

1963

Eighty-fifth Season

1964

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

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Fifth Program

Chamber Arts Series

Complete Series 3413

The Zurich Chamber Orchestra

EDMOND DE STOUTZ, *Conductor*

SATURDAY EVENING, JANUARY 25, 1964, AT 8:30

RACKHAM AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

Concerto grosso in G minor, Op. 3, No. 2 GEMINIANI

Largo—Allegro

Adagio

Allegro

Sinfonia in E for String Orchestra

and Flute, Op. 53 PAUL MÜLLER-ZÜRICH

Allegro energico

Molto tranquillo

Allegro vivace

Flute soloist: ANDRÉ JAUNET

INTERMISSION

Divertimento in F major, Op. 3, No. 5 HAYDN

Presto

Andante cantabile (Serenade)

Menuetto

Scherzando

Suite for String Orchestra: "The Married Beau" PURCELL

Overture

Hornpipe

Slow Air

Trumpet Air

Jig

Hornpipe

March

Hornpipe on a Ground

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

PROGRAM NOTES

Concerto grosso in G minor, Op. 3, No. 2 . . . FRANCESCO GEMINIANI (1667-1762)

Francesco Geminiani was born in Lucca, Italy, and died in Dublin. He studied violin with Carlo Ambroggio Lunati and with the great Corelli, and composition with Alessandro Scarlatti. He began his career first in the Lucca orchestra, then conducted the one in Naples. He was above all a violin virtuoso, however. He developed the technique of his instrument and increased greatly its possibilities of expression. It was in England that he had a most successful career as soloist and professor.

In his compositions Geminiani was opposed to classical beauty, to the imperturbable dignity of Corelli's style, because of the vivacity of his own temperament and a very personal sensitivity. The first movement of this Concerto grosso (*Largo*) resembles a bridge between Corelli and Handel. In the second (*Allegro*) which is introduced by rapid triplets, the composer establishes a dialogue in which the violas take part after a solo by the first violins. Then follows the entire quartet that forms the framework of the *Adagio*. From the harmonic point of view there is contrast between the simplicity of the opening motive, utilizing the notes of the arpeggio, and the modulations which progress far from the initial theme. The Finale begins with a classical fugue and finishes as a dance. The German composers of the late Baroque period often used this device.

Sinfonia in E for String Orchestra and Flute, Op. 53 PAUL MÜLLER-ZÜRICH (b. 1898)

Paul Müller, a native of Zurich, studied there and later in Paris and Berlin. His creative talent shows a reaction against over-romantic lushness coupled with a sympathy for the clean lines of classical form and texture. He also turned to the study of the old Italian and Netherlands schools, which resulted in a string polyphonic vigor becoming a feature of his own music, but he has avoided both yielding to influences from the past and experimenting for experiment's sake. In his work there is a serious concern for elegance of style and clarity of thought, combined with a sober, but not severe, quality of music invention.

A number of Müller's works have been styled for small orchestra, among them this Sinfonia, completed on January 20, 1953, which is closely related to the eighteenth-century concerto grosso. It is scored for flute and string orchestra, or rather, as the score specifically states "for string orchestra and flute," the flute having a true concertante part, as distinct from a real solo. The idiom too, unlike Bartók's, is very markedly neoclassical. There are passages that might almost be mistaken for part of a Brandenburg Concerto, or some work of that date. This illusion is heightened by Müller's choice of the flute, an instrument much favored by eighteenth-century composers for works of this type. More careful attention to the musical texture, however, soon reveals that, in spite of this first impression, Müller's music, in idiom, belongs very much to our own time. Although simple and austere diatonic, it makes use of dissonances that would have been inconceivable in the nineteenth century, let alone the eighteenth. Their modernity is concealed by the composer's masterly absorption of them into a traditional tonal scheme, and by the flowing contrapuntal texture and figuration, which, especially in the quick movements, are more authentically archaic. In this particular work the modernities are further softened by the medium of the string orchestra, which is a great leveler of harmonic intensities and can make a chord containing all the notes of the chromatic scale sound hardly more dissonant than a unison.

In the brisk first and third movements of the Sinfonia, Müller shows himself to be like a slightly more conservative Hindemith, a superb craftsman, master of his medium, always able to devise something interesting and satisfying. Their thematic material is lively and distinctive, their formal outline beautifully planned, and the detail of their thematic development and formal construction full of skill and invention. In the slow movement the composer sounds a more personal note. It consists of an extended melodic arch, slowly built up over a simple harmonic foundation, sustained by a slow but steady increase of tension to the climax, followed by an equally surely controlled relaxation. It is a beautiful and expressive movement, the highlight of an aesthetic and stimulating work that has a personality of its own in the music of today.

Divertimento in F major, Op. 3, No. 5 FRANZ JOSEF HAYDN
(1732–1809)

The Divertimento, as well as the Serenade, Cassation and Notturmo, was a favorite form of the rococo era. Haydn wrote many of them and Mozart, especially in his beautiful "Eine kleine Nachtmusik," raised it to the realm of highest art.

The word "Divertimento" means diversion. These delightful compositions were frequently played during opera performances as an interpolated attraction which the composer used to postpone an interesting moment. Listeners and performers alike—the first seated, the latter standing—were requested to be patient and listen to the added piece.

Played as a Serenade at night in the dark streets, the Divertimento assumed a different character. The opening and closing movements consisted mostly of marches, symbolizing the arrival and departure of the musicians. In between were movements in dance form, generally minuets, including, as the most important part, the actual Serenade. Haydn's Divertimento in F major is a delightful example of this type of music.

Suite for String Orchestra: "The Married Beau" . . . HENRY PURCELL
(c. 1659–1695)

"The Married Beau" Suite by Purcell was taken from a musical scene for the piece of the same name, concerning a certain Crowne. It belongs very definitely to the "masque" form, a sort of comic opera, very much in favor in the England of Charles II. Compositions for the theater of that time represent a very important part of Purcell's work. "These stage works," says Riemann, "include a large collection of airs, duos, vocal ensembles, symphonic pieces of the greatest variety. In them Purcell shows the influence of Lully, very well-known composer of the same period. Nevertheless, because of his own accomplishments, Purcell remains the most typical English composer not only of his time, but of all time."

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