



International
Presentations of
Music & Dance

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Baltimore Symphony Orchestra

SERGIU COMISSONA, *Music Director and Conductor*

The Festival Chorus

DONALD BRYANT, *Director*

WEDNESDAY EVENING, APRIL 2, 1980, AT 8:30
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

- Sinfonia Concertante for Woodwinds and Orchestra
in E-flat major, K. 297b MOZART
Allegro
Adagio
Andantino con variazioni
Joseph Turner, *Oboe* Phillip Kolker, *Bassoon*
Steven Barta, *Clarinet* David Bakkegard, *Horn*
- Polovtzián Dances from *Prince Igor* BORODIN
THE FESTIVAL CHORUS

INTERMISSION

- Symphony No. 2 in C minor, Op. 17 ("Little Russian") . . . TCHAIKOVSKY
Andante sostenuto, allegro vivo
Andantino marziale, quasi moderato
Scherzo: allegro molto vivace
Finale: moderato assai, allegro

Vanguard and Vox Records.

PROGRAM NOTES

Sinfonia Concertante for Woodwinds and Orchestra
in E-flat major, Op. 297b WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
(1756-1791)

Terminology is one of the intriguing and unpredictable aspects of music. A word or term used in one historical period can have a meaning entirely different in another, or it can carry several simultaneous meanings. In the Baroque period, *sinfonia* could be the name given to an orchestral composition designed to serve as introduction to an opera, orchestral suite, or a cantata. On the other hand, the *Sinfonie Musicali a otto voce* (1610) by Lodovico Viadana represent the instrumental application of Giovanni Gabrieli's multichorus style. In 1723 Bach applied the word to his fifteen three-part *Inventions* for keyboard. In the early part of the Classical period, *sinfonia* could simply be the Italian spelling for "symphony." When the word *concertante* was added to it, it took on the character of a concerto for multiple soloists. This cross between a symphony and a concerto achieved a sudden spate of popularity, especially in Paris, around 1770.

Mozart attempted to capitalize on this latest of French musical fashions when he visited the capital city in 1777 seeking what he hoped to be some measure of fame and fortune. The *Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat major* was composed the next year at the request of Jean Le Gros, director of the famed Concert Spirituel, and the score was turned over to him for performance during the summer season. But because of petty intrigues and jealousies brought about by other musical personalities, the performance never took place. Since Mozart failed to retrieve his music, the manuscript disappeared and was considered lost for almost a century. The work was discovered again in the 1860s and it was clearly judged to be by Mozart. What was not possible to verify, however, was whether the found score was the original *Sinfonia* or the revision that Wolfgang had promised his father he would make.

In the *Sinfonia Concertante*, scored for a solo quartet of winds and orchestra, Mozart adheres to the *concertante* principle throughout. The featured group is in constant opposition to the larger instrumental body. After the traditional orchestral exposition in the opening *Allegro*, the soloists are heard as a unit, in pairs, and as individuals, always conversant with the orchestra. The *Adagio* is a flowing, expressive interlude before the *Andantino* finale, a set of ten variations on a march-like tune. Here the solo players are given every opportunity to display their technique and the special characteristics of their instruments. A six-bar *Adagio* is inserted towards the end to momentarily slow down the proceedings before an *Allegro* in 6/8 time concludes the animated movement.

—SAM DI BONAVENTURA

Polovtzián Dances from *Prince Igor* ALEXANDER BORODIN
(1833-1887)

The Polovtziáns, a people of central Asia, were the subjects around which Borodin wrote his opera, *Prince Igor*. Therefore much of the music, the dances and choruses, are actual melodies of the tribes. Borodin left the opera unfinished, and Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazounov completed the score and also developed some of the sketches which had been left.

An opera with a prologue and four acts, *Prince Igor* had its first performance in St. Petersburg on November 4, 1890. The action takes place in the 12th century when Prince Igor and his son Vladimir undertake a campaign against the Polovtziáns. They are defeated and captured by Khan Konchak. The Prince and his son are well treated at the camp of the captors, and the famous dances, heard tonight, take place during the festivities in honor of Igor and Vladimir. The dance finale occurs at the end of Act II, as the male and female Polovtziáns who are in bondage enter, several of them carrying tambourines and other musical instruments, followed by Khan Konchak's retinue.

Symphony No. 2 in C minor, Op. 17 PIOTR ILYITCH TCHAIKOVSKY
(1840-1893)

Tchaikovsky was never identified with the native school of Russian nationalism launched by "The Five": Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov, Cui, Borodin, and Mussorgsky. In fact, critical spokesmen in the group frequently denounced the composer's music as being eclectic and Western.

In reality, however, the so-called "Russian" element is stronger in many of his works than in those of his contemporaries. With him the national spirit was instinctive rather than consciously cultivated, and in the long run it had a more lasting significance.

An example of Tchaikovskian nationalism is to be found in the *Symphony No. 2*. It was begun at Kamenka in June, 1872, when the composer paid one of his annual visits to his sister, and it occupied his attention for the remainder of the year. After the *Symphony* had been completed, he showed the score to Rimsky-Korsakov and played the finale at a party in the latter's home in St. Petersburg. It was so well received by the assembled group that, as the composer later remarked, "The whole company almost tore me to pieces with delight." The reason for their pleasure is easy to understand: the main theme of the last movement is the Ukrainian folksong, "The Crane." When Nicolas Rubinstein led the Imperial Musical Society Orchestra in the symphony's world première in Moscow on February 7, 1873, it was received with such enthusiasm that it had to be repeated some weeks later.

Although the Second *Symphony* is not a grandiose work, either through the depth of its ideas or the complexity of its structure, it contains in embryonic form aspects of the composer's musical signature: his sense of isolation, his underlying melancholy, his romantic nostalgia, and his forcefully induced gaiety in finales. The opening proceeds from a lengthy introduction to an *Allegro vivo* and back to the *Andante sostenuto*. The second movement is a martial *Andantino* over ostinato timpani based on material salvaged from the opera *Undine*. The *Scherzo* justifies its name by a kind of wry sprightliness underscored by orchestral play and counterplay. The *Finale* features a dance-like theme which undergoes a series of variations. Everything builds up to a *Presto* close.

About the Artists

In the sixty-two years of its existence, the **Baltimore Symphony Orchestra** has grown from a three-concert-per-season municipal agency into one of America's major musical institutions. The Orchestra now performs over 250 concerts each year, including 56 in the Lyric Theatre in Baltimore; concerts in major cities throughout Maryland, at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., summer festival concerts in the Merriweather Post Pavilion in Columbia, Md., scores of youth concerts, and also performances with the Baltimore Opera Company.

Sergiu Comissiona, Music Director of the Baltimore Symphony since 1969, is in constant demand as guest conductor with major orchestras in the United States and abroad. In addition to his duties in Baltimore this season, he was invited to conduct the Houston Symphony for the first two weeks of their season, and also in Boston, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Israel, England, Canada, Sweden, and South Africa. He also serves as Music Adviser to the American Symphony Orchestra and as Artistic Director of the Temple University Music Festival at Ambler, with the Pittsburgh Symphony. He has recently been appointed Artistic Adviser of the Houston Symphony Orchestra, serving concurrently with the Baltimore Symphony for a three-year period beginning with the 1980-81 season.

Born in Rumania in 1928, Comissiona made his conducting debut at age eighteen when he substituted on short notice for the conductor of the opera orchestra. That debut led to his becoming the youngest principal conductor of the Rumanian State Ensemble. After leaving Rumania in 1959 he held posts in Sweden, Israel, and Ireland, and for nearly a decade commuted between orchestras in Göteborg and Haifa, with periodic concerts in Belfast and opera in London. His subsequent guest appearances with the orchestras of Philadelphia, Boston, and Chicago led to his distinguished and enduring affiliation with the Baltimore Symphony. It was in their adopted city's Bicentennial celebration on July 4, 1976, that Maestro and Mrs. Comissiona became citizens of the United States.

This evening's concert is the second in Ann Arbor of Mr. Comissiona and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.

THE FESTIVAL CHORUS

DONALD BRYANT, *Conductor*

LEIF BJALAND, *Assistant Conductor*

NANCY HODGE, *Accompanist*

STEPHEN BATES, *Manager*

First Sopranos

Kimberly Jo Buechner
Letitia Byrd
Susan Campbell
Beverly Chapdelaine
Elaine Cox
Gladys Hanson
Sylvia Jenkins
Carolyn Leyh
Doris Luecke
Loretta Meissner
Alice Schneider
Mary Ann Sincok
Joanne Westman

Second Sopranos

Christine Arnison
Wilma Greening
Alice Horning
Beth Lipson
Karen Myhre
Charlotte Nametz
Barbara Nordman
Eleanor Overdeck
Virginia Reese
Carolyn Richards
Suzanne Schluederberg
Patricia Tompkins
Christine Wendt
Kathleen Young

First Altos

Martha Ause
Melodie Blacklidge
Ella Brown
Marion Brown
Sally Carpenter
Jan Engardio
Carol Hurwitz
Janice Johnson
Dawn Kalis
Nancy Karp
Geraldine Koupal
Lois Nelson
Kathi Rosenzweig
Martha Swartz
Helen Thornton
Charlotte Wolfe

Second Altos

Marjorie Baird
Mary Haab
Dana Hull
Katherine Klykylo
Elsie Lovelace
Susan Nisbett
Beverly Roeger
Joan Roth
Carol Spencer
Kathryn Stebbins
Margaret Thompson

First Tenors

Hugh Brown
Bruce Carter
Tim Dombrowski
Robert MacGregor
James McNally

Second Tenors

William Bronson
John Alan Comfort
Albert Girod
Donald Haworth
Jay Klein
Carl Smith
David Woods

First Basses

Richard Bachmann
Mark Bush
Thomas Hagerty
Klair Kissel
William Ling
Lawrence Lohr
Sol Metz
Steven Spencer
David Varner

Second Basses

Howard Bond
John Dietrich
Alfred Meyer
Raymond Schankin
Terril Tompkins

The Festival Chorus was organized in 1969, and under Donald Bryant's leadership possesses a varied repertoire of masses, cantatas, songs, and works with orchestra. The collaboration tonight with the Baltimore Symphony is another in a long list of performances with prestigious ensembles from around the world: The Hague, Rotterdam, and Leningrad Philharmonics; the symphony orchestras of Philadelphia, Boston, Detroit, Prague, and Melbourne; the Orpheus and Prague Chamber Orchestras; the Paul Kuentz Chamber Orchestra of Paris and Mozarteum Orchestra of Salzburg; performances under Ormandy, Ozawa, Martinon, de Waart, Copland, Rohan, Jarvi, van Otterloo, Ehrling, and tonight with Comissiona. The Chorus also made a European tour of eight cities in 1976, and in 1979 gave concerts in the Egyptian cities of Cairo and Alexandria. Under conductor Bryant's direction, the Chorus most recently presented a complete performance of Handel's oratorio *Israel in Egypt* for the Musical Society's Founders Day Concert on February 24.

Important Chamber Music Concert Change

The Amadeus Quartet will perform on Sunday, April 20, at 8:30 in Rackham Auditorium, replacing the Quartetto Italiano which has cancelled its concert of April 17 due to the illness of one of its members. Those holding Italiano tickets should use them for admission to the Amadeus concert. (Any necessary ticket adjustments must be made by April 17.)

The Amadeus Quartet program: Haydn's "Emperor" Quartet, Op. 76, No. 3; Britten's Quartet No. 3; and Schubert's Quartet in D minor ("Death and the Maiden").

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

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