momentum is halted by a nostalgic hymn in the movement’s middle section. The finale opens with a simple duet between the two instruments, with the piano playing a long-breathed, single-line melody. This theme becomes the basis for a set of theme and variations, in which (as one writer has evocatively put it) “clarinet and piano join together to spin yard after yard of silken, overlapping, arpeggiated spiderwebs.”

If these two late works for clarinet and other instruments are subtle and reserved, the earlier Sonata for Cello and Piano in E minor, Op. 38, is a work of much starker hues. A famous Brahms biographer wrote that “the young Brahms was hard, almost to harshness; he loved blunt expression and sudden contrasts, and avoided concessions to mere comprehensibility.” Consider the first movement, where the exposition transitions from somberness to agitation and back again and the two instruments engage in a dialogue that is more contentious than loving. The finale begins with a three-voiced fugue, a clear homage to Bach. But this fugue is more violent than anything Bach could have imagined: the percussive high and low octaves with which the fugue subject begins sound almost like cracks of lightning in a storm. The music alternates between turbulence and tranquility, with piano and cello each vying for the upper hand, until the very closing bars, where turbulence wins out.

**concert five**: Monday, February 29, 2016
- Horn Trio in E-flat major, Op. 40
- Piano Quartet in G minor, Op. 25

**concert six**: Monday, May 23, 2016
- Clarinet Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 120 No. 1
- Piano Quartet in A major, Op. 26

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Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Sonata for clarinet and piano no. 2 in E-flat major, Op. 120

*Allegro amabile*
*Allegro appassionato*
*Andante con moto – allegro*

Michael Anderson, clarinet
Alexandre Dossin, piano

Sonata for violoncello and piano no. 1 in E minor, Op. 38

*Allegro non troppo*
*Allegretto quasi Menuetto*
*Allegro*

Steven Pologe, violoncello
Alexandre Dossin, piano

INTERMISSION

Trio for clarinet, violoncello and piano in A minor, Op. 114

*Allegro*
*Adagio*
*Andantino grazioso*
*Allegro*

Michael Anderson, clarinet
Steven Pologe, violoncello
Alexandre Dossin, piano

On December 11, 1890, Brahms sent his publisher a revised arrangement of his Second String Quartet, and in an accompanying letter took the opportunity to announce his retirement: “The enclosed is the end of the first movement in the piano duet arrangement. With this you can bid farewell to music from me—because it is high time for me to give up.” Brahms was nearing sixty, he had been ill with the flu and struggling to compose, and he felt it was time to stop writing music. Only one month later, however, the tide had turned: he heard a performance by the German clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld and was so overwhelmed that he spent the next several years writing four works prominently featuring the clarinet. Two of those works appear on tonight’s program.

The Clarinet Sonata in E-flat major, Op. 120, No. 2, is just as autumnal as the Clarinet Trio, but somewhat warmer—more early fall than late fall. Brahms eschews the formal contrasts that one normally expects of a sonata-form movement, opting instead for lyrical ease from start to finish. The minor-mode second movement has more drive, in no small part because of the immensely challenging piano part, but even here the passion is muted; furthermore, the
**Michael Anderson** is currently Principal Clarinet of the Eugene Symphony and the Santa Fe Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra. He performed as Principal Clarinet of the Oregon Ballet Theater for 18 seasons, and was Principal Clarinet of the Oregon Bach Festival Orchestra under Helmuth Rilling for 20 seasons. He has also performed in recent years with the Portland Baroque Orchestra, Chamber Music Northwest, Smithsonian Chamber Players and the Oregon Symphony.

Anderson has performed as concerto soloist with the Eugene Symphony, Portland Columbia Symphony, Oregon Coast Music Festival, Oregon Mozart Players, University of Oregon Symphony, Ernest Bloch Festival, and Santa Fe Pro Musica.

Michael Anderson has taught clarinet at the University of Oregon, Lane Community College, Willamette University, and Woodwinds@Wallowa Lake. Mr. Anderson is Director of Artistic Administration and Interim Executive Director for the Oregon Bach Festival. He lives in Eugene with his violinist wife Alice Blankenship and his 11-year-old son Francis.
Steven Pologe has performed as soloist and chamber musician throughout the United States, and in Italy, Sweden, Taiwan, South Korea, Thailand, New Zealand and Canada. His CDs include two with the Oregon String Quartet (quartets by William Grant Still and All That Jazz), works by Jon Deak for solo cello and piano trio, and the piano trio of Lev Abeliovich. Pologe is Professor of Cello at the University of Oregon School of Music and cellist in the Oregon String Quartet, Trio Pacifica and Chamber Music Amici. He also performs and teaches each summer at the Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival. In his earlier career, he performed for many years with the American Ballet Theater, Brooklyn Philharmonia, Grand Teton Music Festival and as principal cellist with the Honolulu Symphony and the Oregon Bach Festival.

Considered by Martha Argerich an “extraordinary musician” and by the international critic a “phenomenon” and “a master of contrasts,” Alexandre Dossin keeps an active performing, recording and teaching careers.

Dossin received the First Prize and the Special Prize at the 2003 Martha Argerich International Piano Competition in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Other international awards include the Silver Medal and second Honorable Mention in the Maria Callas Grand Prix, and Third Prize and Special Prize in the Mozart International Piano Competition, in addition to several prizes in Brazil.

An active recording artist, he has 15 CDs released with several labels, including 5 CDs with Naxos and 6 editions/recordings for Schirmer. His work was praised in reviews by Diapason, The Financial Times, Fanfare Magazine, American Record Guide, Clavier and other international publications.

Dossin is the Vice President of the American Liszt Society, the President of the Oregon Chapter of the American Liszt Society and is one of the recipients of the prestigious 2015-2016 Faculty Fund for Excellence at the University of Oregon.