



Killinger Family Stage at Lauridsen Amphitheater, Water Works Park
Friday, July 12, 2019

BRAHMS String Quartet No. 3 in B flat Major, Op. 67

- I. Vivace
- II. Andante
- III. Agitato - Allegretto non troppo
- IV. Poco Allegretto con Variazioni - Doppio Movimento

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) was a composer of the Romantic era who composed a total of three string quartets during his lifetime. String Quartet No. 3 in B flat Major, Op. 67 dates back to the summer of 1875, and was the final string quartet that Brahms published. Brahms often felt the pressure of following in the footsteps of Beethoven, one of the greatest composers of his generation. Due to this pressure, Brahms didn't publish a symphony or string quartet until he was forty years old.

Brahms dedicated this quartet to a well-known physician, Theodor Wilhelm Engelmann, and likened the piece to Engelmann's wife, "very dainty, but brilliant." The Joachim Quartet premiered the piece on October 30, 1876 in Berlin, just before Brahms's first symphony, which premiered a week later.

Quartet No. 3 is light, cheerful and in a major key. The first movement, the vivace, is in 6/8 time and uses accents on typically unaccented beats within a measure. The second movement, the andante, is in F Major. The movement is slow and graceful, with a dramatic middle section, featuring the atypical meter signature 5/4. The third movement features a viola solo, which further stands out against the other instruments when they use mutes throughout the movement. The final movement plays with thematic variations until it makes its way to the initial theme from the first movement, bringing a sense of closure to the work.