

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

Charles A. Sink, President

Thor Johnson, Guest Conductor

Lester McCoy, Associate Conductor

Seventh Concert

1955-1956

Complete Series 3178

Seventy-seventh Annual  
Choral Union Concert Series

TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

SIR ERNEST MACMILLAN, *Conductor*

WEDNESDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 22, 1956, AT 8:30

HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

Overture to *Idomeneo* . . . . . MOZART

Symphony No. 29 in A major (K. 201) . . . . . MOZART

Allegro moderato

Andante

Minuetto

Allegro con spirito

"New York Profiles," Suite for Orchestra . . . NORMAN DELLO JOIO

The Cloisters

The Park

The Tomb

Little Italy

INTERMISSION

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

Allegro; poco allegro

Tempo andante, ma rubato; allegro; andante sostenuto

Vivacissimo

Allegro moderato

NOTE.—The University Musical Society has presented the Toronto Symphony Orchestra on one previous occasion: February 10, 1954.

*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 Marcus Adeney

### Overture to *Idomeneo* . . . . . MOZART

Mozart is often thought of as the very embodiment of "pure" music, a visionary in the realm of sound. It is more likely that his whole imagination of life found its natural expression in musical terms. Always he was fascinated by the stage, and followed several blind alleys in hopes of creating serious opera before being given a commission to write one for the Carnival at Munich in 1781. *Idomeneo*, as the composer's father observed, was almost entirely a Salzburg production. The libretto was by G. B. Varesco, chaplain to the Archbishop Hieronymus, and even the German translation was made locally. The story, however, was remote, concerning a legendary King of Crete who, "storm-tossed in returning from a Trojan victory, vows to sacrifice to Neptune the first person he sees in return for a safe landing. His son, Idamante, is the first to greet him and he endeavors to avoid the consequences of his rash pledge. But Neptune is adamant and Idomeneo is forced to fulfil his promise. However, love, in the form of Ilia, intervenes; Neptune's heart is softened; Idomeneo abdicates; the populace acclaims the accession of Idamante and his loving bride, Ilia."

### Symphony No. 29 in A major (K. 201) . . . . . MOZART

This "slender but extremely appealing work" was composed at Salzburg in 1774. It is one of four symphonies which Mozart, then only eighteen years old, wrote for the small orchestra available at Salzburg on his return from Vienna; hence the scoring for two oboes, two horns, and strings.

Even in the days of his youthful exuberance, curious shadows offset the bright lucidity which seems to have been Mozart's birthright. These notes of implied sorrow, this poignancy of feeling discoverable just below a surface gaiety, has given rise to almost contradicting comment by the best critics. An English writer, Dyneley Hussey, finds echoes here of Goethe's *Werther*, a deeply romantic impulse working through to moments of tragic nobility. On the other hand, for Otto Jahn the "music is full from beginning to end of cheerful humour." Perhaps these are only the two sides of a wonderful coin—itsself a reflection, in the mirror of genius, of our own paradoxical emotions.

The first movement is notable for some brilliant counterpoint and a "sunny and gracious" secondary theme. The *Andante*, employing muted violins, is in sonata form. "The garden is one with trimmed hedges and symmetrical vistas." The "vigorous and original" *Minuetto* features octave unisons for oboes and horns and chromatic harmonies in the trio section. The fourth movement reveals Mozart's early and supreme penchant for operatic writing—his willingness to be as light as Rossini and, in his own way, as representative of his own time.

### "New York Profiles," Suite for Orchestra . . . . . NORMAN DELLO JOIO

At the age of forty-two Norman Dello Joio has gained a distinguished place among contemporary American composers. His father was a church organist in New York City, and most of his early training was with Pietro Yon, who had charge of the music at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Studies at the Institute of Musical Art and the Juilliard Graduate School were succeeded by two years (1941-42) with Paul Hindemith. Add to this a flair for popular music, and considerable experience with his own band, and you have an understandable basis for the many awards that have come his way. Mr. Dello Joio is modern without being modernist. Although at his ease with medieval modes or classical counterpoint he does not deplore any part of the wide range of present day musical resources, or evade an occasional need for massive dissonance. One is surprised by stylistic contrasts, by unexpected tensions and releases. The formal and familiar dissolves, even as we recognize it, into something new and strange.

All this was most apparent in *The Ruby*, a short opera intensifying an horrific fantasy by Lord Dunsany, recently broadcast from Toronto by the CBC. "New York Profiles" is more objective, presenting four scenes from the metropolis after the fashion of Moussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition." The first movement employs a Gregorian chant, *Ite missa est*, to evoke images of a transplanted monastery overlooking the

Hudson river. It opens with some singularly beautiful linear writing which is only incidentally archaic. When the bassoon enters with a second tune we realize how strikingly individual are the voices in Mr. Dello Joio's orchestra. The rhythms tend to be easy-going, conformable to a New Yorker's background. As the music proceeds, counterpoint gives way to slightly dissonant harmonies, and the work builds to a climax. Archaic voices return, this time in a more ghostly context.

In the second section, *The Park*, we encounter broken rhythms, light, tuneful fragments. Children's voices, at first out of key, come gradually into focus as playful suggestions are banded around. Aided by an authoritative trumpet the rhythms become first clear then insistent. Voices take on a choral as well as an individual character—a delightful touch.

*The Tomb*, a slow movement in the nature of a choral fantasy, refers to Grant's Tomb. The tragedy rather than the glory of war—a hint at the fearfulness of things long ago and not to be forgotten—informs this curious, composite work. Only traditional means are employed; the mild dissonances are never unresolved. At one point modal harmonies behind a flute tune create a most poignant effect. To close there is a reference to "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

*Little Italy* brings the composer back to his Italian-American community and, no doubt, the happiness of childhood. Kettle drums give out the tune. Neopolitan dance rhythms gradually emerge and take command. Above them lifts a singing, appealing melody. The air is full of evocations and memories. Childish voices recall *The Park*. The simple opening theme returns in power, and this very personal, truly American suite closes on a note of abounding vitality.

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

Sibelius' Second Symphony has been seriously reconsidered during the last few years. This is partly because, as Louis Biancolli noted for the New York Philharmonic, "no symphony since Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique*—with the possible exception of Shostakovich's Fifth—has won such popularity in America."

All four movements may be said to evolve from one "thematic germ," the interval of a falling fifth, in which invariably the accent falls on the higher note (to some extent the same principle applies to the first movement in Beethoven's C minor). Music, as we know, is the language of the unconscious, and at first this basic pattern escapes our notice. Later, after many near-repetitions, there is the peculiar feeling of disturbance and pleasure with which one says, "I have been here before; all this happened at another time." It should be added that the opening three melodic notes of the symphony, which come at once and unexpectedly off beat, have tremendous importance for the rest of the work. They form what might be called the upper surface of repeated chords; and this chord group provides material for three descending notes played by oboes and clarinets later on. By such processes Sibelius reveals "the natural conformations of an utterance which is not only logical but passionate; and the passion, far more readily grasped, is really the essential matter."

Less obvious factors lend weight to Sibelius' writings of the period. For one thing he leaned heavily on the *Kalevala* for inspiration. This Saga of the Finns is available (in a translation that attracted Longfellow when he wrote *Hiawatha*) in two volumes of *Everyman*. Witty, profound, with Lemmenkainen as a figure of devilry matching Till Eulenspiegel, the *Kalevala* provides symbols for most of Sibelius' Tone Poems.

The Second Symphony is compact of folklore, of appealing, easily recognizable tunes. Only their use is a bit startling. This is hardly surprising when we consider how Number One followed a tradition, whereas its successor, of necessity, pointed the way to new symphonic patterns. Sibelius wrote of his later symphonies that they were "acts of faith," that he was "hammering at an ethical line," and adds, "in this way utterly unlike the first four." Too much has, perhaps, been said of the composer's sombre hues, his icy harmonies. Without exaggeration his *Second Symphony* could be described as rhapsodic; unreservedly, passionately expressive of the joy of living. Because it is made up so largely of sensuous, even delicious sounds, and because its affirmation is that of youthful vigor (appreciative even of the darker mood, the nostalgic dissonance) this work is likely to join the ranks of the few most memorable works of art.

# MAY FESTIVAL

**MAY 3, 4, 5, 6, 1956**

THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA AT ALL CONCERTS

**THURSDAY, MAY 3, 8:30 P.M.**

EUGENE ORMANDY, *Conductor*  
INGE BORKH, *Soprano*

Concerto for Orchestra,  
A major . . . . . HANDEL-ORMANDY  
Symphony No. 7 . . . . . SIBELIUS  
Cleopatra's aria from *Julius Caesar* . . . . . HANDEL  
"Abscheulicher wo eilst du hin?"  
from *Fidelio* . . . . . BEETHOVEN  
Inge BORKH  
Monologue from *Elektra* . . . . . R. STRAUSS  
Miss BORKH  
Symphonic Variations, "Paganiniana" . . . . . BLACHER

**SATURDAY, MAY 5, 8:30 P.M.**

EUGENE ORMANDY, *Conductor*  
ZINO FRANCESCATTI, *Violinist*

Overture to *Oberon* . . . . . WEBER  
Symphony No. 1 in C major . . . . . BIZET  
Concerto in D major, Op. 77,  
for Violin and Orchestra . . . . . BRAHMS

**FRIDAY, MAY 4, 8:30 P.M.**

UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION  
THOR JOHNSON, *Guest Conductor*

LOIS MARSHALL, *Soprano*  
JANE HOBSON, *Mezzo-soprano*  
RUDOLF PETRAK, *Tenor*  
VRONSKY and BABIN, *Pianists*

Overture to *The Magic Flute* . . . . . MOZART  
"Davidde penitente" . . . . . MOZART  
CHORAL UNION AND SOLOISTS  
Concerto in F major . . . . . MOZART  
VRONSKY AND BABIN

**SUNDAY, MAY 6, 2:30 P.M.**

THOR JOHNSON, *Conductor*  
UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION

LOIS MARSHALL, *Soprano*  
MARTHA LIPTON, *Contralto*  
RUDOLF PETRAK, *Tenor*  
HAROLD HAUGH, *Tenor*  
LAWRENCE WINTERS, *Bass*  
ERIKA VON WAGNER STIEDRY, *Narrator*

"Gurre-Lieder" . . . . . ARNOLD SCHOENBERG  
UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION AND SOLOISTS

**SATURDAY, MAY 5, 2:30 P.M.**

EUGENE ORMANDY, *Conductor*  
HILDE GUEDEN, *Soprano*

FESTIVAL YOUTH CHORUS  
MARGUERITE HOOD, *Conductor*

Adagio and Fugue . . . . . MOZART  
Aminta's Aria from *Il Re Pastori* . . . . . MOZART  
"Non temer amato bene" . . . . . MOZART  
HILDE GUEDEN  
Songs by Robert Schumann  
FESTIVAL YOUTH CHORUS  
Zerbinetta's aria from *Ariadne* . . . . . R. STRAUSS  
Miss GUEDEN  
Concerto for Orchestra . . . . . VON EINEM

**SUNDAY, MAY 6, 8:30 P.M.**

EUGENE ORMANDY, *Conductor*  
BYRON JANIS, *Pianist*

"Cantus animae et cordis"  
for String Orchestra . . . . . YARDUMIAN  
Concerto No. 3 in D minor, Op. 30,  
for Piano and Orchestra . . . . . RACHMANINOFF  
BYRON JANIS  
Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98 . . . . . BRAHMS

SEASON TICKETS: \$13.00—\$10.00—\$9.00—\$8.00  
SINGLE CONCERTS (on sale beginning March 12):  
\$3.50—\$3.00—\$2.50—\$2.00—\$1.50

Artur Rubinstein, Pianist . . . . . Thursday, March 1  
Teresa Stich-Randall, Soprano . . . . . Friday, March 9  
Virtuosi di Roma . . . . . Tuesday, March 13  
Walter Giesecking, Pianist . . . . . Postponed to Wednesday, May 16

TICKETS: \$3.50—\$3.00—\$2.50—\$2.00—\$1.50

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