UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

FACULTY ARTISTS CONCERT

University of Michigan Chamber Players

Karen Lykes, Mezzo-soprano
Gerald DePuit and Arthur Greene, Pianists
Hamao Fujiwara and Paul Kantor, Violinists
Yizhak Schotten, Violist
Erling Blöndal Bengtsson and Jerome Jelinek, Cellists
John Mohler, Clarinetist

Sunday Evening, March 15, 1992, at 8:00
Rackham Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Michigan

PROGRAM

Suite No. 3 for Solo Cello
in C major . . . . . J.S. Bach
Erling Blondal Bengtsson

Sonata in G minor for Cello and Piano, Op. 65 . . . . . Chopin
Allegro moderato
Scherzo
Largo
Finale: allegro
Erling Blöndal Bengtsson and Arthur Greene

INTERMISSION

Quintet in A major for Clarinet and Strings, K. 581 . . . . . Mozart
Allegro
Larghetto
Menuetto
Allegretto con variazione
John Mohler, Clarinetist
Hamao Fujiwara and Paul Kantor, Violinists
Yizhak Schotten, Violist Jerome Jelinek, Cellist

For the twelfth consecutive year, the University Musical Society is pleased to provide this showcase for the talents of faculty members of the U-M School of Music. Their performing artistry, combined with an ardent commitment to education, continues to uphold the school's reputation as one of the finest in the nation.

The University Musical Society is a member of Chamber Music America.
Activities of the UMS are supported by the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs and the National Endowment for the Arts.

The Thomas A. Edison American Music Collection

The University of Michigan School of Music has acquired the Thomas A. Edison American Music Collection, an historically important archive of sheet music and memorabilia that will give performers and music historians new insights into American music published from approximately 1830 to 1929. The collection is one of the largest collections of its kind and in the best condition of all those being held in other libraries. At the behest of its director, Thomas Edison, the Edison Phonograph Company acquired every piece of sheet music available in the United States over a thirty-year period. In his usual thorough manner, Edison was searching for music for his company to record, and such decisions seemed to be made almost entirely on the basis of his personal taste.

In 1929, the archive was given by Edison to his good friend, Henry Ford. At the time of Ford's death, the collection was bequested to an heir, who sold it in 1964 to Bly Corning, of Flint. The archive was purchased with a grant to the School of Music from Edwin and Mary Meader of Kalamazoo.

The collection is in excellent condition. Even the original wood shipping boxes with Henry Ford's address stenciled on them have been preserved. The music itself, which was wrapped in newspapers dating from about 1921 to 1925, is in pristine condition.

Thomas Edison's interest in purchasing sheet music for his phonograph company has been well documented. Victor Young, Edison's personal pianist and music director of the company, reminisced in later years: "Mr. Edison bought immense quantities of music, frequently purchasing old music for an agreed price per foot. This he would listen to intently . . . and set aside the few compositions that he liked." Edison's son Charles also commented on his father's habit of "buying sheet music, literally by the ton." Edison maintained a music room at his New Jersey laboratories and allocated substantial funds to amass the collection. Other music apparently was sent unsolicited to the Edison Company or to Edison himself by composers hoping to see their songs recorded.

Noteworthy elements of the Edison Collection include Civil War songs, first editions of compositions by important American composers such as Stephen Foster and Louis Moreau Gottschalk, and 14 different editions of "Yankee Doodle" published from 1814 to 1892. Over 70 first and early editions of sheet music by John Philip Sousa are also found here; two of the pieces are inscribed to Thomas A. Edison in Sousa's autograph.

The sheet music and its illustrated covers also provide glimpses into artistic, historical, and sociological trends. Popular artists including Winslow Homer and Nathaniel Currier were commissioned by music publishers, and lithographic illustrations by both are represented in the collection. Other music covers on a less artistic level are nonetheless important historical documents, depicting popular attitudes toward such topics as love, family, country, and race.

This collection also preserves the papers associated with the Edison Phonograph Company and thus chronicles the inventor's role as a central figure in the early development of the entertainment business. To be found here are lists comparing Edison recordings to those of its major competitor, the Victor Company; letters written to Edison, many from composers requesting that their compositions be considered for recording; surveys returned by Edison customers; and miscellaneous memos dealing with the recording arm of the Edison enterprises, with some pieces of music marked with Edison's own opinion of the musical/market value.

The Edison Collection offers ample subjects for studies of American music, one of only a handful of collections in the world that can give musicians firsthand information about popular music and musical tastes of the nineteenth- and twentieth centuries. John Dann, director of the Clements Library of Americana at the U-M, states that "I know of no other collection of this quality. Furthermore, such a collection could not be gathered again."

The acquisition of the Edison Collection by the School of Music is in keeping with its dedication to the study and performance of American music. It joins several other important archives of American music owned by the school. The oldest is the University of Michigan Afro-American

Music Collections comprised of three separate entities: The Eva Jessye Collection of Black Music, donated in 1974 by the late Dr. Jessye, who was choral director for the first production of *Porgy and Bess*; the N.C. Standifer Video Collection containing 120 taped interviews conducted with prominent older black artists by James Standifer, professor of music education; and the Maxwell Reade Collection, comprising over a thousand 78-rpm recordings of jazz, gospel, and rhythm-and-blues artists, mostly from the late 1940s to 1955.

In 1987, the School of Music acquired the Michael Montgomery Collection of Popular American Sheet Music, including some 22,000 pieces dating from 1900 to 1950. The whole range of American popular music is found in this collection — college tunes, vaudeville numbers, and songs from Broadway musicals and Hollywood films.

In 1988, the School of Music established the American Music Institute through funding from the Katherine Tuck Foundation. This, along with the wealth of original source materials now in the school's possession, assures the place of the University of Michigan as one of the nation's leading centers for the study and performance of American vernacular music.

Excerpted from Music at Michigan, *Spring 1990*

Sonata in G minor, Op. 65, for Cello and Piano

FREDERIC CHOPIN (1810-1849)

In 1845, Chopin spent his summer as he usually had for some years, comfortably cared for by George Sand at her country estate. Sand described to friends how they passed the time: "We are busy from noon until six o'clock — long summer days during which we are shut up with our work like hermits. We arrange things so as not to bother our dear Chopin . . . Delacroix was with us and will be leaving in a few days. Chopin is still composing masterpieces, although he claims that nothing he is doing is worth anything." Delacroix, who enjoyed the company there, said, "Chopin played Beethoven for me, divinely. It is much better than a lot of talk about aesthetics."

Among the pieces Chopin was working on then was a Cello Sonata for his friend Auguste Franchomme (1808-1884), a busy Paris musician who also helped the composer in his business dealings with music publishers. Chopin once said that he loved him as a brother. Franchomme owned the Stradivarius cello of 1711 that had belonged to Duport and is now owned by Rostropovich, taught at the Conservatory, and was a well-known orchestral and chamber music player.

The Sonata was the last work that Chopin published, and it occupied him for a long time. "I am doing as well as I can," he once wrote to Franchomme, "but it's not good enough." They played through it in December 1845, and Chopin wrote that although he was making progress, it was far from ready for publication. The summer of 1846 was the last that Chopin spent with Sand, for her quiet refuge had turned into a violently troubled household. His work was not going well. "Sometimes I am satisfied with my Cello Sonata," he wrote in the autumn, "sometimes not. I toss it aside and then pick it up again." In 1847, he finally released the work for publication, dedicated, of course, to Franchomme. The first public performance was given by the two friends on February 16, 1848, at Chopin's last concert in Paris. They omitted the first movement, which they thought too difficult for the audience.

The Sonata made its way slowly into the musical world. It was neither a brilliant showpiece nor vapid salon music, but it required that the performers possess great technical skills, and it posed complex problems in ensemble playing. In the Mendelssohn circle, Ignaz Moscheles, a confirmed classicist, found it too freely improvisatory and described it as "a wild overgrown forest." There are moments when the piano part almost seems orchestral, as though Chopin may at some time have been about to make it into a concerto. From a twentieth-century viewpoint, this is not quite a masterpiece of chamber music on the level of the best sonatas of Beethoven and Brahms, yet it cannot be dismissed as a mere *pièce d'occasion.* Perhaps it is best heard simply as a work in which one of the greatest composers for the piano tried to provide a medium of expression for a close friend whose instrument was the cello.

Chopin was not altogether at ease with classical formal ideas, which he had used relatively little since his youth, and he found them a little difficult to discipline. Nevertheless, the first movement, *Allegro moderato,*

and the brilliant Scherzo, *Allegro con brio,* are structurally regular presentations of his musical materials. The third movement is a slow Schumannesque miniature, *Largo,* and the Finale, *Allegro,* a brilliant dance.

—*Leonard Burkat*

Quintet in A major for Clarinet and Strings, K. 581

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

Discussions from the second half of the eighteenth century about the nature of the audiences for music almost inevitably make use of two terms: *Kenner* and *Liebhaber* in German, connoisseur and amateur in English or French. Amateurs passionately love music but have little technical knowledge of it; connoisseurs not only love music, they also understand it. It was Mozart's proud claim that he could compose in a way that would satisfy both groups: a polite, entertaining surface for the amateurs, along with elegant inner workings for the connoisseurs.

In general, whether a work was aimed primarily at amateurs or at connoisseurs depended on its genre. Lots of technically and conceptually easy songs and chamber music were written and published for home consumption, geared to the playing abilities and tastes of amateurs. Highly public genres — church music, opera, orchestral music — had to reach all kinds of people and, therefore, were often aimed at the same audience, although this time for the playing abilities of professionals and the tastes of amateurs. It was in the realm of "serious" chamber music, frequently in the form of sonatas, trios, quartets, and quintets, that composers most often provided more challenging fare for the connoisseurs.

Mozart's much-loved string quartets and quintets, for instance, were not concert music. They were conceived for the pleasure of their performers and a tiny circle of intimates who might be invited to listen, in someone's living room, parlor, or salon. Music-loving noblemen and -women who were connoisseurs would hire string quartets to play for their private enjoyment. (Many of them were also fully competent to play in such a group.) This is also what the musicians themselves did for recreation. The Irish baritone Michael Kelly, who lived in Vienna from 1783 to 1786, recorded in his memoirs a quartet party given by the English composer Stephen Storace: "The players were tolerable; not one of them excelled on the instrument he played, but there was a little science among them, which I dare say will be acknowledged when I name them:

The First Violin . . . Haydn
The Second Violin . . . Baron Dittersdorf
The Violoncello . . . Vanhall
The Tenor [viola] . . . Mozart

"I was there, and a greater treat, or a more remarkable one, cannot be imagined."

The Clarinet Quintet in A major is one of a group of masterpieces that Mozart wrote for Anton Stadler, a fellow Mason and one of several close friends among the fraternity of Viennese wind instrumentalists. The Quintet seems immediately to evoke the same limpid and lyrical mood as Mozart's other late works in A major, such as the Piano Concerto, K. 488, and the Clarinet Concerto, K. 622.

The presence of a Minuet movement makes this the only one of Mozart's works for wind soloist and strings to be in four movements. The extra movement is entirely consistent with the strong chamber music (as opposed to concertante) characteristics of the work, but for the composer to provide two Trios is indeed rare in any of his chamber music.

Mozart's first thoughts on a Finale petered out after 89 measures, and he replaced them with this set of five variations and coda on a not-very-remarkable theme in march rhythm. It shows unmistakable signs of Mozartean genius, however, in the delightful imitation between violin and viola in its middle section, and in the imitative second violin part, which acts as a bass to the final phrase of the theme.

From The Compleat Mozart
Edited by Neal Zaslaw