

Saint Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra

Mariss Jansons, Conductor
Dmitri Alexeev, Pianist

Yuri Temirkanov, Music Director and Principal Conductor
Mariss Jansons, Associate Principal Conductor

Monday Evening, October 25, 1993, at 8:00
Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Michigan

PROGRAM

Roman Carnival Overture, Op. 9 Hector Berlioz

Piano Concerto No. 3, in C Major, Op. 26 Sergei Prokofiev
Andante - Allegro
Andantino
Allegro ma non troppo

Dmitri Alexeev, pianist

INTERMISSION

Symphonic Dances, Op. 45 Sergei Rachmaninoff
Non Allegro
Andante con moto (Tempo di valse)
Lento assai - Allegro vivace

Special thanks to Hammell Music Inc., Livonia, Michigan,
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PROGRAM NOTES

Roman Carnival Overture, Op. 9

Hector Berlioz (Born December 11, 1803, in La Cote-Saint-Andre; died March 8, 1869, in Paris)

Hector Berlioz was a composer of great originality whose new conception of musical expression led the way directly to many of the innovations of Liszt and Wagner. When he won the *Prix de Rome*, in 1830, he went off to Italy for an eighteen-month stay that eventually inspired many of his finest works. Among them was the opera *Benvenuto Cellini*, whose first performances were failures - although it was later given new life when Liszt revived it. Seeking to salvage some of the music in the opera, in 1843 Berlioz wrote an orchestral piece based principally on two themes from *Benvenuto Cellini*, a love song and a wild Italian dance, the *saltarello*. The new work was this concert overture, called *The Roman Carnival*.

The music opens with a brief quotation from the *saltarello*, which serves as an introduction to Cellini's beautiful aria, here played by the English horn. The remainder of the work is taken up with the whirling *saltarello* and snatches of the aria. The entire score is marked by the dash and daring and the brilliant orchestral colors so typical of Berlioz.

The orchestration requires two piccolos and two flutes, two oboes and English horn, two clarinets, two or four bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, two cornets, three trombones, timpani, cymbal, triangle, two tambourines and strings. Berlioz conducted the first performance of this Overture, on February 3, 1844, in Paris.

Piano Concerto No. 3, in C Major, Op. 26

Sergei Prokofiev (Born April 23, 1891, in Sontzovka; died March 5, 1953, in Moscow)

Prokofiev, the last great Russian composer who worked in the West as well as in his homeland, was born in a remote Ukrainian village where his agronomist father was employed as manager of a large estate and his mother gave him his first music lessons. Later he studied at the Conservatory in Saint Petersburg and became a brilliant pianist. After the Revolution, Prokofiev came to America and then settled in Paris, where he was an influential figure until his return to the Soviet Union in 1933.

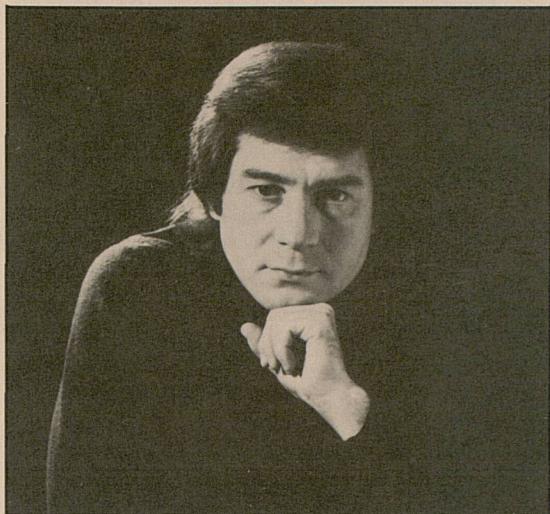
Prokofiev accumulated ideas for this Concerto over a period of years. Some originated as early as 1911, but he did not plan the work as a whole until 1917, a year of intense creative activity in which he also worked on his First Violin Concerto, the *Classical Symphony*, two piano sonatas and the opera, *The Love of Three Oranges*. In 1918 he was allowed to leave Russia for a long trip across Asia and the Pacific Ocean to the United States and, eventually, Western Europe. He finished the Concerto in France, in October, 1921, and on December 16 he was the soloist in the first performance, with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. The Concerto was a success in Chicago, with public and press, but failed in New York ten days later. It soon made its way to London and Paris, however, and even to Moscow. Since then, it has become one of the most popular twentieth-century piano concertos, for it is at once brilliant, lyrical, witty and profound; a great virtuoso piece for both soloist and orchestra.

Alfred Frankenstein, the distinguished critic who as a young man was present at the Concerto's American première, wrote more than forty years later, "To hear Prokofiev play the piano was an utterly shattering experience. The piano seemed to bend and sway under the impact of Prokofiev's assault, and yet his playing was monumental in its clarity and in the sharp, steely planes of sound. He created the pianistic style of the twentieth century - a classically inspired style, in keeping with the character of the music, but one which overwhelmed the listener with its elemental force. [Abridged]" We now know that these qualities in Prokofiev's performance are inherent in the music of the Concerto itself.

York (at Carnegie Hall); his debut with the New York Philharmonic and return engagements with the Chicago Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Pittsburgh Symphony.

Mariss Jansons has been awarded the prestigious Norwegian Culture Prize of Anders Jahre and is a holder of The Royal Norwegian Order of Merit. He was recently honored with an appointment as Professor of Conducting at the St. Petersburg Conservatory.

Tonight's concert marks Mr. Janson's fourth appearance under UMS auspices.



Russian pianist **Dmitri Alexeev** has established himself as one of the music world's most highly regarded artists. His critically praised recitals on the world's leading concert stages and his concerto appearances with the most prestigious ensembles of Europe have secured his position as one of the "most remarkable pianists of the day." (*Daily Telegraph*)

He has performed with such orchestras as the Berlin Philharmonic, the Royal Concertgebouw of Amsterdam, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Orchestre de Paris, the Israel Philharmonic and the Munich Bayerische Rundfunk. He has worked with such conductors as Vladimir Ashkenazy, Pierre Boulez, Antal Dorati, Carlo

Maria Giulini, Gennady Rozhdesvensky, and Klaus Tennstedt, to name a few.

Mr. Alexeev was born in Moscow in 1947 and began to play the piano at the age of five. One year later, his prodigious talent brought him to the Central Music School and then to the Moscow Conservatory, where he came under the tutelage of the eminent Soviet pianist Dmitri Bashkirov. While pursuing graduate studies, he participated in several international competitions, capturing top honors at the 1969 Marguerite Long Competition in Paris, at the 1970 Georges Enescu Competition in Bucharest, and at the 1974 Tchaikovsky Competition in his native Moscow. In 1975, he was unanimously awarded first prize in the fifth Leeds International Competition in England.

Mr. Alexeev returns regularly to Russia and plays frequently with the St. Petersburg Philharmonic, working extensively with Yuri Temirkanov and Mariss Jansons both in Russia and abroad. He has also performed extensively in Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Scandinavia, and Korea. He has performed at the Edinburgh, Aldeburgh, Prague Spring, Maggio Musicale (Florence), and Bordeaux festivals.

He made his heralded American debut with Carlo Maria Giulini and the Chicago Symphony in 1976. Two years later, he made his New York orchestral debut and gave his first Carnegie Hall recital. In 1991 he joined the Philadelphia Orchestra for concert performances and a recording of Scriabin's *Prometheus*, *the Poem of Fire*. He returned to the United States in December 1992 for concerts with the Chicago Symphony under Pierre Boulez and will appear as soloist during the St. Petersburg Philharmonic's American tour in the fall of 1993.

Mr. Alexeev's recordings include Brahms solo works and concertos by Prokofiev, Rachmaninoff, and Shostakovich for French EMI. His recordings of the Chopin Waltzes and Preludes have both garnered great critical acclaim. He has recently recorded the Grieg and Schumann Concertos with conductor Yuri Temirkanov and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra for EMI, and a Rachmaninoff recital disc for Virgin Classics.

This is Mr. Alexeev's second UMS appearance.

The first movement begins with a slow introduction, *Andante*, in which a solo clarinet presents a lyric melody that will be transformed into the two contrasting subjects of the *Allegro* main section. The first is vigorously athletic and the second may be interpreted as either witty or grotesque, but Prokofiev also returns, in the course of the movement, to the opening clarinet theme, to be sure that the listener not forget it. The second movement presents a march like theme, *Andantino*, a series of five inventive variations on it, and a coda in which the theme is restated. The last movement is a brilliant scherzo-finale, *Allegro ma non troppo*, constructed, like the first, on the classical principle of contrast between two themes.

The Concerto is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, cymbals, tambourine, castanets, and strings.

Symphonic Dances, Op. 45

Sergei Rachmaninoff (Born April 1, 1873, in Oneg, Russia; died March 28, 1943, in Beverly Hills, California)

Sergei Rachmaninoff was one of those great versatile musicians who appear in history from time to time, one of the supreme pianists of his era, an admired composer and a conductor good enough to have been twice offered the direction of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Despite his busy life as a touring performer, Rachmaninoff found or made the time to write a great deal of music: four piano concertos, three symphonies, three operas, a large number of other works in many forms, and a larger number of songs and piano pieces. He left Russia in 1917 and made his home in the United States for the rest of his life.

Rachmaninoff was educated at the Conservatories of Saint Petersburg and Moscow, and after winning a gold medal for composition, in 1892 he set off on his first long concert tour. He had just written his famous Prelude in C-Sharp Minor, and his long career had begun. The great melodic power and the rich, characteristically Russian, sonority of his music made him one of the most popular composers in the twentieth century.

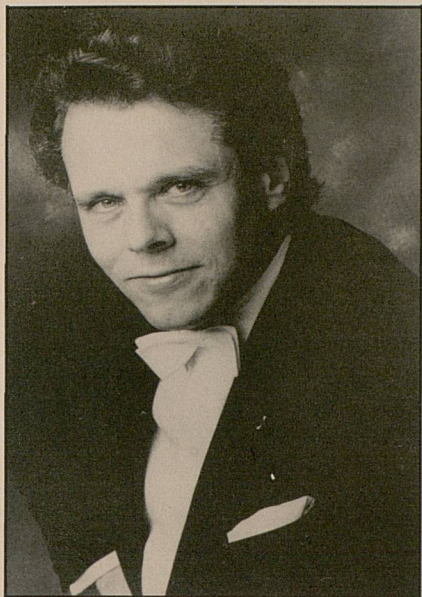
The set of three *Symphonic Dances*, Rachmaninoff's last composition, was written during the summer of 1940 on New York's Long Island. The orchestration was completed that October, and on January 3, 1941, Eugene Ormandy and Philadelphia Orchestra performed the work for the first time. The composer had originally thought of entitling the movements *Noon*, *Twilight* and *Midnight*, but in a letter written to Ormandy before the first performance, he referred to the score simply as "a symphonic piece called *Fantastic Dances*." In the end, he abandoned all descriptive designations and adopted the simple *Symphonic Dances*. He and the great choreographer Michael Fokine discussed the possibility of using the score for a ballet but Fokin's death in 1942 prevented any further development of this idea, and in the next year, Rachmaninoff, too, died.

When composing the music, however, Rachmaninoff had been much more concerned with the symphonic aspect of this work than with the dance, and it is in fact rather more like a "dancing symphony." The first movement, *Non allegro*, is the most rhythmic of the three, although the second is a waltz, *Andante con moto* (*Tempo di valse*). The third begins with a slow introduction, *Lento assai*, and then shifts to *Allegro vivace*. The ancient hymn, *Dies irae* ("Day of Wrath"), from the Latin Mass for the Dead, is woven into the music in a way that suggests a medieval dance of death.

The score calls for a large orchestra with triple woodwinds, alto saxophone, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba, timpani, percussion, piano, harp, and strings.

— Notes by Leonard Burkat

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Mariss Jansons, Music Director of the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra and Principal Conductor of the St. Petersburg Philharmonic, is recognized as one of the most distinguished musicians of his generation. He has become known to audiences worldwide through his acclaimed recordings, concert performances, and prolific touring, as well as his numerous radio and television appearances. With the start of the 1992-93 season, he took up an additional post as Principal Guest Conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

Mr. Jansons was born in Riga, Latvia, in 1943, son of the renowned conductor Arvid Jansons. He studied violin, piano, and conducting at the Leningrad Conservatory, from which he graduated with honors. In 1969 he continued his training in Vienna with Hans Swarowsky and in Salzburg with Herbert von Karajan. In Berlin, in 1971, he won the International Herbert von Karajan Foundation Competition.

Considered one of the leading conductors to emerge from the former Soviet Union, Mariss Jansons has conducted the St. Petersburg Philharmonic on many successful tours of Europe, Japan, and the United States. His collaboration with the orchestra dates back to 1973 when Evgeny Mravinsky, its legendary Music Director, invited Mr. Jansons to assist him. In 1989 his recording of the Shostakovich Symphony No. 7 with the orchestra received the Edison Award in Holland.

As its Music Director since 1979, Mr. Jansons has led the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra in all of the major music centers of Europe, America, and Japan, including the Salzburg Festival, the Edinburgh Festival, the BBC Proms, London's Barbican Centre and Royal Festival Hall, Vienna's Musikverein, New York's Carnegie Hall, and Tokyo's Suntory Hall. Under his leadership, the orchestra has developed an outstanding international reputation and produced a number of highly praised recordings, including a Tchaikovsky cycle, which was released on the Chandos label and featured in the BBC Wales television series "Jansons Conducts."

Since 1986, Mariss Jansons' long-term exclusive recording relationship with EMI has included releases with the Oslo Philharmonic, the St. Petersburg Philharmonic, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the London Philharmonic and the Philharmonia Orchestra. His discography includes works by Bartók, Berlioz, Dvořák, Mussorgsky, Prokofiev, Ravel, Respighi, Shostakovich, Sibelius, Svendsen, Tchaikovsky and Wagner.

In North America, Mariss Jansons has made exceptionally well-received appearances with the Cleveland Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra and the symphony orchestras of Chicago, Pittsburgh, Boston, Montreal, Baltimore, Los Angeles, and Toronto, all of which have invited him to return. His summer engagements have included concerts at the Mann Music Center and at the Blossom, Ravinia, and Tanglewood festivals. He also regularly conducts the leading orchestras of Europe, including the Berlin Philharmonic, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the NDR Hamburg Symphony, the Israel Philharmonic, the London Symphony, and the Philharmonia Orchestra of London. He continues to appear annually at the Salzburg Festival with, variously, the Oslo Philharmonic, the St. Petersburg Philharmonic, or the Vienna Philharmonic.

His American schedule during the 1993-94 season includes a major tour with the St. Petersburg Philharmonic, highlighted by concerts in San Francisco, Los Angeles and New

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