

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

CHARLES A. SINK, PRESIDENT

HARDIN VAN DEURSEN, CONDUCTOR

Eighth Concert

1946-1947

Complete Series 2945

Sixty-Eighth Annual
Choral Union Concert Series

DETROIT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
KARL KRUEGER, *Conductor*

MONDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 17, 1947, AT 8:30
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

Overture, "Prometheus," Op. 43 BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 4 in B-flat major, Op. 60 BEETHOVEN

Adagio; allegro vivace
Adagio
Allegro vivace
Allegro ma non troppo

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 6 in B minor ("Pathetique"), Op. 74 . . . TCHAIKOVSKY

Adagio; allegro non troppo
Allegro con grazia
Allegro molto vivace
Adagio lamentoso

NOTE.—The University Musical Society has presented the Detroit Symphony Orchestra on thirty-nine previous occasions under respective conductors as follows: Ossip Gabrilowitsch (26); Victor Kolar (7); Alfred Hertz, guest (1); Bernardino Molinari, guest (3); Rudolph Siegel, guest (1); and Karl Krueger (1).

The Steinway piano, furnished through the courtesy of Grinnell Brothers, is the official concert instrument of the University Musical Society

A R S L O N G A V I T A B R E V I S

PROGRAM NOTES

By J. DORSEY CALLAGHAN

Overture, "Prometheus," Op. 43 BEETHOVEN

Beethoven, in addition to his other attributes, may rightly be called the Father of German Ballet, not only for the Prometheus music, but because of a ballet on a knightly theme which he had set ten years previously.

The music for Prometheus was composed in 1800, in response to a request by the Milanese dancer and choreographer, Salvatore Vigano. The ballet was designed as a tribute to Maria Theresa, second wife of the Emperor Francis.

The ballet is an allegorical piece on the Greek god who brought two statues to life; took them to Apollo and had them made sensitive to human emotions. Its title, freely translated, is "The Creatures of Prometheus."

The music in full consists of an overture and introduction, and fifteen dance pieces. The overture survives as a favorite concert piece.

Symphony No. 4 in B-flat major, Op. 60 BEETHOVEN

Although the Fourth Symphony does not enjoy the universal recognition that has been accorded its two giant neighbors, the "Eroica" and the Fifth, it is a work that is marked with much beauty and considerable ingenuity.

It was composed in 1806, but was not performed until near the end of the following year. Even though it was presented on a program that would daunt any but the most gargantuan musical appetite, it was warmly received. On the same program, believe it or not, the First, Second, and Eroica Symphonies were given. The Fourth was played at the end of the concert. Its second hearing, at a public concert seven months later, was an unqualified success.

Of course, there were those who gave it a panning. Most famous of these was Von Weber, then a stripling in his early twenties. Weber made the symphony the target for his keenest shafts of wit.

The opening *adagio* is a slow and impressive introduction. Horns and woodwinds sustain a B flat, over which the strings play a solemn melody. The mood changes suddenly, with a lashing figure which brings forth the first theme, filled with youth and gaiety. Syncopated chords in winds lead to the tripartite second theme. The development is full of interest, recurring frequently to the lashing figure and presenting still another melody in violins and violas.

The second movement is simple in form, beginning with a rocking figure that is a consistent feature of the movement, and which sets the rhythmical pattern. The principal subject is spoken by the violins. It is the essence of beauty and romance. The melody is treated with an artist's grace. Particularly lovely is its treatment by clarinets and flutes. Just before the end of the movement, the rocking figure is finally given to tympani unaccompanied, with great effect.

The minuet is hardly to be recognized as such, so virile and driving is its character. The opening melody, stated in emphatic terms, is given to the woodwind and horns in a trio that is decorated with charming flourishes of the violins. The minuet, so-called, returns, and the trio is repeated.

There are few happier Beethoven finales than this one. Joy and humor mark it in every bar. The violins enter with a busy, rustling subject, yielding soon to a broad melody. The second subject enters on the oboe, to be answered immediately by the flute.

Beethoven pokes genial fun at the bassoons by assigning them the re-entrance of the hustling first subject, so out of line with the instrument's grave voice. Near the end, the subject is heard again, this time to similarly ludicrous effect in the deeper strings. The symphony ends in a bright and happy spirit.

Symphony No. 6 in B minor ("Pathétique"), Op. 74 . TCHAIKOVSKY

The Sixth Symphony, easily the best known of Tchaikovsky's symphonic works, was given its first performance, October 28, 1893, with the composer conducting. It was given a cool reception on that occasion, but at the next performance under Eduard Napravnik, on November 18 of the same year, the response was overwhelming.

Tchaikovsky died before its second reading. The title, however, had nothing to do with the tragedy of the composer's death. It had already been named by Tchaikovsky's brother, Modesto. The "sorrow" inherent in the work became the more monumental in the light of its creator's fate.

It is one of the few pieces of abstract music which has been given an acceptable title by a person other than the composer.

The symphony opens in a mood of abysmal gloom, the bassoon and violas deepening the melancholy against cellos and basses. The mood undergoes a subtle change, brightening only to the extent of determined cheerfulness and returns to the abandon of grief. The movement proceeds to one of Tchaikovsky's sweetest melodies and ends softly and deeply.

The second movement is notable for its curious rhythm, a sort of broken waltz time, overlain by a gracious melody. In the third movement the music becomes triumphant in powerful expressions by the brasses. The composer seems to have risen above his troubled soul and to have concluded that submission to sorrow is not the answer.

The final movement has finality of death, both in the requiem-like manner of its beginning and in the rush of its continuance. It is the summation of despair and the abandonment of everything, even grief and struggle.

ALEC TEMPLETON

FRIDAY, FEB. 21, 8:30

TICKETS — \$1.50 — \$1.20 — \$1.00

LOTTE LEHMANN

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 26, 8:30

CHICAGO SYMPHONY

SUNDAY, MARCH 16, 7:00

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