Saturday, August 10, 8pm
THE COLTON FAMILY CONCERT IN HONOR OF
THE TANGLEWOOD LEARNING INSTITUTE

RAFAEL PAYARE conducting

CARREÑO  “Margariteña, glosa sinfónica”

RACHMANINOFF  Piano Concerto No. 1 in F-sharp minor, Opus 1
Vivace
Andante
Allegro vivace
NIKOLAI LUGANSKY
{ Intermission }

BRAHMS  Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Opus 68
Un poco sostenuto—Allegro
Andante sostenuto
Un poco allegretto e grazioso
Adagio—Più Andante—Allegro non troppo
ma con brio—Più Allegro

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Please note that the use of audio or video recording devices, or taking pictures of the artists—whether photographs or videos—is prohibited during concerts.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Inocente Carreño (1919-2016)
“Margariteña, glosa sinfónica”

Composed 1954. First performance: December 1954, with the composer conducting, at the Latin Music Festival in Caracas, Venezuela. This is the first performance by the Boston
Symphony Orchestra of any music by Inocente Carreño. The duration of “Margariteña” is about fourteen minutes.

At the time of his death in 2016, at the age of ninety-six, Inocente Carreño was the grand old man of Venezuelan compositional life, having made contributions to a wide range of genres over the course of a career that outlasted presidencies and dictatorships, economic booms and busts, and turbulent demographic and technological shifts. Born on the island of Margarita, off Venezuela’s northern, Caribbean coast, Carreño grew up in a deeply musical family whose matriarch was his grandmother Mauricia, or “Güicha,” as she was affectionately known. Despite receiving only a limited primary education, Carreño was able to read music from an early age and developed considerable facility with regional dance and song forms before he was even a teenager. In the late 1930s, following a move to Caracas, the capital, Carreño co-formed the Trío Caribe, which became a popular attraction on Venezuelan radio (he was the guitarist). Around the same time, he enrolled in the courses of Vicente Emilio Sojo, then the doyen of Venezuelan composers, whose teaching encouraged him to redirect his attention to concert music. It was also during this period that Carreño began performing with the Venezuela Symphony Orchestra, eventually on horn—something directly reflected in the prominent role given to that instrument in his Margariteña. In his later years, Carreño was particularly active as a conductor, an administrator, and even a cultural diplomat.

Both at home and abroad, Carreño is best-known as the composer of Margariteña, one of the foundational documents of Venezuela’s national orchestral repertory. Yet if Carreño once characterized Margariteña as his most “nationalistic” score, it also bears a strong autobiographical stamp. A kind of symphonic rhapsody on folk tunes from Margarita, the piece casts a glance back at Carreño’s childhood there, and, in particular, at the impact of Güicha. In fact, Carreño even went so far as to suggest that “the influence of my grandmother was such that she could be said to be the author of [...] Margariteña,” which originated in large part with “the songs she once taught me there on the island, the ones that I heard out of her mouth.”

Foremost among these is an Iberian-tinged malagueña with which Carreño was long associated, “Margarita es una lagrima” (“Margarita is a tear”), whose leading motive is heard right at the start, in the solo horn. A more sweeping, extended treatment of it soon follows, after which comes a quick, insistent canción de cuna, or lullaby, given first by bassoon and clarinets, with string and harp accompaniment; significantly, it is constructed from the same sequence of intervals as the “Margarita” motive. It soon climaxes in a heroic, brass-led fortissimo episode, sounding a canto del pilón (a “pilón” is a hollowed-out tree trunk used to crush food, like an oversized mortar and pestle). After the climax abates, various instrumental voices toss around a lighthearted, syncopated triple-time version of the canto del pilón, and following an altered reprise of the humid, dramatic opening mood, the strings offer one more new theme, a children’s song Carreño knew as “Tigüítigüitos.” Now Carreño starts combining Margariteña’s
themes in a real show of compositional virtuosity, and the score culminates in an opulent, multi-hued potpourri containing elements of them all.

According to Carreño, it was Sojo who persuaded him to give Margariteña its definitive subtitle, “glosa sinfónica,” in reference to a poetic metrical scheme imported from Spain early in the history of American colonization. However, Carreño’s original subtitle, “rapsodia,” would probably have been just as fitting, given Margariteña’s big-hearted, CinemaScope romanticism, which emphatically sees the world as if through the eyes of the child that its composer once was.

MATTHEW MENDEZ

Matthew Mendez is a New Haven-based musicologist, critic, and annotator who was the 2014 Tanglewood Music Center Publications Fellow. He was the recipient of a 2016 ASCAP Foundation Deems Taylor/Virgil Thomson Award for outstanding music journalism.

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

Piano Concerto No. 1 in F-sharp minor, Opus 1


Rachmaninoff first came to the United States in 1909, for which occasion he composed his Piano Concerto No. 3 in D minor. His reputation as pianist, conductor, and composer was secure, and his fame rested to a great extent on the success of two of his works, the C-sharp minor piano prelude, and the Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, which he had composed in 1901. He would never escape the popularity of the prelude—audiences called for it wherever he went—and he was even to consider the demand for the Second and Third concertos something of a hindrance. “I have rewritten my First Concerto,” he stated in 1931. “It is really good now. All the youthful freshness is there, and yet it plays itself so much more easily. But nobody pays any attention. When I tell them in America that I will play the First Concerto, they do not protest, but I can see by their faces that they would prefer the Second or Third.”

He wrote the First Concerto while he was a student at the Moscow Conservatory. An attempt at a C minor piano concerto in November 1889 had come to nothing, and other works intervened, but by April 1891 he had completed the first two movements of the F-sharp minor. In a flurry of activity, he finished the piece on summer holiday in 1891, working from five in the morning until eight in the evening, composing the final movement and scoring the last two movements in
the space of two and a half days, an effort that left him tired but pleased. In March 1892 a concert of student works at the Moscow Conservatory provided the occasion for the premiere, albeit just the first movement. The conductor, Vasily Safonov, professor of piano and director of the Conservatory, was notorious for making changes in the pieces to be performed on these occasions, cleaning them up, cutting them, anything to make them more playable. But Rachmaninoff held his ground, not only refusing to accept alterations, but even correcting Safonov’s tempos and shadings when the conductor’s ideas differed from his own.

By 1908, however, Rachmaninoff’s attitude toward his First Concerto had changed. By then his works included the Second Concerto, numerous pieces for piano and voice, chamber, choral, and operatic works, and two symphonies (though it should be noted that the First had been a dreadful failure at its premiere in 1897, such a failure, in fact, that the composer submitted to hypnosis and autosuggestion to set his compositional juices flowing properly again). His appearances were in demand both at home and abroad, and he no longer considered the F-sharp concerto a suitable touring piece. Thoughts of revising the work came as early as April 1908: “Now I plan to take my First Concerto in hand tomorrow, look it over, and then decide how much time and work will be required for its new version, and whether it’s worth doing anyway. There are so many requests for this concerto, and it’s so terrible in its present form, that I should like to work at it and, if possible, get it into decent shape...”

But composing, performing, and traveling kept Rachmaninoff from the revision until November 1917, in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution, and at which time regular musical activities had been suspended until a return to normal conditions. At odds with the new regime, feeling his career at a standstill, the composer seized upon an invitation to appear in Stockholm, and just before Christmas of 1917, he and his family left Russia, never to return. Rachmaninoff had previously rejected offers to stay in America (he had turned down the conductorship of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1909 and again in 1918) but decided at the end of the 1920-21 musical season to make New York City his home, later settling in Los Angeles. He remained a resident of the United States, recording and touring on both sides of the Atlantic, and also continuing to compose, until his death in 1943.

“It will have to be written all over again, for its orchestration is worse than its music,” Rachmaninoff said of the F-sharp minor’s original version, and his changes are concerned with matters of instrumentation, texture, and structure, the thematic content remaining basically what it was. The final product is tight, concise, even classical in form, the thematic recurrences being on the whole quite regular. The orchestral and piano writing is considerably thinned out. The balance between tune and figuration in the piano’s initial statement of the first-movement theme represents an alteration of an alteration, for Rachmaninoff changed this passage first during the initial revision, then in the pre-publication proofs. In the second movement, the composer lightened the texture and added touches of chromaticism. In the final form of the third
movement, the fortissimo opening is new, and a prominent return of the main theme near the end is omitted.

The first movement opens Vivace, the “youthful freshness” of the composer being immediately apparent. The cascading triplets for piano that separate the introductory fanfares provide the basis for connective and transitional material later in the movement. The main theme sounds espressivo, then dolce, the second theme cantabile, Rachmaninoff’s markings ensuring the mood (as if the tunes themselves would not). The principal theme achieves its particular romantic, open quality through an immediate, sequential repetition of its opening measures. The second theme, reached by a vivace, scherzando passage, is at once insistent and halting, the lingering fourth note of the tune offsetting the rhythmic charge of the first three. The development makes much of the second theme’s opening motive, and the working out of the main theme is preceded by its appearance in the solo horn. The broad horn calls early in the development are straight out of Tchaikovsky, whom the student Rachmaninoff idolized. At the recapitulation, the main theme is heard moderato and cantabile in the piano, its original upbeat restored, and the second theme’s return is made striking by a touch of solo violin. The movement’s opening fanfare returns in the piano to announce the cadenza, which concludes with a sweeping, maestoso statement of the principal theme.

The prevailing calm of the D major second movement is established by an ascending motive first heard in the solo horn, that most romantic of all instruments. A piano episode offers an espressivo (again!) theme not heard elsewhere in the movement, and the ascending horn motif, more intense, sounding a third higher than at the start, brings in the main part of the movement, with piano filigree weaving through the orchestral texture. A rustling woodwind accompaniment is heard just before the close, which is again marked by solo horn.

As noted earlier, the fortissimo opening of the third movement is new. The finale is for the most part all energy, rhythm, and drive, punctuated by moments suggesting dance, and even jazz. Two principal themes are introduced. When they reappear after a central, lyrical episode—which contains yet another of those plaintive, winding string melodies that Rachmaninoff seems to have endlessly available—the first is recapitulated outright, the second only suggested by the intervallic swellings of winds and brass. The emotional plane of this lyrical episode is as far from the main world of the movement as its key, E-flat major, is remote from the concerto’s home F-sharp minor; through this interlude, the piano is suitably distant and restrained. But for the most part, the orchestra in this movement accedes to the piano’s demands (if grudgingly at one point), and the soloist leads the way to the bright, Allegro vivace, F-sharp major close.

MARC MANDEL
Marc Mandel is Director of Program Publications of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.
Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Opus 68


When Brahms finished his First Symphony in September 1876, he was forty-three years old. (Beethoven was twenty-nine, Schubert fifteen, Schumann twenty-two, Mahler twenty-eight at the completion of their respective first symphonies; Mozart was nine, but that’s another story altogether.) As late as 1873, the composer’s publisher Simrock feared that a Brahms symphony would never happen (“Aren’t you doing anything any more? Am I not to have a symphony from you in ’73 either?” he wrote the composer on February 22), and Eduard Hanslick, in his review of the first Vienna performance, noted that “seldom, if ever, has the entire musical world awaited a composer’s first symphony with such tense anticipation.”

Brahms already had several works for orchestra behind him: the Opus 11 and Opus 16 serenades, the D minor piano concerto (which emerged from an earlier attempt at a symphony), and that masterwork of orchestral know-how and control, the Variations on a Theme by Haydn. But a symphony was something different and had to await the sorting out of Brahms’s complicated emotional relationship with Robert and Clara Schumann (only after Robert’s death in 1856 could Brahms finally begin to accept that his passion for the older Clara needed to remain unrequited), and, more important, of his strong feelings about following in Beethoven’s footsteps.

Beethoven’s influence is certainly to be felt in Brahms’s First Symphony: in its C minor-to-major progress; in the last-movement theme resembling the earlier composer’s Ode to Joy—a relationship Brahms himself acknowledged as something that “any ass could see” (perhaps less obvious is the relationship between the theme itself and the slow-moving violin phrase of the last movement’s opening measures); and, perhaps most strikingly, in the rhythmic thrust and tight, motivically based construction of the work—in some ways quite different from the melodically expansive Brahms we encounter in the later symphonies. But at the same time, there is really no mistaking the one composer for the other: Beethoven’s rhythmic drive is very much his own, whereas Brahms’s more typical expansiveness is still present throughout this symphony, and his musical language is unequivocally 19th-century-Romantic in manner.

Following its premiere at Karlsruhe on November 4, 1876, and its subsequent appearance in other European centers, the symphony elicited conflicting reactions. Brahms himself had
already characterized the work as “long and not exactly amiable.” Clara Schumann found the ending “musically, a bit flat...merely a brilliant afterthought stemming from external rather than internal emotion.” Hermann Levi, court conductor at Munich and later to lead the 1882 Bayreuth premiere of Wagner’s *Parsifal*, found the two middle movements out of place in such a sweeping work, but the last movement he decreed “probably the greatest thing [Brahms] has yet created in the instrumental field.” The composer’s close friend Theodor Billroth described the last movement as “overwhelming,” but found the material of the first movement “lacking in appeal, too defiant and harsh.”

One senses in these responses an inability to reconcile apparently conflicting elements within the work, and the two inner movements do indeed suggest a world quite different from the outer ones. At the same time, these reactions also point to the seeming dichotomy between, as Hanslick put it, “the astonishing contrapuntal art” on the one hand and the “immediate communicative effect” on the other. But the two go hand in hand: the full effect of the symphony is dependent upon the compositional craft that binds the work together in its progress from the C minor struggle of the first movement through the mediating regions of the Andante and the Allegretto to the C major triumph of the finale.

The first Allegro’s two principal motives—the three eighth-notes followed by a longer value, suggesting an abstraction of the opening timpani strokes, and the hesitant, three-note chromatic ascent across the bar, heard at the start in the violins—are already suggested in the *sostenuto* introduction, which seems to begin in mid-struggle. The movement is prevailingy somber in character, with a tension and drive again suggestive of Beethoven. The second idea’s horn and wind colorations provide only passing relief: their *dolce* and *espressivo* markings will be spelled out at greater length in the symphony’s second movement.

The second and third movements provide space for lyricism, for a release from the tension of the first. The calmly expansive oboe theme of the E major Andante is threatened by the G-sharp minor of the movement’s middle section (whose sixteenth-note figurations anticipate the main idea of the third movement), but tranquility prevails when the tune returns in combined oboe, horn, and solo violin. The A-flat Allegretto is typical of Brahms in a *grazioso* mood—compare the Second Symphony’s third movement, or the finale of the Piano Concerto No. 2—and continues the respite from the main battle. And just as the middle movements of the symphony are at an emotional remove from the outer ones, so too are they musically distant, having passed from the opening C minor to third-related keys: E major for the second movement and A-flat major for the third.

At the same time, the third movement serves as preparation for the finale: its ending seems unresolved, completed only when the C minor of the fourth movement, again a third away from the movement that precedes it, takes hold. As in the first movement, the sweep of the finale depends upon a continuity between the main Allegro and its introduction. This C minor introduction gives way to an airy C major horn call (originally conceived as a birthday greeting
to Clara Schumann in 1868) which becomes a crucial binding element in the course of the movement. A chorale in the trombones, which have been silent until this movement, brings a canonic buildup of the horn motto and then the Allegro with its two main ideas: the broad C major tune suggestive of Beethoven’s Ninth, and a powerful chain of falling intervals, which crystallize along the way into a chain of falling thirds, Brahms’s musical hallmark. The movement drives to a climax for full orchestra on the trombone chorale heard earlier and ends with a final affirmation of C major—Brahms has won his struggle.

MARC MANDEL

Guest Artists

Rafael Payare

Venezuelan conductor Rafael Payare makes his Boston Symphony Orchestra and Tanglewood debuts this evening. Mr. Payare’s musicianship, technical brilliance, and charismatic podium presence have made him one of the most sought-after young conductors to be working regularly with the world’s leading orchestras. He was appointed principal conductor of the Ulster Orchestra in Northern Ireland in September 2014 and made his BBC Proms debut with them in August 2016. In September 2017 the orchestra named him music director in recognition of the huge impact he has made on the orchestra and the community of Northern Ireland. In the 2019-20 season, Mr. Payare becomes music director of the San Diego Symphony. Highlights of his 2018-19 season include return visits to the Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Bamberger Symphoniker, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, and the BBC Symphony Orchestra at London’s Barbican Centre, as well as debuts with the Tonhalle Orchestra of Zurich, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, and Detroit Symphony. He enjoys a special relationship with the Sinfonietta Cracovia, which recently named him its honorary conductor. Soloists with whom he has collaborated include Daniil Trifonov, Frank Peter Zimmermann, Gil Shaham, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Nikolai Lugansky, Christiane Karg, Alisa Weilerstein, Nikolaj Znaider, Piotr Anderszewski, Elisabeth Leonskaja, Sergey Khachatryan, Jonathan Biss, and Dorothea Röschmann. Born in 1980 and a graduate of the celebrated El Sistema in Venezuela, Mr. Payare began his formal conducting studies in 2004 with José Antonio Abreu. He has conducted all the major orchestras in Venezuela, including the Simón Bolívar Orchestra. Having also served as principal horn of that ensemble, he took part in many prestigious tours and recordings with conductors including Giuseppe Sinopoli, Claudio Abbado, Sir Simon Rattle, and Lorin Maazel. In May 2012, Rafael Payare was awarded first prize at the Malko International Conducting Competition.

Nikolai Lugansky
Pianist Nikolai Lugansky works regularly with such top conductors as Osmo Vänskä, Yuri Temirkanov, Mikhail Pletnev, Gianandrea Noseda, and Vladimir Jurowski. Concerto highlights for the 2018-19 season include performances with the Minnesota Orchestra, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Russian National Orchestra, Orquesta Nacional de España, and the Iceland and Bamberg symphonies. A tour with the Orchestre National de France took him to China, and from there he joined the St. Petersburg Philharmonic for concerts in Taipei and Japan. He is a regular recitalist the world over, his performances this season including the International Piano Series in London, Amsterdam’s Muziekgebouw, and the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, as well as a residency at Flagey in Brussels. Mr. Lugansky appears regularly at music festivals throughout the world, including Aspen, Tanglewood, Ravinia, and Verbier. As a chamber musician, he collaborates with musicians such as Vadim Repin, Alexander Kniazev, Mischa Maisky, and Leonidas Kavakos. Mr. Lugansky has won a number of awards for his many recordings. His recital CD featuring Rachmaninoff’s piano sonatas won the Diapason d’Or, and his recording of concertos by Grieg and Prokofiev with Kent Nagano and the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin was a Gramophone Editor’s Choice. He recently signed an exclusive contract with the Harmonia Mundi label, which last year released two of his CDs—Rachmaninoff’s 24 Preludes and an album of solo piano music by Debussy—both being met with enthusiastic reviews. Mr. Lugansky is artistic director of the Tambov Rachmaninoff Festival and is also a supporter of, and regular performer at, the Rachmaninoff Estate and Museum of Ivanovka. He studied at Moscow’s Central Music School and the Moscow Conservatory, where his teachers included Tatiana Kestner, Tatiana Nikolayeva, and Sergei Dorensky. In April 2013 he was awarded the honor of People’s Artist of Russia. Nikolai Lugansky made his BSO debut in October 2012 with Rachmaninoff’s Piano Concerto No. 3 and his Tanglewood debut performing that same work with the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra in August 2014 in that summer’s Leonard Bernstein Memorial Concert. He has since appeared with the BSO as soloist in Rachmaninoff’s Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini in March 2016 and in Prokofiev’s Piano Concerto No. 3 at Tanglewood in July 2017.