



*International
Presentations of
Music & Dance*

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

From Moscow
The State Symphony Orchestra
of the U.S.S.R.

YEVGENY SVETLANOV
Music Director and Conductor

OLEG KAGAN, *Violinist*
NATALIA GUTMAN, *Cellist*

THURSDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 16, 1986, AT 8:00
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

P R O G R A M

Concerto in A minor, Op. 102, for Violin, Cello, and Orchestra BRAHMS

Allegro

Andante

Vivace non troppo

OLEG KAGAN and NATALIA GUTMAN

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

Symphony No. 2 in E minor, Op. 27 RACHMANINOFF

Largo, allegro moderato

Allegro molto

Adagio

Allegro vivace

Melodiya/Angel and Columbia Records

The State Symphony of the U.S.S.R. is the first Soviet orchestra to perform in the United States since 1979, and Ann Arbor is its first stop before continuing to Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, and New York. Prior to this evening's concert, the orchestra performed in Canada. In Ann Arbor the orchestra has given three concerts — two in March 1969, and one in October 1975. Yevgeny Svetlanov is making his third Ann Arbor appearance; Oleg Kagan and Natalia Gutman are heard tonight in their Ann Arbor debuts.

Halls Cough Tablets, courtesy of Warner-Lambert Company, are available in the lobby.

PROGRAM NOTES
by GLENN D. McGEACH

Concerto in A minor, Op. 102, for Violin, Cello,
and Orchestra JOHANNES BRAHMS
(b. May 7, 1833; d. Apr. 3, 1897)

In a letter to Clara Schumann, Brahms wrote concerning his concerto for violin and cello: "Indeed it is not at all the same thing to write for instruments whose nature and timbre one has in one's head, as it were, only from time to time, and hears only with one's intelligence, as it is to write for an instrument which one knows through and through, as I do the piano, in which case I know thoroughly what I am writing, and why I write in this way or that."

It is obvious that Brahms did not feel quite at ease with this work, as to either form or expression, and there is no doubt that this awkward embarrassment reflected itself in his music. The Viennese critic Eduard Hanslick detected it when he said that this concerto was the product of a great constructive mind, rather than an irresistible inspiration of creative imagination and invention. Even those who admired Brahms unconditionally, as Hanslick certainly did, were often aware of calculation and of workmanship due merely to an astonishing artistic understanding, which Brahms evidently applied in the conviction that he was employing his genius. The great violinist and personal friend of Brahms, Joseph Joachim, once actually warned him not to let himself be "disturbingly or forcibly urged by his will power."

It must be noted that the A-minor Double Concerto was received with no more than cool admiration, and that it remains one of the most cerebral of the Brahms compositions. This curiously somber and contemplative work, with its rigid themes, its introspectiveness, its mechanical and almost obstinate movement, its equation-like development, seems congealed into a kind of strange frosty greatness.

This, the last of the Brahms concertos, was an experiment in the revival of the old Italian form of the orchestral concerto or "concerto grosso" of the seventeenth century, in which the orchestral *tutti* of the concerto grosso contrasted with a *concertino* for several soloists. Perhaps the deliberate choice of an old classical form and the endeavor to make the most out of as little material as possible led Brahms to mistake the means for the end. In spite of its pleasing effect upon a wide public through its often eloquent lyricism, the Double Concerto is considered by many to be a work elaborated by strictly mechanical method rather than an expression of an intense inner experience. In the second movement, however, there is a rich, mysterious quality that makes its appeal for the moment, but soon leaves us again on the barren plains. The beauty of statement, in this particular case, has a validity above the expression of the "things of the spirit." These purely abstract elements can in themselves be a source of a kind of beauty, but a beauty that depends almost entirely upon the absolute, technical perfection of the execution. The Double Concerto, unlike most of the great works of Brahms, succeeds or fails with an audience on the basis of the quality and distinction of the performance.

Symphony No. 2 in E minor, Op. 27 SERGEI RACHMANINOFF
(b. Apr. 1, 1873; d. Mar. 28, 1943)

Rachmaninoff, like so many young men living in Moscow at the turn of the century, suffered from the contagion of his times. His melancholy turn of mind and pessimistic outlook offered little protection against the disappointments and frustrations he met at the outset of his career as a composer. His first symphony, written in 1895 and produced in St. Petersburg, was a complete failure; it received one performance and was never heard again. This threw the young composer into the depths of despair from which he emerged only after the fabulous success of the Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18, in 1901.

Six years after the composition of the Second Concerto, Rachmaninoff again turned to the symphony with renewed confidence in his talent and in the fullness of his creative powers. In 1906, he left Moscow with his wife and young daughter to seek relief from his professional duties as pianist and conductor. Dresden offered an environment favorable to creative work, and in temporary seclusion he produced his most successful compositions for orchestra, *The Isle of the Dead*, and the Second Symphony. The Symphony had its world première in St. Petersburg, February 8, 1908, and its first performance in Moscow, November 26, 1909. Success was immediate. Two months earlier it had been awarded the coveted Glinka Prize.

The work is dedicated to Sergei Ivanovich Taneyev, successor to Tchaikovsky as teacher of composition at the Moscow Conservatory. Tchaikovsky continued in an honorary position, and Rachmaninoff came briefly under his guidance when he entered in 1885. The influence of the master upon the impressionable young composer is nowhere more evident than in the Second Symphony and the Third Piano Concerto from the same period. Their introspective melodies, rich dark harmonies, opulent instrumental colors, and especially their restless, shifting moods from quiet contemplation or brooding melancholy to rhapsodic fervor and impassioned eloquence, are all in the Tchaikovsky idiom.

The reasons for the immense popularity of the Second Symphony and the Second and Third Piano Concertos are obvious. They are melodious, sonorous, and eminently vital works. They do not perplex or attempt to say anything new. The forms are academic, the expression familiarly romantic. They are the product of an age that saw the fading of an ideal and the advance of the realistic, logical, and scientific ideas of the twentieth century; they are epilogues echoing from a vanishing world, increasingly remote, now irrecoverably lost.

About the Artists

The first concert of **The State Symphony Orchestra of the U.S.S.R.** took place in the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory on October 5, 1936, and included the First and Third Symphonies of Beethoven. On the podium was Alexander Gauk, who was the founder, the first artistic director, and head conductor of the orchestra. From its inception, the orchestra has played an active role in Soviet musical life, such as the celebrations in 1940 in honor of the 100th birthdate of Tchaikovsky. Among the orchestra's conductors who rose to fame are Evgeny Mravinsky, Nathan Rakhlin, and Konstantin Ivanov.

Nathan Rakhlin succeeded Alexander Gauk, leading the orchestra from 1941 to 1945. During those years, the musicians who were not fighting at the front continued working in Central Asia, the Urals, and Siberia, performing for the Soviet Army, in hospitals, cooperatives, and factories. The orchestra was reunited in Moscow in 1943, the occasion marked by a performance of Shostakovich's dramatic and poignant *Leningrad Symphony* (No. 7).

From 1946 to 1965, the position of artistic director and principal conductor was held by Konstantin Ivanov. Under his leadership the fame of the orchestra grew, and its repertoire was restored and expanded to include the works of contemporary foreign composers, as well as traditional and contemporary Russian compositions. The orchestra made its first tour abroad in 1956.

Since 1965 Yevgeny Svetlanov has led the symphony in a period of artistic flowering and creativity. It has attracted many leading Soviet conductors as well as several foreign guest conductors, which include Otto Klemperer, Ernest Ansermet, Charles Munch, André Cluytens, Malcolm Sargent, Lorin Maazel, and Igor Markevich. It has received wide acclaim in all Soviet Republics, and its artistry is applauded throughout Europe, Asia, and America. The orchestra's recordings have received international awards, including a Gold Medal in Paris.

Yevgeny Svetlanov is a National Artist of the U.S.S.R. and a laureate of the Lenin and State Prizes of the U.S.S.R. and Russian Federation. He is acclaimed as a composer, pianist, and conductor, and has led hundreds of highly successful concerts throughout the Soviet Union and in other countries including Italy, Great Britain, Holland, West Germany, Czechoslovakia, and the United States. Before joining The State Symphony Orchestra of the U.S.S.R., he held the position of chief conductor at the famous Bolshoi Theatre for ten years. During his tenure there he conducted such works as Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tsar's Bride*, *Snow Maiden*, *Sadko*, and *The Maid of Pskov*, and Borodin's *Prince Igor*.

Mr. Svetlanov graduated from the Gnessin Music Institute in Moscow at the age of twenty and then entered the Moscow Conservatory where he studied conducting with Alexander Gauk and composition under Yuri Shaporin.

Oleg Kagan, born in Yuzhno-Sakkalinsk in the Soviet Far East, soon moved with his parents to Riga, where he entered the Latvian Conservatory of Music at age seven. In 1959 he went to Moscow and began violin studies at the Moscow Conservatory with Professor Boris Kuznetsov and, as a third year student, with David Oistrakh. This relationship with the famous violinist continued throughout Mr. Kagan's postgraduate work. By the age of twenty, Oleg Kagan had received awards from three major international competitions. An award winner at the 1946 Third International Enescu Contest, he also won first prize at the violinists' competition in honor of the birth centenary of Jean Sibelius. His performance of the Sibelius Violin Concerto won him special popularity with the Finnish public, and since then he has appeared numerous times in Finland as recitalist and orchestral soloist. Shortly after winning the Sibelius contest, Mr. Kagan was awarded second prize in the Third Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, and in 1968 he won first prize at the Third International Bach competition in Leipzig. In recent years Mr. Kagan has given many solo recitals and played in chamber music ensembles, in addition to his performances with orchestras. His collaboration with the outstanding Soviet pianist Sviatoslav Richter has received high acclaim from both critics and audiences alike.

Natalia Gutman began music studies at an early age at the Central Music School in Moscow and continued her cello studies at the Moscow Conservatory with Professor Semion Kozolupov. After postgraduate work, she remained at the conservatory as a professor. Miss Gutman concertizes extensively throughout the Soviet Union and has appeared in many other countries as soloist, recitalist, and chamber music performer. She is also an accomplished composer. Her wide and varied repertoire includes numerous premières of works by many contemporary Soviet composers.

Coming Concerts — 1986-87 Season

- ANDREA LUCCHESINI, *Pianist* Wed. Oct. 22
 Rachmaninoff: Preludes from Op. 23 and 32; Chopin: 24 Preludes, Op. 28
- VLADIMIR ASHKENAZY, *Pianist* Sun. Nov. 2
 Schumann: Two Novelettes of Op. 21, Sonata No. 1 in F-sharp minor;
 Schubert: Two Pieces, Op. Post., "Wanderer" Fantasy, Op. 15
- THE KING'S SINGERS Sat. Nov. 8
- L'ORCHESTRE NATIONAL DE LYON Tues. Nov. 11
 SERGE BAUDO, *Conductor*, GERARD POULET, *Violinist*
 Berlioz: *Beatrice et Benedict* Overture; Bartók: Violin Concerto No. 2;
 Dutilleux: Symphony No. 1; Roussel: *Bacchus et Ariane*
- NEW ARTS TRIO (piano, violin, cello) Tues. Nov. 18
 Haydn: Trio in C major, Hob. XV, No. 27; Shostakovich: Trio in E minor;
 Beethoven: "Archduke" Trio, Op. 97
- Handel's *Messiah*/DONALD BRYANT Fri.-Sun. Dec. 5-7
- PITTSBURGH BALLET, Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* Fri-Sun. Dec. 12-14
- THE CANADIAN BRASS Sat. Dec. 13
- MURRAY PERAHIA, *Pianist* Sun. Dec. 14
 Beethoven: Sonata in E-flat, Op. 31, No. 3; Schumann: Sonata No. 2 in G minor;
 Chopin: Four Ballades
- PETER NERO, *Jazz Pianist* Sat. Jan. 17
- RIDGE STRING QUARTET Sun. Jan. 25
 Haydn: Quartet in B-flat, Op. 50, No. 1; Debussy: Quartet, Op. 10;
 Mendelssohn: Quartet in E-flat, Op. 44, No. 3
- MUMMENSCHANZ Mon., Tues. Jan. 26, 27
- WARSAW SINFONIA/YEHUDI MENUHIN Tues. Feb. 3
 Bach: Violin Concerto in A minor; Wagner: Siegfried Idyll; Rossini:
La Scala di Seta Overture; Grazyna Bacewicz: Concerto for String Orchestra;
 Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 ("Italian")
- MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE COMPANY Fri.-Sun. Feb. 6-8
- KIRI TE KANAWA, *Soprano* Tues. Feb. 10
- GUARNERI STRING QUARTET Fri. Feb. 13
 Beethoven: Quartets Op. 18, No. 6; Grosse Fuga, Op. 133; and Op. 135
- VIENNA PHILHARMONIC/CLAUDIO ABBADO Tues., Wed., Mar. 3, 4
 March 3 — Beethoven: Symphonies No. 1 and No. 3 ("Eroica")
 March 4 — Beethoven: *Egmont* Overture, Symphonies No. 2 and No. 4,
Leonore No. 3 Overture
- VIENNA SYMPHONY VIRTUOSI Fri. Mar. 6
- MAURICE ANDRÉ, *Trumpet* Sat. Mar. 14
- HUNGARIAN STATE FOLK ENSEMBLE Tues. Mar. 17
- NEW YORK CITY OPERA NATIONAL COMPANY Thurs. Mar. 19
 Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*
- FACULTY ARTISTS CONCERT (free admission) Sun. Mar. 22
- JAMES GALWAY, *Flutist* Fri. Mar. 27
- THE CAMBRIDGE BUSKERS Sun. Mar. 29
- CHAMBER ORCHESTRA OF EUROPE Fri. Apr. 3
 LORIN MAAZEL, *Conductor*; FRANK PETER ZIMMERMANN, *Violinist*
- GARY KARR, *Double Bass*/ELIOT FISK, *Guitar* Sun. Apr. 5
- JEAN GUILLOU, *Organist* Sun. Apr. 12
- 94th ANNUAL MAY FESTIVAL Tues.-Fri. Apr. 28-May 1
 Complete Festival information available in December.

Write or call for free brochure with all details and ticket information.

New UMS 1986-87 Season Events Calendar

A convenient and attractive month-by-month wall calendar for planning cultural and other important events — on sale in the lobby for \$4, or at Burton Tower during office hours.

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