

1967

Eighty-ninth Season

1968

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY
THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

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First Concert

Fifth Annual Chamber Arts Series

Complete Series 3589

Forty-fifth program in the Sesquicentennial Year of The University of Michigan

The Chamber Symphony of Philadelphia

ANSHEL BRUSILOW, *Conductor*

SATURDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 21, 1967, AT 8:30
RACKHAM AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

P R O G R A M

- Overture to *Il Signor Bruschino* ROSSINI
- Italian Serenade for Small Orchestra WOLF
- Symphony No. 60 in C major ("Il Distratto") HAYDN
 Adagio; allegro di molto
 Andante
 Menuetto; trio
 Presto
 Adagio
 Finale (prestissimo)

INTERMISSION

- Cantus Animae et Cordis for String Orchestra YARDUMIAN
- Symphony No. 1 in D major SCHUBERT
 Adagio; allegro vivace; adagio
 Andante
 Menuetto (allegro); trio (Ländler)
 Allegro vivace

The Berlin Philharmonic Octet will be presented in the second concert of the Chamber Arts Series, Sunday evening, November 5, at 8:30.

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

PROGRAM NOTES

by

PAUL AFFELDER

Overture to *Il Signor Bruschino* GIOACCHINO ROSSINI

Two of the three operas that Rossini composed in 1813, when he was twenty-one, would probably be forgotten today were it not for their overtures. These works are *Tancredi* and *Il Signor Bruschino*; the third opera, *L'Italiana in Algeri*, still enjoys an occasional performance.

Il Signor Bruschino is a light operatic farce about two lovers who are united through the hero's disguise as his own rival. The libretto by a certain Foppa did not suit Rossini, and he sought to be released from his contract with Cera, manager of the Teatro Mosè in Venice. According to legend, when he was unsuccessful, Rossini vented his spleen by inserting into the score all sorts of musical pranks, such as having the coloratura soprano sing notes in the normal tenor range, concluding a merry scene with a funeral march and, in the Overture, having the second violins tap their desks with their bows.

But Rossini's biographer, Francis Toye, has discounted the composer's motive. He defends the funeral march as a mock affair that produces a wonderfully comic effect, and feels that the bow-tapping passage provides a delightful parody on the Overture's principal theme.

Be this as it may, the Overture, like most of Rossini's operatic curtain-raisers, is a jolly, thoroughly engaging, well-written composition, completely able to stand on its own feet.

Italian Serenade for Small Orchestra HUGO WOLF

In the world of music, the name of Hugo Wolf will be remembered primarily in connection with the many magnificent art songs he created. In proportion to his output of *Lieder*, the number of his instrumental works is small. Best known of the latter is the *Italian Serenade*.

Both the quartet and orchestral editions of the *Italian Serenade*, a combination of puckish good humor, satire, and romantic sentiment, were published posthumously in 1903, and both were given their initial hearing the following year, the quartet version in Vienna and the orchestral version by the Styrian Music Society in Graz on January 29.

The *Italian Serenade* is scored for pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and horns with the customary strings. Max Reger's name appears on the published score as editor but it is doubtful that he made any substantial alterations in Wolf's original orchestration.

Symphony No. 60 in C major ("Il Distratto") JOSEPH HAYDN

Those who know the music of Haydn know what a musical prankster he could be. The clue to all these musical shenanigans lies in the symphony's title, *Il Distratto* (*The Absent-Minded One*). Being in six movements instead of the customary four, this symphony—which Haydn referred to in later years as "the silly old thing"—is already unusual. Everything starts out soberly enough in the first movement, a slow, stately introduction, *Adagio*, leading to an energetic *Allegro di molto* in fairly orthodox sonata form; the first surprise occurs in its second theme, where the strings die away to near-inaudibility, only to be startled out of their wits by the entrance of the full orchestra, *fortissimo*. The second movement is a peaceful *Andante* with a quiet walking motion; but the peace and quiet are interrupted from time to time by loud militaristic fanfares that have no apparent rhyme or reason. In the middle of this movement, a new theme appears briefly; marked in some old editions as being an ancient French song, it has never been positively identified.

The ensuing *Menuetto* is marked by a certain sturdiness, the use of some counterpoint and phrases of uneven length. Much more striking in its individuality is the trio—or contrasting middle section; scored only for oboes and strings, it expounds a quaint melody in the minor mode with odd scale progressions. Next comes a vivacious *Presto* in which one Balkan folk tune follows another in rapid succession. As in the trio of the preceding movement, this one is in the minor and is scored only for oboes and strings. Just as we are about to expect a recapitulation, however, the music suddenly shifts to major, and brasses and kettledrums join the rest of the orchestra to present an entirely new and different folk melody, with which the movement is brought to a rather exuberant close.

This could be the end of the symphony. We have already had the requisite four movements in their proper sequence, but there is more to come, and with it more surprises. The fifth movement, *Adagio*—with the additional words *di Lamentatione* on some manuscript parts—is slow and serene, a sustained melody sung over steadily undulating arpeggios in the second violins. Into the midst of all this serenity bursts another loud fanfare, with the same incomprehensible rudeness as in the second movement. Most startling of all, though, is the new and totally unrelated figure which appears in the last eight measures of the movement; in one of the earliest instances of an *accelerando*, the music, which one would have expected to end slowly and quietly, gradually speeds up to *Allegro*, finishes the proceedings with a brief nod in the direction of a closing chord, then plunges headlong into the Finale, which is marked *Prestissimo*. Barely have things gotten underway, however, when everything stops dead. The violins try their open strings, and discover that their G strings are a whole tone flat. After bringing them up to proper pitch, the movement continues on its merry way, taking time out once to quote briefly from yet another folk tune, this one an apparent favorite of Haydn's that was evidently familiar to his audiences.

Cantus Animae et Cordis RICHARD YARDUMIAN

Cantus Animae et Cordis for string Orchestra was written as a string quartet, a commission by the Philadelphia Stringart Quartet. The work was inspired by certain passages in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, having to do with the spiritual conflict of good and evil and the regeneration of man.

There are two themes, based on the last words of Jesus Christ on the Cross, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani." The first theme is stated by a solo cello for four bars at the opening; the second follows in the violas. Throughout the first and third major sections of this work, these themes are developed in a modified fugue form.

The music is in three major sections. The first, the composer says, "might be described as an invocation on the part of man." The second part is based on new thematic material which has been woven into the texture of the immediately preceding measures. This appears as a fortissimo climax of the first part. In general, the spirit is that of a song of love and acknowledgment. The third part, a recapitulation of the first, "expresses man's response," interrupted by a violin and a cello solo expressing resolution. The *coda* or climax is a chorale expressive of submission and peace.

Mr. Yardumian describes the "Cantus" as "a polyphonic composition throughout, inherently fugal. If each line were to be played separately, each would be found to be predominantly modal, the prevailing modes being Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, and Mixolydian."

Symphony No. 1 in D major FRANZ SCHUBERT

Authorities like to point out how much Schubert's initial symphonic essay owes to Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, and even take pains to call attention to themes derived from their music. No doubt they are right; yet this youthful symphony, with all its imperfections, already reveals in the characteristic curve of its melodies and the coloration of its harmonies the distinctive personality that stamps this and all the other Schubert symphonies as being by him and no one else.

The opening movement offers a combination of novelty and naiveté. It begins with an imposing introduction, *Adagio*, which leads to a considerably less imposing *Allegro vivace*. Everything moves along quite comfortably until the development section, which is based entirely on the movement's second subject and therefore becomes rather monotonous. Novelty is introduced at the start of the recapitulation, where a portion of the opening *Adagio* is heard before the return of the movement's main section. A gracefully melodious *Andante*, one that presages many such movements from Schubert, follows. The third movement is a fairly broad, sturdy Menuetto, *Allegro*, with a much more relaxed trio, or contrasting middle section, in the form of a richly songful *Ländler*, the forerunner of the Viennese waltz, many examples of which were to come from Schubert's prolific pen in the years ahead. The symphony concludes with a bustling *Allegro vivace*.

The scoring, unquestionably dictated by the makeup of Schubert's school orchestra, comprises flute, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, kettledrums and strings.

