

1959

Eighty-first Season

1960

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY
THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Charles A. Sink, President

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Tenth Concert

Eighty-first Annual Choral Union Series

Complete Series 3289

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

FRITZ REINER, *Conductor*

MONDAY EVENING, APRIL 4, 1960, AT 8:30
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

- Overture to *Benvenuto Cellini*, Op. 23 BERLIOZ
- *Tone Poem, "Don Juan," Op. 20 STRAUSS
- "La Valse," A Choreographic Poem RAVEL

INTERMISSION

- Variations on a Hungarian Folk Song ("The Peacock") KODÁLY

* RCA-Victor LM-1888

NOTE.—The University Musical Society has presented the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in the Choral Union Series on 20 previous occasions; and at the May Festivals from 1905 to 1935 inclusive, totaling 184 concert performances.

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 ARRAND PARSONS

Overture to *Benvenuto Cellini*, Op. 23 HECTOR BERLIOZ

Berlioz completed his opera, *Benvenuto Cellini*, in 1838 and it was presented at the Paris Opera, after numerous delays, on September 10, 1838. Although the Overture was applauded with great vigor at the opening performance, the opera was not well received.

The Overture is patterned after the sonata-allegro form with an introduction. In the recapitulation the theme of the slow second section is combined with one of the themes of the opening part.

Tone Poem, "Don Juan," Op. 20 RICHARD STRAUSS

Strauss composed *Don Juan* in 1888 at Munich where he was assistant to the director of the Royal Opera; he was twenty-four.

Strauss suggested the source of his inspiration for *Don Juan* by including in the orchestral score a portion of a poem of the same name by Nicolaus Lenau, pseudonym for Nicolaus Franz Niembsch von Strehlenau.

When Strauss sent the score to Hans von Bülow for performance he requested that no thematic analysis be given to the listeners. Furthermore, in this work Strauss did not elaborate further on the program as he did for others of his compositions. His desire that no specific or detailed program be attached to *Don Juan* seems understandable on careful examination of the score for it is apparent that he was concerned first with the musical matters and that the program was merely incidental, or perhaps a starting point, for the music. The music follows what may be described as a modified rondo-sonata form; the parts may be represented by the letters A B A C A. The composition is in the key of E major, with frequent appearances of E minor.

The first section is based on a fast, brilliant driving theme in E major. A transition section, in which the second theme is anticipated, leads into the second, or B, section. The B theme, in the key of B major, the dominant, is first given out by the solo violin and is then taken up by the orchestra and treated as a duet between the woodwinds and strings. There is a brief and varied return to the A section of the key of E.

The C section presents three new ideas and a development section. The first of these ideas is given out by the violas and violoncellos, *molto appassionato*, in the key of G minor; the flute answer to the strings is marked *flebile* ("tearful" or "mournful"). The oboe is given the second melodic idea; it is in G major and is to be played very expressively (*ausdrucksvoll*). The third theme of the C section is a strong and expressive melody given first to the horns. This melody is in the key of C. (It will be observed that for this section Strauss has chosen two keys, G and C, which lie a third above and below the basic key of the piece, E.) The development section follows; it is extensive. The C major melody dominates, and there is much use of a transformed version of the theme from section A.

The last section of the piece suggests the idea of a coda combined with a recapitulation; the whole section is highly concentrated. The first, or A, theme returns in the key of E, and this is about the only "regular" part of the recapitulation. After a restatement of the strong third theme of the C section, now in the key of E major, the music continues to a brilliant climax, much in the manner of a coda-development treatment. The ending, quiet and solemn, is in E minor.

"La Valse," A Choreographic Poem MAURICE RAVEL

After the war, in 1918, Ravel received a request from Serge Diaghileff for another ballet. For material he turned to a sketch he had made of an orchestral piece some years before called *Wien* (*Vienna*). Ravel's interest in the Viennese waltz had begun to take shape in this composition as early as 1906 when he wrote his friend Jean Marnold, the music critic: "It is not subtle—what I am undertaking at the moment. It is a Grande Valse, a sort of *hommage* to the memory of the Great Strauss, not Richard, the other—Johann. You know my intense sympathy for this admirable rhythm and that I hold *la joie de vivre* as expressed by the dance in far higher esteem than as [expressed] by the Franckist puritanism. I am so little a Catholic."

The score of "La Valse" is prefaced by the following description: "Through openings in the whirling clouds couples of waltzers may be seen. Little by little the clouds disperse and one is able to distinguish an immense room peopled with a crowd turning round and round. Gradually the scene brightens and the light of the chandeliers blazes out. An imperial court around 1855."

Variations on a Hungarian Folk Song

("The Peacock") ZOLTÁN KODÁLY

The Peacock Variations were composed in 1939 for the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam. The first performance was played by that orchestra on November 23, 1939, under the direction of William Mengelberg.

Kodály is known as a composer, as a scholar for the research done in his native folk music, and as a musicologist. John S. Weissman has described his work in *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*:

"The style of Kodály's music may be described as the result of his consistent assimilation of various traditions and techniques, and the logical realization of their latent implications. His music is not revolutionary: there is nothing in it which could be taken as a new departure either in style or technique. In this it is unlike the music of Bartók, Schönberg or Stravinsky. Its novelty derives from the particular way he uses traditional or current methods and material; from his unconventional approach to largely conventional procedures. His earliest musical impressions . . . were derived from the classical masters of the Viennese school whose characteristic formal perfection had a lasting influence on his style. Apart from this, in most of his early unpublished works the melodic idiom shows an unmistakably Brahmsian flavor

"The impression of Kodály's music appropriates certain stylistic features and technical elements of the French school—especially Debussy—and treats them in an individual manner. His impressionism differs from that of the French school, however, in the function and purpose of its elements: his chord combinations and chromatic progressions are subordinated to the shape and inflections of the melodic invention, and are not merely factors of color.

"The part played by impressionistic elements in almost all his instrumental music corresponds to the style and technique of the 16th century vocal polyphony in his choral music. The discipline of Palestrinian polyphony afforded him new expressive possibilities and admirably suited his primarily melodic nature, contributing to the perfection of his technique and providing a model of melodic construction and development. The essentially simple and transparent contrapuntal texture, the clear part-writing of his vocal music are inconceivable without the stimulus of the Palestrina school. But in this case, as in that of impressionism, it was the spirit rather than the letter that Kodály adopted. . . .

"The most important influence on Kodály's idiom was Magyar folk music. . . . Recognizing the necessity of a new departure, he found in folk music the source of an individual language that preserves the character of an original national style. Folk music provided an inspiration to his musical invention; and since melody is the most conspicuous element in Kodály's music, it is there that the new impulses were assimilated."

The melody of the folk song "The Peacock" is the theme of Kodály's Variations. The presentation of the theme is in the style of a broad introduction to the composition. As a whole, the Variations fall into five groups indicated in the following description. The first three variations, marked *con brio*, are written as a connected unit: in the first, thematic material may be heard in the trombones, while strings and woodwinds exploit the interval of the fourth, characteristic of the folk melody; in the second, a lively woodwind passage work serves as background for the thematic material in the violas and 'cellos; the third variation increases the motion with the derived material, then stops.

The music becomes more calm (*poco calmato*) for the next group of three variations which are continuous: in the fourth, the first violins present a thematic fragment against the accompaniment of winds and *pizzicato* strings; in the fifth, the theme is transferred to the lower strings and, later, the first violins answer them in canon; the sixth variation presents canonic treatment between the violins and 'cellos.

The third group, consisting of four variations, is in a fast tempo, *vivo*. Cadential breaks precede variations eight and ten.

Of the fourth group of four variations, the eleventh, marked *andante espressivo*, presents an imitative melodic passage between English horn and clarinet over sustained harmony in the strings and winds; toward the end the strings join in the melodic play. Variation twelve, *adagio*, is built up entirely over a pedal tone on D; the melodic line is given to the first and second violins and the viola while the harp plays a fragment from the original theme against the recurring accompaniment figure of the wind instruments. Variation thirteen is marked *tempo di Marcia funebre*. Variation fourteen continues the slow tempo with the marking *andante, poco rubato*: string tremolo and harp glissandi provide a background for the flute; near the end, other woodwinds join the flute.

Variation fifteen, beginning the fifth and final group, introduces a sudden change to *allegro giocoso* and a dance-like treatment of the theme. Variation sixteen, *maestoso*, gives the melody to unison strings and horn while the winds provide accompaniment. The finale is marked *vivace*, and is characterized by some dance-like music, colorful orchestration and a brilliant ending.

MAY FESTIVAL

MAY 5, 6, 7, 8, 1960

THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA AT ALL CONCERTS

PROGRAMS

THURSDAY, MAY 5, 8:30 P.M.

EUGENE ORMANDY, *Conductor*
RUDOLF SERKIN, *Pianist*

All-Beethoven Program
Overture to *Leonore*, No. 3, Op. 72
Symphony No. 7 in A major, Op. 92
Concerto No. 5 in E-flat major, Op. 73 ("Em-
peror")
RUDOLF SERKIN

SATURDAY, MAY 7, 8:30 P.M.

EUGENE ORMANDY, *Conductor*
ANSHEL BRUSILOW, *Violinist*
LORNE MUNROE, *Violoncellist*

Program
Symphony No. 7 in C major, Op. 105 . . . SIBELIUS
Concerto in E-flat major for Violoncello
and Orchestra, Op. 107 . . . SHOSTAKOVICH
LORNE MUNROE
Concerto in D major for Violin and
Orchestra, Op. 77 . . . BRAHMS
ANSHEL BRUSILOW

FRIDAY, MAY 6, 8:30 P.M.

THOR JOHNSON, *Guest Conductor*
UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION
ANDRES SEGOVIA, *Guitarist*

Program
Corrido de "El Sol" . . . CHÁVEZ
UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION
Concerto in D major . . . CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO
ANDRES SEGOVIA
Chôros No. 10 . . . VILLA-LOBOS
UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION
Symphonie de Psaumes . . . STRAVINSKY
UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION
Fantasia for Guitar and Orchestra . . . RODRIGO
MR. SEGOVIA

SUNDAY, MAY 8, 2:30 P.M.

THOR JOHNSON, *Guest Conductor*
THE UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION
LEONTYNE PRICE, *Soprano*
FRANCES BIBLE, *Mezzo-soprano*
ALBERT DA COSTA, *Tenor*
KIM BORG, *Bass*

Program
Requiem Mass ("Manzoni") for Soli,
Chorus, and Orchestra . . . VERDI
UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION and SOLOISTS

SATURDAY, MAY 7, 2:30 P.M.

WILLIAM SMITH, *Conductor*
MARILYN COSTELLO, *Harpist*
WILLIAM KINCAID, *Flutist*

Program
Overture, "Le Corsaire" . . . BERLIOZ
Concerto in C major for Flute, Harp
and Orchestra, K. 299 . . . MOZART
MARILYN COSTELLO and WILLIAM KINCAID
Divertissement . . . IBERT
Variaciones concertantes . . . GINASTERA
"Till Eulenspiegel," Op. 28 . . . R. STRAUSS

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

EUGENE ORMANDY, *Conductor*
LISA DELLA CASA, *Soprano*

Program
Tocatta and Fugue in D minor . . . BACH-ORMANDY
"Mi tradi" from *Don Giovanni* . . . MOZART
"Dove sono" from *Marriage of Figaro* . . . MOZART
LISA DELLA CASA
Symphony No. 2 . . . ROSS LEE FINNEY
Monologue from *Capriccio* . . . R. STRAUSS
MISS DELLA CASA
Suite from *Der Rosenkavalier* . . . R. STRAUSS

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