

Second Year Master's Student Recital at Barnett Hall

17, March, 2024

10:30 a.m.

Brett Durocher, tuba

Excerpts from:

<i>The Damnation of Faust: Hungarian March</i>	Hector Berlioz (1803 - 1869)
<i>Symphonie Fantastique</i>	Hector Berlioz (1803 – 1869)
<i>Symphony no. 2</i>	Johannes Brahms (1833 – 1897)
<i>Symphony no. 7</i>	Anton Bruckner (1824 – 1896)
<i>An American in Paris</i>	George Gershwin (1898 – 1937)
<i>Symphonic Metamorphosis</i>	Paul Hindemith (1895 – 1963)
<i>The Planets: Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity</i>	Gustav Holst (1874 – 1934)
<i>Symphony no. 1</i>	Gustav Mahler (1860 – 1911)
<i>Symphony no. 2</i>	Gustav Mahler (1860 – 1911)
<i>Symphony no. 5</i>	Gustav Mahler (1860 – 1911)
<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847)
<i>Symphony no. 5</i>	Sergei Prokofiev (1891 – 1953)
<i>Fountains of Rome</i>	Ottorino Respighi (1879 – 1936)
<i>Symphony no. 5</i>	Dmitri Shostakovich (1906 – 1975)
<i>Ein Heldenleben</i>	Richard Strauss (1864 – 1949)

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Excerpts from: (Continued)

<i>Petrushka</i>	Igor Stravinsky (1882 – 1971)
<i>La Forza Del Destino</i>	Giuseppe Verdi (1813 – 1901)
<i>Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg</i>	Richard Wagner (1813 – 1883)
<i>Die Walküre</i>	Richard Wagner (1813 – 1883)

Solo

<i>Concerto for Bass Tuba</i>	Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 – 1958)
1. <i>Allegro moderato</i>	

*Certain excerpts may be excluded at the discretion of the adjudication panel during the performance.

This recital is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Master of Music degree with a major in Tuba.

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Program Notes

The Damnation of Faust: Hungarian March – Hector Berlioz

This excerpt is one of several on today's list that is called for on nearly every single tuba audition in the world. The piece itself comes from a folktale written approximately five hundred years ago by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. In a way, Berlioz was really the third owner of this piece of music. Originally composed by János Bihari and titled "*Rákóczy March* (aka the Hungarian March)" (Steinberg, 2019), it was brought to popularity through an arrangement by "Franz Liszt, who transmuted it into one of his Hungarian Rhapsodies" (Steinberg, 2019).

Symphonie Fantastique – Hector Berlioz

This excerpt comes in the finale of this work. Berlioz composed this piece at the age of twenty-seven in the year 1830. However, he made use of "material sketched as early as 1819" (Fantastic Symphony: Episode in the Life of An Artist, Op. 14, n.d.), when the composer would have been approximately sixteen years old. This piece was an immense accomplishment for Berlioz who had little musical training prior to 1826, when he enrolled in "the composition curriculum at the Paris Conservatoire" (Fantastic Symphony: Episode in the Life of An Artist, Op. 14, n.d.). This is the piece that he is best known for, which is especially remarkable considering the fact that it was his first symphony and one of his first long form works.

Symphony No. 2 – Johannes Brahms

The tuba part of this piece presents two commonly requested excerpts that are near one another in the piece itself. Brahms was a rather self-deprecating individual and liked to downplay his accomplishments. Referring to this piece, he "told his friend, Elisabeth von Herzogenberg, that it was merely a little *Sinfonia*." (Meltzer, 2020). He also told "critic Eduard Hanslick that 'there is nothing clever about it,'" (Meltzer, 2020). Despite this, Brahms' Symphony No. 2 is one of his most beloved works, especially impressive considering the fact that it took him a mere three months to compose it.

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Program Notes (Continued)

Symphony No. 7 – Anton Bruckner

Anton Bruckner found success later in his life. “It was not until his sixties that he was truly appreciated as a composer.” (Williams Tobias, 2017). It was through “extensive promotion by [composers] Mahler and Furtwängler” that Bruckner was able to establish his “eventual credit and acclaim.” (Williams Tobias, 2017). Bruckner’s writing in his seventh symphony is important work for low brass players. His work as an organist influences the way that players must approach his writing. He was very particular with his choice of markings in each part and the player must strive to adhere to them while representing the lower pedals available to organists.

An American in Paris – George Gershwin

George Gershwin made several attempts in his early career at merging classical and jazz genres including *Blue Monday*, *Rhapsody in Blue*, and *Concerto in F*. He had become “enamored with the music he heard uptown in Harlem, a region that was quickly becoming the center of the jazz universe.” (Kopplin). These works were well received by everybody but musical critics. This continued to be the case when Gershwin premiered *An American In Paris*, although the critical response was less negative than before. The critics were slow to adapt to Gershwin’s new style. The same could not be said for audiences, with whom *An American in Paris* was wildly successful. This translated into success with Hollywood as well, with the piece being featured in the 1951 film of the same name, forever immortalizing the piece of music.

Symphonic Metamorphosis – Paul Hindemith

This piece was originally composed in 1940 as “a series of movements based on themes by Weber, to be used in a ballet for a dance company run by Léonide Massine” (Posner). However, due to creative differences between the pair of Hindemith and Massine, the project was never performed. In 1943, Hindemith redid the music to reflect the tastes of American audiences where they were becoming accustomed to the colourful, although entirely different, styles of Stravinsky, and Gershwin. This was very successful for Hindemith and the piece remains perhaps his “most popular work, even if critics often feel compelled to denigrate it.” (Posner).

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Program Notes (Continued)

The Planets – Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity – Gustav Holst

Gustav Holst is one of the most well-known English composers to ever live. Notably, his work has heavily influenced the wind-band tradition since his compositional beginnings at the end of the 19th century. That being said, the work that brought him the most acclaim was one of his orchestral works, *The Planets*. He began “composing it around 1914, completing the full score three years later.” (Chan-Hartley, 2023). *The Planets* is an interesting piece for orchestra as it is neither a symphony nor a tone poem. Rather, it is a suite. “His own working title for *The Planets* was ‘Seven Pieces for Large Orchestra.’” (Chan-Hartley, 2023). It was important to Holst that every movement of this piece communicated something with the audience. “Jupiter is, in Holst’s words, ‘the musical embodiment of ceremonial jollity’” (Chan-Hartley, 2023).

Symphony No. 1 – Gustav Mahler

Gustav Mahler’s Symphony No. 1 had two different premieres. The world premiere was in 1889 with the Budapest Philharmonic, where “Mahler himself conducted the first performance of the work, then called *Symphonic Poem in Two Parts*” (Steinberg, 2019). The second premiere was where audiences got their first chance to hear the work in the four-movement form that audiences can hear it in today, when it was performed with the New York Philharmonic ten years later, on December 16, 1909. Mahler is well known for his constant revisions long after works had already been premiered. In 1893, though not for the final time, he revised the score and “called it a symphony in five movements and two parts, also giving it the name *Titan* after a novel by Jean Paul, a key figure in German literary Romanticism and one of Mahler’s favorite writers.” (Steinberg, 2019). The excerpt from this symphony comes from the 3rd movement, where a minor arrangement of the chanson *Frère Jacques* is passed in solo voices throughout nearly the entire orchestra beginning with the string bass, before being passed along to the tuba.

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Program Notes (Continued)

Symphony No. 2 – Gustav Mahler

One year prior to the original premiere of Mahler's first symphony, he had already begun composing his second. At least, he had begun the framework of it. A multitude of setbacks, including the tragic deaths of Mahler's father, mother, and sister within a few months of each other, would prevent him from continuing his work as a composer at all. His *Symphonic Poem in Two Parts* had been met with severe criticism upon premiere and he was already working full-time as the conductor of the Hungarian Royal Opera. "He did not return to the project that would become Symphony no. 2 until the summer months of 1893." (Jo Basinger) Mahler wrote music based on his inspiration, as was mentioned earlier with his inclusion of *Frère Jacques* in his first symphony. The internal movements of *Symphony no. 2* were rearrangements of other pieces that Mahler himself had composed. For example, the third movement is an orchestral version of his *Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt* for voice and piano. The finale of this grand symphony was inspired by Mahler's attendance at "the funeral for his fellow Hamburg conductor Hans von Bülow" (Jo Basinger). The performance of Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock's *Auferstehen* is where Mahler got the first two stanzas of poetry for which he would append twenty-seven lines of his own devising to be performed with choir and orchestra.

Symphony No. 5 – Gustav Mahler

This work is one that was very close to Mahler's heart. He began work on this piece shortly after becoming a father with his new wife, Alma Schindler. It was likely due to this sentimentality that he never felt as though it was truly complete. It premiered in 1904 to mixed responses. "It was not until one of his last letters, in February 1911, that Mahler could finally say, 'The Fifth is finished. I have been forced to re-orchestrate it completely. I fail to comprehend how at that time [1904] I could have blundered so like a greenhorn.'" (Des Moines Symphony, 2023). Mahler did not shy away from utilization of the tuba. His music reflects an understanding of the capabilities of the instrument within the orchestration. The performing player will often be asked to display a wide range of emotions through the musical style. Mahler himself felt some of the greatest joy and greatest sadness that life could offer, with many deeming his life a

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Program Notes (Continued)

Symphony no. 5 cont.

tragedy. The performing tubist is no spectator to the communication of this through Mahler's music.

A Midsummer Night's Dream – Felix Mendelssohn

"Mendelssohn and his family were ardent fans of the works of William Shakespeare, which had been translated into German in 1790." (Schwartz, 2023). Some fifty-three years later, Felix Mendelssohn was commissioned to "write incidental music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*" (Schwartz, 2023). It premiered in October of 1843 at the palace in Potsdam. This is a good opportunity for the tubist to demonstrate their ability to play with two distinct styles in the upper register of the horn: lyrical, and accented.

Symphony No. 5 – Sergei Prokofiev

Sergei Prokofiev lived in a time of great conflict. Not only were "his life and works... profoundly affected by... the Russian Revolution" (Newman, 2013), but by "World War II" (Newman, 2013) as well. *Symphony no. 5*, in particular, was completely influenced by the second world war, being written in 1944. In fact, "its premiere performance had to be briefly halted due to celebratory cannon fire outside the concert hall" (Newman, 2013). This was January 13th, 1945, in the Moscow Conservatory Great Hall, with Prokofiev himself conducting the premiere performance. The composition of this work took Prokofiev one month from start to finish.

Fountains of Rome – Ottorino Respighi

This is the first work in Respighi's Roman trilogy of symphonic poems. "The first part of the poem, inspired by the Fountain of Valle Giulia, depicts a pastoral landscape." (Sampson, 2022). This work is infamous in the world of the auditioning tubist for its difficult combination of intricate articulation, flexibility between the middle/lower registers of the horn, and power. The performer must be able to achieve a powerful sound that does not sacrifice style and clarity despite the register changes and rhythmic intensity.

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Program Notes (Continued)

Symphony No. 5 – Dmitri Shostakovich

Shostakovich began his career before his twentieth birthday with his first symphony. This work was praised by the Russian audiences and critics alike with some calling him “the brightest star in the Soviet musical firmament” (Rodda, 2023). During “the mid-1930s, however, the years during which Stalin tightened his iron grasp on Russia” (Rodda, 2023), Shostakovich fell from grace with the Soviet government as he was allowed less artistic freedom and was criticized for his “formalism” (Rodda, 2023). This changed with the premiere of his *Symphony no. 5*. It was received well and “in 1940 [Shostakovich] was awarded the Stalin Prize, the highest achievement then possible for a Russian composer.” (Rodda, 2023). Notably, however, Shostakovich did not see this as some sort of perseverance through adversarial circumstance. He remarked “The rejoicing is forced, created under threat” (Rodda, 2023). Today, Shostakovich’s *Symphony no. 5* remains one of the most programmed and popular works of the 20th century.

Ein Heldenleben – Richard Strauss

Ein Heldenleben (A Hero’s Life) is an autobiographical response by Strauss to the “critics who were hostile to his innovations.” (Gibbs, 2022). Strauss began his compositional career with many of his works adhering to traditional classical forms. This would not last forever, however, as his works became heavily influenced by the music of Richard Wagner. “He hit his stride with *Don Juan* (1888), *Death and Transfiguration* (1889), and *Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks* (1895), and by the time he wrote *Also sprach Zarathustra* in 1896 his works were attracting enormous attention and provoking passionate critical debate.” (Gibbs, 2022). The tuba excerpts from this piece challenge the performer by requiring flexibility and accuracy through many unexpected sonorities.

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Program Notes (Continued)

Petrushka – Igor Stravinsky

Stravinsky composed *Petrushka* over the span of nine months from 1910 to 1911. It was premiered with Diaghilev's Ballets Russes at the Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris. This was Stravinsky's second great success following his previous year's premiere *The Firebird*. Stravinsky was one to abandon a work the moment it has been premiered. Not only was it performed as a ballet, but the success of the music itself allowed it to go on and get performed in concert in 1914, at the Casino di Paris. This was not the final revision, however. Some thirty years later, Stravinsky would reorchestrate it by "reducing the original instrumentation somewhat, particularly in the woodwinds and brass" (Ledbetter). The new version, dubbed the "1947 version" for its year of publication, is now the most popular programming of this work. The tubist has a special role in this work as there is a major solo later in the work. This solo challenges the player as there is lengthy rest prior to their entrance at a fortissimo dynamic in the upper register. The player must trust their ear and arrive with confidence. As the solo nears its end, there is a large written decrescendo down to pianissimo. This requires a display of control from the performer that is more exposed than nearly any work in the orchestral tuba's repertoire.

La Forza Del Destino – Giuseppe Verdi

Giuseppe Verdi was not just a monumentally important composer, but also an important muse of the Italian political climate. "He was considered a nationalist composer... Verdi's use of nationalism is found in the use of nationalist plots in many of his operas, especially those written during the quest for Italian unification." (Newman, 2012). Compositionally, Verdi was the famous successor to such composers as Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti. The original premiere of this work, in 1862, was not quite as successful as Verdi had originally hoped it would be. This led him to begin alterations to the score the following year. Finally, in 1869, a "a revised version with additions by Antonio Ghislanzoni" (Newman, 2012) was premiered at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan. One of the major differences was in the overture. Verdi's original concise prelude had expanded to into "a lengthy assemblage of melodies from the opera" (Newman, 2012). This opera is well known as one of Verdi's finest achievements in dramatic intricacy through opera. Today, the overture is often programmed with orchestra alone.

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Program Notes (Continued)

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg – Richard Wagner

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg was composed on the heels of an excruciating humiliation that Wagner suffered. “The high-profile revival of his early opera *Tannhäuser*... caused such a scandalous uproar that Wagner... canceled the production after only three performances” (May). This took place in the year 1861. It is likely that this sting of embarrassment is what caused Wagner to take a temporary leave of absence from his typical music drama and into comedy, for which he had notable disdain. What was meant to be a quick break from the serious subject matter that Wagner was known for would last over six years as *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* was not finished and premiered until the year 1868. Wagner never shied away from the usage of the tuba. In that regard, he was a pioneer. The overture for this piece relies heavily on the tuba for the melody. The two excerpts from this piece are the two primary melodies in the tuba part.

Die Walküre – Richard Wagner

Die Walküre is the second of four operas in Wagner’s ring cycle. Included in this are *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung*. The four pieces together add up to over fifteen hours of music. The length alone points to the epic nature of these pieces. *Die Walküre* is the single most recognizable tuba excerpt in the repertoire. Nearly every audition in the world will ask for this excerpt in the first round. It has even been extremely popular commercially with many appearances in film, tv, and advertising. The excerpt itself is quite challenging as it requires much agility in the low register of the contrabass tuba as well as control over articulation style at a loud volume.

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Program Notes (Continued, fin.)

Concerto for Bass Tuba – Ralph Vaughan Williams

Vaughan Williams' *Concerto for Bass Tuba and Orchestra* was first premiered with soloist Philip Catelinet in June, 1954. Ralph Vaughan Williams was an important figure in English music during the 20th century. He studied "Royal College of Music, where he struck up a long-lasting friendship with Gustav Holst" (Clifford, 2008). "In his thirties, Vaughan Williams studied briefly in Paris with Ravel." (Clifford, 2008). Despite this, there was very little influence from Ravel seen in Vaughan Williams' music. That is, except for his possible inspiration from Ravel's saxophone and tuba solos. *Concerto for Bass Tuba* was a commission made by the London Symphony Orchestra "to mark the orchestra's jubilee in 1954." (Clifford, 2008). It is no understatement to say that this piece of music has earned its place as one of the most important works for the tuba repertoire. Not only is it asked for in almost all auditions for orchestral work, nearly every tuba student in the world will play it in a university or college solo recital at some point in their education. The work demonstrates nearly the full range of the instrument, challenges the player to adjust style rapidly as articulations change in the middle of measures, and showcases the tuba's ability to play beautiful music without a section of other low brass players to help.

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