

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

Charles A. Sink, President

Thor Johnson, Guest Conductor

Lester McCoy, Associate Conductor

Tenth Concert

1952-1953

Complete Series 3110

Seventy-fourth Annual
Choral Union Concert Series

BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CHARLES MUNCH, *Music Director*

PIERRE MONTEUX, *Guest Conductor*

TUESDAY EVENING, MAY 19, 1953, AT 8:30
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 36 BEETHOVEN
Adagio molto; allegro con brio
Larghetto
Scherzo
Allegro molto

Symphony No. 2, Op. 35 PAUL CRESTON
Introduction and Song
Interlude and Dance

INTERMISSION

Suite from the Ballet, *L'Oiseau de feu* STRAVINSKY
Introduction: Kastcheï's Enchanted Garden and Dance of the Fire-Bird
Dance of the Princesses
Infernal Dance of all the Subjects of Kastcheï
Berceuse
Finale

Suite from *Der Rosenkavalier* STRAUSS

Baldwin Piano and RCA Victor Records.

NOTE.—The University Musical Society has presented the Boston Symphony Orchestra on 29 previous occasions since 1890, under the following conductors: Arthur Nikisch (3); Franz Kneisel (1); Otto Urack (1); Karl Muck (1); Serge Koussevitzky (16); Richard Burgin (2); Charles Munch (5).

A R S L O N G A V I T A B R E V I S

PROGRAM NOTES

By John N. Burk

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 36 BEETHOVEN

At Heiligenstadt in 1802, almost simultaneously Beethoven expressed himself in two startlingly different ways. In October he wrote the famous "Heiligenstadt testament," pouring out his grief at the full realization that his deafness was incurable, into a document carefully sealed and labelled "to be read and executed after my death." Before this and after, working intensively, making long drafts and redrafts, he composed the serene and joyous Second Symphony.

Writers have constantly wondered at the coincidence of the agonized "testament" and the carefree Symphony in D major. Perhaps it must be the expectation of perennial romanticism that a "secret sorrow" must at once find its voice in music. Beethoven at thirty-two had not yet reached the point of directly turning a misfortune to musical account—if he ever reached such a point. He was then not quite ready to shake off the tradition of Haydn and Mozart, who had their own moments of misery, but to whom it would never have remotely occurred to allow depressed spirits to darken the bright surfaces of their symphonies. Beethoven found a way, soon after, to strike notes of poignant grief or of earth-shaking power such as music had never known. He found the way through the mighty conception of an imaginary hero—not through the degrading circumstance that the sweet strains of music were for him to be displaced by a painful humming and roaring, the humiliating thought that he was to be an object of ridicule before the world—a deaf musician. That terrible prospect might reasonably be expected to have driven him to take glad refuge in his powers of creation, to exult in the joyous freedom of a rampant imagination, seizing upon those very delights of his art from which the domain of the senses was gradually shutting him out.

And indeed it was so. Writing sadly to Dr. Wegeler of his infirmity, he added: "I live only in my music, and I have scarcely begun one thing when I start another. As I am now working, I am often engaged on three or four things at the same time." He composed with unflagging industry in the summer of 1802. And while he made music of unruffled beauty, Beethoven maintained the even tenor of his outward life.

The Symphony in D major had been sketched in part by the spring of that year (Nottebohm, studying the teeming sketchbooks of the time, found extended and repeated drafts for the *Finale*, and the theme of the *Larghetto*—first written for horns). The symphony must have been developed in large part during the summer. It was certainly completed by the end of the year in Beethoven's winter quarters.

Dedicated to Prince Carl Lichnowsky, the symphony is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani and strings.

Symphony No. 2, Op. 35 PAUL CRESTON

The title "Symphony" is used freely, as the movements show. It was conceived, writes the composer, "as an apotheosis of the two foundations of all music: song and dance.

"In the opening of the Introduction are presented four themes as a cumulative ground bass, i.e., successively superimposed. Theme 1, played by 'cellos, and Theme 2, played by violas, are the main basis of the entire symphony. Whatever new thematic material emerges is either a ramification or a development of these two themes.

"The Song is largely built on a variation of Theme 1, tender and simple in character, presented first by the flute and then by the horn. After a minor climax, the inversion of Theme 1 is presented by violins and is followed by Theme 2, with the mood gradually increasing in intensity. A short, agitated episode leads to the varied Theme 1 with the whole orchestra participating and played with great breadth and majesty. The movement closes quietly with the original flute theme, this time

played by the oboe, slightly varied rhythmically but equally tender and simple in feeling.

"The Interlude opens with a completely transformed Theme 1, quite aggressive and defiant, leading to a rather quiet section, but soon returning to the aggressive character. This last merges into the Dance without pause, which after a rhythmic introduction begins with another variation of Theme 1 (muted trumpet). Each appearance of this variation of Theme 1 alters further the rhythm and contour of the melody. As the excitement mounts, Theme 2 soars above the ever-recurrent rhythmic pulses, developing to a climax and into the next section of the Dance. In the second section, based on a variation of Theme 1 inverted, the rhythmic pattern has changed and there is a greater sense of driving forward. This theme variant goes through several metamorphoses as the section builds to the major climax and then subsides to an altered version of the original cumulative ground bass. Above three concurrent rhythms which were presented separately earlier in the Dance, the flute theme of the Song (now played by violins), becoming more and more intense, brings the composition to a close."

Suite from the Ballet, *L'Oiseau de feu* STRAVINSKY

In the summer of 1909 Diaghilev asked Stravinsky to write a ballet founded on the old Russian legend of the Fire-Bird. The score was ready in May, 1910. The scenario was the work of Fokine.

Fokine's scenario may thus be described: After a short prelude, the curtain rises and the grounds of an old castle are seen. Ivan Tsarevitch, the hero of many tales, in the course of hunting at night, comes to the enchanted garden and sees a beautiful bird with flaming golden plumage. She attempts to pluck fruit of gold from a silver tree. He captures her, but, heeding her entreaties, frees her. In gratitude, she gives him one of her feathers which has magic properties. The dawn breaks. Thirteen enchanted princesses appear, coming from the castle. Ivan, hidden, watches them playing with golden apples, and dancing. Fascinated by them, he finally discloses himself. They tell him that the castle belongs to the terrible Kastcheï, who turns decoyed travelers into stone. The princesses warn Ivan of his fate, but he resolves to enter the castle. Opening the gate, he sees Kastcheï with his train of grotesque and deformed subjects marching towards him in pompous procession. Kastcheï attempts to work his spell on Ivan, who is protected by the feather. Ivan summons the Fire-Bird, who causes Kastcheï and his retinue to dance until they drop exhausted. The secret of Kastcheï's immortality is disclosed to Ivan: the sorcerer keeps an egg in a casket; if this egg should be broken or even injured, he would die. Ivan swings the egg backwards and forwards. Kastcheï and his crew sway with it. At last the egg is dashed to the ground; Kastcheï dies; his palace vanishes; the petrified knights come to life; and Ivan receives, amid great rejoicing, the hand of the beautiful princess.

Suite from *Der Rosenkavalier* RICHARD STRAUSS

Der Rosenkavalier, Komödie für Musik, text by Hugo von Hofmannsthal, was first produced in Dresden, January 26, 1911. The first performance in America was given by the Metropolitan Opera Company in New York, December 9, 1913.

The suite here performed was made anonymously for its publisher, Boosey & Hawkes, and was first played by the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Society, Artur Rodzinski, conductor, October 5, 1944. It was introduced to these concerts [Boston] by Thor Johnson on January 21-22, 1949.

The present suite includes in instrumental form the introduction to the first act, the music that accompanies Octavian's entrance bearing the silver rose in the second act, the duet between Sophie and Octavian later in that act, the principal waltz associated with Baron Ochs, the trio sung by Sophie, the Marschallin, and Octavian, and the duet of the young lovers.

1953—UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY CONCERTS—1954

Seventy-Fifth Annual Choral Union Series

ROBERTA PETERS, <i>Soprano</i>	Wednesday, October 7
BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA	Thursday, October 22
VIRTUOSI DI ROMA	Monday, November 2
VLADIMIR HOROWITZ, <i>Pianist</i>	Saturday, November 21
DE PAUR'S INFANTRY CHORUS	Tuesday, November 24
TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA	Wednesday, February 10
PAUL BADURA-SKODA, <i>Pianist</i>	Wednesday, February 17
GEORGE LONDON, <i>Bass</i>	Sunday, February 28
ELENA NIKOLAIDI, <i>Soprano</i>	Friday, March 12
MYRA HESS, <i>Pianist</i>	Wednesday, March 17

Season Tickets: Remaining unclaimed seats in Block A, \$16.00.
Block B, \$12.00. Block C, \$10.00. Mail orders accepted beginning May 4.

Eighth Annual Extra Concert Series

GUIOMAR NOVAES, <i>Pianist</i>	Monday, October 12
CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA	Sunday, November 8
GUARD REPUBLICAN BAND OF PARIS	Monday, November 30
MARIAN ANDERSON, <i>Contralto</i>	Sunday, January 10
BOSTON POPS TOUR ORCHESTRA	Thursday, March 4

Season Tickets: Block A, \$8.00. Block B, \$6.00. Block C, \$5.00.
Mail orders accepted beginning May 4.

Annual Christmas Concerts

"MESSIAH" (Handel)	December 5 and 6
MAUD NOSLER, <i>Soprano</i>	NORMAN SCOTT, <i>Bass</i>
CAROL SMITH, <i>Contralto</i>	CHORAL UNION AND ORCHESTRA
WALTER FREDERICKS, <i>Tenor</i>	LESTER MCCOY, <i>Conductor</i>

Tickets: 70¢ and 50¢ (either performance). On sale beginning October 15.

Fourteenth Annual Chamber Music Festival

GRILLER QUARTET	Friday, February 19, 8:30
REGINALD KELL PLAYERS	Saturday, February 20, 8:30
GRILLER QUARTET	Sunday, February 21, 2:30

Season Tickets: \$3.50 and \$2.50. On sale beginning October 15.

Sixty-First Annual May Festival

SIX CONCERTS April 29, 30—May 1, 2, 1954
THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA, EUGENE ORMANDY, *Conductor*. UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION, THOR JOHNSON, *Guest Conductor*, LESTER MCCOY, *Associate Conductor*; FESTIVAL YOUTH CHORUS, MARGUERITE HOOD, *Conductor*. Soloists to be announced.

For tickets or information, address: Charles A. Sink, President, University Musical Society, Burton Memorial Tower.