

***Beaverton  
Symphony  
Orchestra***

Travis Hatton, Music Director

*with special guest*

*artists*

***3 Leg Torso***

**Friday 7:30pm  
January 17, 2014**

**Sunday 3:00pm  
January 19, 2014**

[beavertonsymphony.org](http://beavertonsymphony.org)



# Beaverton Symphony Orchestra

with

special guest artists *3 Leg Torso*

Johannes Brahms  
(1833-1897)

**Hungarian Dance No. 6**

Béla Bartók  
(1881-1945)

**Hungarian Sketches**

*Evening in the Village*

*Bear Dance*

*Melody*

*A Bit Topsy*

*Dance of the Swineherds*

Aram Khachaturian  
(1903-1978)

**Masquerade Suite**

*Waltz*

*Nocturne*

*Mazurka*

*Romance*

*Galop*

**Intermission**

3 Leg Torso

**Selected works**

*Astor in Paris*

*Frailach Fun Der Chupa*

*Frog – Secret Agent*

*Counterpoint*

*Beym Rebyn in Palestina*

*The Life and Times and Good Deeds of Saint Penguin*

*Sinfonia Misterioso*

## Program Notes by Hugh Ferguson

### Johannes Brahms: *Hungarian Dance No. 6*

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) master of the symphonic form, began his career as a pianist, playing in seedy taverns in his native Hamburg. He was a teen-ager, and he was augmenting his family's income.

At seventeen, he heard the Jewish Hungarian Eduard Remenyi play Hungarian Gypsy, or Roma, music on the violin. Brahms liked what he heard. Three years later, he was accompanying Remenyi on the piano.

The taste for Roma music remained with Brahms, as did his penchant for piano music. (He was a keyboard virtuoso.) The two interests merged to produce, in 1869, 21 *Hungarian Dances* written for piano four-hands: piano duets to be played by two people sitting at the same keyboard.

The piano, in the mid-nineteenth century, had become an immensely popular instrument in middle-class households throughout Western civilization. It held sway as the supreme music source — there was of course no radio or phonograph to listen to — around which families would gather. And when pieces were composed for four hands, it meant that two people could play at once at the same piano.

Ranging in length from about one minute to four, the *Hungarian Dances* were a phenomenal success, and were played all over the world in their original form. Later, Brahms would arrange ten of them for solo piano. Countless third-party arrangements for individual instruments, ensembles, and orchestras appeared over the years.

Albert Parlow (1824-1888) orchestrated Number Six, which we hear this evening. While doing so, he transposed it from D flat major to D major, for which all string players will be forever grateful. In 1880, Parlow was made Musikdirektor of the Prussian Army.

## **Béla Bartók: *Hungarian Sketches***

Like Brahms, Béla Bartók (1881-1945) began his musical career as a pianist. Bartók, too, became a virtuoso performer. Also like Brahms, he drew on Hungarian folk music to produce short pieces for the piano. In 1931 he selected five of these and orchestrated them under the title *Hungarian Sketches*.

Four of these are dances. But they sound nothing like the *Hungarian Dances* of Brahms. The reason is that there is Hungarian folk music, and then there is Hungarian *gypsy* folk music. Brahms (and Liszt before him) drew on Hungarian gypsy music, but simply called it Hungarian. Bartók, however, drew on the music of the Magyar peasants of the Hungarian countryside. Starting in 1908, with his friend Zoltán Kodály, he traveled across Transylvania, often lugging bulky and primitive recording equipment, gathering thousands of songs, making sound recordings of them or transcribing them by hand.

He found that few of the melodies he came across were in the conventional major and minor scales. They were more likely to be based on pentatonic scales, similar to those in Asian folk traditions. What's more, they were monodies: they consisted of a single melodic line, without any accompaniment or harmonizing voice or voices. And because of the scales they were in, the traditional Western classical rules of harmony wouldn't work. So Bartók set about developing a new way of harmonizing, growing out of the tunes he had found and the scales they were in. In this way he constructed his piano pieces, as well as accompaniments for countless songs using other instruments. And they will never be mistaken for Brahms.

Bartók, in this suite, gives every piece a name. (Brahms merely numbered his *Hungarian Dances*.)

1 - "Evening in the Village" (sometimes translated as "Evening in Transylvania.") Bucolic and serene, it may remind some of passages from Ferde Grofé's *Grand Canyon Suite*.

2 - "Bear Dance" Bartók wrote that the piece was intended as an "Impression of a bear dancing to the song of his leader and growling to the accompaniment of a drum."

3 - "Melody" A gentle theme that grows steadily in volume as it passes from the violins to the clarinet to the low strings.

4 - "A Bit Topsy" A humorous portrayal of a staggering drunk.

5 - "Dance of the Swineherds" The only piece to use an actual folk song. A lively dance.

Bartók orchestrated these pieces as a commercial venture, so that he could profit from their performances, both in concert halls and on the radio, which, in 1931, when these pieces were published, was just coming into its heyday.

## **Aram Khachaturian: *Masquerade Suite***

Aram Khachaturian (1903–1978) was known for drawing inspiration from the folk music of his native Armenia, with its characteristic scale progressions of Caucasian melodies, but the music in his *Masquerade Suite* seems almost as if it could have been drawn from Tchaikovsky. This can be at least partially explained by the fact that Khachaturian composed it originally as incidental music for a play written in 1836, just four years before Tchaikovsky's birth.

*Masquerade*, by Mikhail Lemontov, considered the supreme poet of Russian literature alongside Pushkin and the greatest figure in Russian Romanticism, was revived in Moscow in 1941, and Khachaturian was asked to write incidental music for it. The play deals with the aristocracy of Czarist Russia, and in order to get the flavor that period in Russian music, Khachaturian immersed himself in romances and waltzes from Lermontov's time.

In 1944, Khachaturian reworked the play's incidental music into a five-movement symphonic suite. It contains some of Khachaturian's most frequently heard melodies.

“Waltz,” is probably the most familiar.

“Nocturne” — is an extended violin solo joined by passages by horn and clarinet.

“Mazurka” and “Romance” — will be familiar even to many who seldom listen to classical music, because they have found their way so often into the soundtracks of movies: “Mazurka” is a sprightly dance. “Romance” is a gentle mood piece.

The suite ends with “Galop” — a rousing can-can worthy of Orpheus.

### 3 Leg Torso

**Béla Balogh**, the son of a touring Hungarian concert violinist and symphony conductor and grandson of the leader of a Hungarian Gypsy ensemble, has been playing the violin since he was four. He also plays trumpet. **Courtney Von Drehle** plays the accordion. In 1996, the two co-founded **3 Leg Torso**.

The unique sound they created is now enhanced by the addition of two percussionist/mallet players, **Gary Irvine** and **T. J. Arko**, and an acoustic bass, **Mike Murphy**.

From its humble beginnings in local street performances, this unlikely combination has risen to complete successful concert tours on both coasts, three award-winning instrumental albums, a profile on NPR's "All Things Considered," and extensive work with movie and television studios.

Drawing inspiration from tango, Eastern European folk and other world traditions, 3 Leg Torso's cosmopolitan music is known for its display of wit and humor while retaining its commitment to the tenet that music should be laced with sublime and uncommon beauty.

Perhaps most amazingly, the group has found a way to integrate its original sound with the instrumentation of the 19th Century masters. It has, in fact, developed a full concert set of arrangements for symphony orchestra. Their success may be measured by the fact that their performances with the Central Oregon Symphony, Pacific Crest Wind Symphony, Portland Festival Symphony, and the Metropolitan Youth Symphony were all sold out.

Here is some of the praise they have received:

*"Astonishing musicianship, timeless yet wholly original song craft. 3 Leg Torso is a unique American treasure"* —Steve Berlin, *Los Lobos*

*"I love 3 Leg Torso, it blows the top off my head!"* —Teller, of *Penn & Teller*

*"3 Leg Torso makes the greatest music you could ever put in a movie"* —Morgan Spurlock, Director, *SuperSize Me*

*"They have one foot in Eastern Europe and one foot in the Pacific Northwest. Then there's that third foot.."* —Victoria Frey, executive director, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art

*"A band of great whimsy, wonderful to watch."* —  
Joan Gratz, Academy Award winning filmmaker

The seven pieces selected for this evening's concert are:

**Astor in Paris** by Courtney von Drehle

Informed by the compelling music of the Argentinian Nuevo Tango composer and bandoneonist Astor Piazzolla. The *Bandoneon*, like the accordion, is a member of the family of instruments known as *keyed free reed brass aerophones*. We hear the accordion used in the charming French Musette music and the bandoneon in the passionate tango pieces. The composer tries to marry the two styles in this piece.

**Frailach Fun Der Chupa** arr. 3 Leg Torso

A traditional Klezmer piece often performed at Jewish weddings, which translates as: *Dance under the Chupa*. The chupa is the ceremonial canopy under which the bride and groom stand.

**Frog.... Secret Agent** by Béla Balogh

Inspired by film composer Henry Mancini, this piece employs various percussion instruments to tell a story about a frog who is on a spy mission.

**Counterpoint** by Courtney von Drehle

Built on the premise of developing a simple mournful melodic phrase and slowly adding density and complexity while the harmonic cycle repeats, much in the manner that Pachelbel's canon develops.

**Baym Rebyn in Palestina** arr. 3 Leg Torso

A traditional Israeli piece often used in celebratory events

**The Life and Times and Good Deeds of Saint Penguin** by Béla Balogh

A song that was inspired by watching penguins waddling along the ice, and is also an autobiographical piece about Béla trying to follow in the footsteps of Earnest Shackleton.

**Sinfonia Misterioso** by Béla Balogh and Courtney von Drehle

This piece was 3 Leg Torso's first commissioned orchestral work. Influences are from Balkan horn bands.

## The Orchestra

### Violin I

Rachael Susman, *Concertmaster*  
David Abbott  
Susan Booth Larson  
Kathy Boulton  
Sarah Brody Webb  
Anne Haberkern  
Pamela Jacobsen  
Jonathan Novack  
Sarah Novack  
Kris Oliveira  
Spencer Shao  
Sohyun Westin

### Violin II

Heather Case, *Principal*  
Barbara Baker  
Hugh Ferguson  
Caroline Fung  
Elle Hohn  
John Lake  
Tom Lee  
Margret Oethinger  
Christina Reynolds  
Laura Semrau  
Nancy Vink

### Viola

Bev Gibson, *Principal*  
Jane Brown  
Erin Gordenier  
Stephanie Gregory  
Mary Musa  
Charlie VanDemarr

### Cello

Marcy England, *Principal*  
Barb Camp  
Rachel Davis  
Kristin Dissinger  
Allen Dobbins  
Holly Hutchason  
David Keyes  
Michelle McDowell  
Ann Neuman

### Bass

Veronika Zeisset, *Principal*  
Allen Bodin  
Vytautas Nagisetty  
Dot Rust

### Flute/Piccolo

Kathy Burroughs, *Principal*  
Jerry Pritchard  
Ellen Bercovitz

### Clarinet

Don Barnes, *Principal*  
Milt Monnier

### Oboe

Sharon Ross, *Principal*  
Celeste Martinez

### English Horn

Celeste Martinez, *Principal*

### Bassoon

Tricia Gabrielson, *Principal*  
Nancy Pierce

### French Horn

Kippe Spear, *Principal*  
Jennifer Anderson  
Audrey Garbacik  
Kurt Heichelheim

### Trumpet

Mayne Mihacsi, *Principal*  
Jason Bills  
James Nufer

### Trombone

Paul Hanau, *Principal*  
Stephen Blaufuss  
Eric Olson

### Tuba

Bennett Battaile, *Principal*

### Percussion

Tom Hill, *Principal*  
Ryan Fitz  
Jonathan Ward



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Nancy Vink

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## Travis Hatton, Music Director

Travis Hatton's versatile conducting career spans a broad range of musical organizations around the world. He has led opera and ballet companies throughout Europe and America, and has appeared as a guest conductor with orchestras in Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and in Boston, Tennessee, Indiana, California, Alaska, Colorado, Washington, Oregon and Texas. He holds a Bachelors of Music degree (awarded Magna Cum Laude) in Music Theory and Composition from the University of the Pacific and a Masters of Music degree in Orchestral Conducting from the New England Conservatory of Music.



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