

The University Musical Society

of

The University of Michigan



Presents

The ANN ARBOR May Festival

THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA
EUGENE ORMANDY, *Music Director and Conductor*
WILLIAM SMITH, *Associate Conductor*

THE FESTIVAL CHORUS
of the UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION
DONALD BRYANT, *Director*

JINDRICH ROHAN, *Conducting*

Soloist
JEROME HINES, *Bass*

FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 29, 1977, AT 8:30
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

Symphonic Poem, "From Bohemia's Meadows and Groves"
from *Ma Vlast* ("My Country") SMETANA

Prologue to *Mefistofele* BOITO

JEROME HINES

The FESTIVAL CHORUS and CHILDREN'S CHOIR

INTERMISSION

Excerpts from *Boris Godunov* MUSSORGSKY

Prologue and Coronation Scene
Boris' Monologue
Clock Scene
Polonaise

The Simpleton's Lament
RANDALL LAMBERT, *Tenor*
The Death of Boris

MR. HINES and THE FESTIVAL CHORUS

PROGRAM NOTES

Symphonic Poem, "From Bohemia's Meadows and Groves"

BEDRICH SMETANA
(1824–1884)

Rivaling Mozart as a child prodigy, Smetana's early youth gave promise of a brilliant and happy future. Through his optimism, freshness, and joy of life, he infused into his music the spirit of national life in its widest sense. Tragically, like Beethoven, he fell victim to total deafness at the age of fifty, nevertheless continuing to create works which were to become national masterpieces.

During this period of deafness, Smetana wrote his monumental cycle of six symphonic poems (begun in 1874 and completed in 1879) under the general title of *Ma Vlast* ("My Country"). The two most famous are "The Moldau" and "From Bohemia's Meadows and Groves," intensely poetic and picturesque descriptions of the Bohemian countryside, while the other four dramatically evoke Bohemia's historic mythology.

Of the work heard this evening, "From Bohemia's Meadows and Groves," Smetana has given us some idea of the descriptive intent in a letter to a friend: "On a fine summer day we stand in Bohemia's fields, where the lovely scent of flowers and cool breezes fill us with a rich sense of well-being. The air is filled with happy country sounds. But taking our leave of the noisy crowd, we are led to a quiet forest spot, where a light breeze sets the whole woodland a-rustle—all this being mingled with the twittering of birds. Through all this a distant horn sings a hymn of nature. A rush of wind soon carries in upon us the festive sounds of peasant merry-making, and we are in the midst of a rustic feast. Here the Czech rural folk partake of their true joy of life in song and dance, spreading this joy and gladness far and wide across the fertile Bohemian meadowlands."

Prologue to *Mefistofele* ARRIGO BOITO (1842–1918)

At the end of his musical studies at the Milan Conservatory, Boito went to Paris where he met Hugo, Berlioz, Rossini, and Verdi. While in the French capital, he conceived the idea of composing an opera on the theme of Goethe's *Faust*, and another on the Roman Emperor Nero (which was never completed.) The first performance of his *Mefistofele* took place in 1868, with the composer conducting, and, with the exception of the Prologue and the Second Act quartet, was roundly booed by the audience. Performances on the two following evenings met with equal hostility, and the opera had to be taken off. Disillusioned, Boito burnt most of the score and set about the work of revision. It was seven years later (1875) when the revised version was performed, and, despite a few minor complaints, this time met with rousing success.

The opera opens with a sequence of sonorous, impressive fanfares, after which a celestial chorus sings the praises of the Lord of the angels and the saints. Heralded by an instrumental scherzo, Mephistopheles confronts the heavenly host. In an aria (*Ave Signor*) he addresses God mockingly and apologizes for his uncouth speech and lack of a halo. The fact is that he is bored with the "Divine Master" and his worldly creation—man—who has become so degenerate that he is not worth tempting any more. A mystic choir asks him if he knows Faust. Indeed he does—the most fantastic madman he ever remembers, insatiable in his quest for knowledge. Mephistopheles wagers to ensnare the scholar. He boasts to the Maker that Faust shall bite the sweet apple of vice and so Mephistopheles will triumph over the King of Heaven. He cynically comments upon the pleasure and advantages of a periodical conversation between God and the Devil. A band of cherubs appears, blissfully singing, to the disgust of Mephistopheles who vanishes from the scene. The choral forces are joined by a congregation of penitents on Earth, praying for forgiveness, and the prologue ends with a mighty paean of praise to the Virgin Mary and the Lord of Heaven.

Excerpts from *Boris Godunov* MODEST MUSSORGSKY (1839–1881)

Mussorgsky was one of a group of composers all passionately devoted to the cause of Russian nationalism in music, and opera was considered the ideal medium for patriotic expression because of the opportunity to use Russian literature. Mussorgsky made several abortive attempts at writing an opera before Vladimir Nikolsky, an authority on Pushkin, suggested the master-dramatist's

historical tragedy *Boris Godunov* as the basis for a libretto. The composer produced his own text, using, in addition to Pushkin, "The History of the Russian Empire" by Karamzin, to relate this episode in the history of Russia between 1598 and 1605. Working continuously, Mussorgsky finished the vocal score in eight months, and the whole work, set in seven scenes, was completed by December 1869. He submitted his score to the Imperial Theatre, but it was rejected on the grounds of its "extraordinary modernism." In addition, Pushkin's original drama had run into censorship problems.

Undeterred, Mussorgsky radically revised his masterpiece and a full production took place in 1874. Nine successful performances followed that year and Mussorgsky seemed on the brink of a long and glittering career. In fact, however, *Boris Godunov* marked the climax of his creative life—although his genius still flared in many of his songs, Mussorgsky tangled with the problems of poverty and alcoholism for the next seven years, until his death in 1881.

After the composer's death, *Boris Godunov* was not performed again until Rimsky-Korsakov revised it in 1896. He made further revisions in 1906–8, and it is this fourth version that is still usually performed.

PROLOGUE AND CORONATION SCENE. — It is the year 1598. In a square of the great Kremlin the Moscow crowds kneel. The bells are pealing to celebrate the coronation of a new ruler for Russia—Boris Feodorovich Godunov. From the Cathedral of the Assumption comes a Boyar, the crafty Prince Shuisky, who cries: "Long live Tsar Boris!" The people, firmly controlled by the police, break into a splendid chorus (Like to the red sun in the heavens); a magnificent song of glorification. In response Boris himself emerges from the Assumption, followed by a procession of Boyars. Feeling foreboding rather than triumph (I am sick at heart), he prays for heavenly blessing and guidance. To solemn trombone chords he addresses the assembled multitude: after paying tribute to the Russian rulers of the past, everyone from beggar to prince shall feast as his cherished guest. The bells ring out anew, and the populace again raises its voice in praise as the procession moves on to the Cathedral of the Archangels. This scene is truly one of the most majestic in all opera.

BORIS' MONOLOGUE. — In the Tsar's apartments in the Kremlin Boris pours out his agony of mind while his young son studies geography. His years of power have brought no happiness to his tortured spirit. Even the comfort of his family is shattered by the death of his daughter's betrothed. Poor Russia groans under famine and plague, conspiracies and plottings, and it is Boris who is blamed for all the evil misfortune. The great monologue rises to an intense climax as Boris declares his remorse for Dimitri, the boy Tsarevich whom he had had murdered to clear his own way to the throne. Still the vision of the bloody child denies him sleep, and the mighty Tsar sinks under the weight of conscience.

THE CLOCK SCENE. — The ambitious Shuisky has told Boris of a Pretender who has arisen in Lithuania, calling himself Dimitri. Boris cannot contain himself; he bids Shuisky begone and collapses into a chair. He feels that his conscience is suffocating him. At that moment the chiming mechanism of a great clock grinds into action. The figures begin to move and in the sinister half-light Boris takes them for an apparition of the murdered child. Verging on madness, he sinks sobbing to the floor and implores the Almighty to have mercy on his guilty soul.

POLONAISE. — Scene 2 of the 'Polish' Act III takes place in the grounds of the Castle Mnishek at Sandomir in Lithuania. It is night and a fête is in progress. Dancers performing a polonaise pour into the moonlit gardens. The nobles, spurred on by their ladies, boast of the coming victory over the Muscovites. Then the whole company sings a toast to the family of Marina Mnishek, the Polish princess. Still dancing the merry throng re-enters the castle.

THE SIMPLETON. — Act IV opens before the Church of Basil the Blessed in Moscow where a Requiem mass has just been sung for the long-dead child-Tsarevich. When Boris and his suite have passed on, a melancholy simpleton, seated on a stone, is left lamenting the wretched fate of Russia: "Gush forth, bitter tears! Woe to Russia! Weep, Russian people, starving people."

THE DEATH OF BORIS. — Realizing that death is near, Boris dismisses all around him except his son. In the most moving of monologues he bids farewell. He tells Feodor that he is the rightful heir, and must beware of the nobles' plots. Let him protect the Russian people and care for his sister Xenia. Boris prays that God may bless his children. The passing bell begins to toll, and monks can be heard chanting. The Boyars creep silently back into the chamber together with the monks who are ready to receive the Tsar into the church before he dies. In a final desperate effort Boris raises himself declaring: "I am still Tsar," then falls dying in their midst. With his last breath he presents Feodor as the new Tsar, and imploring forgiveness, he dies.

—Synopsis by RAY CRICK

THE FESTIVAL CHORUS

DONALD T. BRYANT, *Director*

NANCY HODGE, *Accompanist*

ROBERT JOHNSON, *Manager*

First Sopranos

Ann Burke
Letitia Byrd
Susan Campbell
Elaine Cox
Estelle Fox
Carole Gallas
Gladys Hanson
Joann Hoover
Sylvia Jenkins
Cathy Keresztesi
Carolyn Leyh
Doris Luecke
Loretta Meissner
Rosalind Pehoski
Julia Remsperger
Karwyn Rigan
Alice Schneider
Mary Ann Sincoc
Diane Weil
Joanne Westman

Second Sopranos

Kathy Berry
Joyce Bleby
Doris Datsko
Sheryl Halsey
Becky Happel
Mary Hiraga
Alice Horning
Frances Lyman
Karen Myhre
Charlotte Nametz
Eleanor Overdeck
Susan Petcoff

Sara Peth
Virginia Reese
Carolyn Richards
Susan Schluederberg
Patricia Tompkins
Rachelle Warren
Judith Weber
Sally Weaver
Christine Wendt
Mary Fran Wisner
Karen Yoskovich
Kathy Young

First Altos

Ella Brown
Marion Brown
Alice Cambron
Lael Cappaert
Margaret Counihan
Sandra Festian
Merian Frederick
Meredy Gockel
Kathy Greene
Janice Johnson
Nancy Karp
Geraldine Koupal
Metta Lansdale
Kirsten Lietz
Lois Nelson
Carol Peacock
Anne Phelps
Susan Simmons
Nancy Tennenhouse
Charlotte Wolfe

Second Altos

Ellen Armstrong
Elaine Fontichiaro
Mary Haab
Joan Hagerty
Linda Hatcher
Dana Hull
Kathy Klyklo
Elsie Lovelace
Beverly Roeger
Carol Spencer
Katie Stebbins
Libby Stuber

First Tenors

Hugh Brown
William Craven
Tim Dombrowski
Robert Domine
Marshall Franke
Paul Lowry
Robert MacGregor
James McNally
Dennis Rigan
Marc Setzer
William Shepherd

Second Tenors

Steven Anderson
Paul Angelo
Martin Barrett
Peter Bleby
William Bronson
Al Girod

Donald Haworth
Thomas Hmay
Robert Johnson
John Meyer

First Basses

Robert Andres
Viktors Berstis
Lee Bratton
John Eastman
Thomas Farrell
Thomas Hagerty
Edgar Hamilton
Klair Kissel
Steven Olson
Dennis Powers
George Shepherd
Riley Williams
Robert Meader

Second Basses

Richard Andrews
Howard Bond
John Daly
David Harari
Phil Pierson
Raymond Schankin
Wallace Schonschack
Mark Sebastian
Edward Shoemaker
Thomas Sommerfeld
Dale Stafford
Robert Strozier
Terril Tompkins
John VanBolt

CLAGUE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL CONCERT CHOIR

HUNTER MARCH, *Director*

Carole Baker
Linda Bisel
Lisa Bohn
Laurel Burke
Edie Burton
Kathy Daws
Natalie Geiss
Kelly Gottschang
Kay Hamilton

Nadine Harston
Julie Heirich
Karen Henderson
Susan Janes
Jeffrey Jones
Erin Karr
Mike Lampe
Joni Lantry

Tammy Linden
Jill Malila
Ranee Meyers
Karen Pekkala
Anne Marie Piehl
Christy Proux
Rene Reichard
Gail Rhodes

Teri Roman
Diane Stevens
Jane Stillwagon
Suzanne Strader
Jennifer Taylor
Jane Tornatore
Linda Vredevelde
Debby Young

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