

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

Charles A. Sink, President

Thor Johnson, Guest Conductor

Lester McCoy, Associate Conductor

Second Concert

1954-1955

Complete Series 3141

Ninth Annual
Extra Concert Series
CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA
OF AMSTERDAM

EDUARD VAN BEINUM, *Conductor*

WEDNESDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 27, 1954, AT 8:30

HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

Symphony No. 4 in B-flat major, Op. 60 BEETHOVEN
Adagio; allegro vivace
Adagio
Allegro vivace; trio: un poco meno allegro
Finale: allegro ma non troppo

INTERMISSION

Prélude à l'après midi d'un faune DEBUSSY
Musique pour l'esprit en deuil RUDOLF ESCHER
Suite from *The Firebird* STRAVINSKY
Introduction—Dance of the Firebird
Dance of the Princesses
Infernal Dance of the Subjects of Kaschei
Berceuse
Finale

London, Columbia Masterworks, and Epic Records

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

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

In the fall of 1806 Beethoven made the acquaintance of Count Franz von Oppersdorf whose estate lay in the neighborhood of Ober-Glogau, in Silesia, not far from that of Prince Lichnowsky, Beethoven's patron, with whom the composer was staying. The Count had a good orchestra and some time later commissioned Beethoven to write a work for this ensemble. Such was the origin of the Fourth Symphony.

The Symphony opens with a slow introduction of some length and rather serious, though uncertainly defined, mood. The section is marked by detached and staccato notes. The main body of the movement is launched *allegro vivace*. The music takes on an excited and jubilant character, with a group of secondary themes, one of them treated in imitation. The *Adagio*, of sweet, sentimental character, has been regarded as a love song inspired by the composer's devotion to Therese von Brunswick, or some other embodiment of the "Immortal Beloved." The third movement, an *allegro vivace*, though marked Minuet, differs from the traditional minuet pattern. The melody of the trio, given largely to the woodwind, is contrasted with little violin figures termed by Berlioz "so many teasing but charming allurements." The finale is a kind of "perpetual motion," with mercurial phrases broken upon from time to time by bursts of an almost irascible character.

Prélude à l'après midi d'un faune CLAUDE DEBUSSY (Afternoon of a Faun)

Camille Mauclair who was present with Mallerme at the first performance of this work wrote, many years later: "We returned, struck with consternation by the hisses of a public which denounced this music as lacerating the ears, this music so volatile that one scarcely hears its adorable murmurings."

What Debussy was attempting to do he has said in the following words: "The music of this prelude is a very free illustration of the beautiful poem of Stéphane Mallarmé. It makes no pretensions whatever to being a synthesis of the poem. It projects, rather, a changing background for the dreams and desires of the Faun in the heat of that summer afternoon, as, weary from pursuing the frightened nymphs and maids, he falls into a wine-drugged sleep, free at last to enjoy every bounty that he had craved of Nature.

Musique pour l'esprit en deuil RUDOLF ESCHER (Music for a mourning spirit)

Rudolf Escher was born in Amsterdam in 1912, studied at the Rotterdam Conservatory and was taught by Willem Pijper for four years. Since 1935 he has devoted most of his time to composition. His works include an opera *Protesilaos and Laodameia*, a Symphony, Passacaglia for orchestra, Concerto for piano and orchestra, the "Music for a mourning spirit," chamber music, piano works, and songs.

The "Music for a mourning spirit" was written with many interruptions during the first years of World War II. The form of the composition is a rather freely handled sonata form, consisting of introduction, exposition (in two sections A1 and A2), development, recapitulation (without A2) and coda. A full analysis is impossible in the available space. Suffice it to say that the title means no more than an indication of the emotional domain with which this music is associated. If one connects the indications,

“expectation and lyricism” with “spirit” in the broadest sense of the word, and “oppressive, imperative tone” with Teutonic fascism and its criminality, then the domain of inspiratory impulses is satisfactorily defined.

Suite from *The Firebird* IGOR STRAVINSKY

Stravinsky's ballet *The Firebird*, from which the music of this Suite is extracted is based on an old Russian legend telling how Prince Ivan with the help of the wonderful Firebird, overcame the sorcerer Kaschei and freed his victims.

Introduction, leading into a section called *Dance of the Firebird*, combines some of the music accompanying Ivan's pursuit of the miraculous Bird as prelude to the Dance itself—music of fantastic and captivating grace. Ivan captures the Firebird as she is feeding on golden apples in Kaschei's garden but, melted by her entreaties, he soon releases her and she leaves with him, in gratitude, one of her shining feathers.

Dance of the Princesses—A round-dance of charming gravity and stateliness. Thirteen princesses, held prisoner by Kaschei, play with the golden apples and dance as Ivan watches from his hiding place. He joins them and they warn him to flee before Kaschei can turn him into stone.

Infernal Dance of the Subjects of Kaschei—Instead of running away, Ivan flings open the gates of Kaschei's palace and out swarm slaves and buffoons, soldiers and freaks, Kikimoras and Bolibochki—subjects of Kaschei and finally the sorcerer himself. The Firebird's feather protects Ivan from his evil spells. Now the Firebird reappears and causes Kaschei and his crew to begin a frenzied dance till they fall to the ground exhausted.

In the Ballet, the delightful *Berceuse*, with its opening bassoon solo over an accompaniment of muted strings and harp, follows the Infernal Dance. The loveliest Princess is lulled into a sleep that will protect her from the wicked designs of Kaschei.

Finale—This movement which succeeds without pause, follows in the ballet the Death of Kaschei, and accompanies the breaking of the sorcerer's spell, the vanishing of his castle and the release of his victims. The Suite ends with the jubilant music that celebrates the happy conclusion of Ivan's adventure.

This tour of the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam is under the High Patronage of Her Majesty, the Queen; and is sponsored by the government of The Netherlands and the Municipality of Amsterdam; and in the United States, by the Netherlands—American Foundation, Inc.

SIXTY-SECOND ANNUAL MAY FESTIVAL

Six Concerts May 5, 6, 7, 8, 1955

The University Choral Union will perform Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, under Thor Johnson. The Festival Youth Chorus, under Marguerite Hood, will participate at the Saturday afternoon concert.

The Philadelphia Orchestra will be heard in all six concerts. Eugene Ormandy will conduct the concerts on Thursday evening, Saturday afternoon and evening, and on Sunday evening.

Subscribers of record to tickets in Block "A" for the current Choral Union Series may renew their present locations up to January 31. All other tickets will be allocated in sequence. Others with remittances will be accepted and filed in sequence beginning as of December 1.

COMING CONCERTS

THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA Sunday, November 7
GEORGE SZELL, *Conductor*

Program

Overture to *The Bartered Bride* SMETANA
Hymn and Fuging Tune No. 3 HENRY COWELL
"La Mer," Three Symphonic Sketches DEBUSSY
Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64 TCHAIKOVSKY

JORGE BOLET, *Pianist* Monday, November 15

Program

Andante con variazioni HAYDN
Sonata in E-flat, Op. 81a BEETHOVEN
Sonata in B minor LISZT
Scherzo No. 1, B minor, Op. 20
Scherzo No. 2, B-flat minor, Op. 31
Scherzo No. 3, C-sharp minor, Op. 39
Scherzo No. 4, E major, Op. 54 } CHOPIN

LEONARD WARREN, *Baritone* Sunday, November 21

ROBERT SHAW CHORALE AND ORCHESTRA
ROBERT SHAW, *Conductor* Monday, December 6

"MESSIAH" Two Christmas Concerts

First Concert: Saturday, December 4, 8:30 P.M.
Repeat Concert: Sunday, December 5, 2:30 P.M.

LUCINE AMARA, *Soprano* CHARLES CURTIS, *Tenor*
LILLIAN CHOOKASIAN, *Contralto* DONALD GRAMM, *Bass*

UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION AND ORCHESTRA
ALICE LUNGERSHAUSEN, *Harpsichordist*
LESTER MCCOY, *Conductor*

Tickets: 75 cents and 50 cents—now on sale.

CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL

BUDAPEST STRING QUARTET February 18, 19, 20, 1955

JOSEF ROISMAN, *Violinist* BORIS KROYT, *Violist*
JAC GORODETZKY, *Violinist* MISCHA SCHNEIDER, *Cellist*
ROBERT COURTE, *Guest Violist*

Season Tickets: \$3.50 and \$2.50; Single Concerts: \$1.75 and \$1.25

Now on sale.

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