

The University Musical Society

of
The University of Michigan



Presents

Eugene Ormandy

Conductor

University of Michigan Symphony Orchestra

GUSTAV MEIER, *Director*

FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 15, 1977, AT 8:30
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

- “Leonore” Overture No. 3, Op. 72a BEETHOVEN
- Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67 BEETHOVEN
- Allegro con brio :
Andante con moto
Allegro
Allegro; presto

INTERMISSION

- Two Nocturnes: “Nuages”; “Fêtes” DEBUSSY
- Symphonic Poem: “The Pines of Rome” RESPIGHI
- The Pines of the Villa Borghese
The Pines near a Catacomb
The Pines of the Janiculum
The Pines of the Appian Way

PROGRAM NOTES

by

GLENN D. MCGEOCH

Glenn D. McGeoch, Professor Emeritus of the School of Music, has generously reactivated his musicological expertise in providing these notes. From 1934 through 1974 he was the official program annotator for the annual May Festival programs, while serving as Professor of Music Literature in the School of Music during those years.

"Leonore" Overture No. 3, Op. 72a LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
(1770–1827)

As a master of absolute music Beethoven undeniably exerted a powerful influence upon the succeeding opera composers. But *Fidelio*, his single attempt in that field, has been far less an emancipating force than most of his instrumental compositions. The supreme service of *Fidelio* to aesthetic history was accomplished in turning Beethoven's attention to the dramatic overture. There is more real dramatic art in the four overtures designed as preludes for *Fidelio* than exists in the entire bulky score of the opera.

The four overtures are known as the "Leonore" Nos. 1, 2, and 3, in C major, and the "Fidelio" in E major. We know that the overture numbered by the publishers as No. 2 was used for the première of the opera, November 20, 1805. The incomparable No. 3, on this evening's program, is a remodeled form written for the reconstructed version, heard March 29, 1806. The established order of composition is No. 1 before 1805, No. 2 in 1805, No. 3 in 1806, and the "Fidelio" overture in 1814.

Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67 BEETHOVEN

The date of the completion of the Fifth Symphony is not definitely known. According to Alexander Thayer, "this wondrous work was no sudden inspiration." Themes for the first three movements are found in sketchbooks belonging to the years 1800 and 1801 (between the composition of the First and Second Symphonies). There are studies also preserved which show that Beethoven worked on it while composing *Fidelio* and the Piano Concerto in G (1804–06), at the time he laid the C-minor Symphony aside for the composition of the Fourth. That is all that is known of the rise and progress of this famous Symphony.

Those who believe that a great piece of music is simply profoundly felt emotion poured out under the immediate impact of events or experience that generate that emotion have been persistent in their attempts to read specific meaning into this work. Beethoven's noble music has been constantly dragged from its Empyrean heights to dwell in the world of the commonplace, by imposing upon it an extramusical content. The romantic vaporings of incurable sentimentalists have read into the Fifth Symphony everything from the summons of Fate to the Song of the Yellowhammer, and have never ceased to mention the inevitable overtones of unrequited and tragic love.

All of this is, of course, an insult to the very spirit of music. Such imaginings tie it down to finite things, and music should not be thus bound. What poverty of mind and little understanding of the psychical processes by which a significant piece of music comes into being is revealed by such attempts to make the most evasive and ephemeral of all the arts finite and specific. "Music," writes Ernest Newman, "is simply air in motion, and though the sound symbols written down by the composer at a particular time may have taken the form and color they did because of some volcanic experience of his in the outer world, or some psychological change within himself at that or some earlier time, it is always dangerous to try to read into the notes an expression of that experience."*

Whatever Beethoven was trying to express outside of the music itself, one thing is certain: he created a symphony of tremendous concentration, concision, and heroic power.

Two Nocturnes: "Nuages"; "Fêtes" CLAUDE DEBUSSY
(1862–1918)

Debussy wrote three Nocturnes for Orchestra (1897–1899). The first two performed on this program are "Nuages" and "Fêtes"; the third entitled "Sirènes" was written for orchestra and a chorus of female voices. The pieces are individual and not inseparably linked as are the movements of a symphony or a concerto.

In the fall of 1894, Debussy called these pieces "an experiment in different combinations that can be achieved with one color—what a study in gray would be in painting." The only verbal description Debussy ever wrote about music, he provided for "Nocturnes":

* Ernest Newman, "Beethoven: the Last Phase," *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1953.

"The title *Nocturnes* is to be interpreted in a decorative sense. Therefore, it is not meant to designate the usual form of a nocturne, but rather all the impressions and the special effects of light that the word suggests.

"Nuages" renders the immutable aspect of the sky and the slow, solemn motion of the clouds, fading away in gray tones slightly tinged with white.

"Fêtes" gives us the vibrating, dancing rhythm of the atmosphere with sudden flashes of light. There is also the episode of the procession (a dazzling fantastic vision) which passes through the festive scene and becomes merged in it. But the background remains persistently the same: the festival with its blending of music and luminous dust participating in the cosmic rhythm."*

Symphonic Poem: "The Pines of Rome" OTTORINO RESPIGHI
(1879-1936)

"The Pines of Rome" is the second of a cycle of three compositions dealing with the Eternal City: "The Fountains of Rome" (1816), "The Pines of Rome" (1924), and "Roman Festivals" (1928).

When Respighi arrived in America in 1925, he made the following reference to this work:

"I do not believe in sensational effects for their own sake. It is true that in my new orchestral poem, "The Pines of Rome," some of the instruments play B-sharp, and others B-flat in the same passage. But this is not obtruded upon listeners; in the general orchestral color it simply provides a note which I wanted.

"Yes, there is a phonograph record of a real nightingale's song used in the third movement. It is a nocturne, and the dreamy, subdued air of the woodland at the evening hour is mirrored in the scoring for the orchestra. Suddenly there is silence, and the voice of the real bird arises, with its liquid notes.

"Now that device has created no end of discussion wherever the work has been played. It has been styled radical, a departure from the rules. I simply realized that no combination of wind instruments could quite counterfeit the real bird's song. So I used the phonograph. The directions in the score have been followed thus wherever it has been played."

The "Pines" is written in four movements. In a program book of The Philadelphia Orchestra, Lawrence Gilman wrote:

"The Pines of the Villa Borghese (*Allegretto vivace*, 2-8). Children are at play in the pine-grove of the Villa Borghese, dancing the Italian equivalent of "Ring Around the Rosy"; mimicking marching soldiers and battles, twittering and shrieking like swallows at evening; and they disappear. Suddenly the scene changes to

"The Pines Near a Catacomb (*Lento*, 4-4) beginning with muted and divided strings, muted horns (*pianissimo*). We see the shadows of the pines which overhang the entrance to a catacomb. From the depths rises a chant which re-echoes solemnly, sonorously, like a hymn, and is then mysteriously silenced.

"The Pines of the Janiculum (*Lento*, 4-4, piano cadenza; clarinet solo). There is a thrill in the air. The full moon reveals the profile of the pines of Gianicolo's Hill. A nightingale sings (represented by a gramophone record of a nightingale's song heard from the orchestra).

"The Pines of the Appian Way (*Tempo di marcia*). Misty dawn on the Appian Way. The tragic country is guarded by solitary pines. Indistinctly, incessantly, the rhythm of innumerable steps. To the poet's phantasy appears a vision of past glories; trumpets blare, and the army of the consul advances brilliantly in the grandeur of a newly risen sun toward the sacred way, mounting in triumph the Capitoline Hill."

* Robert Bagar, *The Concert Companion* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1947), p. 212.

Eugene Ormandy, Music Director of The Philadelphia Orchestra and honorary alumnus (1952) of the University of Michigan, has conducted annually in Ann Arbor at the May Festivals since 1937. Tonight's performance is the third annual Benefit Concert played by the University Symphony Orchestra, following those conducted by Mstislav Rostropovich and Yehudi Menuhin, and Gyorgy Sandor, soloist. We are deeply appreciative of the contributions these artists have made, and equally grateful to responsive concertgoers who have shown their enthusiastic support by attending these concerts and receptions.

All net proceeds from this benefit evening will be shared equally by the University Musical Society and the School of Music.

Tonight's collaboration between the University Musical Society and the School of Music is reminiscent of the 60-year affiliation from 1880 to 1940, when the School of Music was founded and administered by the University Musical Society and before it became solely a School of The University of Michigan in 1940. The University Symphony Orchestra from those earliest years has been and is a significant part of Ann Arbor's concert life.

THE UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

GUSTAV MEIER, *Conductor*

Violin I

David Updegraff,
concertmaster
Mi-Hee Chung
Elizabeth Child
Katherine Ransom
Cynthia Stutt
David Gable
Jill Riethmiller
Diane Bischak
Benita Williams
Judith Palac
Linda Bischak
Charles Roth
Karen Peterson
Magdalen Heilbronn
Gabriela Klassen
Duane Cochran
Alison Neufeld
Judith Picker

Violin II

George Marsh,
principal
Diane Driggs
Maria Petkoff
Michelle Pauly
Karen Medhus
Marla Smith
Barbara Whale
Cindy Nichols
Scott Staidle
Kirsi Perttuli
Joni Niemann
Joanne Wisti
Richard Evich
Mary Porter
Amy Johnson
Anna Ahronheim

Viola

Margaret Lang,
principal
Sue Robinson
Max Raimi
Gail Van Aernum
Catherine Armstrong
Anne Hegel
Scott Woolweaver
Barbara Zmich
Philip Stoll
Loretta Castor
Nancy Yagiela
Mary Hendrikson

Violoncello

Michael Sebastian,
principal
Karen Sumner
Deborah Milan

Paul Wingert
Mark Brandfonbrener
Cathryn Mortenson
Cynthia Bloom
Luis Biava
Kathryn Everson
David Moulton
Margaret Murray
Beverly Brown
Lennie LaGuire

Double Bass

Erik Dyke,
principal
John Hood
Mark Wilson
Cathrine Garrett
William Ritchie
Craig Nelson
Michael Crawford
Keith Orr
Liz Stewart
Bruce Hanson

Flute

Deborah Ash
Gina Christianson
(piccolo)
Joyce Ann Simonson
Kathleen Stevenson
Phyllis Taylor

Oboe

Nancy Brammer
(English horn)
Lori Holmgren
David Lauth
Carol Purcell
Ellen Sudia

Clarinet

Lief Bjaland
Donna Edington
(bass clarinet)
Fernando Leon
Phil Thompson
Michael Votta

Bassoon

Hillary Burchuk
Elizabeth Haanes
Erik Haugen
Bruce Lupp
Jill Marderness
Mark Romatz
(contrabassoon)

Horn

Jennifer Burch
Richard Goldfaden

Mark Olson
Michael Phillips
Richard Price
Louis Stout, Jr.
Corbin Wagner
Lauren Zaccarelli

Trumpet

Brandon Cooper
Bob Grim
Craig Knepp
Cathy Leach
John Shuler

Trombone

Lyle Cowen
Michael Danielson
(bass trombone)
Marta Hofacre
Tom McKelvey

Tuba

Steven Seward

Percussion

Dave Colson
Pat McGinn
Mike Varner
Doug Walter
(timpani)

Celesta

David Carlson

Organ

Jon Gossett

Piano

Michael Gurt

Tape

Kerry Thompson

General Manager

Jon Gossett

Librarian

Richard Shillea

Library Assistant

Luis Biava

Equipment Manager

Erik Dyke

Equipment Assistant

Michael Varner

Above personnel includes some members of the University Philharmonia Orchestra.