

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

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Eighth Concert

1948-1949

Complete Series 2996

Seventieth Annual
Choral Union Concert Series

VLADIMIR HOROWITZ, *Pianist*

FRIDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 11, 1949, AT 8:30
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

Impromptu in G major, Op. 90 SCHUBERT

Sonata in D major, Op. 10, No. 3 BEETHOVEN

Presto

Largo e mesto

Menuetto; allegro

Rondo; allegro

Pictures at an Exhibition MOUSSORGSKY

(Revision by Vladimir Horowitz based on the original piano manuscript)

Promenade

The Gnome

Promenade

The Old Castle

Promenade

Tuileries: Children Quarreling at Play

Bydlo: The Polish Oxcart

Promenade

Two Jews, the one Rich, the Other Poor

Ballet of the Chicks in their Shells

Limoges: The Marketplace

The Catacombs

The Hut on Fowls' Legs

The Great Gate at Kiev

INTERMISSION

Ballade No. 3 in A-flat major
Two Nocturnes: E minor; F-sharp major
Etude in C-sharp minor, Op. 10
Mazurka in F minor } CHOPIN

Rákóczy March (after Liszt) HOROWITZ

NOTE.—The University Musical Society has presented Vladimir Horowitz on previous occasions as follows: Nov. 12, 1928; Jan. 31, 1930; Mar. 6, 1933; Jan. 15, 1941; Jan. 15, 1945; and Jan. 17, 1947.

Mr. Horowitz uses the Steinway piano.

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

ANALYTICAL NOTES BY OLIN DOWNES

Impromptu in G major, Op. 90 SCHUBERT

The Schubert Impromptus and Moment Musicales, short piano pieces, are in genre by themselves. Each one is a simple, lyrical idea, or two related ideas which make a song without words inimitably expressive of Schubert. There is no effort in these unpretentious creations to invent a new piano style, discover some novel method of technique, or otherwise establish a stylistic copyright of the composer's product. The little fat-backed, be-spectacled Schubert, whose shyness was an agony, produced these small pieces with the same spontaneity that he composed his songs, and with if anything less intellectual responsibility, being freed here from conforming to any poetic text. He sings here as a sheer melodist, and no composer has ever sung like him.

The first of the Impromptus of Op. 90 is the sustained melody in the key of G major (changed from that of G-flat on the request of a publisher) which could not be simpler in its form or harmonic facture.

Sonata in D major, Op. 10, No. 3 BEETHOVEN

This sonata is the first of the famous Thirty-two to reveal to us the full-statured and disconcertingly dynamic Beethoven. This is not to deride his earlier works in the form. Each one of them is historic and distinctive, secure of an everlasting place in the repertory. But here, in a sudden explosion, is the master and the revolutionist, Beethoven. The first theme, in bare octaves which stride furiously upward, would defy the universe. When the motive is repeated, the interlocking octaves give it still more of torrential power. The second theme is of a fresh pattern, despite the regularity of the form of the movement. Note the beginning of the development part which goes from D minor into B-flat major, the tonality of the 6th degree, a key-relation that the later Beethoven loved and one which is the harmonic basis of the Ninth Symphony. The savage staccati that thrust upward from the bass—the first theme is a new guise—and mount in the upper registers, are as flashes of lightning. There is no customary transition to the repetition of the first part, no easing of the listener into the recapitulation when it comes. Instead, the development comes to a dead stop on a dominant chord with a fermata; whereupon we are launched with neither apology nor by-your-leave into the reprise. For concentration, energy, the boldest self-affirmation, this movement could hardly be surpassed, if equalled. The towering part of the sonata, nevertheless, is the poignant *largo e mesto*. It is the music of the man of sorrows, acquainted with grief. Its depth and intensity of feeling are companioned by the simplicity of the expression. Yet the music of the scherzo is charming, vigorous but light-hearted. What of the finale? To the writer, it is singularly personal, capricious, often sardonic in its communication. The stamp of Beethoven and none other, is evident on every page of this sonata—Beethoven, whether his mien is grand or tender, gay or terrible.

Pictures at an Exhibition MOUSSORGSKY

The year after the death of the Russian architect, painter, designer and wood engraver, Victor Alexander Hartmann, in 1873, the critic Vladimir Stassov arranged an exhibition of his works. Moussorgsky was a bosom friend of the departed, whom he mourned in letters of frantic protest against fate. He visited the exhibition, looked upon the paintings and designs shown there, and memorialized Hartmann in a series of short piano pieces whose fame has far outlived that of the pictures which inspired them.

Moussorgsky's music, like the pictures with which it is associated, remained for a time in obscurity. It was not published until 1886. Pianists were slow to take it up, which is primarily the reason why "Pictures at an Exhibition" are widely supposed to have been composed originally for orchestra. They were first popularized by Ravel's orchestral version which he made at the behest of Dr. Serge Koussevitzky in 1923.

Mr. Horowitz's editing of Moussorgsky's piece is in no sense an effort to compete with the orchestra transcriptions or to introduce any extraneous elements in the music as Moussorgsky wrote it. It is a return to the original text of the piano pieces as they are published in the Lamm edition made from Moussorgsky's manuscripts and issued as Volume 8 of his complete works by the State Publishing Company of the U. S. S. R. in 1939.

This edition, following faithfully the original manuscripts, differs in a few significant details of harmony or melodic outline from others which had not the source material available for examination. Following it carefully, Mr. Horowitz has done a little "piano orchestration" in ways confined to octave doublings, redistribution of passage work between the hands, transposition of brief passages an octave below or

above the original pitch, etc. The effort has been solely to realize the intention of the composer, and to refrain from gratuitous ornamentation or officious "correction" any of his text as it stands.

Ballade in A-flat major, Op. 47, No. 3 CHOPIN

The third Ballade is so felicitous in its every idea, and charming in its fancy and pianistic device, that the distinction of its workmanship is taken for granted. And this is as it should be. It is one of the many proofs in music that a composition can be universally popular and at the same time a great work of art. Perhaps what Ehlert has said of the Ballades, each one of them entirely different from the other, is as pertinent as any comment could be on this subject. "They have but one thing in common, their romantic working out and the nobility of their motives. Chopin *relates* in them; he does not speak like one who communicates something actually experienced; it is as though he told what never took place, but what has sprung up in his inmost soul, the anticipation of something longed for."

Nocturne in E minor, Op. 72 (Posthumous) CHOPIN

The Posthumous Nocturne in E minor, not published until six years after Chopin's death, was among the few of his works which he did not issue during his lifetime, but which he did intend to be published. This nocturne was composed in the year in which the seventeen-year-old Chopin emerged from the Warsaw Lyceum and Schumann acclaimed his early set of variations on "La ci darem la mano," with the words, "Hats off, gentlemen, a genius!"

Nocturne in F-sharp major CHOPIN

It would be very difficult to speak in a purely analytical vein of the F-sharp nocturne, which, even for Chopin, is exceptional in the beauty of its lyrical idea, in the exquisite fancy of the ornamentation, and the subtlety of interlacing rhythms and harmonies, employed with such finish of workmanship as almost to disguise their astonishing modernity.

Etude in C-sharp minor, Op. 10 CHOPIN

The Etude in C-sharp minor is the brilliant interchange between the hands of coruscating figures, chords, octaves, set to a vigorous rhythm, and presented with conclusive authority.

Rákóczy March (after Liszt) HOROWITZ

The origin of the air of the Rakoczy March is variously ascribed. It is generally supposed to have been written by Rakoczy Ferenz, the Transylvanian prince who led his countrymen in an unsuccessful attempt to throw off the yoke of Austria. At any rate, this is the most famous of all Hungarian national airs, and Berlioz's account, in his *Memoirs*, of the occasion when he orchestrated this march for performance in Hungary, to the frantic delight of his audience, is itself a dream. Liszt, in turn, arranged the tune — indeed, with it, composed the Fifteenth Hungarian Rhapsody. Mr. Horowitz's treatment of the theme starts with Liszt and proceeds with some original extensions of his own. He finds an important distinction between the Berlioz and the Liszt versions, not only in the letter but the spirit. Berlioz's March is the triumph of an army. The Liszt conception is something else; it is not triumph, but desperate revolt. And this, to Mr. Horowitz, is the emotional ground-bass of the music. There are harmonic distinctions between his version and those of Liszt and Berlioz. Berlioz, writing with wildly dramatic spirit one of those scores that will always live in the repertory, conventionalized in a degree the scale patterns. Liszt uses different scale formations which affect the nature of the music. Mr. Horowitz goes farther in the Hungarian direction than either of these two masters, employing consistently the old Hungarian scale which has not one but two augmented seconds in it. His version begins with the trumpet calls à la Berlioz, thereafter following freely for a distance the Liszt model. In the lyrical trio there begin imitations of the phrase and colloquy of the two hands with it. Thereafter come Mr. Horowitz's own elaborations and cadenzas, leading to the return of the initial theme. And now this theme is worked out in almost symphonic style, making much of such of its elements as the augmented second which rises against a descending bass, and canonic treatment, with crashing dissonances of an elemental sort, passages in which virtuosity vies with the organic character of the development. The coda begins to mount from a pedal point in the bass and piles up, in a species of harmonic counterpoint, to the whirlwind conclusion made of the old scale and the initial motive of the march.

MAY FESTIVAL

MAY 5, 6, 7, 8, 1949

Soloists

PIA TASSINARI (new)	Soprano
SHIRLEY RUSSELL (new)	Soprano
GLADYS SWARTHOUT	Contralto
TANN WILLIAMS (new)	Contralto
SET SVANHOLM	Tenor
HAROLD HAUGH	Tenor
MARTIAL SINGHER (new)	Baritone
ERICA MORINI	Violinist
BENNO MOISEWITSCH (new)	Pianist
GREGOR PIATIGORSKY	Violoncellist

Conductors

EUGENE ORMANDY	THOR JOHNSON
ALEXANDER HILSBURG	MARGUERITE HOOD

Organizations

THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA
THE UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION
THE FESTIVAL YOUTH CHORUS

Choral Works

REQUIEM	Brahms
CHOROS NO. 10 (Rasga O Caracao)	Villa-Lobos
GLORIA IN EXCELSIS (world premiere)	Llywelyn Gomer
LIEDER CYCLE	Orchestrated by Dorothy James

Season tickets (6 concerts) now on sale. Address: Charles A. Sink, President, University Musical Society, Burton Memorial Tower.

CONCERTS

HEIFETZ	Saturday, February 19, 8:30 P.M.
NATHAN MILSTEIN, <i>Violinist</i>	Friday, March 4, 8:30 P.M.
INDIANAPOLIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA FABIEN SEVITZKY, <i>Conductor</i>	Sunday, March 13, 7:00 P.M.
CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA FRITZ BUSCH, <i>Guest Conductor</i>	Sunday, March 27, 7:00 P.M.

Single Concerts: \$3.00—\$2.00—\$1.80