

# The University Musical Society

of  
The University of Michigan



Presents

## The ANN ARBOR May Festival

THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA  
EUGENE ORMANDY, *Music Director and Conductor*  
RICCARDO MUTI, *Principal Guest Conductor*  
WILLIAM SMITH, *Associate Conductor*

EUGENE ORMANDY, *Conducting*

THURSDAY EVENING, APRIL 27, 1978, AT 8:30  
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

### PROGRAM

- \**Don Juan*, Op. 20 . . . . . STRAUSS
- †\**"La Mer"* ("The Sea") . . . . . DEBUSSY  
From Dawn 'til Noon on the Sea  
Play of the Waves  
Dialogue of the Wind and the Sea

### INTERMISSION

- \**Symphony No. 1 in E minor*, Op. 39 . . . . . SIBELIUS  
Andante ma non troppo; allegro energico  
Andante ma non troppo lento  
Scherzo  
Finale: quasi una fantasia

\* Available on Columbia Records

† Available on RCA Red Seal

## PROGRAM NOTES

by

RICHARD FREED

*Don Juan*, Op. 20 . . . . . RICHARD STRAUSS  
(1864–1949)

Strauss made his first sketches for *Don Juan* in the fall of 1887 and completed the work the following summer, about the time he turned twenty-four; he conducted the first performance himself on November 11, 1889, in Weimar, where Franz Liszt, the "inventor" of the tone poem, had introduced all but three of his own works in that form. *Don Juan* was the first of Strauss's tone poems to reach the public, and it was in this work that he announced himself as the composer destined to carry what Liszt had initiated to its highest level.

The legend of Don Juan Tenorio has fascinated writers from Molière to Bernard Shaw and beyond, by way of Lord Byron and Alfred de Musset, and has inspired at least a dozen operas in addition to Mozart's masterpiece. The version that intrigued the twenty-three-year-old Strauss was written by the Austro-Hungarian poet Nikolaus Lenau in 1844. Lenau produced one of the most sympathetic and probing portraits of the amatory conquistador, a portrayal whose subtlety and depth would naturally strike the imagination of Strauss, the future master of musical dramaturgy, more than the traditional characterizations of Don Juan as a mindless rakehell.

The exuberance and impetuosity of Don Juan himself, so vividly projected in the very opening of the Strauss work, are contrasted with episodes of tenderness and several "feminine" themes, all flashing by in what Richard Specht described (in his foreword to the score) as an "intoxicating carnival procession." But even the heroic theme given to the four horns in unison (and subsequently quoted by Strauss by way of self-glorification in *Ein Heldenleben*), for all its nobility, might be said to betray an element of futility, and the dissolute hero (or anti-hero) meets his end unceremoniously; there is no peroration.

"La Mer"—Three Symphonic Sketches . . . . . CLAUDE DEBUSSY  
(1862–1918)

"You may not have known that I was destined for a sailor's life," Debussy wrote to André Messager from Burgundy in September 1903, "and it was only by chance that fate led me in another direction. Yet I have always felt a passionate love for the sea. You may say that the Burgundian hills are not exactly bathed by the ocean, and that my seascapes might be studio landscapes, but I have a store of memories beyond number, and, to my mind, these are worth more than the reality which often only deadens one's thought."

The letter to Messager was written on the same day as another letter, to the publisher Jacques Durand, in which Debussy first outlined "La Mer," describing the sea as "mysterious, alluring, menacing, complex, elemental." He wrote from the coastal town of Dieppe a year later: "I should have liked to finish 'La Mer' here, but I must complete the orchestration, which is as tumultuous and varied as the sea itself!" In yet another letter, also from Dieppe, he wrote of "my old friend the sea," complaining that "the sea is not respected enough. . . . It ought not to be permitted that bodies deformed by workaday life dip into it. . . . In the sea there should be only Sirens, and how do you suppose these estimable personages would consent to return to waters defiled by such low creatures?"

Despite these professions of familiarity and love, it would appear that the composer of "La Mer" actually had little more contact with the sea than the composer of "Ibéria" had with Spain: in the latter case, a three-hour visit to a border town to witness a bullfight; in the former, two Channel crossings and some seaside holidays. That Debussy's imagination could be fired by so little in the way of actual experience only serves to emphasize the intensity of his involvement with his subject—and the validity of what he wrote to Messager: for him the *idea* was always of far greater importance than mere reality.

Oscar Thompson, author of *Debussy, Man and Artist*, published in 1937, wrote with such insight and authority of "La Mer" that his words might well be an appendix to the score:

*From Dawn to Noon on the Sea.* "There is a mysterious, eerie quality in the undulations with which this sketch begins. In the music are at once an incantation and an awakening. The chief

subject . . . is declaimed by muted trumpet and English horn. Thereafter, as the light seems to grow clearer and Nature more boisterous, the waves of this chimerical sea ride higher, throwing their spume into the sunshine, with all manner of glint and refraction, exultant, tumultuous, but not menacing or cruel. Toward the end, wind instruments intone a solemn and noble theme that has been described as 'the chorale of the depths.' Above it continues the pitching of the waves; there comes a momentary lull, then a last shake of the mane of these horses of the sea."

*Play of the Waves.* "There are waves of every color and mood in a capricious sport of wind and spray. In a contrastive sense this is the Scherzo of Debussy's heretical symphony. . . . The elements dance, they romp and race. . . . About all is an aura of the remote and the unreal. This is a world of sheer fantasy . . . a mirage of sight and equally . . . of sound. On the sea's vast stage is presented a trancelike phantasmagoria so evanescent and fugitive that it leaves behind only the vagueness of a dream."

*Dialogue of the Wind and the Sea.* "A gustier and wilder sea. . . . There are two clear recollections of the first movement, the first subject being whisked back in one of countless necromantic transformations of fragments of song, and the chorale returning again for a climax of glowing sonorities. . . . The brass peals forth in shining splendor. . . ."

Symphony No. 1 in E minor, Op. 39 . . . . . JEAN SIBELIUS  
(1865–1957)

As the opus number indicates, Sibelius busied himself with many other works before undertaking a symphony for the first time. He was nearly thirty-four years old when he completed this work in 1899, and it has been suggested that he had not yet found his own personal style as a symphonist. Slavic influences are readily discerned in the First Symphony; it has been called Tchaikovskian, and a resemblance of its first movement to that of Borodin's First Symphony has been noted. Cecil Gray, a respected English commentator on the music of Sibelius, purported to find "the principal subjects . . . predominantly Slavonic in character, the subsidiary ones . . . often distinctly Finnish," and concluded that "the atmosphere of storm and conflict which pervades the entire work . . . presents a symbolic picture of Finnish insurrection against Russian oppression." Sibelius' Finnish biographer Karl Ekman, however, states that the First Symphony is basically "a profound human document [of] the struggle of a soul full of conflict for its salvation."

The first movement opens with a rhapsodically brooding clarinet solo against a soft drum-roll, after which the strings enter vibrantly with the main theme, which is given a full-blown Romantic working-out, with surging climaxes that do indeed recall Tchaikovsky. But the wind writing at the beginning of the development section is as characteristically "Sibelian" as anything the composer wrote later.

The second movement, which many have assumed to be based on a folk melody, is actually original Sibelius in every phrase. The persevering theme, making its way through an accompaniment now undulating, now whirring, has evoked a dogged journey through the winter snow for many listeners, while to Paul Rosenfeld it suggested "the pathos of brief, bland summers." In structure and mood, this movement is similar to the corresponding one in Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony, but, while the theme of the Tchaikovsky slow movement is plaintive from the outset and so remains, until bathed in its own tears, the theme of Sibelius' *Andante* is one of determination—if tempered with resignation.

The Scherzo is still more rugged and outdoorsy. In a striking reversal of roles, rhythmic beats from the violins and violas set off the theme, which is actually played on the timpani; it is then echoed in turn by the lower strings and the winds, then tossed back and forth between the timpani, clarinets, and trombones. Altogether, this extremely vigorous Scherzo, with its nostalgic Trio, is one of Sibelius' most jovial and open-hearted pieces, its rough humor recalling the beguiling gruffness of his early tone poem *En Saga*.

If the Symphony may be regarded as a spiritual journey, the Finale is its yield, a grand summing-up. None of the themes from the earlier movements is introduced here (though some are hinted at), but this movement seems to weigh the emotional turbulence and contrasts of its predecessors and emerge "bloody but unbowed," fully confirming Ekman's description of the work. The theme itself is a Romantic one—not hymnlike, but songful—but one that neither Tchaikovsky nor Borodin nor anyone else would have shaped in quite the same way as it appears here. The harp, fairly prominent in all four movements, is used here with particular effectiveness, vaguely suggesting some sort of bardic presence.

# THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA

EUGENE ORMANDY, *Music Director and Conductor*

RICCARDO MUTI, *Principal Guest Conductor*

WILLIAM SMITH, *Associate Conductor*

BORIS SOKOLOFF, *Manager*

JOSEPH SANTARLASCI, *Assistant Manager*

## *Violins*

Norman Carol  
*Concertmaster*

William de Pasquale  
*Associate Concertmaster*

David Arben  
*Assistant Concertmaster*

Morris Shulik  
Owen Lusak  
David Grunschlag  
Frank E. Saam  
Frank Costanzo  
Barbara Sorlien  
Herbert Light  
Charles Rex  
Ernest L. Goldstein  
Luis Biava  
Larry Grika  
Cathleen Dalschaert  
Herold Klein  
Julia Janson

Irvin Rosen  
Robert de Pasquale  
Armand Di Camillo  
Joseph Lanza  
Irving Ludwig  
Jerome Wigler  
Virginia Halfmann  
Arnold Grossi  
George Dreyfus  
Louis Lanza  
Stephane Dalschaert  
Isadore Schwartz  
Booker Rowe  
Davyd Booth  
Jonathan Beiler

## *Violas*

Joseph de Pasquale  
James Fawcett  
Leonard Mogill  
Sidney Curtiss  
Gaetano Molieri  
Irving Segall  
Leonard Bogdanoff  
Charles Griffin  
Wolfgang Granat  
Donald R. Clauser  
Albert Filosa  
Renard Edwards

## *Violoncellos*

William Stokking  
George Harpham

Harry Gorodetzer  
Lloyd Smith  
Joseph Druian  
Bert Phillips  
Deborah Reeder  
Christopher Rex  
Richard Harlow  
Gloria Johns  
William Saputelli  
Marcel Farago

## *Basses*

Roger M. Scott  
Michael Shahan  
Neil Courtney  
Ferdinand Maresh  
Carl Torello  
Samuel Gorodetzer  
Emilio Gravagno  
Curtis Burris  
Henry G. Scott

## *Flutes*

Murray W. Panitz  
Kenneth E. Scutt  
Loren N. Lind  
John C. Krell  
*Piccolo*

## *Oboes*

Richard Woodhams  
Stevens Hewitt  
Charles M. Morris  
Louis Rosenblatt  
*English Horn*

## *Clarinets*

Anthony M. Gigliotti  
Donald Montanaro  
Raoul Querze  
Ronald Reuben  
*Bass Clarinet*

## *Bassoons*

Bernard Garfield  
John Shamlan  
Adelchi Louis Angelucci  
Robert J. Pfeuffer  
*Contra Bassoon*

## *Horns*

Mason Jones  
Nolan Miller  
Randy Gardner  
Martha Glaze  
Howard Wall  
Daniel Williams

## *Trumpets*

Frank Kaderabek  
Donald E. McComas  
Seymour Rosenfeld  
Roger Blackburn

## *Trombones*

Glenn Dodson  
Tyrone Breuninger  
M. Dee Stewart  
*Bass Trumpet/Tenor Tuba*  
Robert S. Harper  
*Bass Trombone*

## *Tuba*

Paul Krzywicki

## *Timpani*

Gerald Carlyss  
Michael Bookspan

## *Battery*

Michael Bookspan  
Alan Abel  
Anthony Orlando  
William Saputelli

## *Celesta, Piano and Organ*

William Smith  
Marcel Farago

## *Harps*

Marilyn Costello  
Margarita Csonka

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