,
you who with your glance have hurled
these wild feelings of ardor
into my once-indifferent heart!*

Willst du nicht dein Herz erweichen,
willst du, eine Überfromme,
rasten ohne traute Wonne,
oder willst du, daß ich komme?

*Won't you soften your heart?
Do you wish to remain overly pious
without a sweet bliss of your own,
or do you want me to come to you?*

Rasten ohne traute Wonne,
nicht so bitter will ich büßen.
Komme nur, du schwarzes Auge.
Komme, wenn die Sterne grüßen.

*To remain without a sweet bliss of my own—
I don't want such a bitter penance.
So come, dark-eyed boy,
come when the stars greet you.*

Am Gesteine rauscht die Flut,
heftig angetrieben:
wer da nicht zu seufzen weiß,
lernt es unterm Lieben.

*The stream dashes against the stones,
violently propelled:
anyone who doesn't learn to sigh at that
will learn it when they fall in love.*

O die Frauen, o die Frauen,
wie sie Wonne tauen!
Wäre lang ein Mönch geworden,
wären nicht die Frauen!

*Oh, women, women,
how they distill rapture!
I'd have become a monk long ago
except for women!*

Wie des Abends schöne Röte
möcht' ich arme Dirne glühen,
Einem, Einem zu gefallen,
sonder Ende Wonne sprühn.

*Like the beautiful red glow of evening
I, a poor lass, would like to shine,
to please one lad, one lad,
to radiate bliss unendingly.*

Die grüne Hopfenranke,
sie schlängelt auf der Erde hin.
Die junge, schöne Dirne,
so traurig ist ihr Sinn!

*The green hopvine,
it trails along the ground.
The young, pretty girl,
how sad are her thoughts!*

Du höre, grüne Ranke!
Was hebst du dich nicht himmelwärts?
Du höre, schöne Dirne!
Was ist so schwer dein Herz?

*Listen, green vine!
Why don't you raise yourself skyward?
Listen, pretty girl!
Why is your heart so heavy?*

Wie höbe sich die Ranke,
der keine Stütze Kraft verleiht?
Wie wäre die Dirne fröhlich,
wenn ihr das Liebste weit?

*How can the vine raise itself
when no prop lends it strength?
How can the girl be happy
when the boy she loves best is far away?*

Ein kleiner, hübscher Vogel

nahm den Flug
zum Garten hin,
da gab es Obst genug.

*A little pretty bird
took flight
to the garden,
where there was fruit in plenty.*

Wenn ich ein hübscher,
kleiner Vogel wär,
ich säumte nicht,
ich täte so wie der.

*If I were
a pretty little bird,
I wouldn't hesitate,
I'd do the same thing he did.*

Leimruten-Arglist
lauert an dem Ort;
der arme Vogel
konnte nicht mehr fort.

*Treacherous birdlime-smeared twigs
were lying in ambush there;
the poor bird
could no longer get away.*

Wenn ich ein hübscher,
kleiner Vogel wär,
ich säumte doch,
ich täte nicht wie der.

*If I were
a pretty little bird,
I would have hesitated,
I wouldn't do what he did.*

Der Vogel kam
in eine schöne Hand,
da tat es ihm,
dem Glücklichen, nicht and.

*The bird fell
into a beautiful girl's hand;
there the lucky fellow
had nothing to complain of.*

Wenn ich ein hübscher,
kleiner Vogel wär,
ich säumte nicht,
ich täte doch wie der.

*If I were
a pretty little bird,
I wouldn't hesitate,
I would do just what he did.*

Green Emblem

Leaf
body
wavering in air
waiting
to fall and mix
become duff
as earth calls
a long
tremulous
moment
hanging
as branch holds
against the pull
the lean
the gravity of desire
and finally
falls into
fecund embrace

The Barn of My Darkness

In the shadowed barn
night against my skin
and the sound of air,
hanging around the rafters
with that peculiar smell of mold.
My hands feel the walls,
caressing old wood silkeness,
wondering if something
can feel golden, feel grayed.

Tentative on unseen ground,
my feet try to find their way
to steadiness, along clumps
of dirt and hay, old ropes,
toes searching out stability,
something known.

Walking through a flow of warmth,
maybe light from a window,
I listen again:
the scurry of small feet,
the exhalations of large animals
(they would be warm to the touch)
and that sound of enclosed air
moving against the walls.
The crackle of leaves
along the roof line.
I too take a breath
pulling into myself
the pungent odors
of food and excrement,
patience and fear,
the smells each animal
living here has given up, bequeathing
its one life breath,
waiting for us
to come and pull it
into ourselves.

Deborah Buchanan

Wohl schön bewandt

war es vorehe
mit meinem Leben,
mit meiner Liebe;
durch eine Wand,
ja, durch zehn Wände
erkannte mich
des Freundes Sehe;
doch jetzo, wehe,
wenn ich dem Kalten
auch noch so dicht
vorm Auge stehe,
es merkt's sein Auge,
sein Herze nicht.

*Previously
my life
was a quite pleasant one,
and so was my love;
through a wall,
yes, through ten walls
my sweetheart's eyes
recognized me;
but now, alas,
no matter how close
I stand to the eyes
of that cold boy,
neither his eyes
nor his heart will take notice.*

Wenn so lind dein Auge mir

und so lieblich schauet
jede letze Trübe flieht,
welche mich umgrauet.

*When your eyes look at me
so mildly and so lovingly,
every last shadow
that had darkened my life vanishes.*

Dieser Liebe schöne Glut,
laß sie nicht verstieben!
Nimmer wird, wie ich, so treu
dich ein Andrer lieben.

*The beautiful flame of this love,
don't let it go out in sparks!
No one else will ever love you
as faithfully as I do.*

Am Donaustrande,

da steht ein Haus,
da schaut ein rosiges
Mädchen aus.

*On the banks of the Danube
there stands a house,
a pink-complexioned girl
looks out from it.*

Das Mädchen,
es ist wohl gut gehegt,
zehn eiserne Riegel
sind vor die Türe gelegt.

*The girl
is well protected,
ten iron bolts
are placed before the door.*

Zehn eiserne Riegel
das ist ein Spaß;
die spreng ich,
als wären sie nur von Glas.

*Ten iron bolts
are just a joke;
I'll snap them
as if they were only made of glass.*

O wie sanft die Quelle sich

durch die Wiese windet;
O wie schön, wenn Liebe sich
zu der Liebe findet!

*Oh, how gently the stream
winds its way through the meadow!
Oh, how beautiful it is when a lover
finds his way to his beloved!*

Nein, es ist nicht auszukommen

mit den Leuten;
Alles wissen sie so giftig
auszudeuten.

*No, there's just no dealing
with people;
they manage to put such an evil
interpretation on everything.*

Bin ich heiter, hegen soll ich
lose Triebe;
bin ich still, so heißt, ich wäre
irr aus Liebe.

*If I'm jolly, they say I harbor
wayward lusts;
if I'm calm, the story is I'm
out of my mind with love.*

Schlosser auf, und mache Schlösser,

Schlösser ohne Zahl!
Denn die bösen Mäuler will ich
schließen allzumal.

*Locksmith, come, and make locks,
locks without number!
For I want to lock up
all the spiteful mouths.*

When you are old and gray and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true;
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face.

And bending down beside the glowing bars
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

William Butler Yeats

Vögelein durchrauscht die Luft,
sucht nach einem Aste;
und das Herz, ein Herz,
ein Herz begehrt, wo es selig rastet.

*The little bird flutters through the air,
it looks for a branch;
and my heart desires a heart
on which it can rest blissfully.*

Sieh, wie ist die Welle klar,
blickt der Mond hernieder!
Die du meine Liebe bist,
liebe du mich wieder!

*See how clear the waters are
when the moon shines down!
You who are my love,
love me in return!*

Nachtigall, sie singt so schön,
wenn die Sterne funkeln.
Liebe mich, geliebtes Herz,
küsse mich im Dunkeln!

*The nightingale sings so beautifully,
when the stars twinkle.
Love me, dear heart,
kiss me in the darkness!*

Ein dunkeler Schacht ist Liebe,
ein gar zu gefährlicher Brunnen;
da fiel ich hinein, ich Armer,
kann weder hören noch sehn,
nur denken an meine Wonnen,
nur stöhnen in meinen Wehn.

*Love is a dark shaft,
a highly dangerous well;
and I, poor fool, fell in;
I can't hear or see,
I can only think about my bliss,
I can only moan in my sorrow.*

Nicht wandle, mein Licht, dort außen
im Flurbereich!
Die Füße würden dir, die zarten,
zu naß, zu weich.

*Light of my life, don't walk out there
in the meadows!
Your tender feet would get
too wet, too soaked.*

All überströmt sind dort die Wege,
die Stege dir;
so überreichlich tränkte dorten
das Auge mir.

*The paths there are all flooded,
and so are the trails,
because my eyes wept
so copiously there.*

Es bebet das Gesträuche;
gestreift hat es im Fluge
ein Vögelein.

*The bushes are quivering;
a little bird
brushed them as it flew by.*

In gleicher Art erbebet
die Seele mir, erschüttert
von Liebe, Lust und Leide,
gedenkt sie dein.

*In the same way my soul
trembles, overcome
by love, pleasure and pain,
whenever it thinks of you.*

First He Looked Confused
I could not lie anymore so I started to call my dog 'God.'
First he looked
confused,

then he started smiling, then he even
danced.

I kept at it: now he doesn't even
bite.

I am wondering if this
might work on
people?

Sant Tukaram/Daniel Ladinsky

Why Mira Can't Go Back To Her Old House
The colors of the Dark One have penetrated Mira's body;
all the other colors washed out.
Making love with the Dark One, and eating little, those are
my pearls and carnelians.

Meditation beads and the forehead streak, those are
my scarves and my rings.
That's enough feminine wiles for me.
My teacher taught me this.
Approve me or disapprove me: I praise the Mountain
Energy
night and day.
I take the path that ecstatic human beings have taken for
centuries.
I don't steal money, I don't hit anyone.
What will you charge me with?
I have felt the swaying of the elephant's shoulders;
and now you want me to climb on a jackass?
Try to be serious!
Mirabai/Robert Bly

Beautiful Hands

This is the kind of Friend
You are –
Without making me realize
My soul's anguished history,
You slip into my house at night,
And while I am sleeping,
You silently carry off
All my suffering and sordid past
In Your beautiful
Hands.
Hafiz/Daniel Ladinsky

Damn Thirsty

First,
the fish needs to say,

“Something ain't right about this
camel ride –

and I'm Feeling so damn

thirsty.”
Hafiz/Daniel Ladinsky

Then Winks

Everything is clapping today,

Light,
Sound,
Motion,
all movement.

A rabbit I pass pulls a cymbal
from a hidden pocket
then winks.

This causes a few planets and I
to go nuts
and start grabbing each other.

Someone sees this,
calls a
shrink,

Tries to get me
committed
for
being too
happy.

Listen: this world is the lunatic's sphere,
don't always agree it's real.

Even with my feet upon it
and the postman knowing my door

My address is somewhere else.
Hafiz/Daniel Ladinsky

You Were Brave

You have done well
in the contest of madness.

You were brave in that holy war.

You have all the honorable wounds
of one who has tried to find love
where the Beautiful Bird
does not drink.

May I speak to you
like we are close
and locked away together?
Once I found a stray kitten
and I used to soak my fingers
in warm milk;

It came to think I was five mothers
on one hand.

Wayfarer,
why not rest your tired body?
Lean back and close your eyes.

Come morning
I will kneel by your side and feed you.
I will so gently
spread open your mouth
and let you taste something of my
sacred mind and life.

Surely
there is something wrong
with your ideas of
God

O, surely there is something wrong
with your ideas of
God

If you think
our Beloved would not be so
tender.

Hafiz/Daniel Ladinsky

Vom Gebirge Well auf Well

kommen Regengüsse,
und ich gäbe dir so gern
hunderttausend Küsse.

*From the mountains, wave after wave,
come downpours of rain,
and I want so much to give you
a hundred thousand kisses.*

Weiche Gräser in Revier,

schöne, stille Plätzchen!
O, wie linde ruht es hier
sich mit einem Schätzchen!

*Soft grass all around,
lovely, quiet spots!
Oh, how soothing it is to rest here
with one's sweetheart!*

Nagen am Herzen fühl ich ein Gift mir.

Kann sich ein Mädchen,
ohne zu fröhnen zärtlichem Hang,
fassen ein ganzes wonneberaubtes Leben entlang?

*I feel a poison gnawing at my heart.
Is it possible for a maiden
not to give in to her tender inclinations
and live her entire life robbed of bliss?*

Ich kose süß mit der und der

und werde still und kranke,
denn ewig, ewig kehrt zu dir,
o Nonna, mein Gedanke!

*I sweetly fondle this girl and that,
and grow quiet and sick at heart,
for always, always, toward you
my thoughts turn, o Nonna!*

Alles, alles in den Wind

sagst du mir, du Schmeichler!
Alle samt verloren sind
deine Müh'n, du Heuchler!

*All, all is lost to the wind
of what you say to me, you flatterer!
Altogether, all your efforts
are lost, you pretender!*

Einem andern Fang' zu lieb
stelle deine Falle!
Denn du bist ein loser Dieb,
denn du bist um alle!

*Be so good as to set your trap
for another!
For you are a loose thief,
for you have been with them all!*

Zum Schluß

Nun, ihr Musen, genug!
Vergebens strebt ihr zu schildern,
wie sich Jammer und Glück
wechseln in liebender Brust.
Heilen könnet die Wunden
ihr nicht, die Amor geschlagen,
aber Linderung kommt einzig,
ihr Guten, von euch.

In Conclusion

*Now, you Muses, enough!
In vain you strive to depict
how lamentation and happiness
alternate in the heart that loves.
You cannot heal the wounds
that Amor has inflicted,
but, you kind ones, relief
comes only from you.*



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Jessica Israels	Alice J. Tallmadge
G. Jane Jarrett	Jonathan Tamez & Keith Walters
Josquin des Prez	Ruby Tang
Beth Knoll	Simon Thompson
Paul & Susan Knoll	Laura Thoreson
Soren Knudsen	Ann & Peter van Bever
Shohei Kobayashi	Ruud & Catherine van der Salm
Stephanie Kramer	Keith Walters
Frank La Rocca	Ann Wetherell
Ronni Lacroute	WillaKenzie Estate
Dr. Gary J. LeClair	Jeff Winslow
Barbara Leone	Tim & Sarah Wright



The Ensemble

Patrick McDonough, Artistic Director

My Sweetest Life

Vancouver: November 18, 2016, 7:00p

Eugene: November 19, 2016, 7:00p

Portland: November 20, 2016, 3:00p