



**January 10, 2008, 8:00pm on PBS**

***I Can't Believe It's Schoenberg* with Rob Kapilow and The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center**

"I can't believe it's Schoenberg!" Now THAT is a provocative title — and it happens to be the title of the next Live From Lincoln Center, to be presented on Thursday evening, January 10. "Presented" is the appropriate word in this context for it will mark the initial LFLC appearance by a music presenter who in little more than a decade has established a nationwide reputation as "The Pied Piper of Classical Music." I'm speaking, of course, of Rob Kapilow.

A graduate of Yale and the Eastman School of Music, Kapilow, who is a composer, conductor and communicator, began what he called "What Makes it Great?", a series of 10-minute inserts in NPR's Performance Today program. So popular did "What Makes it Great?" become that Kapilow developed the concept into an evening-length program that has delighted audiences wherever he has performed. What is "What Makes it Great?" all about? In Kapilow's own words on his Web Site, "During each 'What Makes it Great?' program we take a piece of great music, tear it apart, and put it back together again. We rewrite it, sing it, tap it, clap it; in short we do everything in our power to get inside to see what makes it tick and what makes it great. Then on the second half of the program we hear the piece performed in its entirety — hopefully with a new pair of ears."

The work to be subjected to the "What Makes it Great?" treatment on Live From Lincoln Center will be Schoenberg's "Verklärte Nacht" ("Transfigured Night"). More than a half century after Schoenberg's death, the mere mention of his name is enough to make some listeners cringe: "You know, that man who gave us all that awful, unlistenable music." Whatever problems some others of Schoenberg's works make present, "Verklärte Nacht" is an extraordinary, richly-colored and highly emotional work strongly influenced by the music of such ultra-Romanticists as Wagner, Mahler, and Richard Strauss.

Schoenberg composed "Verklärte Nacht" for string sextet in 1899, revising it for full strings in 1917, with further revisions in 1943. The inspiration came from a poem by the German writer, Richard Dehmel, which tells the story of a man and a woman walking in a moonlit grove. The woman confesses that she has been unfaithful to him and is carrying another man's child. The man responds that he doesn't care, that he still loves her. The two continue their walk in the woods and the world is transfigured by the gallant compassion of the man.

Rob Kapilow's explication of "Verklärte Nacht," with musical examples played by members of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, will take up approximately the first half-hour of the program, followed immediately by a performance of the entire piece. That will mark the end of the televised program. However, after an intermission, concert-goers in the hall will hear a performance of Brahms's String Sextet No. 2 — and this portion of the concert will be streamed live on the Web, the first time in the history of Live From Lincoln Center that such a transition has been made from airwaves to bandwidth. To access the Brahms portion, you will need to go to the web site [PBS.org](http://PBS.org).

So, a most unusual concatenation awaits us on the evening of January 10! Again, I urge you to check the schedule of your local PBS station for the exact date and time of the telecast in your area.

Enjoy!

By MARTIN BOOKSPAN