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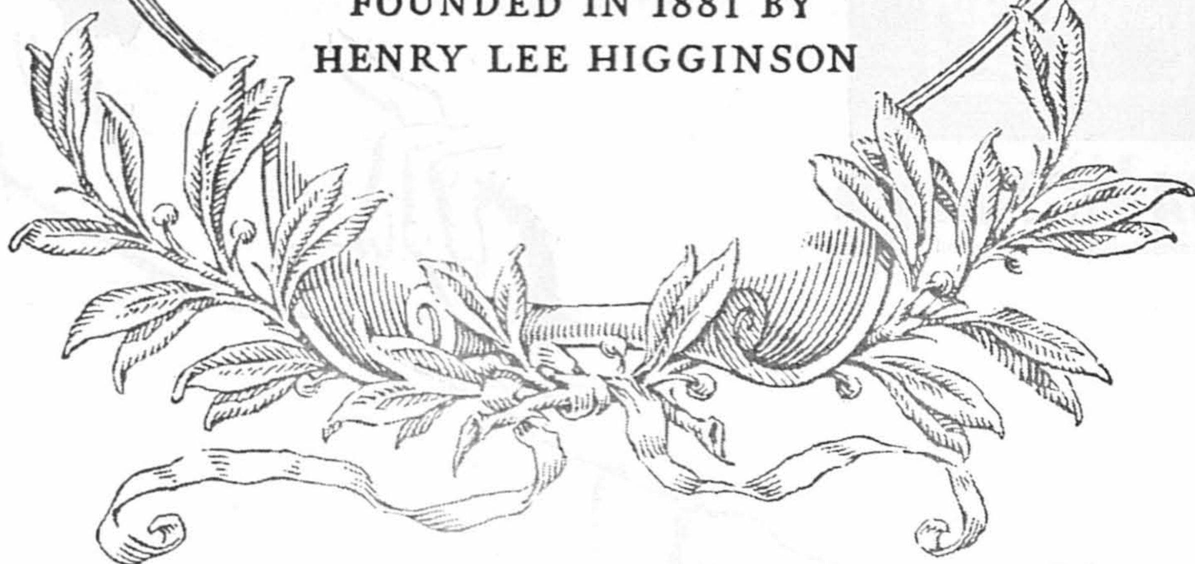

EIGHTY-SIXTH SEASON

1966–1967

BEETHOVEN
"EROICA" SYMPHONY
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Schumann / Symphony No. 4
Beethoven / Leonore Overture No. 3
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Program

SATURDAY EVENING, APRIL 8, *at* 8:30 *o'clock*

MOZART . . . . Overture to "Die Entführung aus dem Serail"

BEETHOVEN . . . . Symphony No. 7, in A major, *Op.* 92

I. Poco sostenuto; Vivace
II. Allegretto
III. Presto; Assai meno presto; Tempo primo
IV. Allegro con brio

INTERMISSION

SCHULLER . . . . Diptych for Brass Quintet and Orchestra

ARMANDO GHITALLA, *Trumpet*
ROGER VOISIN, *Trumpet*
JAMES STAGLIANO, *Horn*
WILLIAM GIBSON, *Trombone*
CHESTER SCHMITZ, *Tuba*

STRAVINSKY . . . . *Suite from the Ballet, "L'Oiseau de feu"

Introduction: Jardin enchanté de Katschei et danse de l'oiseau de feu
Supplications de l'oiseau de feu
Jeu de princesses avec les pommes d'or
Ronde des princesses
Danse infernale de tous les sujets de Katschei
Berceuse
Finale

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OVERTURE TO *"DIE ENTFÜHRUNG AUS DEM SERAIL"*

By WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Born in Salzburg, January 27, 1756; died in Vienna, December 5, 1791

"Die Entführung aus dem Serail," translated as "The Abduction from the Seraglio" (or "Harem"), *Singspiel* in three acts, was composed to a text by Gottlob Stephanie, an adaptation from C. F. Bretzner's *"Belmonte und Constanze,"* which, with music by Johann André, had been performed in 1781.

Mozart's *"Die Entführung"* was first performed at Vienna, July 12, 1782. There were innumerable performances in Austria, and in other parts of Europe after Mozart's death. The opera reached this country in 1860, when it was performed in New York by the Brooklyn Operatic School. The first production by the Metropolitan Opera Company took place in the season 1946–1947.

The orchestration of the Overture calls for a piccolo (interchangeable with flute in the *Andante* middle section), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, triangle and strings.

"*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*" was Mozart's first great popular success in opera. Several reasons can be given for this. Mozart entered the field of the *Singspiel,* which bears some formal resemblance to our operetta. The *Singspiel,* using the language of its audiences, relying upon intelligibility by spoken lines, dipping unashamed into broad comedy, resorting to colorful scenery and costumes, was in great vogue in Vienna at the time. Entertainment *alla Turca* was then in similar favor, and Mozart, choosing an Oriental subject, made free use of such outlandish instruments as the bass drum, cymbals, triangle, and piccolo. These reasons in themselves would not have been enough to account for the immediate and spreading success of *"Die Entführung,"* which was performed seventeen times in Vienna in its first season and quickly taken up by theatres in other cities. Mozart plunged into his subject with his usual enthusiasm and turned out music which on the stage and in the pit was so full of verve, sparkle and true dramatic delineation that there was no resisting it.

Mozart was called to account by Christophe Friedrich Bretzner for having stolen his text:

"A certain person by the name of Mozart in Vienna has had the audacity to misuse my drama, *'Belmonte und Constanze,'* as an opera text. I hereby protest most solemnly against this infringement of my rights and reserve the right to take further measures."

But free borrowing was common enough at that time. Mozart himself had already composed the greater part of an *opera buffa* called *"Zaide"* for a project which had been abandoned. *"Zaide"* used a very similar plot of Christians captured, confined in a Turkish *seraglio* and providentially released for a happy ending. His recompense for *"Die Entführung"* consisted of fifty ducats, which, as he remarked to his father, was brought in at the box office before its career was fairly started.

The amusing incidents of the story, the continual hazards of the plot whereby Belmonte and his servant Pedrillo plan to rescue their fiancées from the harem, the scene where Osmin, the overseer of Selim Pasha and the villain of the piece, is plied with wine against his Turkish principles by Pedrillo and rolled off in a wheelbarrow out of harm's way, these lively happenings did much to insure the popular success of *Die Entführung*.

Mozart's opera may well have suggested to Rossini, always his ardent admirer, his own *L'Italiana in Algeri* (1813) with its somewhat similar story. Both pieces offer, not only the possibilities for music *alla Turca* and bright, exotic décor, but an entertaining situation traceable to Marmontel's *Soliman II,* one of his *Contes Moraux,* published in book form in 1775. This satirical encyclopedist depicts a sultan's boredom with the facile, insipid complaisance of the slaves of his harem, who are nothing more than *"machines caressantes."* He causes to be captured a European girl with intelligence, independence and spirit of her own, by the name of Roxelane. Her impudence and complete disregard of every Oriental custom of abject obedience intrigues and wins him. As she leads him to the altar and to the state of legal matrimony, a blessing hitherto denied harem potentates, he remarks—*"Est il possible qu'un petit nez retroussé renverse les loix d'un empire?"*

This kind of piquant rebellion of Western womanhood found its way into Mozart's Constanze, an English girl, and Rossini's Isabella, an Italian beauty, although each of them finally departs with her fiancé from home (who is of course the principal tenor). Incidentally, the Fiorilla of *The Turk in Italy* handles the visiting Turk with similar ease.

In the libretto which Mozart used, written by Stephanie and copied from Bretzner, the escape is foiled at the last moment and the lovers, instead of being executed according to Turkish expectation, are pardoned by their overlord as a point of personal pride and magnanimity, and sent their way: a startling but properly happy ending. In libretto language: "His heart is touched by their sorrow; he nobly forgives and all are set at liberty."

The tale has been often told how the Emperor Joseph II said to Mozart after the first performance, "Too beautiful for our ears, and far too many notes, my dear Mozart," to which Mozart is said to have replied, "Exactly as many as are necessary, Your Majesty." This is one of those anecdotes which is almost too good to be true—so good, in fact, that it has also been told of Cherubini and Napoleon. True or not, it moved Alfred Einstein to exclaim: "Mozart had clarinets again, as in Paris and Mannheim and Munich, and how he used them! Mozart had 'Turkish music': piccolo, trumpets, timpani, triangle and cymbals; and what color they lend to the Overture, to the Janissary

choruses, to Osmin's outbursts of anger, to the drinking duet! – a coloration at once exotic, gay, and menacing."

This little *Singspiel* has been praised far and wide, but nothing has been more apt than a remark by the composer of *Der Freischütz*. This expert in the musical theatre once wrote: "I think I may venture to lay down that in the *Entführung* Mozart's *artist experience* came to maturity, and that his *experience of the world* alone was to lead him to further efforts. The world might look for several operas from him like *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni,* but with the best will possible he could write only one *Entführung.* I seem to perceive in it what the happy years of youth are to every man; their bloom never returns, and the extirpation of their defects carries with it some charms which can never be recaptured."

J. N. B.

SYMPHONY No. 7 IN A MAJOR, *Op.* 92
By LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Born in Bonn, December 16(?), 1770; died in Vienna, March 26, 1827

The Seventh Symphony, finished in the summer of 1812, was first performed on December 8, 1813, in the hall of the University of Vienna, Beethoven conducting.

The Symphony is scored for 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani and strings. The dedication is to Moritz Count Imperial von Fries.

BEETHOVEN was long in the habit of wintering in Vienna proper, and summering in one or another outlying district, where woods and meadows were close at hand. Here the creation of music would closely occupy him, and the Seventh Symphony is no exception. It was in the summer of 1812 that the work was completed. Four years had elapsed since the Pastoral Symphony, but they were not unproductive years, and the Eighth was to follow close upon the Seventh, being completed in October, 1812. Beethoven at that time had not yet undertaken the devastating cares of a guardianship, or the lawsuits which were soon to harass him. His deafness, although he still attempted to conduct, allowed him to hear only the louder tones of an orchestra. He was not without friends. His fame was fast growing, and his income was not inconsiderable, although it showed for little in the haphazard domestic arrangements of a restless bachelor.

The sketches for the Seventh Symphony are in large part indeterminate as to date, although the theme of the Allegretto is clearly indicated in a sketchbook of 1809. Grove* is inclined to attribute the real inception of the work to the early autumn of 1811, when Beethoven, staying at Teplitz, near Prague, "seems to have enjoyed himself thoroughly – in the midst of an intellectual and musical society – free and playful, though innocent.

* Sir George Grove: *Beethoven and his Nine Symphonies* (1896).

"Varnhagen von Ense and the famous Rahel, afterwards his wife, were there; the Countess von der Recke from Berlin; and the Sebalds, a musical family from the same city, with one of whom, Amalie, the susceptible Beethoven at once fell violently in love, as Weber had done before him; Varena, Ludwig Löwe the actor, Fichte the philosopher, Tiedge the poet, and other poets and artists were there too; these formed a congenial circle with whom his afternoons and evenings were passed in the greatest good-fellowship and happiness." There was more than one affair of the heart within the circle, and if the affairs came to no conclusion, at least they were not unconducive to musical romancing. "Here, no doubt," Grove conjectures, "the early ideas of the Seventh Symphony were put into score and gradually elaborated into the perfect state in which we now possess them. Many pleasant traits are recorded by Varnhagen in his letters to his fiancée and others. The coy but obstinate resistance which Beethoven usually offered to extemporising he here laid entirely aside, and his friends probably heard, on these occasions, many a portion of the new Symphony which was seething in his heart and brain, even though no word was dropped by the mighty player to enlighten them."

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It would require more than a technical yardstick to measure the true proportions of the Seventh Symphony — the sense of immensity which it conveys. Beethoven seems to have built up this impression by wilfully driving a single rhythmic figure through each movement, until the music attains (particularly in the body of the first movement, and in the Finale) a swift propulsion, an effect of cumulative growth which is akin to extraordinary size. The three preceding symphonies have none of this quality — the slow movement of the Fourth, many parts of the "Pastoral" are static by comparison. Even the Fifth Symphony dwells in violent dramatic contrasts which are the antithesis of sustained, expansive motion. Schubert's great Symphony in C major, very different of course from Beethoven's Seventh, makes a similar effect of grandeur by similar means in its Finale.

The long introduction (Beethoven had not used one since his Fourth Symphony) leads, by many repetitions on the dominant, into the main body of the movement, where the characteristic rhythm, once released, holds its swift course, almost without cessation, until the end of the movement. Where a more modern composer seeks rhythmic interest by rhythmic variety and complexity, Beethoven keeps strictly to his repetitious pattern, and with no more than the spare orchestra of Mozart to work upon finds variety through his inexhaustible invention. It is as if the rhythmic germ has taken hold of his imagination and, starting from the merest fragment, expands and looms, leaping

through every part of the orchestra, touching a new magic of beauty at every unexpected turn. Wagner called the Symphony "the Dance in its highest condition; the happiest realization of the movements of the body in an ideal form." If any other composer could impel an inexorable rhythm, many times repeated, into a vast music – it was Wagner.

In the Allegretto Beethoven withholds his headlong, capricious mood. But the sense of motion continues in this, the most agile of his symphonic slow movements (excepting the entirely different Allegretto of the Eighth). It is in A minor, and subdued by comparison, but pivots no less upon its rhythmic motto, and when the music changes to A major, the clarinets and bassoons setting their melody against triplets in the violins, the basses maintain the incessant rhythm. The problem of the proper tempo for this Allegretto has troubled conductors over the years. Their concern was heightened by the fact that Beethoven in his last years seemed to disapprove of the lively tempo often used. Nevertheless, in most modern performances and including that by Mr. Leinsdorf, the movement is considered definitely as an Allegretto, with no hint of a funereal character.

The third movement is marked simply "presto," although it is a scherzo in effect. The whimsical Beethoven of the first movement is still in evidence, with sudden outbursts, and alternations of fortissimo and piano. The trio, which occurs twice in the course of the movement, is entirely different in character from the light and graceful presto, although it grows directly from a simple alternation of two notes half a tone apart in the main body of the movement. Thayer reports the refrain, on the authority of the Abbé Stadler, to have derived from a pilgrims' hymn familiar in Lower Austria.

The Finale has been called typical of the "unbuttoned" (*aufgeknöpft*) Beethoven. Grove finds in it, for the first time in his music, "a vein of rough, hard, personal boisterousness, the same feeling which inspired the strange jests, puns and nicknames which abound in his letters. Schumann calls it "hitting all around" (*"schlagen um sich"*). "The force that reigns throughout this movement is literally prodigious, and reminds one of Carlyle's hero Ram Dass, who had 'fire enough in his belly to burn up the entire world.'" Years ago the resemblance was noted between the first subject of the Finale and Beethoven's accompaniment to the Irish air "Nora Creina," which he was working upon at this time for George Thomson of Edinburgh.*

* In an interesting article, "Celtic Elements in Beethoven's Seventh Symphony" (*Musical Quarterly*, July, 1935), James Travis goes so far as to claim: "It is demonstrable that the themes, not of one, but of all four movements of the Seventh Symphony owe rhythmic and melodic and even occasional harmonic elements to Beethoven's Celtic studies."

However plausibly Mr. Travis builds his case, basing his proofs upon careful notation, it is well to remember that others these many years have dived deep into this Symphony in pursuit of special connotations, always with doubtful results. D'Indy, who called it a "pastoral" symphony, and Berlioz, who found the scherzo a *"ronde des paysans,"* are among them. The industrious seekers extend back to Dr. Carl Iken, who described in the work a revolution, fully hatched, and brought from the composer a sharp rebuke. Never did he evolve a more purely musical scheme.

December 8, 1813, is named by Paul Bekker as the date of "a great concert which plays a part in world history," for then Beethoven's Seventh Symphony had its first performance. If the importance of the occasion is to be reckoned as the dazzling emergence of a masterpiece upon the world, then the statement may be questioned. We have plentiful evidence of the inadequacy of the orchestras with which Beethoven had to deal. Beethoven conducting this concert was so deaf that he could not know what the players were doing, and although there was no obvious slip at the concert, there was much trouble at rehearsals. The violinists once laid down their bows and refused to play a passage which they considered impossible. Beethoven persuaded them to take their parts home to study, and the next day all went well. A pitiful picture of Beethoven attempting to conduct is given by Spohr, who sat among the violins. So far as the bulk of the audience is concerned, they responded to the Allegretto of the Symphony, but their enthusiasm soon gave way to ecstacy before the exciting drum rolls and fanfares of the battle piece, *Wellington's Victory,* which followed. The performance went very well according to the reports of all who were present, and Beethoven (whatever he may have expected – or been able to hear) was highly pleased with it. He wrote an open letter of gratitude (which was never published) to the *Wiener Zeitung*. The newspaper reports were favorable, one stating that "the applause rose to the point of ecstasy."

A fairly detailed account of the whole proceeding can be pieced together from the surviving accounts of various musical dignitaries who were there, most of them playing in the orchestra. The affair was a "grand charity concert," from which the proceeds were to aid the "Austrians and Bavarians wounded at Hanau" in defense of their country against Napoleon (once revered by Beethoven). Mälzel proposed that Beethoven make for this occasion an orchestral version of the *Wellington's Victory* he had written for his newly invented mechanical player – the "pan-harmonicon," and Beethoven, who then still looked with favor upon Mälzel, consented. The hall of the University was secured and the date set for December 8.

The program was thus announced:

I. "An entirely new Symphony," by Beethoven (the Seventh, in A major).

II. Two Marches played by Mälzel's Mechanical Trumpeter, with full orchestral accompaniment – the one by Dussek, the other by Pleyel.

III. "Wellington's Victory."

All circumstances were favorable to the success of the concert. Beethoven being now accepted in Vienna as a very considerable personage, an "entirely new symphony" by him, and a piece on so topical a subject as *Wellington's Victory,* must have had a strong attraction. The

nature of the charitable auspices was also favorable. The vicissitudes at the rehearsals and their final smoothing out have been described. When the evening itself arrived, Beethoven was not alone in the carriage, driving to the concert hall.* A young musician by the name of Glöggl had obtained permission to attend the rehearsals, and all seats for the concert being sold, had contrived to gain admission under the protecting wing of the composer himself. "They got into the carriage together, with the scores of the *Symphony* and the *Wellington's Victory;* but nothing was said on the road, Beethoven being quite absorbed in what was coming, and showing where his thoughts were by now and then beating time with his hand. Arrived at the hall, Glöggl was ordered to take the scores under his arm and follow, and thus he passed in, found a place somewhere, and heard the whole concert without difficulty."

*** This incident actually pertains to the second performance, but the circumstances were almost identical.**

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DIPTYCH FOR BRASS QUINTET AND ORCHESTRA

By GUNTHER SCHULLER

Born in New York, November 22, 1925

In addition to the solo brass quintet, the following instrumentation is required: 3 flutes and piccolo, 2 oboes and English horn, 2 clarinets and bass clarinet, 3 bassoons and contra-bassoon, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 trombones and tuba, timpani, glockenspiel, bass drum, cymbals and suspended cymbal, 3 tom-toms, triangle, snare drum, tambourine, harp and strings.

The composer has kindly provided the following note concerning this work.

Diptych for Brass Quintet and Orchestra is the orchestral version of a similarly titled piece originally written for brass quintet and band. In its original form it was commissioned by the New York Brass Quintet under the sponsorship of the Cornell University Music Department, Chairman William A. Campbell. The world première took place in Ithaca on March 22, 1964, with Mr. Campbell conducting the Cornell University Band, and the New York Brass Quintet as soloists. A first New York performance at the New York State Theatre, with the composer conducting, took place on March 11, 1965. The score was finished in February, 1964.

As the title suggests, the work consists of two contrasting movements. The first of these, an adagio, explores large-surfaced textures in the orchestra, pitting these occasionally against the solo brass quintet. In the lively second part, an initial statement by the brass quintet is recapitulated two further times in an almost refrain-like fashion. Each quintet statement brings forth a response from the orchestra, leading each time to a different conclusion. The third time the music develops through a series of metric modulations, i.e., tempo changes, into a jazz-oriented climactic ending. This jazz section, with the orchestra, is interrupted just prior to the final coda by an exact recapitulation – an excerpt, as it were – from the tranquil first movement.

SUITE FROM THE DANCED STORY, "THE FIRE-BIRD"

By IGOR FEDOROVITCH STRAVINSKY

Born in Oranienbaum, near St. Petersburg, June 17, 1882

In the summer of 1909 Diaghilev asked Stravinsky to write a ballet founded on the old Russian legend of the Fire-Bird. The score is dated May 18, 1910. It bears a dedication to Andrey Rimsky-Korsakoff (the son of the composer). The scenario was the work of Fokine.

The first performance of *L'Oiseau de Feu*, a *"Conte dansé"* in two scenes, was at the Paris Opéra on June 25, 1910. The Fire-Bird was Tamara Karsavina; The Beautiful Tsarevna, Mme. Fokina; Ivan Tsarevitch, Fokine; Kastchei, Boulgakov. Gabriel Pierné conducted. The stage settings were by Golovine and Bakst.

The Suite played at this performance has been drawn by Mr. Leinsdorf primarily from the original score of the ballet rather than from the suites compiled by Stravinsky in 1919 or 1945. It will be played without pause. The instrumentation will be as follows: 3 flutes and 2 piccolos, 3 oboes and English horn, 3 clarinets in A, small clarinet in D and bass clarinet, 3 bassoons and contra-bassoon, 4 horns, 4 trumpets, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, bells, tambourine, xylophone, celesta, 2 harps and strings.

Fokine's scenario may thus be described: After a short prelude, the curtain rises and the grounds of an old castle are seen. Ivan Tsarevitch, the hero of many tales, in the course of hunting at night, comes to the enchanted garden and sees a beautiful bird with flaming golden plumage. She attempts to pluck fruit of gold from a silver tree. He captures her, but, heeding her entreaties, frees her. In gratitude, she gives him one of her feathers which has magic properties. The dawn breaks. Thirteen enchanted princesses appear, coming from the castle. Ivan, hidden, watches them playing with golden apples, and dancing. Fascinated by them, he finally discloses himself. They tell him that the castle belongs to the terrible Kastcheï, who turns decoyed travelers into stone. The princesses warn Ivan of his fate, but he resolves to enter the castle. Opening the gate, he sees Kastcheï with his train of grotesque and deformed subjects marching towards him in pompous procession. Kastcheï attempts to work his spell on Ivan, who is protected by the feather. Ivan summons the Fire-Bird, who causes Kastcheï and his retinue to dance until they drop exhausted. The secret of Kastcheï's immortality is disclosed to Ivan: the sorcerer keeps an egg in a casket; if this egg should be broken or even injured, he would die. Ivan swings the egg backwards and forwards. Kastcheï and his crew sway with it. At last the egg is dashed to the ground; Kastcheï dies; his palace vanishes; the petrified knights come to life; and Ivan receives, amid great rejoicing, the hand of the beautiful princess.

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How two Russian geniuses met and collaborated to their mutual glory in *The Fire-Bird* is interestingly told by Romola Nijinsky, in her life of her husband,* a book which is much concerned, naturally, with the amazing career of Diaghilev, and the Ballet Russe.

Diaghilev and Nijinsky, in the days of their early fame, before breaking with the Imperial Ballet School, had the habit of wandering about St. Petersburg on free evenings, in search of ballet material.

"One evening they went to a concert given by members of the composition class at the Conservatory of Music. On the program was the first hearing of a short symphonic poem called *'Feu d'artifice.'* Its author was a young man of twenty-six, the son of a celebrated singer at the Imperial Theatre – Feodor Stravinsky. After the performance Diaghilev called on the young Igor, whose father he had known and admired, and, to Stravinsky's utter amazement, commissioned him to write a ballet expressly for his company.

"For a long time Fokine had had the idea of a distinctly Russian story for dancing, founded on native legends. Fokine told the story of the Fire-Bird to Benois, over innumerable glasses of tea, and with every

* "Nijinsky," Romola Nijinsky (Simon and Schuster, 1934).

glass he added another embellishment, and every time he repeated the tale he put in another incident. Benois was enthusiastic, and they went so far as to tell Diaghilev and asked who would be a good one to compose the music. Liadov's name was mentioned. 'What,' cried Fokine, 'and wait ten years!' Nevertheless, the commission was awarded to Liadov and three months passed. Then Benois met him on the street and asked him how the ballet was progressing. 'Marvellously,' said Liadov. 'I've already bought my ruled paper.' Benois' face fell, and the musician, like a character out of Dostoievsky, added: 'You know I want to do it. But I'm so lazy, I can't promise.'

"Diaghilev thought at once of Igor Stravinsky, and the conferences between him, Benois, and Fokine commenced.

"Fokine heard Stravinsky's *Feu d'artifice* and saw flames in the music. The musicians made all manner of fun of what they considered his 'unnecessary' orchestration, and he was touched by, and grateful for, Fokine's congratulations. They worked very closely together, phrase by phrase. Stravinsky brought him a beautiful cantilena on the entrance of the Tsarevitch into the garden of the girls with the golden apples. But Fokine disapproved. 'No, no,' he said. 'You bring him in like a tenor. Break the phrase where he merely shows his head on his first intrusion. Then make the curious swish of the garden's magic noises return. And then, when he shows his head again, bring in the full swing of the melody.'

"Stravinsky threw himself whole-heartedly into the composition, and he had little enough time in which to complete it. He was extremely eager, but, in spite of the awe he had for Diaghilev and the respect held for his elders like Benois and Bakst, he treated them all as his equals. He was already very decided and willful in his opinions, and in many ways a difficult character. He not only wished his authority acknowledged in his own field of music, but he wanted similar prestige in all the domains of art. Stravinsky had an extremely strong personality, self-conscious and sure of his own worth. But Diaghilev was a wizard, and knew how to subdue this young man without his ever noticing it, and Stravinsky became one of his most ardent followers and defenders. He was extremely ambitious, and naturally understood the tremendous aid it would mean to him to be associated with Sergei Pavlovitch's artistic group.

"Vaslav and Igor soon became friends. He had a limitless admiration for Stravinsky's gifts, and his boldness, his direct innovation of new harmonies, his courageous use of dissonance, found an echo in Vaslav's mind."

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