

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

CHARLES A. SINK, PRESIDENT

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Special Concert

1946-1947

Complete Series 2930

Sixty-Seventh Annual
Choral Union Concert Series

VITYA VRONSKY and VICTOR BABIN, *Pianists*

THURSDAY EVENING, AUGUST 8, 1946, AT 8:30
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

Andante and Variations, Op. 46 SCHUMANN

"Strains from Far-Off Lands" VICTOR BABIN

The Piper of Polmood

Hebrew Slumber Song

Russian Village

Duetтино Concertante, after Mozart BUSONI

INTERMISSION

Le Bal Martiniquais MILHAUD

Chanson créole

Biquine

Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Op. 56B BRAHMS

NOTE.—Vronsky and Babin have been heard in the Choral Union Series on one previous occasion:
March 3, 1942.

(over)

The Steinway is the official concert piano of the University Musical Society

A R S L O N G A V I T A B R E V I S

PROGRAM NOTES

Andante and Variations, Opus 46 ROBERT SCHUMANN

This, Schumann's only work for two pianos, was much played by Clara Schumann and Brahms. It was composed at a time when Schumann was enjoying a creative period of rich fullness, producing his greatest works for chamber music. The original subject is one of great beauty, the variations, an arabesque of changing harmonies; particularly lovely is the quiet conclusion, with passages that have been described as "the interweaving of garlands of flowers."

"Strains from Far-off Lands" VICTOR BABIN

The Piper of Polmood
Hebrew Slumber Song
Russian Village

Mr. Babin has done and is doing much toward enriching the literature for two-piano music. As a student, he studied composition under that rugged individualist, Franz Schreker, the German composer. Mr. Babin has already to his credit numerous compositions for voice, violin, solo, and duo piano. His concerto for two pianos and orchestra had its first American performance with the Chicago Orchestra in 1939 and the following season with the New York Philharmonic Society, Leopold Stokowski conducting; Mr. Babin and Miss Vronsky at the two pianos, at both performances.

Duettino Concertante, after Mozart FERRUCCIO BUSONI

The monumental possibilities of the piano that Liszt discovered to the world, found a later exponent in the great Italian pianist, Busoni. His interpretations of Beethoven and Bach, magnificent in their power and grandiose conception, gave him *outstanding eminence throughout the concert world*. It is, therefore, all the more surprising that he should have been drawn in later life to the delicate, rippling music of Mozart. He wrote only four works for two pianos—the *Fantasia Contrapuntistica*, a daring modern version on an unfinished Bach fugue, an improvisation on a Bach chorale, a transcription of Mozart's *Fantasy for Orgelwalze* (or barrel-organ), and the present little work. In this, Busoni has given the tender and intimate character of one of Mozart's sparkling operatic duets.

INTERMISSION

Le Bal Martiniquais DARIUS MILHAUD

Chanson créole

Biquine

Milhaud, brought up in the academic atmosphere of the Paris Conservatory, was not long in breaking away. He was one of the famous "Six" to sign the manifesto of revolt against the servile acceptance of age-worn formulas in art. His compositions cover a wide field. A serious musician, he can also condescend to such flippant gaieties as his setting of a florist's catalog for voice and chamber-music.

After the liberation of the French West Indies in 1943, the Governor of Martinique sent to Milhaud a collection of verses and tunes expressing the joy of the people over their freedom. These tunes of the island were used by Milhaud as a basis for the present composition and are reflected in its gaiety and insistent rhythmic patterns.

Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Opus 56B . . . JOHANNES BRAHMS

This set of variations is here played in its original form—a composition for two pianos, although it is now more often heard in Brahms's own later orchestral version. The theme is taken from Haydn's "St. Anthony Chorale," a serenade for woodwinds. The eight variations do not follow the theme faithfully, but are very free treatments of different ideas suggested by the theme. Each variation shows a mood and style of its own, and the whole displays an impressive harmonic and contrapuntal skill.



