

# UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

Charles A. Sink, President

Thor Johnson, Guest Conductor

Lester McCoy, Associate Conductor

Second Concert

1952-1953

Complete Series 3088

## Seventh Annual Extra Concert Series

THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA

GEORGE SZELL, *Conductor*

HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

SUNDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 9, 1952, AT 8:30

### PROGRAM

Overture to "Benvenuto Cellini," Op. 23 . . . . . BERLIOZ

Symphony No. 2 in C major, Op. 61 . . . . . SCHUMANN

Sostenuto assai; allegro ma non troppo  
Scherzo: allegro vivace; trio I; trio II  
Adagio espressivo  
Allegro molto vivace

### INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 43 . . . . . SIBELIUS

Allegretto  
Tempo andante ma rubato  
Vivacissimo: lento e suave  
Finale: allegro moderato

NOTE—The University Musical Society has presented the Cleveland Orchestra on previous occasions as follows: Mar. 28, 1935; Nov. 9, 1937; Nov. 7, 1938; Nov. 9, 1941; Nov. 8, 1942, Artur Rodzinski, conductor; Nov. 7, 1943, Erich Leinsdorf, conductor; Nov. 12, 1944, George Szell, guest conductor; Nov. 11, 1945, Erich Leinsdorf, conductor; Nov. 10, 1946; Nov. 9, 1947; Nov. 7, 1948; Nov. 6, 1949; Nov. 5, 1950, and Nov. 4, 1951, George Szell, conductor.

*The Steinway is the official piano 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 GEORGE H. L. SMITH

### Overture to "Benvenuto Cellini," Op. 23 . . . HECTOR BERLIOZ

The overture to "Benvenuto Cellini" has long been a pillar of the concert repertory, although it is played less often than its companion piece, the *Roman Carnival Overture*. It begins, *Allegro deciso con impeto*, G major, 2-2, with the characteristic theme of Cellini. There is brief development and a pause, followed by a slow section, *Larghetto*, 3-4, in which the lower strings, pizzicato, announce a dark and solemn theme taken from an address of the Cardinal that is to be of great importance. The woodwinds sing in the higher register the little air of Harlequin from the carnival scene, and this is superbly developed by the strings in octaves. Trombones and clarinets then repeat the Cardinal's theme in sustained song, and the theme of Harlequin reappears to usher in the main body of the overture. The opening theme of Cellini is now heard at length and is followed by a rushing subsidiary figure. The main second theme of the overture is given out by the woodwinds in D major and taken up by the strings. There is elaborate development. Cellos announce the theme of the forge, to which, in the second act, Cellini casts his celebrated statue of Perseus in a single hour at the urgent request of the Pope (and fired by the promise of the hand of the beautiful Teresa). This motto is strikingly developed by trombones in the last section of the overture, after the opening theme returns first in A minor and then, with great brilliance, in G major. In the coda, the trombones triumphantly proclaim the Cardinal's theme below the rushing strings. There is a dramatic pause, and a final reappearance of this theme just before the scintillant ending.

### Symphony No. 2 in C major, Op. 61 . . . ROBERT SCHUMANN

If Schumann's C major Symphony was not composed in that wonderfully productive year after his marriage to Clara Wieck it belongs to a curiously analogous period half a decade later, when the magic of convalescence in a new environment freshened his powers and reawakened such a vernal mood as had produced the "Spring" Symphony. There had been dark days before his marriage to Clara, and there were darker days of mental illness and nervous collapse before the gradual rejuvenation that gave birth to the Symphony in C major.

Schumann, recalling afterward the mental struggles that he was always to associate with the growth of the symphony, wrote of how he had composed it while ailing, adding: "It seems to me as if one could not but hear it in the music." In another letter he wrote: "I sketched it when I was still in a state of physical suffering." The commentators have jumped at these remarks as a basis for a trite analysis of the symphony that begins with the inevitable struggle and rises to the inevitably triumphant conclusion. What they forgot, as Schumann himself did, was that the actual composing of the work took place in a happy state of convalescence, when he rose for a short time to the very height of his powers. So in the Symphony in C major it would be nonsense to look for the story of struggle over mental disease. We must look rather for that happy cheerfulness and rich introspective fancy which are among Schumann's most treasurable contributions to his art.

Even in the introduction to the opening movement (*Sostenuto assai*, C major, 6-4), the hushed mood, with its sustained proclamations of the brass, is one of expectancy—and already overbrimming exuberance—which soon bursts forth in the fascinating dotted rhythms of the main theme (*Allegro ma non troppo*, 3-4). The brief second theme in G major is rich in similar happy emotion, which pervades the development, the freshly orchestrated recapitulation, and the brilliant coda with its climax on the "motto-theme" of the brass from the introduction. The second movement (*Allegro vivace*, C major, 2-4) is a vigorous scherzo with two contrasted trios, and the third (*Adagio espressivo*, C minor, 2-4) is not only the greatest of Schumann's slow movements but one of the most perfect in the full range of orchestral literature. The form is simple, a quiet theme in E-flat major contrasting only briefly with the sustained song that opens the movement and returns to complete it. The finale (*Allegro molto vivace*, C major, 2-2) is typical of the energetic Schumann. The vigorous theme, heard after the first rush of the strings, pervades the movement. The second theme is a plain reference to the introspective song of the slow movement, and the "motto-theme"—which also returned in the closing passages of the scherzo—is heard again in the course of the development, along with a wholly new theme introduced by the oboe. The "motto" appears again in the coda, first softly, then with mounting intensity as the triumphant climax approaches.

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 43 . . . . . JEAN SIBELIUS

Sibelius, writing a Second Symphony in the lush Italian spring of 1901, reached at thirty-five his first full maturity as a symphonic composer. Behind him were solid accomplishments. He could afford to give free rein to his teeming fancy and try his new-found abilities in the most colorful regions of the orchestra.

Mr. John N. Burk compares the Sibelius of the Second Symphony with the Beethoven of the *Eroica* and the Tchaikovsky of the Fourth—young men in their thirties “when the artist first feels himself fully equipped to plunge into the intoxicating realm of the many-voiced orchestra, with its vast possibilities for development. Sibelius, like those other young men in their time, is irrepressible in his new power, teeming with ideas . . .”

The late Cecil Gray gave the following description of the symphony in his valuable book on Sibelius:

“With the Symphony No. 2 in D major, written three years later [than the First], an immense advance is to be perceived. If the First is the very archetype of the romantic, picturesque symphony of the latter part of the nineteenth century, the Second strikes out a new path altogether. The first is a conclusion, the last of its dynasty and in many ways the best; the second is the beginning of a new line, and contains the germs of immense and fruitful developments. In addition, apart from an occasional suggestion of the influence of Tchaikovsky, it is entirely personal and original in idiom from beginning to end.

“The Second Symphony is scored for the same orchestra as its predecessor, minus the harp, and is slightly shorter. In outward appearance it still conforms to the traditional four-movement formula of allegro, andante, scherzo, and finale, but the internal organization of the movements reveals many important innovations, amounting at times, and particularly in the first movement, to a veritable revolution, and to the introduction of an entirely new principle into symphonic form. The nature of this revolution can be best described by saying that whereas in the symphony of Sibelius’ predecessors the thematic material is generally introduced in an exposition, taken to pieces, dissected, and analyzed in a development section, and put together again in a recapitulation, Sibelius in the first movement of the Second Symphony inverts the process, introducing thematic fragments in the exposition, building them up into an organic whole in the development section, then dispersing and dissolving the material back into its primary constituents in a brief recapitulation. Furthermore, the convention of first and second subjects or groups of subjects is abandoned; in this movement one can detect several distinct groups of thematic germs, none of which can claim the right to be regarded as the most important.

“Nothing in the entire literature of symphonic form is more remarkable than the way in which Sibelius here presents a handful of seemingly disconnected and meaningless scraps of melody, and then breathes life into them, bringing them into organic relation with each other and causing them to grow in stature and significance with each successive appearance, like living things.

“The slow second movement is also highly individual. The familiar principle of the contrast between a lyrical chief subject and a more virile second subject is here intensified into an almost epic conflict, involving several groups of thematic protagonists. The melancholy, reflective first subject is quite unequal to the task of coping with the violent opposition it arouses, and is compelled to call to its assistance a second lyrical subject which, in its turn, engenders antagonism. The melodic writing in this movement, incidentally, is of quite exceptional beauty, particularly the second lyrical subject, which is both exquisitely molded and deeply expressive.

“The bustling scherzo is comparatively conventional in form and style, apart from the lovely trio which is built upon a theme beginning with no fewer than nine repetitions of the same note—a thing no one but Sibelius would dare or could afford to do. For the rest it is on familiar lines, and the concluding movement which follows without a break is in the usual finale tradition—broad, stately, ceremonious, rather pompous perhaps here and there. In these days of cynicism and disillusion it is of course the fashion to sneer at the convention of the ‘happy ending,’ of which the orthodox symphonic finale is the musical equivalent, and it is certainly true that most modern attempts to conform to it ring hollow and insincere. We of the present generation simply do not feel like that; we find it difficult to be triumphant, and we have no doubt excellent reasons for it. The fact remains that it is a weakness and a deficiency in us, and there is something of sour grapes in the contemporary attitude toward those artists of an earlier generation who have achieved the state of spiritual serenity, optimism, and repose which makes it possible for them to conclude a work convincingly in this manner. Sibelius is one of them; his triumphant final movements, so far from being due to a mere unthinking acceptance of a formal convention, correspond to a definite spiritual reality.”

# CONCERTS

## Choral Union Concert Series

(All concerts begin at 8:30 p.m.)

DANISH NATIONAL ORCHESTRA . . . . .	Thursday, November 13
ERIK TUXEN, <i>Conductor</i>	
VLADIMIR HOROWITZ, <i>Pianist</i> . . . . .	Wednesday, November 19
BIDU SAYAO, <i>Soprano</i> . . . . .	Monday, December 1
VIENNA CHOIR BOYS . . . . .	Friday, January 16
MINNEAPOLIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA . . .	Thursday, February 12
ANTAL DORATI, <i>Conductor</i>	
GERSHWIN CONCERT ORCHESTRA . . . . .	Monday, March 2
LORIN MAAZEL, <i>Conductor</i>	
ARTUR RUBINSTEIN, <i>Pianist</i> . . . . .	Thursday, March 12
BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA . . . . .	Tuesday, May 19
CHARLES MUNCH, <i>Conductor</i>	

Single Concerts: \$2.50—\$2.00—\$1.50

(Boston Symphony only—\$3.00, \$2.50, \$2.00, \$1.50.)

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## Extra Concert Series

(All concerts begin at 8:30 p.m.)

CLAUDIO ARRAU, <i>Pianist</i> . . . . .	Tuesday, November 25
HEIFETZ, <i>Violinist</i> . . . . .	Tuesday, February 17
BOSTON "POPS" TOUR ORCHESTRA . . . .	Monday, March 23
ARTHUR FIEDLER, <i>Conductor</i>	

Single Concerts: \$2.50—\$2.00—\$1.50

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**"Messiah"**—December 6 and 7. Tickets: 70¢ and 50¢.

NANCY CARR, *Soprano*

DAVID LLOYD, *Tenor*

EUNICE ALBERTS, *Contralto*

JAMES PEASE, *Bass*

**Chamber Music Festival**—Feb. 20, 21, 22. Season Tickets: \$3.50, \$2.50.

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For tickets or for further information, please address: Charles A. Sink,  
President, University Musical Society, Burton Memorial Tower.