

The University Musical Society

of
The University of Michigan



Presents

The Hague Philharmonic

JEAN MARTINON, *Conductor*

The Festival Chorus
of the University Choral Union

DONALD BRYANT, *Director*

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1975, AT 8:30
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

Symphony in A major SAINT-SAËNS
Poco adagio, allegro vivace
Andantino
Scherzo: vivace
Finale: allegro molto e presto

Symphonie des Psaumes for Chorus and Orchestra STRAVINSKY
Prelude: Psalm XXXVIII, Verses 13 and 14
Double Fugue: Psalm XXXIX, Verses 2, 3 and 4
Allegro symphonique: Psalm CL

THE FESTIVAL CHORUS

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 4, Op. 29 ("The Inextinguishable") NIELSEN
Allegro, attacca
Poco allegretto, attacca
Poco adagio, attacca
Allegro

Deutsche Grammophon, Mercury, Epic, Philips and Fontana Records

PROGRAM NOTES

Symphony in A major (1850) CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS

Saint-Saëns allowed only the last three of his six symphonies to be published. To those in E-flat (1853), A minor (1859), and C minor (1886), issued as Nos. 1, 2 and 3, respectively, three may now be added: the present work, the very first Saint-Saëns symphony, composed when he was fifteen, a "Second" Symphony, in F (1856) sub-titled *Urbs Roma*, and a "Third" Symphony, in D (1859). Now that the concert-going public has become accustomed to the "new" numbering of the Schubert and Dvorák symphonies, it may, before long, have to accept the re-numbering of those of Saint-Saëns.

The Symphony in A major is interesting, not only as an example of a precocious musical genius, but because it even anticipates (by seven years) the Symphony in C of Bizet, and so initiates a line of French symphonies owing nothing in these early stages to the wilder originality of Berlioz.

A slow introduction in D major and common-time precedes the first *Allegro*, in the tonic A major and *alla breve*. Saint-Saëns gave no tempo indication to his slow movement, which unfolds in a five-section lied-form in D major and three-four time. The scherzo, in three-four time, is in A minor, with a trio (for flute, oboe and strings alone) in the major. The finale *alla breve* in A major is in the nature of a *moto perpetuo* with a still faster, Rossini-like coda.

—FELIX APRAHAMIAN

Symphonie des Psaumes for Chorus and Orchestra (1930) . . . IGOR STRAVINSKY

An intensely religious man, Stravinsky has here produced one of his most reverent compositions. It was written "to the glory of God," and is permeated from the first bar to the last with profound spirituality, though on occasion the beauty is austere and remote. It has the primitivism of early Christian art, and it has reminded Paul Rosenfeld of "mosaics in a Byzantine church."

Stravinsky produced this work to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. It was, however, not introduced in Boston but in Brussels, on December 13, 1930, Ernest Ansermet conducting the Brussels Philharmonic. One week later, on December 19, Serge Koussevitzky conducted it in Boston.

For his text (sung in Latin), the composer went to the Vulgate: verses 13 and 14 of Psalm XXXVIII (Part I); verses 2, 3, and 4 of Psalm XXXIX (Part II); and the entire Psalm CL (Part III).

The composer has written: "The juxtaposition of the three psalms is not fortuitous. The prayer of the sinner for divine pity (prelude), the recognition of grace received (double fugue), and the hymn of praise and glory are the basis of an evolutionary plan. The music which embodies these texts follows its development according to its own symphonic law. The order of the three movements presupposes a periodic scheme and in this sense realizes a 'symphony' from a collection of pieces with no scheme but one of succession, as in a suite."

Stravinsky's orchestration is unusual in that he dispenses with clarinets, violins and violas. His musical style leans heavily on polyphonic writing, equal prominence being given to orchestra and chorus. The three movements are played without a break.

The symphony opens, as Joseph Machlis has explained, with a "prelude-like section in which flowing arabesques are traced by oboe and bassoon . . . punctuated by an urgent E minor chord." The altos are then heard in a "chant-like theme consisting of two adjacent notes—the interval of a minor second (semitone) that has structural significance throughout." In the second movement double fugue, for four voices, the oboe is heard in the main subject, which is characterized by wide leaps in the melody. The third movement opens with a sober Alleluia, which is followed by an Allegro "with Stravinskyan rhythms that project the spirit of the Psalm in dance-like measures," Machlis explains. A brief recollection of the Alleluia music closes the composition.

—DAVID EWEN, *The World of Twentieth-Century Music*

TEXT

Psalm XXXVIII, Verses 13 and 14

Hear my prayer, O Jehovah, and give ear
unto my cry:
Hold not Thy peace at my tears.
For I am a stranger with thee,

And a sojourner, as all my fathers were.
Oh spare me, that I may recover strength
Before I go hence, and be no more.

Psalm XXXIX, Verses 2, 3, and 4

I waited patiently for the Lord
And He inclined unto me, and heard my
cry;
He brought me up also out of an horrible
pit, out of the miry clay,
And set my feet upon a rock,

And established my goings.
And he hath put a new song in my mouth,
even praise unto our God.
Many shall see it, and fear,
And shall trust in the Lord.

Psalm CL

Praise Ye the Lord.
Praise God in his sanctuary.
Praise him in the firmament of his power.
Praise him in his mighty acts:
Praise him according to his excellent
greatness.
Praise him with the sound of the trumpet:
Praise him with the psaltery and harp.

Praise him with the timbrel and dance,
Praise him with stringed instruments and
organs.
Praise him upon the loud cymbals,
Praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.
Let everything that hath breath, praise the
Lord.

Symphony No. 4, Op. 29 (1916) ("The Inextinguishable") . . . CARL NIELSEN

Nielsen's Fourth Symphony was first performed in Copenhagen on February 1, 1916, only two or so weeks after he had completed its writing. The symphony was acclaimed, was soon performed outside Denmark, and won for its composer a membership in the Swedish Academy and the Berlin Academy of Art.

To the published score, the composer appended the motto: "Music is life and, like it, inextinguishable." The symphony, consequently, was intended to point up the indestructibility not only of great art but also of the human spirit.

Though in four movements, the symphony is played without interruption, and is, in actuality, all of one piece, an inextricably unified concept. Here is how Harris Goldsmith described it in *High Fidelity*: "Violent eruptions of brass, tympani, and a recurring note motif in the strings constitute Nielsen's depiction of the forces of discord and evil. Finally, at the work's very end, a passionate reiteration of one of the more serene themes from the first movement triumphantly asserts the victory of the life force." Goldsmith goes on to emphasize that the symphony is "first and foremost a superbly rich specimen of absolute music which can be heard with no knowledge of the underlying programmatic implications. It makes a splendid sound."

—DAVID EWEN, *The World of Twentieth-Century Music*

THE FESTIVAL CHORUS

DONALD BRYANT, *Conductor*

NANCY HODGE, *Accompanist*

ROBERT JOHNSON, *Manager*

First Sopranos

Karen Brown
Elaine Cox
Phyllis Denner
Estelle Fox
Carol Gallas
Gladys Hanson
Joann Hoover
Berit Ingersoll
Sylvia Jenkins
Sigrid Johnson
Ann Keeler
Cathy Keresztesi
Julia Remsperger
Miriam Restrepo
Mary Ann Sincock
Norma Ware
Beverly Wistert

Second Sopranos

Ann Barden
Kathy Berry
Judith Calligan
Doris Datsko
Vicki Fink
Sheryl Halsey
Mary Hiraga
Alice Horning
Pat Klettke
Frances Lyman
Sara Peth
Carol Porterfield
Susan Randolph
Virginia Reese
Carolyn Richards
Sue Schluederberg
Pat Tompkins
Chris Wendt

First Altos

Judith Adams
Martha Ause
Alice Cambron
Lael Cappaert
Sally Carpenter
Carol Dick
Meredy Gockel
Kathy Greene

Ellen Gross
Jean Hochheimer
Janice Johnson
Nancy Keppelman
Nancy Karp
Geraldine Koupal
Joann Kratzmiller
Kirsten Lietz
Pamela Marshall
Joan McIntire
Lois Nelson
Anne Phelps
Barbara Purkerson
Monica Schutte
Laura Wallace
Charlotte Wolfe

Second Altos

Ellen Armstrong
Marjorie Baird
Sandra Festian
Mary Haab
Joan Hagerty
Dana Hull
Kathy Klykylo
Elsie Lovelace
Linda Ray
Beverly Roeger
Carol Spencer
Katie Stebbins
Nancy Williams

First Tenors

Robert Domine
Marshall Franke
Marshall Grimm
Myron Gross
Paul Lowry
Robert MacGregor
Dennis Mitchell
Marc Setzer

Second Tenors

Martin Barrett
John Etsweiler
Joseph Gradisher
Jeff Halpern
Donald Haworth

Thomas Hmay
Robert Johnson
Dwight Klettke

First Basses

Richard Berent
Lee Berke
Viktors Berstis
Ken Bos
Alan Braun
Robert Damashek
John Dietrich
John Eastman
Walter Evans
Paul Freddolino
Thomas Hagerty
Jeff Haynes
Mark Hirano
John Jarrett
Klair Kissel
David Loehr
Steve Olson
Robert Pazur
Dennis Powers
Graham Purkerson
Michael Roth
Roger Smeltekop
Riley Williams

Second Basses

Gabriel Chin
Bruce Feldstein
David Johnson
Kevin Karkau
Seth Kivnick
John McIntire
Kim Nagel
Phil Pierson
George Rosenwald
Jay Sappington
Raymond Schankin
Wally Schonschack
Helmut Schick
Mark Sebastian
Thomas Sommerfeld
Robert Strozier
Terril Tompkins
John Van Bolt

The Festival Chorus of over one hundred select singers from the larger University Choral Union is now entering its sixth season with tonight's prestigious appearance with The Hague Philharmonic under Jean Martinon. A repeat performance of the Stravinsky Symphony of Psalms will be given on Tuesday evening when Martinon and his orchestra present a concert on the Michigan State University campus at East Lansing. The Festival Chorus will also participate in the 1976 May Festival, performing, with The Philadelphia Orchestra, a work by Aaron Copland under the direction of the composer. Plans are in the making for a European tour during the summer of 1976, when the chorus will make appearances in the Holland Festival, in Vienna, Salzburg, and other cities.

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

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