

Illinois State University

ISU ReD: Research and eData

School of Music Programs

Music

9-21-1997

Brahms' Two Piano Concertos

Glenn Block Director/Conductor
Illinois State University

Julian Dawson Piano

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/somp>



Part of the [Music Performance Commons](#)

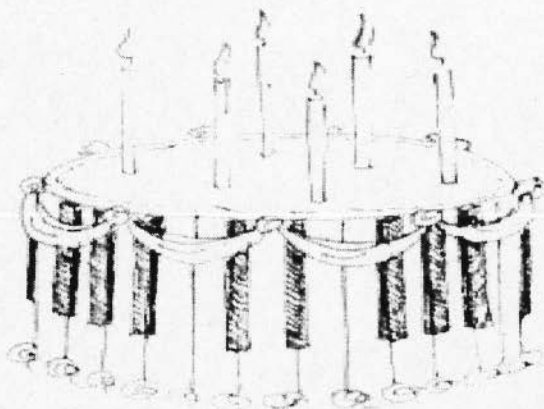
Recommended Citation

Block, Glenn Director/Conductor and Dawson, Julian Piano, "Brahms' Two Piano Concertos" (1997).
School of Music Programs. 1570.
<https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/somp/1570>

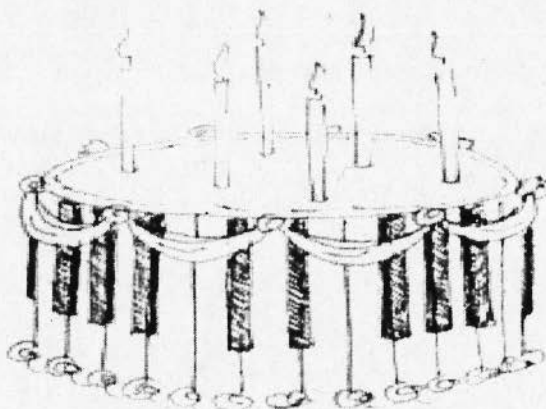
This Concert Program is brought to you for free and open access by the Music at ISU ReD: Research and eData. It has been accepted for inclusion in School of Music Programs by an authorized administrator of ISU ReD: Research and eData. For more information, please contact ISURed@ilstu.edu.

Illinois State University Symphony Orchestra

**JULIAN DAWSON 60TH BIRTHDAY
CELEBRATION CONCERT**



Brahms' Two Piano Concertos



September 21, 1997
Braden Auditorium, 3:00 pm
Glenn Block, Music Director and Conductor
Julian Dawson, Piano

The seventh program of the 1997-98 season

**JULIAN DAWSON 60TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
CONCERT**

Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80 (1880)

Johannes Brahms
(1833 - 1897)

from Enigma Variations, Op. 36 (1899)
"Nimrod"

Sir Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)

Dedicated to the memories of Princess Diana, Mother Theresa,
and Sir Georg Solti

(The audience is requested to stand during the performance of the Elgar, with-
hold applause and maintain a minute of silence upon its conclusion.)

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1 in D minor, op.15 (1858)

Brahms

I - Maestoso
II - Adagio
III - Rondo: Allegro non troppo

INTERMISSION

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2 in B-flat Major, op.38 (1881)

Brahms

I - Allegro non troppo
II - Allegro appassionato
III - Andante
 Ya Lin Song, cello
IV - Allegretto grazioso

This concert also commemorates
the 100th anniversary year
of the death of Brahms
and the 140th anniversary year
of the birth of Elgar.

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)



Academic Festival Overture, Op.80

In 1879, Breslau University granted Brahms an honorary of
Doctor of Philosophy degree; a year later, in return he wrote an
overture to express his appreciation. The Academic Festival
Overture is based on four student songs that were popular at the
time. This composition has been described as a "merry potpourri
of student songs" and is written in one continuous movement. The
Overture involves the largest instrumentation Brahms ever wrote,
utilizing the rarely scored (by Brahms) piccolo, bass drum, and
triangle. This colorful and brilliant piece is often performed as it
displays a strong sense of national pride.

The soft introduction anticipates the principal theme of the
Overture as well as the first student song, "Wir hatten gebauet"
("We had built a stately house"). This hymn-like tune features a
choir of trumpets and horns. The second song, "Weihelied" ("The
Father of His Country") appears as a flowing melody in the violins
and the third song, "Fuchslid" ("What comes there from on
high") features a jocular duet in the bassoons. The coda introduces
the fourth and most famous song, "Gaudeamus igitur" ("Let us then
be merry"). The majestic ending combines brass and woodwinds
overvirtuoso scale passages in the violins.

Piano Concerto No.1 in D minor, Op.15

The first piano concerto actually originated from a two-piano sonata. It was then reworked as a symphony, but finally became a piano concerto, Brahms' first major orchestral work. Brahms had been writing this around the time when he first met Robert and Clara Schumann. Because Robert had committed suicide, many find that the composition displays Brahms' grief over the death of his friend. Ironically, some may also hear the conflict and passion of his growing relationship with Clara displayed in the piece.

The first public performance of the concerto was in 1859 with the composer as soloist. It was poorly received by the audience, possibly for the perceived lack of overt virtuosity, the integrated texture of piano within the orchestra, and the massive scale of the work. Another reason might have been that Brahms was still a fairly new composer to those in Leipzig. This hurt Brahms' young ego and much revision was planned, for he also thought it bore "the stamp of amateurishness".

The opening of the first movement is a bold and stormy theme. This eventually leads to the contrasting second theme, introduced by the solo piano. Brahms had written Clara after Robert's death and said, "...I am also painting a tender portrait of you which is to become the Adagio." The second movement is gentle, like his beloved Clara. Solo piano opens the final movement, a rondo, which brings the concerto to a majestic close.

Piano Concerto No.2 in B-flat Major, Op.83

The second piano concerto was written between the years 1878-81; its first performance was in Budapest, with Brahms as soloist. The work is dedicated to Edvard Marxsen, Brahms' long time tutor and "my faithful friend and master." The concerto stands outside of tradition because of the addition of the fourth movement. Brahms claimed that the first movement was "so harmless" (simple) that another movement was needed before the third movement Andante.

The concerto opens with a single horn, a sound Brahms grew to love as a result of hearing his father practicing the instrument. Again, Brahms ventures out of the norm, in which the power of the orchestra is offset by the soloist. In more traditional 19th century romantic concertos, the orchestra often delivers "the massive force what the solo player can make subtle and delicate with eloquence and ornamentation." Brahms reverses these traditional roles of orchestra and soloist by giving the soloist grand, powerful statements. Also, the orchestra tends to borrow material from the soloist, rather than the other way round, which is more common. The second movement's scherzo bursts with energy and excitement. The contrasting, reflective third movement is based on the solo cello opening theme. This theme is passed from cello to violins to solo piano throughout the movement. The finale is a light gypsy dance of Hungarian heritage.

Notes by Anne Decker

JULIAN DAWSON was born and educated in Dublin, Ireland. He became a U.S. Citizen in 1985. He began his piano career by winning all the major trophies at the annual Dublin competitive festival, Feis Ceoil. After graduating in music from Trinity College, Dublin University and gaining Diplomas in Performance and teaching from the Royal College of Music and the Royal Academy of Music in London, he was appointed staff pianist of the B.B.C. (British Broadcasting Corporation) in Scotland.

In 1970, Mr. Dawson performed the complete cycle of the Beethoven sonatas in Glasgow and again at the Edinburgh Festival. They were among many of Dawson's recitals and concertos broadcast by the BBC. He recorded the Beethoven sonata cycle again in 1982 for Public Radio (WGLT).

Mr. Dawson came to the United States in 1975 as Orchestra/Opera Conductor and Professor of Piano at Illinois State University. In 1979 he was appointed music Director of the Bloomington-Normal Symphony, a post he held until 1984. Since 1988, he has been opera conductor at Brevard Music Center (summers). He has continued to pursue a rigorous schedule of performances as pianist, both solo and in chamber music, and as conductor in the U.S. and overseas. Today's performance is the first time he has performed both Brahms piano concertos on the same program.

GLENN BLOCK has served since 1990 as Director of Orchestras and Opera at Illinois State University. He received the Performers Certificate from the Eastman School of Music, and the Ph.D. from the University of California at San Diego. Dr. Block has appeared as a guest conductor of professional orchestras and all-state orchestras in 36 states. Foreign guest conducting has included concerts in Canada, Colombia, South America, Spain, France and Estonia. Dr. Block also serves as Music Director of the Youth Symphony of Kansas City, one of the nation's largest youth symphony programs. The Kansas City Youth Symphony has appeared on tour throughout Spain, at the Banff International Festival of Youth Orchestras and in their Carnegie Hall debut in June, 1997. Beginning September, 1997, Dr. Block has also assumed the music directorship of the Sangamon Valley Youth Symphony, an affiliate orchestra of the Illinois Symphony Orchestra in Springfield.

ISU SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Glenn Block, Music Director and Conductor

VIOLIN I

•Benjamin Roberts
--Concertmaster
Al Bartosik
Stephanie Deimer
Miquel DePablo
Airi Enomoto
Mary Gomez
Michelle Kang
Colleen Moss
Jennifer Smith

VIOLIN II

•Megan Brady
Christopher Baranyk
Elizabeth Hunt
Peter Jufferbruch
Christine Sands
Matthew Stedman
Jackie Stevenson
Kelli Stocker
Rick Warner

VIOLA

•Peggy Weiss
Emily Daoust
Steve Hampton

CELLO

•Chris Frey
•Yalin Song
Charley Davenport
Brian Gaona
Aaron Gradberg
Erin Hughes
Nathaniel Johnson
Nicole Novak
Kimberly Martin
Marie Zieske

BASS

•Cliff Hunt
Joel Packer
Jeremy Reiner
Benjamin Sullivan
John Van Benthuysen

FLUTE

•Christina L. Barnes
•Sabina M. White
Jennifer Smith (piccolo)
Anne Decker

OBOE

•Jennifer Schraml
Deana Rumsey

TIMPANI/PERCUSSION

•Shawn Neely
Jeff Matter
Nick Anderson
Roger True

ISU INSTRUMENTAL FACULTY

Kim Reisinger, flute	Judy Dicker, oboe	Aris Chavez, clarinet
Michael Dicker, bassoon	Joe Neisler, horn	Amy Gilreath, trumpet
Steve Parsons, trombone	David Collier, percussion	Sarah Gentry, violin
Kate Hamilton, viola	Greg Hamilton, cello	William Koehler, bass

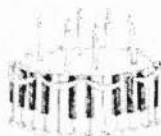
STAFF

Anne Decker, *Assistant Conductor*
Colleen Moss, *Orchestra Manager / Librarian*

ORCHESTRA COMMITTEE

Kimberly Martin, *Chairman*
Christina L. Barnes
Ryan Heseltine
Anne Decker
Benjamin Roberts

• denotes principal. Players are listed in each section alphabetically after principals.



**Upcoming ISU Symphony Orchestra
performances include:**

Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*

with ISU Choirs, Bloomington Singing Y'ers, faculty soloists
3 pm , Sunday, October 12
Braden Auditorium
(Admission charge)

ISU Chamber Orchestra

Greg Hamilton, cellist
7 pm, Wednesday, November 5
Kemp Recital Hall

Orchestra Tour to Chicago

November 11-13

Holiday Concert

7 pm, Sunday, December 12
Braden Auditorium
(Admission charge)

