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**Israel Philharmonic Orchestra**

**Zubin Mehta**, music director

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**Gustavo Dudamel**, conductor

**Eyal Ein-Habar**, flute

**Bernstein**

*Halil*

**Eyal Ein-Habar**, flute

**Bernstein**

Concerto for Orchestra, "Jubilee Games"

- 1. Free-Style Events: Allegro con brio, giocoso
- 2. Mixed Doubles: Theme and Seven Variations
- 3. Diaspora Dances: Vivace
- 4. Benediction: Moderato, invocando

—Intermission—

**Brahms**

Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98

- Allegro non troppo
- Andante moderato
- Allegro giocoso
- Allegro energico e passionato

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## NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

### LEONARD BERNSTEIN

(b. Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1918; d. New York, 1990)

#### *Halil*

For Leonard Bernstein, as for Gustav Mahler, it was a challenge to find time for composing amid all his other activities. In 1980–81, when *Halil* was written, Bernstein was conducting all over the world, being honored by the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and above all, trying to begin what he later called *A Quiet Place*, the sequel to his opera *Trouble in Tahiti*.

Inspired by the story of the death of a young Israeli flute player, Bernstein composed whenever he could that winter, drawing on music he had written earlier for a CBS television 50th anniversary tribute, and completing the score on April 13, 1981. *Halil* was premiered on May 27, 1981, in Tel Aviv with flutist Jean-Pierre Rampal and Bernstein himself conducting the Israel Philharmonic. Bernstein wrote the following note in the preface to the score:

“This work is dedicated ‘To the Spirit of Yadin and to his Fallen Brothers.’ The reference is to Yadin Tanenbaum, a 19-year old Israeli flutist who, in 1973, at the height of his musical powers was killed in his tank in the Sinai. He would have been 27 years old at the time this piece was written.

“*Halil* (the Hebrew word for ‘flute’) is formally unlike any other work I have written, but is like much of my music in its struggle between tonal and non-tonal forces. In this case, I sense that struggle as involving wars and the threat of wars, the overwhelming desire to live, and the consolations of art, love, and the hope for peace. It is a kind of night-music which, from its opening 12-tone row to its ambiguously diatonic final cadence, is an ongoing conflict of nocturnal images: wish-dreams, nightmares, repose, sleeplessness, night-terrors, and sleep itself, *Death’s twin brother*.

“I never knew Yadin Tanenbaum, but I know his spirit.”

The single-movement work calls for harp, strings, and a great variety of percussion instruments, in addition to the solo flute. Peaceful and violent elements vie with one another, sometimes marked in the score as “shrieking,” “singing,” “crude,” or “childlike.” According to Bernstein’s friend and biographer Humphrey Burton, the silence of the solo flute at the end symbolizes the flute player’s departing spirit, and the peaceful concluding duet between alto

flute and solo viola represents a blessing. Even though the work has no specific narrative, this serenity comes through as a message of hope.

#### Concerto for Orchestra, “Jubilee Games”

In 1986 Leonard Bernstein composed a two-movement work called *Jubilee Games* to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. The composer conducted the orchestra in the premiere on their grand tour of the United States and Europe in September 1986, and performed the work again in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem to open the orchestra’s 1986–87 season. Bernstein said at the time that he hoped “one day soon to add another movement or two.”

The first addition came in the guise of a piece called *Opening Prayer*, for baritone and small orchestra, which he wrote and conducted for the gala reopening of the refurbished Carnegie Hall in December 1986. He then inserted this piece as the middle movement of *Jubilee Games*, and premiered this three-movement version with the New York Philharmonic in November 1988.

Finally, in January 1989, Bernstein composed *Seven Variations on an Octatonic Theme* (a theme from his 1974 *Dybbuk* ballet), which more explicitly pays homage to the great work he had conducted many times—Bartók’s Concerto for Orchestra. He placed this movement second, calling it Mixed Doubles after Bartók’s *Play of the Couples*, and moved the “Opening Prayer” movement—now titled *Benediction*—to the end. Bernstein aptly renamed this now complete, four-movement display piece “Concerto for Orchestra,” dedicating it to the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, which he conducted in the premiere on April 24, 1989, in Tel Aviv.

Bernstein based the first movement, *Free-style Events*, on the Biblical concept of *jubilee*, when all servants were freed after every seventh cycle of seven years. The movement contrasts improvised (*aleatoric*) and raucous sounds representing freedom, with tightly organized representations of the number seven. The composer uses 7/4 and 7/8 meter and seven-note scales, and even has the players shout “*sheva*” (the Hebrew word for seven), seven times, followed by “*hamashim*” (fifty) for the jubilee year. He also employs brass fanfares to evoke the sounds of the *shofar*, the ram’s horn blown on festive occasions. From its inception, this joyous celebration was tied to the Bartókian idea of the players “showing off” in “games.” Bernstein wrote: “The first movement, *Free-style Events*, is musical athletics, with cheers and all. It is also charades,

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anagrams, and children's 'counting-out' games. But mainly it is celebratory, therefore spontaneous, therefore aleatoric, ranging from structured improvisation to totally free orchestral invention 'in situ.' The improvisations are "controlled" by prerecorded tapes that delineate the beginning, middle, and end.

After what can sometimes sound cacophonous in the first movement, the simpler texture of Mixed Doubles provides utmost contrast, featuring successive "pairs" of instruments as in Bartók's second movement. Bernstein draws on music he had composed earlier as a recorder and cello duet. Following the somber presentation of the theme in the strings, he offers seven variations: for flute and horn, trumpet and double bass, clarinet and trombone, then family groups: percussion, two violins, alto flute and bass clarinet "with kind assistance of piccolo," and English horn and contrabassoon (joined by oboe and bassoon), followed by a pensive coda beginning with solo viola and cello.

Diaspora Dances, wrote Bernstein, are "necessarily eclectic in style, their musical connotations ranging from the Middle East back to Central-European ghettos, and forward again to a New-Yorkish kind of jazz music. Horas are strictly excluded, as is whatever could slither in under the rubric of 'Disco.'" He employs elements based on the number eighteen, corresponding to the Hebrew letter "hai," which means "life" (as in the toast "L'haim!"). The players' unison whispers of "hai" and "haim" form part of the musical fabric.

Benediction opens with a trumpet fanfare that introduces a pensive oboe melody, which is then played more slowly by the violins. Like Bach, Handel, Mozart, Rossini—and countless other astoundingly busy composers—Bernstein again borrowed from an earlier composition for this tune—one of his piano pieces in the *Anniversary* series, in this case dedicated to his friend Aaron Stern. According to the composer, the slower reexamination of the theme represents the deepening of a friendship. He closes the movement, and therefore the entire work, with the peaceful music based on the Hebrew blessing in the Book of Numbers:

May the Lord bless you and keep you.  
May the Lord make His face to shine upon  
you and be gracious unto you.  
May the Lord lift up his countenance upon  
you and give you peace.

**JOHANNES BRAHMS**  
(b. Hamburg, May 7, 1833; d. Vienna, 1897)  
**Symphony No. 4 in E minor, op. 98**

Brahms was plagued by self-doubt perhaps more than any other great composer. Despite having already composed masterful symphonies and numerous other works, he still doubted the merits of his new symphony and sought advice and encouragement. His comments about his Fourth Symphony show the typical mixture of indifference, pride, worry, and tongue-in-cheek self-deprecation that accompanied his most diligent efforts. Brahms sent the completed first movement to his friend Elisabet von Herzogenberg in the summer of 1884, saying:

May I dare to send you a piece of mine, and would you find time to look at it and send me a word? On the whole, unfortunately, my pieces are better than I am and are less in need of correction and admonition. But the cherries never get ripe for eating in these parts [a high altitude spa in Mürzzuschlag, Styria], so don't be afraid if you don't like the taste of the thing.

Announcing the Symphony's completion in September 1885 to conductor and pianist Hans von Bülow, Brahms wrote:

Unfortunately nothing came of the piano concerto that I should have liked to write. . . . But I do have a couple of entr'actes; put together they make what is commonly called a symphony. . . . I'm . . . wondering by the way whether it would have much of an audience.

The manuscript for the Symphony was almost destroyed in the summer of 1885 when a fire broke out in the apartment building where Brahms was staying. Brahms ran out to help save tools in the carpenter's shop, seemingly indifferent to the possibility that all his own hard work might go up in flames. A friend managed to rescue the manuscript, but Brahms's comment was, "Poor people have more need of help than I."

In September 1885 the composer and Ignaz Brüll tried out the Symphony in a two-piano arrangement for a small circle of friends. The Symphony did not greatly impress them and Brahms's worry increased. Kalbeck (Brahms's future biographer) went so far as to recommend that Brahms throw the scherzo into a wastepaper basket and publish the finale as a set of variations, and that he write a more fitting conclusion to the Symphony. It is fortunate that Brahms did not heed this advice, that he waited to hear the whole with orchestra as it should be.

of which comes a sublimely lyrical melody introduced by the cellos.

The Allegro giocoso, an exuberant outburst in sonata form, serves as a scherzo. Brahms indulged in one of his great harmonic fondnesses by setting it in a cheerful C major, which relates to the other movements by the interval of a third. Brahms added triangle, contrabassoon, and a third timpani to the playing forces to enhance the ebullient mood.

The celebrated finale is structured as a passacaglia. A favorite form in the Baroque era, a passacaglia is a set of variations on a short subject, usually introduced in the bass, but which can weave itself into the texture, sometimes conspicuous, sometimes hidden. Brahms had been considering the idea of a symphonic movement based on such a form as early perhaps as 1880, when he played the Chaconne from Bach's Cantata 150 for von Bülow. Brahms's eight-measure theme is announced by winds and brass; the trombones have been saved for this moment. The outlines of sonata form have been imposed over the variations, thus one hears a kind of recapitulation beginning with the eight-chord sequence, after a quieter middle section including variations featuring flute solo and trombone chorale-like passages. Brahms was criticized as archaic and later hailed as innovative for his use of a passacaglia as the crowning movement. His formal experiment is unique in the history of music and remains a superbly dramatic conclusion for his powerful last symphony.

—©Jane Vial Jaffe

The first performance was given October 25, 1885, with the Meiningen orchestra, well-rehearsed by von Bülow, then conducted by Brahms. The audience applauded each movement, especially the scherzo. True to form, Viennese audiences were slower to take up the Symphony's praise, perhaps because it was less well-rehearsed there, but soon audiences everywhere hailed the Fourth as a masterpiece.

The first movement is based on sonata form, but of much broader conception than traditional Classical models, exploiting novel harmonic possibilities and thematic variation. Many of the themes, beginning with the first, are based on a falling third, an interval Brahms used repeatedly in building the entire Symphony. In the first movements of his first three symphonies he had opened with an introductory gesture. Here he ingeniously begins the first theme at once as if "out of thin air," but his manuscript shows that this decision came only with second and third thoughts—an intermediate stage shows the addition of a few simple chords (a plagal cadence) as introduction, which he ultimately considered extraneous.

He also broke with his preceding symphonies by choosing not to repeat the first-movement exposition in the Classical manner. He may have done this in consideration of the movement's weighty proportions, but more likely he was reacting to a new sense of balance between the sections of sonata form and the distance the exposition had traveled, which made going back to the beginning seem inappropriate. It is hard to imagine that this wonderful stroke was once upsetting to audiences.

Another noteworthy feature of this movement is the disguised hushed entrance of the recapitulation, something Romantic composers reveled in and at which Brahms excelled. The main theme enters "prematurely" in elongated tones—thus separated from its usual surroundings—so that by the time the accompaniment and rhythm of the opening seem to announce the recapitulation, the main theme has already progressed several measures.

The Andante moderato is one of the most beautiful slow movements ever written. The major key sets an idyllic mood in contrast to the minor of the previous movement, but there is a sense of continuity since they are both anchored on the same tonic. Brahms arrives at this parallel major in an inspired way, beginning the melody on the tonic in the horns, but suggesting the old Phrygian mode until the clarinets provide the turn to the tonic major. The theme is varied and enriched, out

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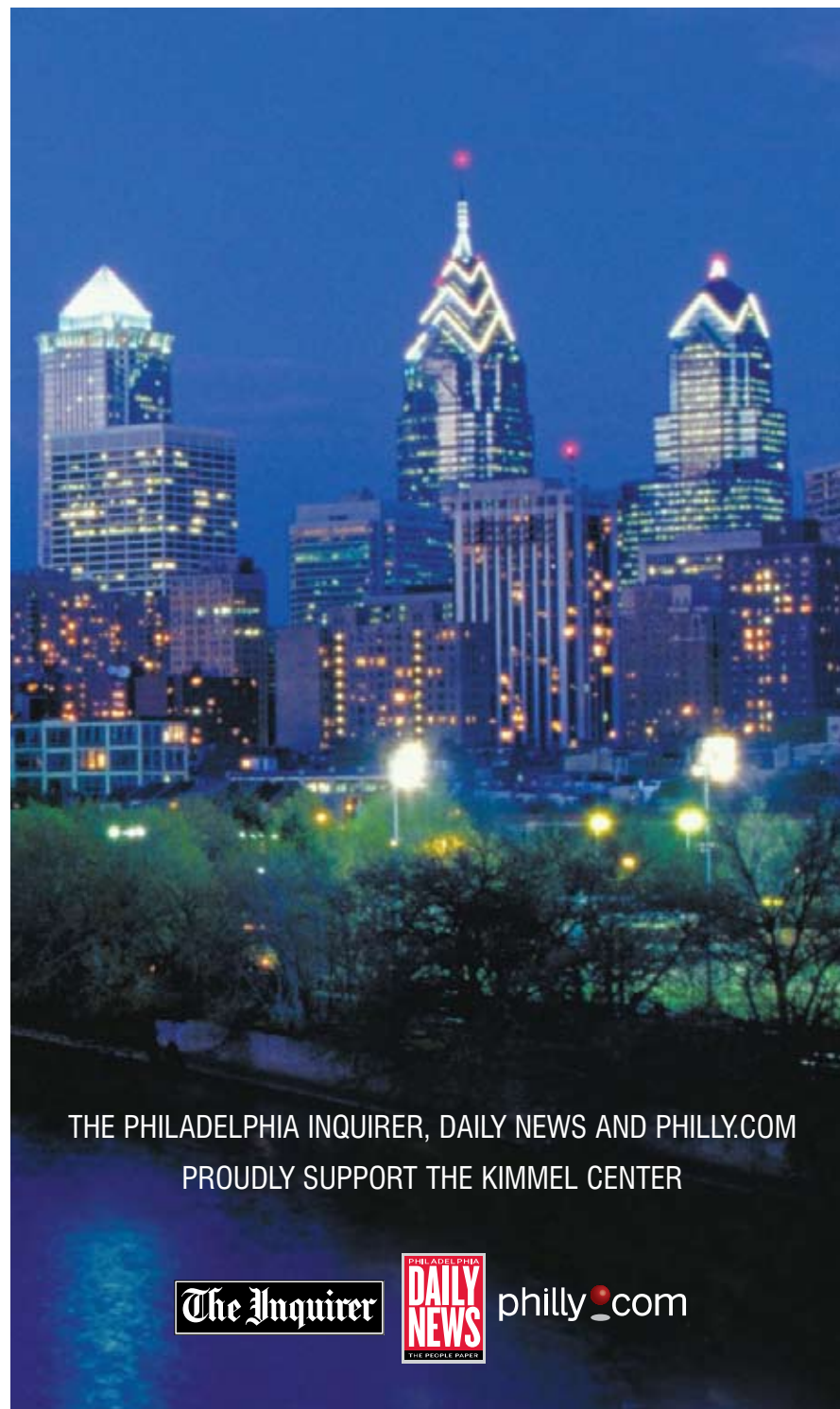
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