

PROGRAM NOTES

Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 61 LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (b. Dec. 15 or 16, 1770; d. Mar. 26, 1827)

Beethoven's life and works have been categorized into three periods by various scholars as early as 1828. The first period, termed as "formative" or "early Vienna," lasted until 1802. The second, or "middle," period lasted until approximately 1812; the third, or "late," period lasting until his death in 1827. While some modern musicologists have contested this three-period approach to the life and works of Beethoven as being a gross oversimplification, the three periods, nonetheless, do accommodate the most obvious stylistic distinctions of his compositional approach as well as corresponding well to the major turning-points in his life. The Violin Concerto, composed in 1806, belongs to the so-called middle period. It is contemporaneous with the Overture to *Leonore*, the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies, the Fourth Piano Concerto, the Opus 59 string quartets, and the "Appassionata" Sonata, to name but a few. This was an incredibly prolific time for Beethoven.

The Violin Concerto was first performed on December 23, 1806, in Vienna, Franz Clement the soloist. Although generally believed to have been written for Clement, the Concerto was published in 1808 with a dedication to Stephen von Breuning, a secretary to the Emperor of Austria. Despite an admirable performance by Clement (all the more noteworthy, given that Beethoven completed the Concerto so close to the first performance date that it is reputed that Clement literally sightread the work), the première of Beethoven's only concerto for violin was met with an icy reception from the critics. One, Johann Nepomuk Möser, wrote: "... its many beauties must be conceded, but it must also be acknowledged that the continuity is often completely broken and that endless repetitions of certain commonplace passages may easily become tedious to the listener. It is to be feared that if Beethoven continues upon this path, he and the public will fare badly." Another, criticizing the extensive use of the kettledrum, went so far as to dub the work a "Concerto for Kettledrum." It was not until many years later — after a performance of the work by the thirteen-year-old prodigy Joseph Joachim, in London in 1844 with Mendelssohn conducting — that the Concerto came to receive the recognition and acceptance it so richly deserves.

The first movement, *Allegro ma non troppo*, is noteworthy due to Beethoven's use of the kettledrums. Its rhythmic figure endures throughout the entire movement, which is cast in sonata form with a double exposition section peculiar to the concerti of the earlier masters. The second exposition ushers in the solo violin in an ascending octave figure, introducing its presentation of the principal theme. While clarinets and bassoons present the second theme, the violin performs trills which lead on into triplet figures. After a *fortissimo* tutti, the violin develops the second theme, the kettledrums' persistent rhythmic motto ever present. Following the violin's cadenza in the development section, a brief reappearance of the second theme closes the movement.

The *Larghetto* is scored for a diminished woodwind section with strings. It is, in essence, a theme and variations with the orchestra carrying the melody and the violin gently hovering over in a detached and almost improvisatory manner.

The final movement is a forceful and frolicking contrast to the prior movement. The violin presents the principal theme which is then taken up by the full orchestra. This movement is worthy of particular note, in that Beethoven ascribed solo passages to instruments that had not formerly had such privileges. The horns, for example, are freed from their customary role of accompaniment to take a place in the spotlight, as they make the transitions to the second theme in the nature of a hunting call. The Concerto ends brilliantly in a burst of energy and splendor.

Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95, ("From the New World") ANTONIN DVOŘÁK (b. Sept. 8, 1841; d. May 1, 1904)

Antonin Dvořák moved to the "New World" in 1892 to become director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York. His stay in America, curtailed by homesickness, lasted for only three years. Nonetheless, he composed some of his most successful compositions during this time, among them the String Quartet in F major, Op. 96 ("American"), the B-minor Cello Concerto, Op. 104, and the symphony heard in this performance. In explaining the Symphony's subtitle, Dvořák stated that the title signified "Impressions and Greetings from the New World." While various American musical influences are in evidence — Dvořák is said to have listened to Negro spirituals and native American Indian music with much interest — the composer acknowledged that the Symphony remained "genuine Bohemian music." Even so, he described the presence of the various American influences: "I tried to write only in the spirit of those national American melodies."

An *Adagio* introduction opens the Symphony, wherein the violas, cellos, and horns foreshadow the first part of the main theme of the *Allegro molto*. The main theme itself enters six bars later, presented by the horns in unison. It has a jaunty character, with the presence of syncopated rhythms and, although in the key of E minor, is heavily colored with the tones of a pentatonic scale. Several restatements of the theme occur with changing orchestrations and keys leading to the second theme, in G minor, presented first by the flute and then taken up by the violins. The second theme is remarkable because of its more than casual resemblance to the melody of the spiritual, "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot."

The *Largo* movement is, perhaps, one of the most celebrated in the symphonic repertoire. It opens with a feeling of solemnity, provided most aptly by the timbres of the brass and low woodwinds. The principal theme, an elegiac melody for the English horn, is supported by underlying harmonies in the strings. One cannot help but hear a certain plaintiveness, perhaps even the melancholy of homesickness, in the hauntingly beautiful melody. There follows an episode which presents two subsidiary ideas: first, a slightly faster theme taken up by the flute and oboe over pizzicato basses, and finally, the oboe breaking the subdued spell of the movement thus far with a bucolic tune. Dvořák ends the movement with a return to the main English horn melody, and it ends as it had begun, contemplatively, with a few quiet chords.

The *Scherzo* has the character of a ritual Indian dance. The flute and oboe present the lively, rhythmic main theme, with its interplay of duple and triple groupings, answered by the clarinet. The same instruments introduce the following second theme. After the return of the first theme, a transitional passage leads to the Trio section containing two spirited Trios, the first in E major and the second in C major. They both have a rustic, charming quality with exchanges of trills between the strings and woodwinds. A repeat of the *Scherzo* section leads directly to the coda, which reintroduces the principal theme of the first movement in the horns and then fades out.

A fanfare of horns and trumpets presents the principal theme of the concluding movement, against *fortissimo* chords for the orchestra. This eventually gives way to a dancing triplet theme in the violins, followed by a clarinet solo presenting a romantic melody set against tremolo in the strings. Variants of themes from earlier movements are then interwoven with this material, which culminates with the reappearance of the *Largo* movement's opening chords. In the coda, a tremendous climax is reached, Dvořák presenting in combination the opening themes of the first and last movements in the major key and scored for the brass. The effect creates an astringent harmony and a most brilliant ending to this monumental symphony.

About the Artists

For the first time in the long history of the Ann Arbor May Festival, a foreign orchestra provides the nucleus of this annual spring event. The **Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig** and Kurt Masur, however, are certainly not "foreigners" in our city; from 1974 to 1984 they have performed five concerts in this auditorium, all to resounding applause. Moreover, there is a century-old connection linking Leipzig with Ann Arbor: Albert A. Stanley, founder of the May Festival in 1894, received four years of musical training at Leipzig's famous Hochschule für Musik, as do, traditionally, most of the Gewandhaus Orchestra members. Currently, eighty-five percent of the orchestra's musicians, including Maestro Masur, have studied at the "Conservatorium" founded by Felix Mendelssohn in 1842.

It is considered a civic honor to be invited to join the Gewandhaus Orchestra, and many members remain with the ensemble all through their careers, sometimes for as long as 30 or 40 years. Although the orchestra's full roster numbers 200, only 150 of these musicians travel overseas when the orchestra goes on tour. The remaining 50 members play at Leipzig's opera house and at St. Thomas Church (where Bach was music director and where weekly concerts of his cantatas still continue). They also perform as part of the nine string quartets, three chamber orchestras, four wind quintets, brass ensemble, and early music ensemble, all integral parts of Leipzig's musical fabric.

The musical life of the city of Leipzig has been a rich and varied one since the sixteenth century, with frequent concerts in churches, schools, and coffee houses. In the late 1600s the foundation of a concert tradition was laid, with the flourishing of an institution known as the Collegium Musicum. These were amateur ensembles which gave extremely popular concert series in a number of Leipzig coffee houses. In 1729, J. S. Bach became music director of a Collegium Musicum which had been founded 25 years earlier by Georg Philipp Telemann. It wasn't until 1743, however, that the citizens, merchants, and music lovers of Leipzig donated the funds necessary to pay salaries for professional musicians, thereby establishing Germany's first concert orchestra. This step changed forever the way music was made, replacing the friendly and casual gatherings with more formal concert performances which were the forerunner of today's orchestral concert programs.

In 1781 this professional orchestra was baptized when it took up permanent residence in the Gewandhaus (cloth house), the imposing structure which was the home of Leipzig's prosperous linen merchants. Throughout the orchestra's 241-year history, an illustrious list of conductors, including Felix Mendelssohn, Richard Wagner, Gustav Mahler, Richard Strauss, Arthur Nikisch, Bruno Walter, Wilhelm Furtwängler, Otto Klemperer, Fritz Busch, Erich Kleiber, and Sir Thomas Beecham, have established and maintained a distinguished musical tradition, further enhanced and strengthened by Kurt Masur since his appointment as music director in 1970.

When Mendelssohn took over as principal conductor of the Gewandhaus in 1835, he actively revived repertoire from past composers while continuing to foster contemporary works. He also ushered in a renewed interest in the music of Bach, which had gone largely unperformed since the composer's death in 1750 — even in Leipzig which had been his home for so many years. (Mendelssohn is generally credited with rescuing Bach's monumental "St. Matthew" Passion from oblivion with performances in Berlin in 1829 and in Leipzig in 1841.)

Until the nineteenth century, direction of the orchestra during performances was shared by the concertmaster and the keyboard player, who was often the composer. Mendelssohn was one of the first to conduct from the podium, guiding the orchestra's interpretation of the music and establishing

precedents for the art of conducting that we recognize today. He was also the very first Gewandhaus conductor to use a baton. Mendelssohn is generally acknowledged as the creator of the orchestra's acclaimed balance and unanimity of ensemble that remain hallmarks of the orchestra to this day.

Repertoire of the Gewandhaus continues to expand. Under Kurt Masur's direction, the orchestra performs music from the mid-eighteenth century up through the present and regularly gives premières of works by native German composers. Ten new works alone were commissioned for the gala opening of the Gewandhaus Orchestra's new concert hall which opened in 1981.

As one of the world's outstanding conductors, **Kurt Masur** fits well into the lineage of conductors who preceded him. While most world-renowned, jet-age conductors spend anywhere from twelve to fifteen weeks with their orchestras, Mr. Masur spends six to seven months each year leading the Gewandhaus at home in the orchestra's concert hall, at the Leipzig Opera, at the weekly Bach cantata performances in St. Thomas Church, and on tour. The remainder of his time is spent conducting such prestigious European ensembles as the Berlin, Vienna, Czech, Leningrad, Stockholm, and Royal Philharmonic Orchestras, the Dresden Staatskapelle, l'Orchestre de Paris, and London's Philharmonia Orchestra. In the United States he has led the Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, and Dallas Symphonies, the Philadelphia and Cleveland Orchestras, and the New York Philharmonic. Maestro Masur participates in major music festivals worldwide, including those in Salzburg, Tanglewood, Ravinia, Prague, and Warsaw.

Born in Silesia in 1927, Mr. Masur's first musical training was at the piano. He attended the Leipzig Hochschule für Musik from 1946-48, where he took his first conducting course. After graduation, he held positions at the Erfurt and Leipzig opera theaters, became a conductor of the Dresden Philharmonic in 1955, and returned to opera three years later as music director of the Mecklenburg State Theater of Schwerin. From 1960-64 he was senior music director at Berlin's Komische Oper, whose world tours were instrumental in building his international reputation. After numerous guest-conducting appearances in Europe, Mr. Masur was appointed chief conductor of the Dresden Philharmonic in 1967, a post he resigned two years after being named music director of the Gewandhaus Orchestra.

Kurt Masur made his American debut with the Cleveland Orchestra in 1974, the same year he made his initial United States tour with the Gewandhaus. Since then, they have appeared regularly in North America and have been featured in New York with a Beethoven Cycle at Carnegie Hall in 1985 and a Brahms Cycle at Avery Fisher Hall in 1986. During the current tour they are appearing at Carnegie Hall, in Pasadena and San Francisco, then continue their tour to the Far East.

Maestro Masur and the orchestra have recorded extensively for Philips Records. Their discography includes all the Brahms symphonies, overtures, and concerti, with Misha Dichter, Salvatore Accardo, and Heinrich Schiff; the works for violin and orchestra of Bruch, with Accardo; and orchestral songs of Richard Strauss with Jessye Norman and Siegfried Jerusalem. Several new recordings were released in 1986, including the nine Beethoven symphonies, three twentieth-century flute concerti with Aurele Nicolet, and Beethoven's Triple Concerto with Ulf Hoelscher, Heinrich Schiff, and Christian Zacharias.

Pinchas Zukerman is one of the most versatile musicians of our day, celebrated worldwide for his virtuosity and artistry as violinist, violist, and conductor. Internationally renowned as a soloist with the major orchestras and as a recitalist, Zukerman has recently completed some new projects. In the 1985-86 season, he performed the world première of Benjamin Lees' *Memorial Candles* with the Dallas Symphony, and conducted the American première of the opera *Where the Wild Things Are* by Oliver Knussen. This was the first opera that Zukerman had conducted, performed by the Minnesota Opera and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. His current season began at the Ordway Theater in St. Paul with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, performing the world première of Per Norgaard's violin concerto, *Remembering Child*, in memory of Samantha Smith. Other orchestral appearances included performances with the Israel and New York Philharmonics, as well as dates with the symphonies of San Francisco, Toronto, Montreal, Detroit, San Diego, Cleveland, and the National Symphony of Washington, D.C. He toured Europe in recital in January with stops in Switzerland, Germany, Vienna, and London.

His role as a conductor began in 1970 with the English Chamber Orchestra, and over the next fifteen years he conducted the New York, Los Angeles, and Israel Philharmonics, the Philadelphia, and Boston Symphony Orchestras, and the orchestras of San Francisco, Vancouver, and Toronto. He was music director of the South Bank Festival in London for three years, and in 1980 began his seven-year association with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. He has toured with them extensively in North and South America, and in past seasons they have received enthusiastic praise for performances and recordings of all the Mozart works for solo violin and orchestra, as well as for Haydn and Stravinsky cycles.

Zukerman's extensive catalogue of recordings is universally acclaimed. He has received 18 Grammy nominations and has received two Grammys: in 1980 for "Best Chamber Music" and in 1981 for "Best Classical Performance — Instrumental Soloist with Orchestra." Recent additions to his discography are Schönberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* and the Berg Violin Concerto, both with Pierre Boulez conducting. Other new recordings in 1986 were the Saint-Saëns and Franck Sonatas and an encore album entitled "Salut d'amour," works by Albéniz, Brahms, Dvořák, Elgar, Falla, and

Kreisler, with pianist Marc Neikrug. A series of television specials entitled "Here to Make Music" aired on PBS for two consecutive seasons. He has been featured in various other television specials and has appeared as a guest on virtually all of the "talk" shows. In 1983 Zukerman was presented with a Medal of Arts from President Reagan honoring him as a leader in the arts.

Born in Tel Aviv in 1948, Zukerman began his musical training with his father, first on recorder, then clarinet, and finally violin. At the age of eight he began studying at the Israel Conservatory and the Academy of Music in Tel Aviv. With the guidance of Isaac Stern and Pablo Casals, he came to America in 1962 to study with Ivan Galamian at The Juilliard School and in 1967 won first prize in the Leventritt International Competition. A year later, when Isaac Stern fell suddenly ill, Zukerman stepped in to fulfill his concert engagements throughout Europe and America, an exposure that marked the beginning of Zukerman's extraordinary career.

This evening's concert marks Pinchas Zukerman's third Ann Arbor appearance. He performed in recital with Marc Neikrug in 1981 and a year ago was soloist and conductor with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.

GEWANDHAUS ORCHESTRA OF LEIPZIG of the German Democratic Republic

KURT MASUR
Artistic Director and Conductor

First Violins

Prof. Gerhard Bosse
Prof. Christian Funke
Eberhard Palm
Conrad Suske
Günter Glass
Fred Roth
Wolfram Fischer
Frank Rudolph
Heinz-Herald Fleischhauer
Otto-Georg Moosdorf
Günter Fiehring
Christian Geidel
Wolfgang Gräntzel
Rolf Harzer
Johannes Fritzsche
Dietrich Brauer
Hans-Rainer Jung
Heinz-Peter Püschel
Susanne Kootz

Second Violins

Roald Reinecke
Eberhard Dinter
Eduard Zetl
Hans Bärwald
Reinhard Zellner
Monika Neumann
Werner Keim
Herbert Schmalz
Lothar Gumprecht
Jürgen Hetzer
Ludolf Kähler
Werner Janok
Udo Hannewald
Rudolf Conrad
Dietrich Reinhold

Violas

Eberhard Freiburger
Hermann Hannewald
Volker Metz
Klaus Schwenke
Wolfgang Gränitz
Olaf Hallmann

Heinz Salamanek

Werner Scheiter
Peter Baake
Hermann Schicketanz
Reinhard Kleekamp
Henry Schneider
Konrad Lepetit

Cellos

Jörnjakob Timm
Günther Stephan
Hartmut Brauer
Siegfried Jäger
Uwe Stahlbaum
Jürgen Schroeder
Siegfried Hunger
Hans-Peter Linde
Matthias Schreiber
Uto Tanze-Wiesenhütter
Heiko Schumann

Basses

Heinz Morawietz
Hans-Jürgen Schmidt
Reinhard Leuscher
Felix Ludwig
Erwin Nerling
Peter Strauch
Achim Busch
Eberhard Rückert
Dieter Köpping

Flutes

Karl-Heinz Passin
Wolfgang Loebner
Joachim Naumann
Ulrich Other

Oboes

Klaus-Peter Gütz
Uwe Kleinsorge
Günter Heidrich
Gerhard Flade
Roland Messinger

Clarinets

Klaus Stöckel
Wolfgang Mäder
Thomas Ziesch
Werner Wunder

Bassoons

Horst Fuchs
Gerd Schulze
Klaus Martinec
Gershwyn Baasch

Horns

Erich Markwart
Ralf Götz
Eckhard Runge
Christian Kretschmar
Rolf Sehring
Amand Schwantge

Trumpets

Karl-Heinz Georgi
Gerd Fischer
Günter Rössler
Harry Haertel
Hartmut Thieme

Trombones

Karl Jacob
Jörg Richter
Jürgen Schubert
Rolf Bachmann
Rolf Handrow

Tuba

Dieter Meschke

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Prof. Karl Mehlig
Ulrich Grunert
Peter Bollman
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