

**Great Classics  
Brahms and Beethoven**

Saturday, September 24, 2011 at 8:00pm  
Glad Tidings Auditorium  
Ian Parker, Piano

Sponsored by: Rocvent

**Program**

Calixa Lavallée	Oh Canada
Claude Champagne	Danse Villageoise
Ludwig van Beethoven	Piano Concerto No. 4 in G Major, op. 58
	1. Allegro moderato
	2. Andante con moto
	3. Rondo: Vivace

Intermission

Johannes Brahms	Symphony No. 4 in E Minor, op. 98
	1. Allegro non assai
	2. Andante moderato
	3. Presto giocoso
	4. Allegro energetico e patetico

**Program Notes - Great Classics, Beethoven & Brahms  
By Desmond Maley**

**Danse Villageoise by Claude Champagne (1891-1965)**

Claude Champagne was one of Canada's most respected musicians. His deep affinity for folk music was reflected in numerous pieces, including this short Danse, which salutes the tradition of old-time fiddling.

**Piano Concerto No. 4 in G Major, op. 58,  
by Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)**

Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto occupies a high place in the concerto repertoire. Beethoven himself was the soloist for the first public performance of the Concerto in Vienna in December 1807, at a four-hour concert of his works that also included the premieres of his Fifth and Sixth Symphonies and the Choral Fantasy. The Concerto is among the fruit of Beethoven's so-called middle period, which saw him writing a series of expansive, visionary pieces. The richly expressive opening movement, with its meditative opening piano solo, can be heard as a hymn to nature. The dramatic slow movement has aptly been compared to the legend of Orpheus (the pianist) gradually

calming the Furies (the orchestra). The concluding rondo, in which a lively theme returns amidst moments of reverie, is notable for the brilliance of the piano writing.

**Symphony No. 4 in E Minor, op. 98, by Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)**

Composed in the summers of 1884-85 in the Alpine village of Märzzuschlag, Austria, Brahms' Fourth Symphony has a tragic eloquence and nobility all its own. Although Brahms was concerned the Fourth might be regarded as too serious, audiences quickly responded to its lyricism and autumnal colour. The first movement's unusually long opening theme is generated from opposing pairs of notes – one falling, the other rising – that in turn becomes the basis for many of the Symphony's themes. The slow movement, which uses a medieval church mode, was described by Richard Strauss as "a funeral procession moving in silence across moonlit heights." In contrast, the rousing Scherzo has a carnival atmosphere, replete with brass fanfares and ringing triangles. Brahms pays homage to Johann Sebastian Bach in the titanic finale. The impressive eight-note theme, adapted from the last chorus of Bach's Cantata No. 150, serves as the ground-bass for thirty variations with an extended conclusion.