

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY
DIAMOND JUBILEE SEASON

Charles A. Sink, President

Thor Johnson, Guest Conductor

Lester McCoy, Associate Conductor

Second Concert

1953-1954

Complete Series 3115

Eighth Annual
Extra Concert Series

THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA
GEORGE SZELL, *Conductor*

HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN
SUNDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 8, 1953, AT 8:30

PROGRAM

- Overture, "The Roman Carnival," Op. 9 BERLIOZ
- "Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune" (After the
Eclogue of Stéphane Mallarmé) DEBUSSY
- Variations for Orchestra on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 26 BLACHER

INTERMISSION

- Symphony No. 7 in C major SCHUBERT
Andante; allegro ma non troppo
Andante con moto
Scherzo: allegro vivace; trio
Finale: allegro vivace

NOTE—The University Musical Society has presented the Cleveland Orchestra on previous occasions as follows: Mar. 28, 1935; Nov. 9, 1937; Nov. 7, 1938; Nov. 9, 1941; Nov. 8, 1942, Artur Rodzinski, conductor; Nov. 7, 1943, Erich Leinsdorf, conductor; Nov. 12, 1944, George Szell, guest conductor; Nov. 11, 1945, Erich Leinsdorf, conductor; Nov. 10, 1946; Nov. 9, 1947; Nov. 7, 1948; Nov. 6, 1949; Nov. 5, 1950; Nov. 4, 1951, and Nov. 9, 1952, George Szell, conductor.

The Steinway is the official 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

By GEORGE H. L. SMITH

Overture, "The Roman Carnival," Op. 9 HECTOR BERLIOZ

"Scores have their destiny, like books and dramas, roses and thistles," wrote Berlioz in his *Memoirs*. He was referring to his overture, the "Roman Carnival," which, unlike the ill-fated opera from which it was derived, was successful from its first performance. Berlioz could be virtually certain of creating a sensation whenever he conducted the overture. As he traveled about Europe, leading orchestras in city after city, he found excerpts from the *Damnation of Faust* and *Romeo and Juliet* particularly useful, but it was the overture that called forth the greatest enthusiasm. "It exploded like a mass of fireworks," he wrote of a performance in Vienna, "and was encored by a noise of feet and hands never heard except in Vienna."

The overture opens with a brilliant announcement of the theme of the saltarello (*Allegro assai con fuoco*, A major, 6-8). The English horn then sings Benvenuto's love song, "*O Teresa, vous que j'aime*," from the first act of the opera (*Andante sostenuto*, C major, 3-4). The theme is developed in counterpoint. An acceleration of tempo with chromatic passages for the woodwind leads into the main body of the overture (*Allegro vivace*, A major, 6-8). The theme of the saltarello, announced by the strings, sweeps along with increasing abandon, its rhythm continuing even while the bassoons recall the melody of Benvenuto's love song.

"Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune" (After the Eclogue of Stéphane Mallarmé) CLAUDE DEBUSSY

It was in the first full flowering of Debussy's art that he penned the tenuous measures of his *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*. While he was molding its exquisite contours, recognition gradually came to him. *La Damoiselle Elue* was conducted by Gabriel Marie at a *Société Nationale* concert on April 8, 1893, and the String Quartet was presented at a concert of the same organization on December 29 by a quartet led by Eugène Ysaÿe. Debussy was already seeking the fancies of which the illusive *Mélisande* was made, and before the prelude was completed he had begun to record his nocturnal impressions of clouds, of festivals, and of sirens.

The prelude was to be performed in Brussels as the climax of an all-Debussy program planned by Ysaÿe to introduce the music of the young Frenchman to the Belgian public. The quartet, two songs, and *La Damoiselle Elue* were announced, and a *Prélude, Interlude, et Paraphrase Finale pour l'après-midi d'un faune*. The latter work was withdrawn by the composer, and when it was finally ready for a première at the concerts of the *Société Nationale* it was but a prelude, stripped of the second and third parts which had not progressed beyond the fragmentary shape of sketches. Debussy's original intention can only be inferred. Mallarmé wished his verse to be recited as a monologue by an actor, and Debussy's announced scheme would seem to leave place for such a declamation. It is not known whether Debussy incorporated the sketches for the projected *Interlude* and *Paraphrase Finale* in the prelude, but it is probable that he considered the prelude so complete in itself that further music or words would be superfluous.

These instruments are used: three flutes, two oboes and English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two harps, antique cymbals, and strings.

Variations for Orchestra on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 26 BORIS BLACHER

Boris Blacher chooses the theme of the last of Paganini's Twenty-four Caprices for Violin Solo, Opus 1, as the subject of his variations. This is the same theme that Rachmaninoff used for his *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini for Piano and Orchestra*, Op. 43. Brahms also employed it for his *Variations on a Theme of Paganini*, for piano.

The celebrated theme is announced by the solo violin in its original key of A minor (*Quasi presto*, 2-4). The orchestra enters with a flowing scale in A minor and introduces the first of the sixteen variations with a powerful chord; fragments of the theme are used with swift descending scales in the woodwind instruments which are soon inverted. The second variation is an oboe solo. The third, in 6-8 time, marked "*feroce*," is based on a curiously syncopated theme given to the higher strings and clarinets, with staccato punctuations of horns and bassoons; other instruments join and there is a brilliant working out of rhythmic figures. Scales, such as introduced the first variation, sweep across the texture as it comes to a stormy close with a full cadence in A minor. The 2-4 time signature is restored in the fourth variation, which is in slower tempo and is played by strings alone. Cellos have the theme *pizzicato* and the higher strings supply atmospheric harmonics. The tempo increases in the scherzo-like fifth variation, which is very brief, like its predecessor. Woodwind instruments repeat a characteristic motive and a running figure is given to the clarinets. The rhythmic sixth variation is omitted in these performances. The seventh makes further use of running scales. The theme is given to violins and trumpet. Both the scale-like figures and theme are then inverted. The eighth variation is given to the *pizzicato* strings, 5-8. Clarinets and flutes join in the quiet trio, 7-8, and horns in the return of the opening bars. The reappearance of the trio is cut short by a pause. The ninth variation is given to the full orchestra. Variation X (*Andante*, 4-4) opens with a flute solo which is continued by clarinet. The eleventh variation (*Allegretto*, 2-4) generates a shimmering texture with curiously shifting harmonies. The twelfth is a development of one of the main figures of the theme. The thirteenth is a canon for wind instruments. Violas announce the theme of the fourteenth, later taken up by the violins. The fifteenth is rhythmic in intent (4-4, 5-4), the fundamental pulse being maintained even during the contrasting section given to the solo clarinet. This headlong propulsion leads directly into the final variation (*Prestissimo*, 2-4) which is in the character of a wild dance and proceeds to a vertiginous climax.

The scoring is for three flutes and piccolo, two oboes and English horn, three clarinets and bass clarinet, three bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba, timpani, and strings.

At fifty Boris Blacher has become one of the foremost German composers. Although he is associated with Berlin, where he has lived for thirty years, he is neither of German parentage nor German birth. His father and mother were Russians and he still speaks with a slight Russian accent. He was born in China, and he attended various schools in the Far East. He is now director of the *Hochschule für Musik* in Berlin.

Symphony in C major, No. 7 FRANZ SCHUBERT

Schubert composed in the mighty shadow of Beethoven and died when the revolutionary genius was only eighteen months in the grave. Beethoven was an overpowering influence, and there can be no doubting the impression he made upon Schubert. But in no way did he weaken the younger man's individuality; there is no page in Schubert's mature works that is not utterly original. The power of Schubert's genius becomes almost terrifying when we think of him in his actual time, keeping pace with Beethoven, and capping the whole period of the classical symphony with a worthy and imposing masterpiece.

Always a prolific composer, he turned out music swiftly when the mood was upon him, forgot it as quickly in the enthusiasm of creating fresh works from an apparently inexhaustible inspiration. Schubert had reached the mature age of thirty-one when he wrote this symphony, and within the year his spirit was to pass forever from a world which realized its debt to him only after his tragic death. Although the symphony is called his Seventh, it is actually his final and crowning work in the symphonic form—the tenth to come from his pen.

The score requires flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, and trumpets in pairs, three trombones, tympani, and strings.

CONCERTS

- DEPAUR'S INFANTRY CHORUS Tuesday, November 24
LEONARD DEPAUR, *Conductor*
- GUARD REPUBLICAN BAND OF PARIS Monday, November 30
FRANCOIS-JULIEN BRUN, *Conductor*
- CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Sunday, December 13
FRITZ REINER, *Conductor*
- MARIAN ANDERSON, *Contralto* Sunday, January 10
- TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Wednesday, February 10
SIR ERNEST MACMILLAN, *Conductor*
- PAUL BADURA-SKODA, *Pianist* Wednesday, February 17
- GEORGE LONDON, *Bass* Sunday, February 28
- BOSTON POPS TOUR ORCHESTRA Thursday, March 4
ARTHUR FIEDLER, *Conductor*
- ELENA NIKOLAIDI, *Contralto* Friday, March 12
- MYRA HESS, *Pianist* Wednesday, March 17

Tickets: \$3.00—\$2.50—\$2.00—\$1.50

Messiah

First Concert: Saturday, December 5, 8:30 P.M.
Repeat Concert: Sunday, December 6, 2:30 P.M.

MAUD NOSLER, *Soprano* WALTER FREDERICKS, *Tenor*
CAROL SMITH, *Contralto* NORMAN SCOTT, *Bass*

UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION AND ORCHESTRA
MARY MCCALL STUBBINS, *Organist*
LESTER MCCOY, *Conductor*

Tickets (either performance): 70 cents and 50 cents

Chamber Music Festival

Rackham Auditorium

GRILLER STRING QUARTET:

Friday, February 19, 8:30 P.M.
Sunday, February 21, 2:30 P.M.

REGINALD KELL PLAYERS:

Saturday, February 20, 8:30 P.M.

Season Tickets: \$3.50 and \$2.50
Single Concerts: \$1.75 and \$1.25

For tickets or for further information, please address: Charles A. Sink,
President, University Musical Society, Burton Memorial Tower.