

The University Musical Society



of The University of Michigan

Presents

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

RUDOLF KEMPE, *Conductor*

TEIKO MAEHASHI, *Violinist*

SATURDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 4, 1972, AT 8:30
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

P R O G R A M

Second Essay for Orchestra, Op. 17 BARBER

Concerto in D minor, Op. 47, for Violin and Orchestra SIBELIUS

Allegro moderato
Adagio di molto
Allegro, ma non tanto

TEIKO MAEHASHI

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique") TCHAIKOVSKY

Adagio; allegro non troppo
Allegro con grazio
Allegro molto vivace
Adagio lamentoso; andante

Columbia, Decca, EMI, RCA, World Record Club

PROGRAM NOTES

BY ROBIN GOLDING

Second Essay for Orchestra, Op. 17 SAMUEL BARBER

The first of Samuel Barber's two *Essays* for orchestra was composed in 1937 and performed for the first time the following year, together with the *Adagio* for strings, by Arturo Toscanini in the first concert he gave with the NBC Symphony to include music by an American composer. The second *Essay* was written in March 1942 and first performed by the Philharmonic Symphony Society of New York under Bruno Walter on April 16 that year. It follows a similarly concise "literary" design to that of the first *Essay*, but is scored for a larger orchestra and is rather broader in scope. There are two main themes, both undulating in outline, the first introduced at the outset by the flute, the second, and more lyrical, by the violas, and both of them are incorporated in the brisk, energetic fugal 'development.' A third, *ostinato*-like motif is introduced by the brass shortly before the end of the exposition and reappears in the coda (which is preceded by a *fortissimo* re-statement of the first theme).

Violin Concerto in D minor, Op. 47 JEAN SIBELIUS

Sibelius learned the violin as a boy and at one time had hopes of becoming a virtuoso on the instrument, and this no doubt accounts for the fact that in his compositions for solo instrument and orchestra the solo instrument is in every case the violin. The Concerto is both the first and by far the most important of these half-dozen works. Sibelius began it early in 1903 (he was thirty-seven, and had already written the first two of his seven symphonies) and completed it in the summer of that year. There are three main thematic groups (as opposed to the more normal two) in the first movement. The first comprises the solo violin's extended statement of the first subject (most beautifully accompanied by shimmering tremoli on the orchestral violins and violas), a short tutti and a cadenza; the second an orchestral passage based on a theme whose cadential falling fifth proclaims its relationship to the first subject, and the true second subject—a decidedly lush, romantic tune delivered by the solo violin in sixths and *largamente*; the third (*Allegro molto*, B-flat minor) a vigorous theme on the orchestral strings with an attractive pendant initiated by the flute. The soloist's main cadenza, a very demanding one, follows soon after this and paves the way for an extended recapitulation and development rolled into one. The movement ends with a brief coda which alludes to the first subject and the beginning of the cadenza.

The remaining two movements are very much more straightforward in design. The *Adagio di molto* in B-flat is in ternary form, its main theme an eloquent cantilena delivered by the solo violin after a short preface by the wind instruments, the rhythmic pattern of which forms the basis of the animated middle section of the movement (in B-flat minor.) There is a varied reprise, in which the main theme reappears in the orchestra, with florid passage-work on the solo violin. The finale is a vigorous rondo in D major. The insistent momentum and impetus of its main theme finds apt contrast in the cross-rhythms (in effect 6/8 against 3/4) in the sturdy D-minor theme that provides the substance of the central episode. Throughout the movement the solo violin part demands the highest virtuosity and bravura.

Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique") PIOTR ILYITCH TCHAIKOVSKY

Tchaikovsky began to work on his sixth Symphony in May 1892, some years after the completion of the fifth, but the work progressed badly, and the composer abandoned it some months later. In February the following year he wrote to his nephew Vladimir Davidov to say that he had

started afresh on a new symphony—"this time with a programme: but a programme of a kind which remains an enigma to all—let them guess it who can. The work will be entitled 'A Programme Symphony'." He went on to outline the plan of the work, drawing attention to the fact that the finale would not be 'great *Allegro*, but an *Adagio* of considerable dimensions'. In spite of a journey to England which included a visit to Cambridge to receive an honorary degree of Doctor of Music, the symphony went ahead well this time, and Tchaikovsky declared that it was 'the best and the most sincere' of all his works, although he confessed to having difficulty with his orchestration. It was performed for the first time on October 27, 1893, and, according to the composer's brother, Modest, it was the following day that he suggested to Tchaikovsky that he should call the symphony by the name which has remained with it ever since. Though melancholy and extravagant self-pity are characteristics of Tchaikovsky's music, particularly of his three great symphonies (and are factors which undoubtedly account for their immediate and widespread appeal) it is tempting to think that he knew his sixth was to be his last. Except for the confidence of its third movement, the symphony is imbued with foreboding and a sense of almost helpless despair. But even if he sensed that he would not live to write another symphony, Tchaikovsky could scarcely have foreseen that a sudden attack of cholera was to bring him to his death-bed a mere nine days later.

The symphony begins with a slow introduction in which, in the sombre colouring of lower strings and a solo bassoon, the principal theme of the movement is suggested. This theme, as it appears in the ensuing *Allegro*, has three elements: (a) a short ascending motif, (b) a semiquaver variant of the same, and (c) a descending succession of repeated semiquavers. The subsequent pages are devoted to an animated discussion of this material. The second-subject group is sharply divided from the first. It is cast in D-major and consists primarily of a tender, expansive melody (*Andante*), played by violins and cellos against sustained wind chords. A subsidiary passage (*Moderato mosso*) which features dialogues between flute, clarinet, and bassoon above a *saltando* string accompaniment, separates it from a restatement with intensified scoring. The development, which starts with a dramatic call to attention, begins as a *fugato* on (a) and (b) and finally builds up to one of Tchaikovsky's almost hysterical climaxes. After the recapitulation, only the principal section of the second subject is played, and the movement ends with a solemn passage for brass above pizzicato strings in unison, suggestive of a funeral cortège.

The second movement has the form, though by no means the character, of a scherzo and trio. Its main section is in the style of a waltz, to which its 5/4 rhythm imparts a halting and lugubrious air. At first the theme is played by the cellos in their highest register, but later it is alternated between winds and strings. Repeated drum beats on a pedal D beneath the sustained notes of the trio's sighing tune impart a threatening character to the middle section. The return of the original theme is skillfully dovetailed in. The third movement is one of Tchaikovsky's most splendid creations; brilliant in orchestration and triumphant in spirit, it is in striking contrast with the other three movements. Formally it, too, has some similarity with a scherzo and trio, except that the trio is treated as the culminating point of the movement and returns as a great coda at the end. In style it is a march, and its theme is hinted at by various wind instruments above the chattering triplets of the strings in the first part of the movement, but only attains its full stature in the trio. In a movement that is conspicuous for the virtuosity of its instrumentation the final statement of the march theme, with pounding chords on the brass, is an unforgettable sound.

The finale is the slow movement. It has two main themes—the reiterated sigh of the opening and the simple, lamenting melody (*Andante*) for which it prepares the way, with its throbbing horn accompaniment. There are two climaxes, the second of them making effective use of a rushing scale-figure in conjunction with the opening theme. After the second of these outbursts the music fades away in the dark colours of bassoons, violas, cellos and basses with which the symphony began. Few musical farewells are more poignant.

An Evening with The Duke

Saturday, November 11, in Hill Auditorium at 8:30

Duke Ellington and his world-famous orchestra will be presented by the University Musical Society for the first time as a special Benefit Concert, with the contributions to help insure the long-standing tradition of excellent concerts in Ann Arbor. Tickets, including contribution, are priced at \$50, \$25, \$15, \$10, \$7, \$6, and \$4, and are now on sale at our Burton Tower offices. Included in the \$50 ticket is a special after-concert supper party and "more jazz."

COMING EVENTS

- CHINESE SKIN SHADOW PUPPETS Monday, November 6*
(8:30, Rackham Auditorium)
- YUVAL TRIO from Israel Wednesday, November 8
(8:30, Rackham Auditorium)
Trio No. 4 in B-flat major, K. 502, Mozart; Trio in A minor (1914), Ravel; Trio No. 2 in C minor, Op. 66, Mendelssohn.
- CHRISTOPHER PARKENING, *Guitarist* Tuesday, November 14*
(8:30, Rackham Auditorium)
- PANIAGUA QUARTET Saturday, November 18
(8:30, Rackham Auditorium)
- ITZHAK PERLMAN, *Violinist* Tuesday, November 21
(8:30, Hill Auditorium)
- HANDEL'S *Messiah*
For over ninety years, the University Choral Union has presented the *Messiah* in celebration of the Christmas Season. Donald Bryant conducts the chorus, members of the Interlochen Arts Academy Orchestra, and soloists Louise Russell, soprano, Sofia Steffan, contralto, Waldie Anderson, tenor, and Benjamin Matthews, bass in three performances in Hill Auditorium. Tickets now on sale.
(8:30) Friday, December 1
(8:30) Saturday, December 2
(2:30) Sunday, December 3
- AUSTRAL STRING QUARTET from Sydney Tuesday, December 5
(8:30, Rackham Auditorium)
- "COSI FAN TUTTE," Mozart's opera Friday, January 12
(8:00, Power Center)
Saturday, January 13
(3:00 and 8:00, Power Center)
- BARTÓK STRING QUARTET Wednesday, January 17
(8:30, Rackham Auditorium)
- KO IWASAKI, *Cellist* Wednesday, January 24
(8:30, Hill Auditorium)
- MICHAEL LORIMER, *Guitarist* Saturday, January 27
(8:30, Rackham Auditorium)
- ALVIN AILEY DANCE THEATRE Thursday, Friday, and Saturday,
February 1, 2, and 3
(8:00, Power Center)

* sold out

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

Burton Memorial Tower, Ann Arbor, Michigan

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