



Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra

Aiken Sings Strauss - At the Concert

Richard Strauss lived a long life and composed music for the majority of it. The two pieces played by the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra for this concert are from opposite ends of Strauss' life; *Don Juan* was written in 1888, when Strauss was 24 years old, and *Four Last Songs* was written in 1948, only one year before his death.

1. Listening to these two pieces, write down the mood or feelings that each piece creates.

2. Comparing the two, do you think that the tone of each piece reflects the emotions that Strauss would have been feeling at each point in his life?

3. How do you feel the addition of a singing part in *Four Last Songs* changes the mood of the piece? Does it make the piece more interesting or emotional than if it had just been the orchestra? Based on emotions, what do you think she is singing about?

4. Imagine Strauss had composed lyrics for *Don Juan* as well. What do you think the soprano would be singing about? Do you think it would make the piece more interesting, or would it take away attention from the orchestral music? Would the emotion conveyed by singing in this song be different from that of *Four Last Songs*?
