



100 Years  
of Great  
Performances

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

*The* ANN ARBOR

*May Festival*

THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA

EUGENE ORMANDY, *Music Director*  
RICCARDO MUTI, *Principal Guest Conductor*  
WILLIAM SMITH, *Associate Conductor*

RICCARDO MUTI, *Conducting*

ALICIA DE LARROCHA, *Pianist*

FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 27, 1979, AT 8:30  
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

*Compositions of Ludwig van Beethoven*

\*Symphony No. 6 in F major, Op. 68 ("Pastorale")

Awakening of cheerful emotions on arriving in the country  
Scene by the brook  
Jolly gathering of country folk  
The storm  
Shepherd's song; happy and thankful feelings after the storm

INTERMISSION

†Concerto No. 3 in C minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 37

Allegro  
Largo  
Allegro

ALICIA DE LARROCHA

*Leonore Overture No. 3, Op. 72a*

\*Available on Columbia Records  
Mme de Larrocha: London Records

†Available on RCA Red Seal Records

*Tomorrow morning, April 28, Mme de Larrocha will be honored at the Spring Commencement Exercises where an honorary Doctor of Music degree will be conferred upon her by the Regents of The University of Michigan. The Musical Society is justifiably proud and privileged to present this outstanding pianist in the closing week of its 100th anniversary.*

## PROGRAM NOTES

by RICHARD FREED

### *Compositions of Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770–1827*

#### Symphony No. 6 in F major, Op. 68 ("Pastorale")

The Sixth Symphony, completed in 1808 and introduced together with the Fifth in the famous concert at the Theater an der Wien on December 22 of that year, is one of the works to which Beethoven himself affixed descriptive titles. He not only labeled this symphony *Sinfonia pastorale*, but gave each of its five movements a heading of its own, indicating a fairly specific "program." At the same time, however, he pointed out that these titles were to be regarded as only the most general indications of his motivation in composing the music.

Such remarks as "I love a tree more than a man" are sometimes cited to illustrate a sour, misanthropic outlook on Beethoven's part, but the fact is that he took a very genuine delight in nature. "No one can love the country as I do," he wrote; "my bad hearing does not trouble me here. In the country, every tree seems to speak to me, saying, 'Holy! Holy!' Here in the woods there is an enchantment which expresses all things!"

Though Beethoven disclaimed graphic intent, the pictorial element is surely evident. The disclaimer, one might say, was a warning to the listener against letting visual images (or expectations of such images) get in the way of the music.

*Awakening of Cheerful Emotions on Arriving in the Country* is the heading of the first movement. There is no introduction: the music begins straightaway with one of Beethoven's most lyrically ingratiating themes and there is not a single wasted note as new themes and sub-themes spin out of each other. The fastidious construction and brightly ornamental use of the woodwinds should be enough to remind the listener who is not entirely consumed in his search for scenic significance that we are dealing here, as Sir Donald Francis Tovey pointed out, "with a perfect classical symphony." "Nothing could be easier to follow," Tovey wrote of this movement, "and yet nothing could be more unexpected than its course."

*Scene by the Brook* was described by Tovey as "one of the most powerful things in music. The brook goes on forever; the importance of that fact lies in its effect upon the poetic mind of the listener basking in the sun on its banks. The representation of its flow with the aid of two muted solo violoncellos is a stroke of genius that will always seem modern." The rest of the cellos play together with the double basses in this movement. Against the constant murmuring of the brook the inter-related themes deepen the feeling of serenity and peace, and near the end of the movement the nightingale, quail and cuckoo are heard from in direct quotations by the flute, oboe and clarinet, respectively.

The last three movements, played without pause, are connecting scenes in a charming bucolic drama. The scherzo is headed *Jolly Gathering of Country Folk*; both the scherzo proper and its trio are repeated, then followed by a final statement of the scherzo and a trim little coda. The writing for the winds in this movement is downright delicious, both recalling and surpassing various examples in the concertante and chamber music of certain baroque masters. The trumpets, silent in the preceding movements, make their first appearance in the trio. The merrymaking breaks off ominously as the sky clouds over.

Beethoven's depiction of *The Storm*, in the fourth movement, is still almost terrifying in its impact, which is achieved with surprisingly modest means. The drums are the only percussion instruments used in this remarkable evocation; the piccolo (also used in this movement alone) and the trombones (held back till now) add in their different ways to the ferocity of the scene. When the storm dies away the oboes give out a luminous motif said to represent a rainbow.

*Shepherd's Song; Happy and Thankful Feelings After the Storm*, unlike any of Beethoven's other symphonic finales, is relatively slow and soft, its burden neither triumph nor revelry, but radiant contentment. Here the rusticity of the scherzo blends with the serenity of the slow movement to form one of the simplest and most heartfelt episodes in all of Beethoven's symphonies, an unselfconscious benediction that validates Tovey's observation that "the *Pastoral Symphony* has the enormous strength of someone who knows how to relax."

#### Concerto No. 3 in C minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 37

The Third Concerto belongs to the same period of creative activity as its two predecessors, but brings that period decisively to its close. It was composed in 1800, modified slightly over the following year or two, and first performed on April 5, 1803. The boldness and forward-looking qualities of this Concerto are extensions of the same characteristics of the one in the same key, K. 491, by Mozart: in both works a traditional form served as a viable framework for utterances whose profundity and personal urgency were to take the concerto out of the realm of "society music."

The opening tutti of Beethoven's Op. 37 is of such genuinely symphonic proportions that Tovey felt it was "something that dangerously resembled a mistake" because "it rouses no expectations of the entry of a solo instrument." Beethoven, he wrote, "recognized and saved a dangerous situation in the nick of time": after the statement of the second subject, "suddenly the orchestra seems to realize that it has no right to take the drama into its own hands; that its function is not drama but chorus-like narrative; and with a modulation in itself dramatic, the melody calmly turns round to C major and is followed by a series of cadence-phrases in the tonic minor . . . which bring this, the longest of all Beethoven's concerto tuttis, to a massive formal close."

Massive, too, is the soloist's entry at this point, following which the partnership between soloist and orchestra is an unprecedentedly rich one, though the primacy of the former is never in question. The slow movement, in E major, breaks with precedent even more strikingly in terms of its subtle and deeply felt expressiveness, while the robust and vivacious final rondo, with its especially imaginative coda, triumphantly validates Tovey's observation that this Concerto is "one of the works in which we most clearly see the style of [Beethoven's] first period preparing to develop into that of his second."

The first performance of the C minor Concerto was a near-chaotic affair, of the sort duplicated in various other Beethoven premières. On the same program were the First Symphony and the premières of both the Second Symphony and the oratorio *Christ on the Mount of Olives*. The concert was to commence at six in the evening. At five that morning Ferdinand Ries found Beethoven copying out the trombone parts for the oratorio; the rehearsal in the Theater an der Wien began at eight, and Beethoven kept his musicians going without a break until 2:30 in the afternoon, when Prince Lichnowsky brought in some cold cuts, bread and wine. The concert proved to be a success financially, if not artistically.

Beethoven was soloist as well as conductor in the Concerto. His friend Ignaz von Seyfried, who turned pages for him, reported that that task "was easier said than done. I saw almost nothing but empty leaves; at the most on one page or the other a few Egyptian hieroglyphs wholly unintelligible to me scribbled down to serve as clues for him; for he played nearly all of the solo part from memory, since, as was so often the case, he had not had time to put it all down on paper. He gave me a secret glance whenever he was at the end of one of the invisible passages and my scarcely concealable anxiety not to miss the decisive moment amused him greatly . . . he laughed heartily at the jovial supper which we ate afterwards."

Ries, who performed the Concerto under Beethoven's direction the following year, noted in his book on the composer: "The pianoforte part of the C minor Concerto was *never completely written out* in the score; Beethoven wrote it down on separate sheets of paper expressly for me." When the work was published, at the end of 1804, Beethoven affixed a dedication to Prince Louis Ferdinand of Prussia, who was himself an accomplished pianist and composer and a great admirer of Beethoven's works. It was not until 1809 that Beethoven wrote out cadenzas for this Concerto.

### *Leonore* Overture No. 3, Op. 72a

While a Rossini or a Donizetti might compose as many as four operas in a single year, Beethoven spent more than a decade creating his single work for the lyric stage and revising it into the form in which we know it today. In the matter of the overture, he turned the tables on Rossini, who sometimes used the same overture for as many as three different operas, by composing no fewer than four overtures for his *Fidelio*.

Beethoven originally titled his opera *Leonore* (as Pierre Gaveaux and Ferdinando Paer had called their earlier operatic treatments of the same story). When the original three-act version was produced on November 20, 1805, he had already discarded his first attempt at an overture (the *Leonore No. 1*, which may not have been finished by then and was not heard until nine years after his death) and substituted one nearly twice as long, known now as *Leonore No. 2*. This was also to be set aside. When the first revision of the opera was presented, only four months after the original première (but now in two acts instead of three), the overture had been trimmed and tightened into the *Leonore No. 3*. When the third and final version was presented under the title *Fidelio*, on May 23, 1814, Beethoven was not ready with a new overture and so used the one from his ballet *The Creatures of Prometheus*; three days later the production was repeated with the overture in E major known ever since simply as the *Fidelio* Overture, and the three *Leonore* overtures (all in C major) have taken their places in the concert repertory.

The *Leonore Overture No. 3*, by all odds the most frequently heard, is also still closely associated with the opera itself. Some 60 years after Beethoven's death the tradition arose of performing it between the two scenes of Act II; Gustav Mahler, Felix Mottl and others have been cited variously as the supposed originator of this custom. It is a concise tone poem far in advance of the genre "invented" by Liszt, and well in advance, too, of the descriptive overtures of Mendelssohn. Romain Rolland, in his *Beethoven the Creator*, observed that the three *Leonore* overtures "have one feature in common: Beethoven's music has signed them not 'Leonora' but 'Florestan.' The prisoner's song appears in all three; but, whereas in No. 1 it is merely pinned on like a quotation, it becomes the very breath of the being of No. 2 and No. 3." Florestan's air ("*In des Lebens Frühlingstagen*") is indeed the only material from the opera itself quoted in the *Leonore Overture No. 3*, except the dramatic trumpet calls—first far-off, then nearer—announcing the arrival of the Minister of Justice, which here lead to the triumphant coda.

## Special Features of the Centennial Season

*"Birds in Springtime"*—a tapestry created and woven at the Wissa Wassef studio in Harrania, Egypt, given to the University Musical Society in honor of its anniversary, by Dr. Michael Papo in April 1978.

*A commissioned composition for carillon*—composed by Gary White and premiered on June 19, 1978, on the Charles Baird Carillon, Burton Memorial Tower.

*"The Past Is Prologue"*—Metropolitan Opera Stars on Film, all of whom have sung in Ann Arbor, narrated by Francis Robinson, October 7, 1978.

*Opening of the 100th Annual Choral Union Series*—a Celebration Luncheon in the Michigan League Ballroom preceded a recital on October 8, 1978, by Vladimir Horowitz, who, significantly, played his first concert in Ann Arbor just fifty years earlier; an *Encore* membership roster saluted special contributors, the Centurions and 100%'ers.

*Anniversary "bonus" concerts*—complimentary tickets to subscribers of all concert series were provided throughout the year.

*Commemorative Album*—a two-record, limited edition of works performed by the University Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy and Yehudi Menuhin, from the Benefit Concerts of 1976 and 1977.

*"Messiah" Recording*—to be made available from the 100th year of the University Choral Union—the performance of December 1978.

*A commissioned choral work by Gian Carlo Menotti*—to be premiered next season by the University Choral Union.

*Founders Day Concert*—The Festival Chorus in a chronicle of the Musical Society history, written by Gail Rector and narrated by Wystan Stevens, Ann Arbor's city historian; and a "Gallery of 100," enlarged, autographed photos of famous artists who have performed in Ann Arbor, uniquely exhibited in the Hill Auditorium lobby.

*Egyptian Tour*—one hundred people journeyed to Egypt in March 1979, fifty-five singers of the Festival Chorus for concerts in Cairo and Alexandria, joined by forty-five members of *Encore*.

*Anniversary year closing concert*—Saturday, April 28, at the May Festival the Choral Union sings Verdi's "Manzoni" Requiem with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy conducting.

*To be published, an "Epilogue"*—a history of the University Musical Society to include a compilation of all artists and organizations presented since 1879, and a listing of the repertoire performed.

With the above "Epilogue," the Musical Society will share the hundreds of letters of congratulations received this season from artists who have performed in Ann Arbor during this century; also the message from President Carter, dated October 5, 1978, and the Resolutions and congratulatory messages from the Governor of the State of Michigan, the Regents of the University, the School of Music, the Mayor of Ann Arbor, and the State of Michigan House of Representatives and Senate, commemorating the 100th Anniversary "in grateful appreciation of the Musical Society's immeasurable contributions to the world of music."

## University Musical Society

Constitution adopted February 24, 1880

Motto: *Ars longa, vita brevis*

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