



*International
Presentations of
Music & Dance*

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig

KURT MASUR

Music Director and Conductor

SUNDAY EVENING, MARCH 29, 1981, AT 8:30
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

P R O G R A M

Serenata notturna in D major, K. 239 MOZART
 Marcia: maestoso
 Menuetto
 Rondo: allegretto

Symphony No. 1 in F minor, Op. 10 SHOSTAKOVICH
 Allegretto, allegro non troppo
 Allegro
 Lento
 Allegro molto

I N T E R M I S S I O N

Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92 BEETHOVEN
 Poco sostenuto, vivace
 Allegretto
 Scherzo: presto
 Allegro con brio

*Philips, Angel, London, Deutsche Grammophon, Vanguard, Turnabout, and
Seraphim Records.*

PROGRAM NOTES

Serenata notturna in D major, K. 239 . . . WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

The original of this very graceful *Serenata notturna* is in the Library of the Institute of France. Composed in Salzburg in January 1776, it is written for two small string orchestras, one composed of two violins, one viola, and one bass, while the other combines the same instruments to which kettledrums are added. It is closely related to the *concerto grosso* form. The first group represents the *concertino* (group of soloists). The *ripieni* composing the *tutti* constitutes the other.

As customary at the time, Mozart commences his *Serenade* with a march, which has a majestic pace. The two groups of instruments combine to announce the motifs. As the *trio* with its very lively pizzicati commences, they separate. Normally, an *Allegro* would follow, but Mozart proceeds directly to the *Menuet*. Here the role of the groups is more individual. The melody moves from one to the other, except in the second section which appears as a single *concertino*. There is a return of the elegant *trio* in G major in which the melody by the first violin is accompanied with triplets by the second. In the final *Rondo*, the theme has a French gracefulness. Two *intermezzi* in G major are inserted. The first, *Adagio*, has the prescribed rhythm of a minuet and serves as an introduction to the following *Allegro*.

Symphony No. 1 in F minor, Op. 10 . . . DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906-1975)

Little "Mitya" Shostakovich led a cultured and sheltered life at first. His father was a successful chemical engineer and his mother was a capable pianist who had studied at the Petersburg Conservatory. As the son of upper-class intellectuals, he attended an exclusive private school, started studying piano at the age of 13, enrolled in the Leningrad Conservatory and studied composition with Glazunov and Maximilian Steinberg. But the Bolshevik Revolution and his father's sudden death changed things, drastically and tragically.

He, his mother, and his two sisters were forced to move to a small slum flat in Leningrad, and Madame Shostakovich began working, when she could, as a stenographer to try to keep her children clothed and fed. They were often cold and more often hungry. And by the time the sensitive Mitya had turned 18, his health was so affected that tuberculosis appeared inevitable and he was sent to a sanitarium.

He responded to treatment. Upon returning, they were poorer than ever and even lost their beloved piano to bill collectors. But, resolved to continue his music education at any cost, the young genius took a job playing the piano in a movie theater. Biographer Victor Seroff describes his situation:

"Down in front below the screen sat Mitya, his back soaked with perspiration, his near-sighted eyes in their horn-rimmed glasses peering upwards to follow the story, his fingers pounding away on the raucous upright piano. Late at night he trudged home in a thin coat and summer cap, with no warm gloves or galoshes, and arrived exhausted around one o'clock in the morning . . . It was in the midst of this that Mitya began composing his First Symphony."

The First Symphony is, then, the work of a gifted teen-ager, completed when he was but 19, as a kind of graduation thesis from the conservatory. It is considered by many to be his finest composition, and much of his successful career is owed to this youthful work, so full of vitality and excitement. And, though it may seem curious, considering both socialist ideology and the fact that we are dealing with the arts, the composition symbolizes the classic transformation from suffering artist to celebrity, a kind of *proletkult* Horatio Alger story.

The conservatory administration decided to support their young genius, and paid to have the parts of the symphony copied; probably through the encouragement of Steinberg, Nikolai Malko agreed to conduct the composition with the Leningrad Philharmonic. It received a tremendous ovation, and Mitya (now Dmitri) became something of an instant folk hero. Subsequently, Bruno Walter heard about the "miracle" and produced the symphony in Berlin, thereby starting Shostakovich's Western fame; shortly thereafter the American premiere was presented by the Philadelphia Orchestra. Thus, within two years, the starving silent film piano player became an international figure, the Mozart of socialist realism, the very embodiment of Lenin's artist-hero.

The First Symphony is eclectic. There are evidences of the influence of Glazunov, Prokofiev, and even Tchaikovsky. Further, we know that Hindemith had been in Leningrad and his music as well as that of Mahler, Berg, and Stravinsky was certainly not unknown there, and their influences might also be detected. Yet the work has distinctive qualities which were to become Shostakovich trademarks: the epochal concept; the Mahlerian contradictions with a Dostoevskian tone; the loftiness beside peasant vulgarity; romantic desolation mixed with delightfully naive humor, as well as with relentless logic; and beyond all, the one trait that was to save his symphonies time and again from political polemics though not always from obtuse mundanity: a simplistic nationalism. It is an incredible first symphony. It is, perhaps, Shostakovich at his purest, for his muse was still exempt from political doctrine.

—ROBERT HOLMES

Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92 LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
(1770-1827)

Beethoven's Seventh Symphony was written in 1812 and heard first in Vienna in 1813. The occasion was a benefit concert for disabled Austrian and Bavarian soldiers who had tried to cut off Napoleon's retreat but were defeated at Hanau.

Many interpretations have been offered in an effort to attach a meaning to the Seventh Symphony, the most joyous and carefree of Beethoven's nine symphonies, but probably the best is that of Richard Wagner, who referred to it as the "Apotheosis of the Dance."

The introduction to the first movement is of striking beauty and sounds the joyous keynote of the entire work. Following a transition period, the gay and spirited movement proper develops. It concludes with an elaborate coda in which fragments of the main theme with its characteristic rhythm are heard, steadily increasing from pianissimo to a powerful fortissimo at the happy close.

The *Allegretto* is somewhat more serious than the rest of the Symphony, but still a steady rhythm pervades. Following the development of counter melodies, the clarinet announces a lovely melody which suggests a beam of sunshine dispelling the more sombre mood of the movement. The opening subject returns as the *Allegretto* concludes.

The third movement, in the nature of a *Scherzo*, is a charming example of lightness and grace. The main theme is a genial melody, full of good humor and buoyantly developed. In the *Trio*, one of Beethoven's supreme moments, violins hold a high tone against an appealing melody, said to be an old pilgrim-chant of southern Austria. The first part of the *Scherzo* is repeated, and also the hymn, leading to the coda and a happy conclusion.

In the *Finale*, the symphony reaches its peak with rhythm holding complete sway and both first and second themes truly bacchanalian and contagious. The rollicking and carefree movement proceeds with animation to the remarkable coda which is full of Beethoven's inimitable inventions. It is an exuberant climax to a work of great beauty and ineffable charm.

About the Artists

The **Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig** is the oldest concert orchestra in Germany and long revered as one of the world's finest. It was organized in 1743 by a group of merchants and noblemen with Johann Sebastian Bach as its leader. Originally called the Collegium Musicum, the ensemble received its present name when, later in the century, the concerts were moved to the Gewandhaus, the building that housed the linen merchants of Leipzig. It was in 1835, when Felix Mendelssohn became conductor, that the Gewandhaus Orchestra became one of the best in the world; thus continued the succession of great composers, conductors, and soloists inseparably woven into its history. The conductors succeeding Mendelssohn include Arthur Nikisch, Gustav Mahler, Bruno Walter, Franz Konvitschny, and Wilhelm Furtwängler; other illustrious musicians associated with the Orchestra include Mozart, von Weber, Franz Liszt, Clara Schumann, Jenny Lind, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Grieg, Richard Strauss, Paul Hindemith, Fritz Busch, Arturo Toscanini, Leopold Stokowski, David and Igor Oistrakh, Yehudi Menuhin, and Wilhelm Backhaus. A few of the masterpieces that were given their first performance by the Gewandhaus Orchestra are Schubert's "Great" C-major Symphony, the majority of Mendelssohn's and Schumann's symphonic works, the first violin and piano concertos of Brahms, Bruckner's Seventh Symphony, and Reger's "Hiller" Variations.

Critics designate the Gewandhaus Orchestra as unique in character. In addition to concert work, all members play at the New Opera House and take part in the weekly performances of Bach cantatas in St. Thomas' Church. A group of musicians led by Gerhard Bosse, the leader of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, form the Bach Orchestra, which performs the instrumental works of the great former Cantor of St. Thomas, Leipzig. In recent years the Orchestra has undertaken concert tours in practically all the countries of Europe and in Japan, as well as America.

Kurt Masur was appointed Music Director of the Gewandhaus Orchestra in 1970, and has continued the ensemble's distinguished reputation for excellence in the classical repertoire while also encouraging the playing of contemporary works. A conductor of world renown, Mr. Masur was formerly conductor of the Leipzig Opera House, and has led such prestigious ensembles as the Dresden Staatskapelle, and the Philharmonic Orchestras of Leningrad, Berlin, Vienna, and Stockholm. A regular guest of the London New Philharmonia and of the orchestras of the Teatro la Fenice and the Orchestre Nacional de l'O.R.T.F. of Paris, he also participates in major music festivals such as the famed Salzburg Festival. Mr. Masur has recorded all nine of Beethoven's symphonies, the complete piano concerti of Mozart and Prokofiev, and the complete symphonic works of Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Bruckner.

Mr. Masur and the Gewandhaus Orchestra are giving their second concert in Ann Arbor this evening.

New 1981-82 Season Coming Soon!

Tonight's concert is the last in this year's Choral Union Series. Our 103rd season, 1981-82, will be announced in April; series ticket orders for five series—Summer Fare, Choral Union, Choice, Chamber Arts, and Debut & Encore—will be accepted beginning Monday, April 13.

Remaining Concerts

FACULTY ARTISTS CONCERT	Sun. Apr. 5
"Virtuoso Music for Wind Instruments."	
GUARNERI STRING QUARTET (sold out)	Mon. Apr. 20
WESTERN OPERA THEATER, "Elixir of Love"	Thurs. Apr. 23

Ann Arbor May Festival, 1981

Wednesday-Saturday, April 29, 30, May 1, 2, in Hill Auditorium

THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA

EUGENE ORMANDY, *Conductor Laureate* ALDO CECCATO, *Guest Conductor*
JUDITH BLEGEN, *Soprano* ANI KAVAFIAN, *Violinist*

GYORGY SANDOR, *Pianist*

THE UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION

FAYE ROBINSON, *Soprano* JOHN GILMORE, *Tenor*
KATHERINE CIESINSKI, *Mezzo-soprano* JOHN CHEEK, *Bass*

Wednesday—*Ormandy and Blegen*; Barber: Second Essay; Mozart: Exultate, Jubilate; Rachmaninoff: Vocalise; Stravinsky: Pastorale; Ravel: Habanera; Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5.

Thursday—*Ceccato and Kavafian*: Rossini: Overture to *Semiramide*; Bruch: Violin Concerto in G minor; Dvořák: Symphony No. 8.

Friday—*Ceccato, Choral Union, Robinson, Ciesinski, Gilmore, Cheek*: Mozart: Symphony No. 41 ("Jupiter"); Rossini: Stabat Mater.

Saturday—*Ormandy and Sandor*: Harris: Symphony No. 3; Bartók: Third Piano Concerto, Concerto for Orchestra.

Series tickets still available at \$40, \$30, \$20, \$18;
single concert tickets now on sale, from \$5 to \$15.

"100 Years of Great Performances"

This brand-new publication of the University Musical Society is available in the lobby this evening for your perusal and purchase. In its 208 pages is a wealth of human interest and information, including: a 100th Season Anniversary Guest Book, handwritten greetings from each artist who performed that season; personal letters from nearly 200 artists who share reminiscences of their Ann Arbor performances over the years; a 100-year history tracing the Musical Society's growth from the small "Messiah Club" in 1879 to its present-day stature; and a roster of performing artists who appeared under our auspices from 1879 through 1979.

This anniversary/souvenir book is also available for purchase (\$10 per copy) in our Burton Tower office, and at the following Ann Arbor locations: Borders Book Shop, Liberty Music Shop, and Little Professor Book Center.

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

Burton Memorial Tower, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109

Phone: 665-3717, 764-2538