

# KINAH

for mixed orchestral ensemble

*dedicated to Felix Slatkin and Eleanor Aller*

## INSTRUMENTATION

### 4 Horns in F

### Flugelhorn in Bb/Trumpet in Bb (off-stage)

#### Percussion 1

Vibraphone  
Medium Suspended Cymbal  
Metal Plate  
Triangle Tree

#### Percussion 2

Glockenspiel  
Small Sizzle Cymbal  
Vibraphone (shared with Percussion 1)  
Large Suspended Cymbal  
Bell Tree

#### Percussion 3

Chimes (with optional low Bb bell)  
Medium Sizzle Cymbal  
Tam-Tam (large)  
Mark Tree

#### Percussion 4

Medium Tam-Tam  
Small Suspended Cymbal  
Metal Wind Chimes  
Large Tam-Tam (shared with Percussion 3)

### Solo violin and cello (off-stage)

### Strings

## PROGRAM NOTES

Dedicated to the memory of my parents, Felix Slatkin and Eleanor Aller.

On February 6th, 1963, my parents rehearsed the Brahms "Double" Concerto with the Doctor's Symphony Orchestra in Los Angeles. It was to be the first time that my father, Felix, a violinist, and his wife, Eleanor, a cellist, would play this work in public. There was a great deal of anticipation for this performance, as the two were regarded as part of the elite of the Hollywood musical establishment.

I was 19 years old and not sure what I was going to do with the rest of my life as far as a career was concerned. Attending the rehearsal seemed a chore, but I saw that everyone there was mesmerized by the pair's incredible way with this piece. We all knew that the concert would be an evening to treasure.

Alas, the performance never took place, as my dad died two nights later, at the age of 47. The respect he was shown was evident in the memorial service held two days later, when 1,500 people showed up to pay their respects, including Frank Sinatra. I really never had adequate time to mourn, and so it seemed right for me to compose this brief elegy as a tribute to both my parents. My father would have turned 100 this December and my mom would have been 98.

The piece is scored for metal percussion instruments, two harps, celeste, piano, four horns and strings. There are also off-stage instruments including a Flugelhorn, trumpet, violin and cello.

The chord sounded at the opening is comprised of notes taken from the melody of the slow movement of the Brahms concerto. The flugelhorn intones the elegy itself, followed by a steady build up in the other instruments.

This leads to a short and fast interlude, once again using the first four notes of the Double Concerto's slow movement. Various unusual sound effects interrupt. After this burst of activity, the elegy melody returns, this time transformed into a canon. As the textures thicken, the four-note motif becomes agitated and repetitive, with flurries of sound coming from almost all the instruments.

To conclude, when the activity dies down, a distant violin and cello play the first few passages of the second movement of the Brahms, but do not complete their phrases, a reminder that the public never heard my parents' interpretation of the piece. The last utterance of the two soloists utilizes the final bars of the Andante, with a brief silence occurring just before a dark bell-like sound in the orchestra brings the work to an end.

"Kinah" is the Hebrew word for "Elegy," and although we were not a devout family, there was always something of our Jewish heritage felt in the Slatkin household. I can only hope that this short work, about 14 minutes long, pays appropriate homage to my parents.

— Leonard Slatkin  
September, 2015