



*International  
Presentations of  
Music & Dance*

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

## Dresden Staatskapelle Orchestra

HERBERT BLOMSTEDT

*Music Director and Conductor*

SUNDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 11, 1979, AT 8:30

HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

### P R O G R A M

Overture to *Die Meistersinger* . . . . . WAGNER

Symphony No. 8 in F major, Op. 93 . . . . . BEETHOVEN

Allegro vivace

Allegretto scherzando

Minuet

Allegro vivace

### I N T E R M I S S I O N

Tone Poem, "Ein Heldenleben," Op. 40 . . . . . STRAUSS

Der Held

Des Helden Widersacher

Des Helden Gefährtin

Des Helden Walstatt

Des Helden Friedenswerke

Des Helden Weltflucht und Vollendung

PETER MIRROR, *Violin Soloist*

*EMI, Philips, Angel, and DGG Records.*



## PROGRAM NOTES

Overture to *Die Meistersinger* . . . . . RICHARD STRAUSS  
(1813–1883)

The charming gaiety and tunefulness of the score of *Die Meistersinger*, Wagner's only comedy, and the mingling of humor, satire, and romance in the text explain its universal popularity.

The Overture opens with the Meistersinger theme in heavy, pompous chords. Bold, strong, and inflexible, it typifies the noble and dignified characteristics of the members of the guild with their steadfast convictions and adherence to tradition. The short second theme, heard alternately by flute, oboe, and clarinet, expresses the tender love of Eva and Walther. Soon is sounded the motive symbolizing the Banner of the Meistersinger on which is emblazoned King David playing his harp. In an interlude, the violins sing the famous "Prize Song" which in the final competition wins Walther his bride. This is followed abruptly by a restatement of the Meistersinger theme in the form of a short scherzo in amusing staccati notes. In the superb climax the three main themes are heard simultaneously: the "Prize Song" in the first violins, first horns, and cellos; the Banner theme in the woodwinds, lower horns, and second violins; the Meistersinger theme in the basses of all choirs.

Symphony No. 8 in F major, Op. 93 . . . . . LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN  
(1770–1827)

Beethoven finished his new Eighth Symphony about a year after the Seventh had been performed. The first performance was a private one, in the house of the Archduke Rudolph on April 20, 1813. Nearly a year was to go by before it had its first public performance in Vienna on February 27, 1814.

The première of the Eighth was doomed from the start to have a cool reception. On the same program had been put the very popular Seventh, and at this performance its *Allegretto* was repeated, just as it had been at the initial performance a year before. When it was time for the Eighth, the audience was much too carried away by its enthusiasm for the older symphony to give the new one more than scant attention. Indeed for many years it was the custom to insert the *Allegretto* from the Seventh Symphony in the Eighth in an effort to make it popular with audiences.

Beethoven was fond of referring to his Eighth as his "little" Symphony in F in contrast to his "great" Symphony in A, the Seventh. The happy contagious quality of the themes of the first movement, together with its compact form, discloses the good spirits of the composer. The second movement, *Allegretto scherzando*, with its obvious ticking, is thought to be based on the canon or round, "Ta, Ta, lieber Malzel," written by Beethoven for his friend Malzel, the inventor of the metronome. The third movement is a *Minuet*, and one of great dignity, not at all like the *Minuet* of the First Symphony, which was in reality a scherzo. This is written in the noble manner of an 18th-century dance. The finale, *Allegro vivace*, is full of delightful humor. As Pitts Sanborn said, "It is a symphony of laughter . . . the laughter of a man who has lived and suffered and, scaling the heights, achieved the summit."

Tone Poem, "Ein Heldenleben," Op. 40 . . . . . RICHARD STRAUSS  
(1864–1949)

"Ein Heldenleben" was acclaimed and attacked at its first performance: such a veritable horror for the members of the old guard that word went out to concert



managers that the work should be scheduled last on the program to afford the audience the chance to leave the hall before it began. Celebrated by the young as an audacious testimony to modern music, it was soon relegated to the list of "classics," with the result that it became no rarity to find "Ein Heldenleben" and the Beethoven "Eroica" Symphony on the same program. A little later, as happened with many other works of the masters, it was gradually pushed back into the shadows and was smiled upon because of its all-too-pompous pathos or because of its all-too-naïve identification of the "Hero" with the creator of the music. Thus reads the history of Richard Strauss's "Ein Heldenleben" over a span of years which many of us can share. The distance which separates us from the first performance of the tone poem (Museumgesellschaft, March 3, 1899, with the composer conducting) should enable us to reach a just appraisal of it. Even today conductors and orchestras would not give up performing the work, for it gives them the opportunity to unfold the greatest possible tonal splendor. And today's listener does not avoid the intoxication these sounds bring. Should he happen to have a rather exact knowledge of music, so much the better, for then he can follow with interest the ingenious development of the themes, their transformations and combinations.

On the occasion of the first performance, in the interests of a better understanding of the various sections of the work, Strauss gave certain headings. They are:

*Der Held (The Hero)*: His theme, of 21 measures, has a spaciousness which seems peculiar to themes of tone poems and during its course gives way to several magnificent episodes. The theme hides within itself a plentitude of small motifs all of which are used later. After a pause this section is followed by:

*Des Helden Widersacher (The Hero's Adversaries)*: This was the section which troubled our forefathers the most. Its motifs are of various kinds and are assigned to the various tonal registers; jagged flute chromatics, rattled triplets in the oboes, and the dull grumbling of the tuba. The Hero's theme sounds tired and morose.

*Des Helden Gefährtin (The Hero's Helpmate)*: This is the great lyric intermezzo of the work, terminating in the famous love scene in G-flat major with the solo violin as protagonist and with a combination of the themes of the Hero and the woman of his choice.

*Des Helden Walstatt (The Hero's Battlefield)*: Here the themes of the first and second parts meet each other. The theme of the woman also has a word to say, inciting the man's strength in battle. The section ends with a mighty statement of the Hero's theme.

*Des Helden Friedenswerke (The Hero's Works of Peace)*: It is possible here to find quotations from "Don Juan" and from "Tod und Verklärung," "Till Eulenspiegel," "Also sprach Zarathustra," "Don Quixote," and from the much-loved song "Traum durch die Dämmerung." And for the highly accomplished Strauss fan, themes from "Macbeth" and the opera "Guntram" are also to be discovered.

*Des Helden Weltflucht und Vollendung (The Hero's Release from the World)*: The English horn gives forth pastoral sounds. They prepare the way for a lovely, spacious 6/8 passage for strings in which the sounds of the enemy are heard from afar. All is joined in calm and peace. The solo violin calls to mind the figure of the woman. The final measures are magnificent: a brass fanfare built out of a greatly extended motive of the "Hero" theme, a fitting conclusion to the "Heldenleben."

Under the last line of the score, which was completed by Strauss with his usual painstaking exactitude, there is the date of its completion: Berlin-Charlottenburg, December 27, 1898.



## About the Artists

The **Dresden State Orchestra**, the oldest and one of the most distinguished orchestras in the world, is making its eagerly awaited United States debut tour this season. Founded in 1548 and known as the home of world-renowned composers and musicians, it gave the première performance of many of the major works of Richard Strauss and Richard Wagner, including *Tannhäuser*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *Salome*, *Elektra*, and *Der Rosenkavalier*. Mozart, Beethoven, Liszt, Schumann, Weber, Paganini, Berlioz, Brahms, and Stravinsky are among the other famed composers who have been closely associated with the Orchestra. The Dresden Staatskapelle has also been led by some of the world's finest conductors, including Herbert von Karajan, Karl Boehm, Rudolf Kempe, Fritz Reiner, Claudio Abbado, Seiji Ozawa, Yuri Temirkanov, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, and Ernst von Schuch who conducted all the Strauss world premières.

In one of Beethoven's conversation notebooks for 1823, there is a note which reads: "It is generally said that the orchestra in Dresden is the best in Europe." Since then it has widened its activities to include performances throughout the Soviet Union and Japan to the highest critical and audience acclaim.

**Herbert Blomstedt** has led the Dresden State Orchestra in concert tours of Japan, Austria, Italy, Sweden, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, and the Soviet Union. He has also recorded extensively with them. Mr. Blomstedt made his conducting debut in 1954 with the Stockholm Philharmonic and shortly after that became chief conductor of the Danish Radio Orchestra. In addition, he has appeared as guest conductor with many of the world's leading orchestras. Tonight marks his first Ann Arbor appearance.

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## COMING ATTRACTIONS

NEW WORLD STRING QUARTET . . . . .	Wed. Nov. 14
("Bonus" concert for Chamber Arts Series subscribers)	
FRED WARING SHOW . . . . .	Fri. Nov. 16
SYNTAGMA MUSICUM . . . . .	Tues. Nov. 20
NINA BEILINA, <i>Violinist</i> . . . . .	Tues. Dec. 4

## Handel's "Messiah"

Friday & Saturday, November 30 & December 1, at 8:30

Sunday Afternoon, December 2, at 2:30

in Hill Auditorium

The University Choral Union and U-M Symphony Orchestra

DONALD BRYANT, *Conductor*

ELIZABETH PARCELLS, *Soprano*

DAVID EISLER, *Tenor*

VICTORIA GROF, *Contralto*

DONALD BELL, *Bass*

Tickets from \$2 to \$6.

## Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker" Ballet

This all-time Christmas favorite is performed by the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre.

Thursday, Friday, Saturday, December 13, 14, 15, at 8:00

Saturday & Sunday, December 15 & 16, at 3:00

Power Center for the Performing Arts

Tickets from \$5.50 to \$9.

LES GRANDS BALLETES CANADIENS . . . . .	Sun. Jan. 20
ALFRED BRENDL, <i>Pianist</i> . . . . .	Tues. Jan. 22
Music of Haydn, Beethoven, and Bartók.	
CONCORD STRING QUARTET . . . . .	Sun. Jan. 27
Featuring world première of George Rochberg's String Quartet No. 7 with Voice, Leslie Guinn, <i>Baritone</i> .	
GLINKA CHORUS OF LENINGRAD . . . . .	Tues. Jan. 29

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