

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

F. W. KELSEY, President

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CHORAL UNION SERIES, 1920-1921

FORTY-SECOND SEASON

SECOND CONCERT

No. CCCXLIX COMPLETE SERIES

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF, PIANIST

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1920, AT EIGHT O'CLOCK

HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

I

SONATE, E minor, Opus 90

Beethoven

Allegro; Andante

Ludwig van Beethoven was born at Bonn, December 16, 1770; died in Vienna, March 26, 1827.

The sonata on our program, like the C minor, Op. 111, has but two movements; but—as Hans von Bülow said of the latter work—“It is no torso.” In other words the end of expression was attained by a curtailing of the formal means. The practice of many modern composers of giving the marks of expression in their own language was anticipated by Beethoven in this as in his Op. 81. There is much to be said in favor of this practice, but one may cite equally convincing reasons for retaining the Italian terms. In this sonata we find the contrast between the first movement—in the minor—and the second—in the major—exhibited in the Op. 111, and, like that, the second movement is based on a naive and compelling melody.

In place of a formal analysis with a schedule of keys, time-signatures and marks of expression we append the following analysis of the form, as such, for in future concerts we will meet with multiform utilizations of the principles underlying this plastic and satisfying formal scheme.

To fully comprehend the structural characteristics of the sonata form, of which the symphony is the highest expression, it must be stated that the term has two quite distinct meanings. The first refers to a cyclical form which includes several complete and contrasting movements; the second is generally applied to the first movement alone, and is now used in that sense. It must be borne in mind, however, that, although in the majority of sonatas and symphonies the first movement is the only one in this specific form, the principles of development, and to a certain extent the formal means of their application, may condition any or all of the remaining movements.

A movement written in this form is divided into three sections. In the first, the “exposition,” we have two principal subjects, in different keys, which give us the thoughts or emotional expression the composer wishes to enunciate. Frequently these subjects are accompanied by “subsidiaries” in the same key. These subjects are separated by a section called the “modulatory phrase.” Through this the first subject merges into the second instead of the two standing shoulder to shoulder—as it were. The artistic reason for this procedure is quite obvious. As, in a strict interpretation of the form, the entire first section is repeated, it becomes necessary for this and other reasons to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion through a closing subject, or theme. This necessity seems to be less urgent in these days for the repetition is observed less frequently.

These themes contain infinite possibilities, the revealing of which is the function of the second division, the “illustration” or “development.” The processes in the second division are often so complex, and introduce so many transformations of the leading subjects, as well as extraneous matter, that herein lies the necessity for the repetition of the first section—if it is a necessity.

The third division, the “recapitulation,” follows the formal structure of the first, gives the various contrasts between the two most important subjects save that of key, and the thematic material is treated in the light of the fuller insight gained through the other divisions. This section closes with a “coda,” which, instead of being perfunctory in nature as in the early days of the form, under Beethoven's hand developed into a part of the organic structure.

II

SIX SONGS WITHOUT WORDS Nos. 32-10-11-37-17-47

Mendelssohn

Felix, or Jacob Felix, Mendelssohn Bartholdy was born at Hamburg, February, 1809; died in Leipzig, November 4, 1847.

The "Songs without Words" were originally published in eight volumes—six during his life-time in the years 1830 (12—2 books); 1832 (6); 1834 (6); 1837 (6); 1845 (6), and two—1845 (6) and 1847 (6)—were included in the large list of his posthumous publications. It may be affirmed that these beautiful creations occupy a position in the hearts of the large majority of music-lovers accorded to but few really significant works. Most of the titles associated with them are not by the composer although several are in accordance with suggestions contained in his letters. We can but feel, however, that, in the majority of cases, these titles are so justified that they will remain in use.

In spite of Mendelssohn's undoubted genius it must be said that these songs constitute his sole original contribution to musical forms, which is nothing against him, for, new mechanical principles are not discovered with embarrassing frequency. Yet the world moves on!

III

BALLADE }
VALESE }
BARCAROLLE }

Chopin

Frédéric François Chopin was born in Juliasova-Volia, Poland, February 22, 1810; died in Paris, October 17, 1840.

Since the prophetic utterance of Robert Schumann—"Hats off, gentlemen, we are in the presence of genius!", the whole world of music has responded to this statement, while professional musicians have acquiesced in another proclamation contained in the same article—"A concerto by Chopin is worth more than a year's issue of a musical paper."

Most assuredly the mantle of prophecy was thrown over Chopin himself, for he incorporated in the works for the instrument, whose possibilities in certain directions he first revealed, much that was to influence both the creative and interpretative art of future generations. On which of the 4 Ballades (Op. 23, 38, 47 and 52); of the 13 Waltzes (Op. 18, 34, 42, 64, 69, 70 and in B minor) the choice of Mr. Rachmaninoff will fall we do not know, but there is but one Barcarolle, Op. 60. We have this certainty, however, the works chosen will reveal the salient qualities of a composer who will always remain *sui generis*. To fully discuss these qualities is beyond the province of these remarks, and were it not would be superfluous.

IV

"ON THE MOUNTAINS"

Grieg

Edvard Hagerup Grieg was born June 15, 1843, at Bergen, Norway; died there September 4, 1907.

Grieg gave to the world something that was distinctive—something new that was vital—something that rose above the manner of statement and laid hold on verities—and of such men the world has known but too few. Much that is novel is not worth while—much that appears novel is new only in so far as its methods of presentation are unique, but, fortunately, that which makes its appeal through novelty, as such, never survives. Grieg not only sounded a new note but that note was the voice of a race. In his treatment of the themes, so original, so instinct with the charm of his rare personality, and so surcharged with tradition and national feeling, he ever looked beyond the letter that he might more perfectly show forth the spirit. He left no school—but he did more than that: he made the music of his country an artistic asset of enormous value by opening up new sources of inspiration. He showed his greatness in his mastery of the smaller forms—and could say great things in a few words—but he never seemed to have mastered the art—no! the "knack"—of saying little things in the "grand manner."

As a good illustration of his style the work on our program may be cited.

V

PRELUDE, C-sharp minor }
 ETUDE-TABLEAUX, Opus 33 }

Rachmaninoff

Sergei Vassilievitch Rachmaninow (ff) was born at Novgorod, Russia, April 2, 1873; still living.

It is always a great inspiration to listen to a composer's interpretations of the creations of his imagination, and the popularity of the C-sharp minor Prelude is such that the joy of realization will be heightened by pleasurable anticipation. To many, if not to most, of this audience the composition is an old friend and they will be glad to renew its acquaintance under such favorable conditions. It will be discovered that the qualities that permeate this particular work will pervade his second selection.

It must, however, be borne in mind that Rachmaninoff's creative ability has displayed itself in the great symphonic forms in which his command of the infinite combinations of orchestral color is as great as his control of the varied *nuances* of piano-forte tone. Those who would know details of his career are referred to Groves' Dictionary (New Ed.), the last edition of Baker's Biographical Dictionary, and "Portraits of Composers" by Paul Rosenfeld. All of these are in the University Library and are easily accessible to all. In the near future it is very probable that our music-lovers will be given an opportunity of listening to one of Rachmaninoff's orchestral works, like the "Toten Insel" (after Böcklein) or one of his noble symphonies. In them he proves himself to be one of the most original and many sided composers of that large group Russia has given to the world.

VI

RHAPSODIE ESPAGNOLE

Liszt

Franz (Hungarian, Ferencz) Liszt was born at Raiding, Hungary, October 22, 1811; died in Bayreuth, July 31, 1886.

We are all acquainted with the Hungarian Rhapsodies of Liszt (of which he wrote 15) and, remembering their highly delineative character, are prepared to recognize in the one we shall hear this evening the same authoritative treatment of Spanish musical idioms as was stamped upon those based upon the products of his native country.

As Chopin realized pianistic possibilities along novel lines and gave new charms to music, so Liszt brought to evidence still other potentialities of his instrument, both revealing its power of interpretation along orchestral lines and the technical means through which it might be attained. Unfortunately, too many form their judgment of his work through the long list of compositions that dazzle rather than satisfy and which do not represent the *really great* Franz Liszt, for he was a great genius in spite of certain erratic tendencies. The Liszt of the "Liebestraum" is not the Liszt of the B minor and the "Dante" sonatas. Listening to some of his greatest works, especially the last named, one cannot escape the conviction that the obligations of Richard Wagner to him were not entirely financial nor matrimonial, but reached much deeper. No composer has suffered more from foolish admirers, as well as from unbalanced detractors, than Liszt, but he is coming into his own in these modern days, for we have gained perspective and thus have won a wider and saner point of view.

Returning to his specific offering for the evening we will all agree that it is an admirable ending to a program that may be taken as a model of arrangement—for which our gratitude is due Mr. Rachmaninoff.

THE UNITED STATES MARINE BAND

HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13, EIGHT O'CLOCK

EVERY MEMBER A CITIZEN

With every one of its scarlet coated members a citizen of the United States, either native born or naturalized, the United States Marine Band is in this respect the most unique of all the great musical organizations of this country.

This famous band has been a notable feature in the Inaugural Parade of every President of the United States since Thomas Jefferson in 1801.

For twenty-two years it has been under the sole leadership of Capt. William H. Santelmann. None but musicians of the highest standing are accepted for membership. They are equipped with the best instruments money can buy and are required to rehearse on five days each week. The average length of service of the present membership of the Band is about eighteen years. To these facts is due the undisputed prestige of The United States Marine Band as one of the world's greatest military and concert bands.

THE ROMANCE OF THE MARINE BAND

The origin of the Band, according to some history and much tradition, is Italian. In fact there is a pretty well authenticated story that the Marine Band was kidnapped by Captain McNeill, of the American Frigate Boston. While in one of the Tripolitan ports, during the war with the Barbary Pirates, the gruff old sea captain heard a band of Italian musicians playing on the streets. He was so delighted with their music that he invited them to come on board ship that evening and play for his men. When the time came for the Italians to be going ashore they found to their consternation that the ship was many miles out from land and the lights of the city were rapidly receding in the distance. The captain, through an interpreter, assured them it was simply a little joke of his, and that he was going to take them to America. The story may not be entirely authentic, for many of the archives which might show what became of these wandering musicians after they reached our shores were destroyed in 1814. But there is no doubt of the Band's Italian origin, as the official records clearly show that it was recruited early in the last century by thirteen Italian musicians who formed the nucleus from which has grown the present world-famous organization.

Course Tickets, including concerts by Percy Grainger, Pianist; The Flonzaley Quartet; and the New York Chamber Music Society—\$2.00-\$2.50. Single concerts, \$1.00-75c-50c.

The next concert in the EXTRA CONCERT SERIES will be given by THE UNITED STATES MARINE BAND, Saturday evening, November 13.

The next concert in the MATINEE MUSICALE SERIES will be given by SASCHA JACOBINOFF, February 8 (High School).

The next concert in the CHORAL UNION SERIES will be given by JAN KUBELIK, VIOLINIST, Monday, December 13.

The Ann Arbor Art Association announces an exhibition of Marine Paintings by Charles H. Woodbury, in Alumni Memorial Hall, November 4 to 30, 2 to 5 p. m. daily.

TRAFFIC REGULATION.—By order of the Police Department, on the nights of Concerts, vehicles of all kinds will be prohibited on North University Avenue between Thayer and Ingalls Streets; Taxi-cabs must park on the West side of Thayer Street, facing South between North University Avenue and Washington Street; Private autos may be parked on Ingalls and Washington Streets. Persons on foot are requested to refrain from leaving from the Taxi-cab entrance at the Thayer Street side of the Auditorium.

LOST ARTICLES should be enquired for at the office of Shirley W. Smith, Secretary of the University, in University Hall, where articles found should be left.