Listening Guide

Brahms: Symphony No. 3 in F major, Third Movement

DATE OF WORK: 1883

GENRE: Symphony

MEDIUM: Orchestra (strings and woodwinds only in this movement)

MOVEMENTS: I. Allegro con brio; sonata-allegro, F major

II. Andante; modified sonata form, C majorIII. Poco allegretto; A-B-A' form, C minor

IV. Allegro; sonata-allegro; F major

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR: Melancholy minor-key melody in cellos, then violins, woodwinds, and

French horns.

Regular, symmetrical phrases set in moderate triple meter. 3-part structure with modal shifts (minor-major-minor). Rhythmic complexity through "three-against-two" patterns;

syncopated rhythms that lean over the barline.

Third movement: Poco allegretto; A-B-A' form, 3/8 meter, C minor

A section—yearning cello melody, accompanied by rustling string figures; symmetrical phrasing:



Violins repeat the cello theme, extending the range and dynamics.

2nd theme, played by violins, "leans" over the barline over moving cello line; violins and cellos join in brief duet:



Return of opening theme in flutes and oboes, with broader accompaniment.

 $\label{eq:Basic_constraints} \textbf{B} \ \text{section} \\ \textbf{—} \text{connected 3-note figure in woodwinds, in A-flat major, accompanied by offbeat sixteenth notes in the cell os:}$



Woodwinds hint at return to main theme, accompanied by sustained strings.

 $A'\ section \\ -- French\ horns\ announce\ the\ opening\ theme\ in\ C\ minor,\ with\ richer\ orchestration.$

Oboes take up the haunting melody as accompaniment builds.

Theme 2, now heard in the clarinets and bassoons.

 $\label{thm:contraction} Violins\ and\ cellos\ take\ up\ the\ main\ theme,\ played\ in\ octaves\ for\ greater\ intensity;\ generally\ thicker\ and\ more\ contrapuntal\ accompaniment.$

Brief coda; reminiscent of B section; last chord is punctuated by pizzicato strings.