

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

LORIN MAAZEL, Music Consultant

SIR ALEXANDER GIBSON

Conductor

THE FESTIVAL CHORUS DONALD BRYANT, Director

HENRY HERFORD, Baritone

Friday Evening, May 3, 1985, at 8:30 Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Dedicated to the memory of Eugene Ormandy, 1899-1985 May Festival conductor 1937-1982 inclusive

Roman Carnival Overture, Op. 9 BERLIOZ

Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550 MOZART

Molto allegro
Andante
Menuetto: allegretto
Allegro assai

INTERMISSION

Henry Herford
The Festival Chorus

PROGRAM NOTES

by Dr. Frederick Dorian in collaboration with Dr. Judith Meibach

Berlioz originally conceived his *Roman Carnival* Overture as an introduction to the second act of his ill-fated opera *Benvenuto Cellini*. The central figure of this opera, the famous Florentine goldsmith and sculptor, Cellini led what can only be described as an unbridled life in the sixteenth-century Italian city-state. Widely acclaimed as an artist, his reputation was tarnished, however, by accusations of murder. Cellini wrote his autobiography, and its chapters, with their vivid, picturesque

description, compete with the ornate products of his extraordinary workshop.

Berlioz was intrigued with the life of Cellini, the "bandit-genius." He might even have felt a kinship with the seemingly free-spirited, tempestuous personality of the Renaissance artist who dared to defy Pope Clement VII. Cellini fought everything that appeared to him as philistine and hypocritical. He claimed that his lawlessness served a noble purpose — it was a justified means to correct some of the ills of society. "I have been greatly struck with certain episodes of Cellini's autobiography," Berlioz confessed, "and was so unlucky as to think they offered an interesting and dramatic subject for an opera."

It took Berlioz four years (1834-1838) to complete *Benvenuto Cellini*, the first of his three operas. When the score was scheduled for rehearsals in the spring of 1838, seemingly insurmountable difficulties arose. Berlioz fell sick; he nonetheless went daily to the theater to supervise rehearsals. "Never shall I forget the tortures I endured for the three months devoted to rehearsing the opera," he lamented. "The musicians were indifferent; the singers refused to take their tasks seriously; Habeneck, the conductor, was in constant ill humor; there was universal hostility." The première of *Benvenuto Cellini* finally took place on September 10, 1838. The composer was fully aware of its failure: "My opera was hissed at with admirable energy and unanimity."

Brilliance of orchestral illustration is a style characteristic of most of Berlioz's works. The *Roman Carnival* Overture depicts a traditional celebration on the Piazza Colonna in the Eternal City. As its title promises, the sparkling music evokes the carnival mood. A colorful procession of harlequins and buffoons, Pierrots and Pierrettes, lovers and fools, passes by in this scene, along with the demonic figures that are never entirely absent from Berlioz's romantically super-charged world of fantasy.

The overture begins with a flourish borrowed from the saltarello (danced during the second act of the opera). The saltarello is a Mediterranean dance in quick tempo, generally in 6/8 time. The name saltarello is derived from the Italian verb saltare, meaning to leap or to jump. It was called alta danza by the Spaniards and pas de Brabant or breban by the French. Only on rare occasions were the best dancers expected to perform the difficult leaps.

The overture continues, andante sostenuto, with the melody from Cellini's aria "O Teresa, you whom I love more than my own life" (first act). This theme is played by the English horn and later

by the violas.

After this lyrical section, the overture storms into a tarantella. This dance, which became extremely popular in eighteenth-century Italy, derives its name from the southern Italian city of Tarentum. It was reputed that the wild jumping of the dance brought relief from the effects of the dangerous bites of the spider known as *Lycosa tarentula*. (In the opera, Cellini's friends sing this music to the words "Come ye people to Rome.") A more relaxed section follows until the saltarello reasserts itself and the agitated music comes to its exciting end.

Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

The score of the G-minor Symphony is unique among Mozart's late orchestral works: the master left us two versions of the orchestration for the woodwind section.

The original writing has no part for clarinets. This instrument was relatively new to Mozart; he became acquainted with its great possibilities in Mannheim on his visit to the German city during 1777-78. Intrigued by the orchestral role of this versatile woodwind, Mozart used it with great

variety in works composed after his stay in Mannheim.

Attached to the autograph of the G-minor Symphony are extra pages on which Mozart rescored the original woodwind parts. He did not merely add clarinets; he reset the score. In certain sections, he used four woodwinds jointly and provided the necessary tone space for this addition. For mellow passages and for chords of homogeneous quality, he preferred the clarinets. He also employed them generally, where he wrote for winds alone. But in pastoral and serene sections (such as the trio of the third movement) the reedy oboes retain their original role. They also lend their incisive tone to poignant passages in the opening movement and the finale.

A pair of horns is the sole representative of the brass section. Neither trumpets nor timpani are used. But the two horns (the first tuned in high B-flat, the second in G) yield a maximum of performing range. The dense sonorities of the two outside movements are strongly supported by

Mozart's horn writing; it is advanced for his time and indicative of future developments.

The ingenious treatment of the string section is apparent from the opening bar, where the chordal accompaniment of the violas sets a somber background for the violins, intoning (in octaves)

the noble and heavy-hearted main theme. As in all of Mozart's symphonies, the strings remain the basis of the score. In full force, they play as an orchestral quintet. The players are called upon to perform with virtuosity, particularly in the two allegros, where so many notes in rapid succession must be executed with impeccable bowing. A single wrong note would show up mercilessly. There are no romantic sound waves that could cover up the slightest inaccuracy. Mozart's textures are

strictly classical.

Scholars disagree as to whether Mozart ever had the opportunity to hear the G-minor Symphony. For a long time, it was taken for granted that the master never conducted any of his last three symphonies — the E-flat major, K. 543; the G minor, K. 550; and the C major, K. 551 — which he completed during the summer of 1783. H. C. Robbins Landon believes that the G-minor Symphony was conducted by Antonio Salieri in a pair of concerts on April 16 and 17, 1791. At that occasion a "Grand Symphony" by Mozart was, indeed, heard in Vienna, and it is known that Mozart's friends, the clarinetists Anton Stadler and his brother Johann, participated in this performance. Did they influence Mozart's rescoring of the woodwind section? An affirmative answer can only be one of speculation. As Otto Erich Deutsch has shown, Mozart, because of a lack of funds, never gave a public concert in Vienna after 1788.

The full score of the Symphony in G minor was not published until 1794, three years after Mozart's death. The priceless autograph of the symphony is now in the possession of the Society of the Friends of Music in Vienna. The manuscript bears the date of completion: July 25, 1788. The Society inherited the symphony from the estate of Brahms, who had received the Mozart original in 1865 as a gift from the Countess Anna von Hessen in exchange for the dedication of his Piano Quintet, Op. 34. A masterpiece of musical calligraphy, the G-minor Symphony is written with

painstaking care in Mozart's beautiful and highly characteristic notescript.

Belshazzar's Feast WILLIAM WALTON (1902-1983)

The Book of Daniel tells in the opening chapter how "In the third year of the reign of Tehoiakim, king of Judah, came Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Tehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God; and he carried them into the land of Shinar to the house of his god, and the vessels he brought

into the treasure house of his god."

Chapter 5 of Daniel describes the feast of Belshazzar (son of Nebuchadnezzar) and the legendary handwriting on the wall. The Scriptures speak to him as the last ruler of Babylon. With a thousand courtiers and concubines, Belshazzar indulges in heathen orgies. They all get drunk on wine poured from the sacred vessels stolen from the Hebrew God's temple. At the height of the unbridled revelry, the writing of an unknown hand appears on the wall: "Mene, mene, Tekel Upharsin." What was the meaning of this ominous script? The frightened king had the astrologers and soothsayers brought before him to interpret the writing on the wall. But the wise men of Babylon were unable to explain it. The queen alone thought of the man living in the kingdom in whom "is the spirit of the holy God: Now let Daniel be called, and he will declare the interpretation!" Daniel was brought to the court, but he refused the rewards of gold and power offered to him by Belshazzar.

According to Jewish tradition, the inscription was in Hebrew characters. The Babylonians could not understand the meaning, because it was hidden in an anagram. Daniel's knowledge of Aramaic as well as Hebrew enabled him to understand the play of words. By reading downward, he obtained the

correct solution of the anagram.

Mene, God hath numbered thy kingdom, and brought it to an end. Tekel, thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting. Peres, thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

Daniel's prophecy was fulfilled. During that very night, foreign invaders poured across the

Tigris River into Babylon. Belshazzar's kingdom was conquered by the Persians.

This synopsis follows the biblical continuity. Obviously, it is not concerned with the results of modern historical research, but archeology has sufficiently explained the discrepancies that exist between legend and ascertainable facts. Modern historians claim that Belshazzar was never really king himself, but a Babylonian general, a vicious dictator living in 6 B.C.

Belshazzar's feast has emerged as a symbol of licentious festivities and of the worship of false gods. The story of Belshazzar's feast, in which tragedy and triumph are so strongly intermingled, bears a powerful implication. Its message is the ultimate triumph of righteousness, which is

fundamental to the Book of Daniel.

Belshazzar's feast is the kind of

Belshazzar's feast is the kind of biblical story which had already attracted the imagination of baroque oratorio composers. And it is hardly a coincidence that a highly effective contemporary setting — William Walton's cantata of this name — comes to us from Britain, from the soil on which Handel's great biblical oratorios grew. Following the model of the older English oratorios and anthems, the tonal structure of Walton's score firmly rests upon giant choral columns. The pathos of this work is biblical, but not liturgical. Like the Handelian oratorios, it is guided by the moral ideals of humanity. The poignant Babylonian episode provided the composer with a powerful stimulus for his choral drama. Just as Handel's great models, so Walton's choral score aims at pictorial plasticity of the scenes from the Old Testament. The chorus is the protagonist of the action, and Handel's grand manner emerges also as the guidepost of Walton's general procedure and organization.

Belshazzar's Feast begins maestoso with a solemn trumpet signal; the unaccompanied voices of the divided male chorus evoke Isaiah's prophecy: "Thy sons that thou shalt beget . . ." This is followed by the grievous setting of "By the waters of Babylon . . ." entrusted to the espressivo of the mixed chorus. Tearful chromaticism permeates the basically diatonic flow of the melody.

The solo baritone introduces "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem . . ." He is joined by the reduced choir, but there is an increase to a broad polyphonic setting for double chorus, until the initial "By the

waters of Babylon" returns.

The choir retains the lead. Just as in Handel's Israel in Egypt, the choral portions of Walton's score far outweigh the solo writing. Such distribution is fitting for a massive tone drama on a biblical legend. With an increased expression of grief, the first section of Belshazzar's Feast comes to a

general pause.

The baritone solo begins the second part with a robust recitative which tells of Babylon, the great city. The recitative, akin to oriental melos, is heard without accompaniment. Allegro molto, the full chorus tells, fortissimo and in frequently changing rhythm, of Belshazzar's revelry. The scene rises from a rapidly changing distribution of the choral forces: Chorus I and Chorus II perform individually, or they are thrown together into a powerful double chorus (as at the king's command "Bring ye the cornet, flute, sackbut, psaltery").

The orchestra falls in with one of its few interludes, yet the women's chorus is gradually knitted into its brisk march. We hear a heathen hymn in praise of the false gods. The altos toast the god of silver, and the sopranos the god of gold. Flute, piccolo, and trumpet add their color to illustrate the precious metals. The heavy god of iron is extolled by the male voices. And which instrument, if not

the xylophone, would be suggestive of the god of wood!

In short, both voices and instruments have their share in the tonal representation of the impious feast. The scene rises to great excitement, which is reflected in the music of the largando molto at "O King, live for ever." Again the movement terminates with a general rest.

As the baritone resumes its recitation, we approach the drama's climax: the catastrophic moment of the handwriting on the wall has come. It is recalled by the solo voice to the lugubrious percussion accompaniment of timpani, cymbals, drums, and gong. The baritone pronounces the ominous words "Mene, mene, Tekel Upharsin." Immediately the divided tenors and basses interpret their meaning: "Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting."

In the terse formulation of Daniel, the baritone now tells the drama's outcome: "In that night was Belshazzar the King slain." Following this announcement, the composer bridges to the finale with a brief orchestral prelude, allegro giocoso. It leads to an ode of joy. The people of Israel thank God for the destruction of their tormentors. A powerful alleluia concludes the biblical cantata.

The composer relied on Osbert Sitwell to select and arrange the text of Belshazzar's Feast directly from the Bible. The work was first performed on October 1, 1931 at the Leeds Festival.

Thus spake Isaiah:

Thy sons that thou shalt beget They shall be taken away, And be eunuchs In the palace of the King of Babylon Howl ye, howl ye, therefore: For the day of the Lord is at hand!

By the waters of Babylon, By the waters of Babylon There we sat down: yea, we wept And hanged our harps upon the willows.

For they that wasted us Required of us mirth; They that carried us away captive Required of us a song. Sing us one of the songs of Zion.

How shall we sing the Lord's song In a strange land?

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, Let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.

Yea, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.

By the waters of Babylon There we sat down: yea, we wept. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed, Happy shall he be that taketh thy children And dasheth them against a stone,

For with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down And shall be found no more at all.

Babylon was a great city, Her merchandise was of gold and silver, Of precious stones, of pearls, of fine linen, Of purple, silk and scarlet, All manner vessels of ivory, All manner vessels of most precious wood, Of brass, iron, and marble, Cinnamon, odours, and ointments, Of frankincense, wine, and oil, Fine flour, wheat, and beasts, Sheep, horses, chariots, slaves, And the souls of men.

In Babylon Belshazzar the King Made a great feast, Made a feast to a thousand of his lords. And drank wine before the thousand.

Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine, Commanded us to bring the gold and silver vessels:

Yea! the golden vessels, which his father, Nebuchadnezzar,

Had taken out of the temple that was in Jerusalem.

He commanded us to bring the golden

Of the temple of the house of God, That the King, his Princes, his wives, And his concubines might drink therein. Then the King commanded us:
Bring ye the cornet, flute, sackbut, psaltery,
And all kinds of music: they drank wine
again
Yea, drank from the sacred vessels,

And then spake the King:

Praise ye, The God of Gold Praise ye, The God of Silver Praise ye, The God of Iron Praise ye, The God of Wood Praise ye, The God of Stone Praise ye, The God of Brass Praise ye the Gods!

Thus in Babylon, the mighty city, Belshazzar the King made a great feast, Made a feast to a thousand of his lords And drank wine before the thousand.

Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine, Commanded us to bring the gold and silver vessels That his Princes, his wives, and his concubines Might rejoice and drink therein.

After they praised their strange gods, The idols and the devils, False gods who can neither see nor hear, Called they for the timbrel and the pleasant harp to extol the glory of the King. Then they pledged the King before the people, Crying, Thou, O King, art King of Kings: O King, live for ever

And in that same hour, as they feasted Came forth fingers of a man's hand And the King saw
The part of the hand that wrote.
And this was the writing that was written: 'MENE, MENE, TEKEL UPHARSIN' 'THOU ART WEIGHED IN THE BALANCE AND FOUND WANTING.'
In that night was Belshazzar the King slain And his Kingdom divided.

Then sing aloud to God our strength: Make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob. Take a psalm, bring hither the timbrel, Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, Blow up the trumpet in Zion For Babylon is fallen, fallen.

Alleluia!

Then sing aloud to God our strength: Make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob, While the Kings of the Earth lament And the merchants of the Earth Weep, wail, and rend the raiment. They cry, Alas, Alas, that great city, In one hour is her judgment come.

The trumpeters and pipers are silent, And the harpers have ceased to harp, And the light of a candle shall shine no more.

Then sing aloud to God our strength. Make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob. For Babylon the Great is fallen.

Alleluia!

Reproduction of the program notes requires the permission of the author and of the Pittsburgh Symphony Society.

About the Artists

Sir Alexander Gibson celebrated his twenty-fifth season as musical director of the Scottish National Orchestra during 1984. When he was appointed in 1959, he became the first Scotsman to have held the post.

His career prior to 1959 had been outstandingly successful. Following his studies at Glasgow University and the Royal College of Music in London, where, in 1951, he was awarded the Queen's Prize, he traveled to Salzburg to study at the Mozarteum and to Siena to work at the Accademia Chigiano. At the Bescançon Festival in 1952 he was awarded the special Enesco Prize in the competition for young conductors. In the previous year he had taken up the post of repetiteur at Sadler's Wells, and in 1952 he became assistant to Ian Whyte with the BBC Scottish Orchestra in Glasgow. Two years later he returned to Sadler's Wells as Staff Conductor and in 1957 became music director of this world famous opera company. From Sadler's Wells he returned to Scotland and the Scottish National Orchestra. Within his first five years, he had not only enhanced the prestige of the orchestra nationally and internationally but also had been the principal instigator and founder of the now world famous Scottish Opera. Sir Alexander Gibson has not only presided over the orchestra's concerts in Scotland and during its many tours of Europe and the United States, but also has produced with the orchestra an enviable list of recordings with several leading companies.

Apart from his work with Scottish Opera and the Scottish National Orchestra, Maestro Gibson has traveled extensively in Europe and the United States as well as in Australia and South America. His visits to New York's Caramoor Festival and to Houston have become annual events — his performances of *Jenufa* and *Falstaff* were highlights of the Houston Opera seasons, as were his performances of *The Dream of Gerontius* with the Houston Symphony. His first visit to Israel was in 1979 to conduct the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. His appearances with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, both in Pittsburgh and Ann Arbor, highlight the current season, and he will appear with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra during the 1985–1986 season.

During his career, Sir Alexander Gibson has received awards and honors from the universities of Aberdeen, Stirling, and his own University of Glasgow. He was made a Fellow of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music in 1973, and his home town of Motherwell made him a Freeman in 1964. Ten years later he became an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. Especially rewarding to him

was Glasgow's St. Mungo's Prize, which was awarded to him in 1970 for the most distinguished contribution to the life of the city. Other citations are "Musician of the Year" (1976) by the Incorporated Society of Musicians and the Sibelius Medal in 1978 for "an outstanding contribution to the appreciation of Sibelius' music throughout the world."

Maestro Gibson previously visited Ann Arbor with his Scottish National Orchestra in 1975.

Henry Herford had already established himself as one of Europe's leading young singers prior to winning First Prize in the 1982 International American Music Competition, co-sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation and Carnegie Hall. In a career which combines recital, opera, and oratorio appearances, he has sung with the Glyndebourne touring company, the Scottish and Handel Operas, given recitals throughout Britain, and performed with the London, Royal Liverpool, and Halle Philharmonics and the English Chamber Orchestra. Mr. Herford's engagements have included *Don Carlos* at Covent Garden, Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédict* with Simon Rattle in London's Royal Festival Hall, appearances with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra under Raymond Leppard, and the English Bach Festival. He has also given performances in the Flanders Festival and a series of recitals in France.

In the United States, Mr. Herford has given recitals at the 92nd Street "Y" in New York and at the Library of Congress in Washington, D. C. His orchestral appearances include those with the American Symphony and Buffalo Philharmonic, and he sang in a concert production of *La Périchole*

with Frederica von Stade in Carnegie Hall.

A native of Edinburgh, Henry Herford graduated in English from Cambridge University and went on to study at the Royal Northern College of Music, where he was awarded the Curtis Gold Medal for singing. In 1980 he won the Benson & Hedges Gold Award, which was followed by a highly acclaimed Wigmore Hall recital and an appearance at the Aldeburgh Festival.

Tonight's concert marks Mr. Herford's first Ann Arbor performance.

Five School of Music trumpet students augment the brasses in tonight's performance of Belshazzar's Feast: Patrick Hund, Derek Lockhart, Charles Lea, Kevin Cordt, Russell Whitehead.

THE FESTIVAL CHORUS

DONALD BRYANT, Conductor James Oleson, Assistant Conductor

NANCY HODGE, Accompanist BETH LIPSON, Manager

First Sopranos Mary Ellen Auch Patsy Auiler Letitia J. Byrd Susan F. Campbell Barbara Carron Tracey Conrad Kathryn Foster Elliott Christen Giblin Sylvia J. Jenkins Cheryl Renee Jordan Carolyn L. Leyh Kathleen Lin Doris L. Luecke Loretta I. Meissner Rebecca Morris Marian Muranyi Margaret Nesse Carole Lynch Pennington Alice Schneider Diane T. Schuster Charlotte Stanek Laurie E. Van Ark Joanne Westman Sandra Winzenz Second Sopranos

Second Sopranos
Kathryn Berry
Carole Lewis DeHart
Kathleen Gayle Forde
Robyne D. Gier
D. Yarrow Halstead
Ann Kathryn Kuelbs
Judy Lehmann
Mary Loewen
Linda Ann Mickelson
Michelle Paul

Sara Peth Leah M. Stein Patricia Tompkins Patricia Towne Barbara Hertz Wallgren

Yvonne Allen Doris L. Baum Mindy P. Beller Kathlyn M. Boyer Marion W. Brown Ella M. Brown Lael R. Cappaert Alice Cerniglia Lori Cheek Ellen J. Collarini Cheryl L. Cox Carolyn Ehrlich Daisy Evans Ann M. Eward Marilyn Finkbeiner Lisa Morris Grobar Nancy Houk Gretchen Jackson Doreen J. Jessen Grace Jones Nancy Karp Katherine Kroeger Metta T. Lansdale, Jr. Yvonne M. Lis Frances Lyman Patricia Kaiser McCloud Lois P. Nelson

Helen Thornton Geraldine C. Toft Jane M. VanBolt Charlotte Wolfe Bobbie Wooding Second Altos Anne Abbrecht

Anne Abbrecht Sandra Anderson Marjorie Baird Eleanor P. Beam Sally Carpenter Lisa Danielson Lois Guebert Mary E. Haab Dana Hull Carol Hurwitz Lily Jarman Elsie W. Lovelace Cheryl Melby Julie Ann Ritter Margaret Sharemet Carol Spencer Kathryn Stebbins Alice Warsinski Helen F. Welford

First Tenors
William Bronson
Hugh Brown
Tim Dombrowski
Jon Grant
James Jeffries
Lee W. Kikuchi
Joseph Kubis
Paul Lowry
Robert K. MacGregor

Miguel Rodriguez

Second Tenors
Randolph C. Cox
John W. Etsweiler III
Albert P. Girod, Jr.
Brent Gunn
Donald L. Haworth
Ted Hefley
Eric A. Markinson
Carl R. Smith

First Basses
Steve Baldwin
Marion L. Beam
Thomas B. Cox
Eugene Goodson
William C. Hale
Klair Kissel
Lawrence L. Lohr
John MacKrell
Robert Meader
James C. Schneider
Donald R. Williams

Second Basses
Howard Bond
Bruce B. Dicey
John Dunkelberger
Don Faber
Charles F. Lehmann
Robert E. Owens
Raymond O.
Schankin
John T. Sepp
Robert D. Strozier
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