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THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

## Orchestre de la Suisse Romande

ARMIN JORDAN  
*Music Director and Conductor*  
MARTHA ARGERICH, *Pianist*

THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 2, 1989, AT 8:00  
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

### P R O G R A M

“Musique concertante” for Orchestra ..... JOST MEIER  
(Commissioned by the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande for this tour.)  
Concerto No. 2 in B-flat major for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 19 ... BEETHOVEN  
Allegro con brio  
Adagio  
Rondo: molto allegro

MARTHA ARGERICH, *Pianist*

### I N T E R M I S S I O N

“Jeux,” Poème dansé ..... DEBUSSY  
“La Mer,” Three Symphonic Sketches ..... DEBUSSY  
De l’aube à midi sur la mer  
Jeux de vagues  
Dialogue du vent et de la mer

*Orchestre de la Suisse Romande records exclusively for Erato/Cascavelle.  
Martha Argerich records for Deutsche Grammophon, RCA, and Philips.*

For the convenience of our patrons, the box office in the outer lobby will be open during intermission for purchase of tickets to upcoming Musical Society concerts.

*The piano heard in tonight’s concert is a Steinway available through Hammell Music, Inc.*

*Orchestre de la Suisse Romande and Martha Argerich appear  
by arrangement with Columbia Artists Management Inc., New York City.*

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## PROGRAM NOTES

“Musique concertante” for Orchestra . . . . . JOST MEIER  
(b. 1939)

Award-winning Swiss composer Jost Meier studied physics and mathematics before becoming a musician. After having obtained his concert diploma as a cellist at the Berne Conservatory, he worked extensively with the famous Swiss composer Frank Martin. Meier is also a conductor, and between 1959 and 1979, he worked in this capacity at various Swiss opera houses. In 1980, he was named conductor of the Basel Opera. Jost Meier has also conducted in Germany, France, Italy, Hungary, England, Holland, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia. He is professor of composition at the Music Academy of Basel and the Conservatory of Zurich.

His compositions include chamber works, orchestral pieces, and operas. Recently, five of his operas have been performed throughout Switzerland and Germany. Meier was awarded the International Prize for composition of the French National Radio in 1969, the Prize of the Lausanne Festival in 1984, and the Prize for Art of the Canton Solothurn in 1985. At the moment, the composer is working on a new opera *L'affair Dreyfus*, commissioned by the Deutsche Oper Berlin; a ballet *Der Rhein* commissioned by the City of Bonn; and an oratorio commissioned by the City of Basel.

“Musique concertante” for Orchestra was commissioned by the Foundation of the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande for the 1989 concert tour of the United States and Spain. The work is dedicated to the orchestra and its music director, Maestro Armin Jordan.

The specific Latin-oriented character of the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande motivated the composer to search for a rather reserved French expressiveness, also taking into consideration the orchestra's particular virtuosity and joy of making music. The general idea for the work could be called “A Turk in the West.” Having to leave his homeland in order to earn his living in a Western country, the Turk learns a lot about our way of life and starts dreaming. He does not know anymore if he is in his homeland, or in America, or in Switzerland, and his thoughts travel and travel . . .

Turkish music is in the single-voiced mode, while Western music is mostly polyphonic and, since the beginning of the century, marked by the Viennese school and its twelve-tone technique. The originality of the Turkish theme that opens the works is more and more developed by the various techniques of composition of Western character before being almost crushed in a rather oppressive fight punctuated by wild scales. Suddenly the music stops, and only the clarinet remains accompanied softly and far away by a simple bongo rhythm. Here the Turk begins to dream.

— Note provided by the OSR and Jost Meier.

Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat major, Op. 19 . . . . . LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN  
(1770-1827)

Beethoven's Concerto No. 2 was actually the first-written of his numbered piano concertos (there is an early concerto in E-flat major and a movement of another in D major). The B-flat major Concerto was finished by March 1797, Beethoven's twenty-sixth year, and he played it almost immediately at a concert in Vienna. Three years later, a much revised version was heard in Prague. (The misleading number and opus number came about because, meanwhile, the C-major Concerto, Op. 15, had been published.)

Despite an entirely new rondo finale in the 1798 version, Beethoven later described this most Haydnesque of his concertos as “not among my best compositions” and, in negotiating with a publisher, offered it for only half the price he was demanding for a piano sonata that he called “a first-rate piece.” However, he hastened to add: “Still, it will not disgrace you to print it.”

*Allegro con brio.* The first subject consists of two contrasting ideas, the first loud and lively, the second quiet and contemplative, one following on the heels of the other. A sprightly yet elegant second theme in the strings is then fragmented and does not reappear until late in the movement. The piano enters softly and gracefully with a new and, at least compared to the others, lengthy theme, following this with still another melody, slightly marchlike in its accents. It is the latter that is treated as the movement's second subject.

The development contains a certain amount of unorthodoxy, and the occasional side-stepping modulations must have caused a few raised eyebrows in their day. In general, the working-out of themes is left to either solo or orchestra, a process quite unlike the more symphonic developments of Beethoven's later concertos. After the recapitulation and cadenza, six measures of orchestral *tutti* bring the movement to a rather abrupt end.

*Adagio.* This movement begins with a kind of music familiar from slow movements of several Haydn symphonies: an essentially calm and meditative atmosphere that is given little jolts of tension by dotted rhythms. The main theme, of some scope and fully scored with horns and woodwinds, gains drama from well-placed pauses. Immediately after its statement in the orchestra, the piano takes it up and begins to ornament. In a later reappearance in the piano, this theme is elaborately embellished, but remains straightforward in the *tutti*, a dialogue being

created throughout much of the movement with the one theme and also with occasional subsidiary motives. Near the end comes an original touch: after a pre-cadenza-like *fortissimo* climax, instead of the expected cadenza there comes a single treble line in the piano marked *con gran espressione*.

*Rondo: molto allegro*. The lighthearted finale acts as a relief from the pensive character of the *Adagio*. The jolly principal theme, immediately heard in the solo piano, displays an odd syncopation that is, in great part, responsible for the movement's vivaciousness. After the orchestra has had its turn with it, new and contrasting material is introduced, chiefly a tune that cleverly satirizes the first movement's main theme. The interpolations in the different episodes, along with the interplay between piano and orchestra, have a spontaneous, assured air that makes this movement easily the most striking of the Concerto.

— Phillip Ramey (Reprinted with permission of the New York Philharmonic.)

“Jeux,” Poème dansé . . . . . CLAUDE DEBUSSY  
(1862-1918)

Claude Debussy's ballet *Jeux*, commissioned by Diaghilev for his Ballets Russes and first performed at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées on May 15, 1913, is (to this listener) one of Debussy's most engrossing works. But it does not fit our cherished image of Debussy, as a sort of musical Monet bounded by *L'Après-midi d'un faune* and *La Mer*, with *Pelléas et Mélisande* as his characteristic masterpiece.

In *Jeux*, Debussy was reaching ahead to the harmonic world of Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps*. Most of the revolutionary dissonances of *Le Sacre* are already handled in *Jeux* with Debussy's typical delicacy and elegance. In fact, *Jeux* and *Le Sacre* are so close in composition and première dates (the première of *Le Sacre* followed that of *Jeux* by only two weeks) that the question has sometimes been asked whether it was not Debussy who learned from the younger man and took over some of his harmonic idiom. However, the likelihood of Debussy having copied Stravinsky is sharply diminished by the fact that the end of Debussy's sketch for *Jeux* is dated some six months before Debussy first saw the *Sacre* score.

The scenario for *Jeux* is this: In a garden at twilight a tennis ball has been lost. A young man, soon joined by two girls, hunts for it vainly. The artificial illumination of the great electric floodlights, which envelop the three in a fantastic glow, put them in mind of childhood games. They play hide and seek, chase, quarrel, sulk — with no cause. The night is balmy, the sky bathed in soft radiance; they kiss. But the charm is broken by another tennis ball thrown by an unknown, malicious hand. Surprised and frightened, the young man and the two girls disappear into the shadows of the nocturnal garden.

The production was only a half-success: moderate applause, a few whistles, and generally indecisive audience reaction. The critics, too, were divided. When the score was played as an orchestral piece (on March 1, 1914), there were again hisses as well as cheers. Although the press was predictably divided, there were many enthusiastic voices, at least one of them (Gaston Garraud in *La Liberté*) ranking *Jeux* far above *La Mer*.

The ballet opens with a brief prelude suggesting the balmy summer twilight. Against the sustained tone of high, muted string solos, spangled with touches of harp and French-horn color, the woodwind choir plays “softly and dreamily” a succession of three whole-tone chords all drawn from the same scale. These chords and their attendant atmosphere return at intervals to punctuate and then conclude the score.

The principal tempo of the ballet is a *Scherzando*, later also designated as *Scherzando molto grazioso*, introduced by a tiny, nervous figure, almost too short to be called a theme but the kind of fragment that was infinitely pliable and jugglable in Debussy's hands. The three chords of the introduction return, now linked by a sinuous melodic line. The profusion of Debussy's thematic ideas and the bewildering speed with which they combine, coalesce, separate, and re-form in new constellations are kaleidoscopic. One critic compared the labile melodic line to the flight of a tennis ball in a brilliant volley. A suggestion that the twilight frolic of the three dancers has its serious (or, at least, sentimental) moments is given by a recurrent phrase sung “passionately” by the higher strings. An extended section “in waltz tempo,” growing more and more exuberant, leads to a return of the basic *Scherzando* and a final page in which the dreamy mood and the three chords of the introduction return.

— Edward Downes (Reprinted with permission of the New York Philharmonic.)

“La Mer,” Three Symphonic Sketches . . . . . DEBUSSY

Debussy, the son of a sailor, is reported to have told a friend that the sight of the ocean fascinated him to such a degree that he was paralyzed creatively — which was the reason he wrote most of *La Mer* in Paris, far from the seashore. Nevertheless, he finished it at the seaside town of Eastbourne, England, on March 5, 1905. *La Mer* was given its first performance in Paris the following October 15, at the Concerts Lamoureux, conducted by Camille Chevillard. The composer had once written to his publisher Jacques Durand that “the sea has been very good to me; it is really the thing in nature that best puts you in your place.”

*La Mer*, Debussy's largest purely orchestral work, is a vast seascape, elaborately orchestrated. Although its parts are cast in free rather than traditional forms, its unity, scale, and detail are such that there is a temptation to view *La Mer* as a symphony-*manqué*, one with a subtle cyclic aspect (theme fragments from the first section reappear in the last). Citing Debussy as the only composer after Schubert "to achieve lifelike organic forms, self-sustained and self-contained," the American composer and critic Virgil Thomson gave his opinion that, on those terms, *La Mer* is "a true and proper symphony, held together not by passion or by pathos or by storytelling, but simply by its own well-functioning muscular and nervous systems."

The following commentary on *La Mer* is by Edward Downes:

*From Dawn Until Noon on the Sea.* First we have an impression of the immense resting power of the ocean at dawn. Gradually the waters seem to awaken: a lazy wisp of foam is cast aloft. A simple two-tone figure from Debussy's *Sirènes* is the starting point of the development of astonishing imagination and mastery. An English horn and muted trumpet announce, very softly, a theme that will return in the last movement in the approach to its great climax. Debussy is less concerned with conventional melody than with the play of minute fragments of rhythm and harmony, with the ever-changing reflections of sky, clouds, and sunlight on his flashing, tossing, orchestral sea. Toward the end, the depths themselves are set in motion with a quiet but impressive chorale phrase, which will return to cap the climax of the last movement.

*Play of the Waves.* The ocean, from the most delicate beginnings, lashes itself into a sportive fury. Rainbow colorings appear and vanish in the fountains of spray. Debussy's instrumental palette is of the utmost delicacy and subtlety, fading at the end almost imperceptibly into silence.

A deep threatening voice, as of approaching storm, opens *The Dialogue of the Wind and the Sea*. A shiver of anticipation runs through the orchestra; there is a swift gathering of forces and the tempest seems about to break. Instead, there is an expectant silence; then suddenly, as from afar, we hear a nostalgic call, like the siren-song of Debussy's imagination. The call is repeated, more insistently, by oboe, English horn, and bassoon. It is answered by Triton's horns; the clamor grows, and in the depths of the orchestra, cellos, doublebasses, and bassoons take up the first theme. At last the first-movement chorale returns in an exultant climax, and the sharply dissonant sound of trilling brass ends the never-ending tale of the sea.

— Phillip Ramey (Reprinted with permission of the New York Philharmonic.)

## About the Artists

The **Orchestre de la Suisse Romande**, Switzerland's most renowned orchestra, was founded in 1918 by Ernest Ansermet to serve the French-speaking part of the country, the "Suisse Romande." Based in Geneva, its goal was three-fold: to provide symphonic music for the main cities of the region, to serve the Swiss radio and television network with performances of classical music, and to supply the Geneva opera house with an orchestra.

Ernest Ansermet led the orchestra for fifty years, shaping the ensemble — and the course of modern music — with his interpretations and premières of the works of Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky, and other contemporaries. Since his resignation in 1968 (and subsequent death in 1969), the OSR has been directed by Paul Klecki, Wolfgang Sawallisch, and Horst Stein, until September 1985 when Armin Jordan assumed the post of music director and chief conductor. Although the orchestra's main objective is to invigorate the musical life in all communities of the "Suisse Romande," the OSR embarks on international concert tours every other year. During the last twenty years, the orchestra has toured in Germany, Austria, France, Greece, Italy, England, Hungary, Korea, Japan, and the United States.

In the current season, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande is making its seventh tour of the United States. Highlights include two performances at New York's Carnegie Hall and in Washington, Boston, and Chicago, as well as performances at many leading colleges and universities. Plans for 1991 include tours of England and Japan, while future tours are planned for Austria, Germany, France, and Belgium.

The Orchestre de la Suisse Romande's long and distinguished recording history began with Ernest Ansermet's recordings of first performances of major works by twentieth-century composers. The orchestra's recordings in the 1950s for London's Decca label, under Ansermet, are regarded as definitive interpretations. Over the years, Ansermet and his musicians were awarded sixteen "Grands Prix du Disque," and the celebrated Swiss conductor also received a "Grand Prix de Disque in honorem" for his complete body of recordings.

The ensemble's studio work under Armin Jordan has been equally illustrious. In September 1985, Jordan and the orchestra earned a "Grand Prix du Disque in honorem" for Paul Dukas' *Symphony in C* and *La Péri*, the first record of a series to be produced by Casavalle and released under the Erato label. The orchestra's recordings of works by Maurice Ravel, under Jordan, are held in especially high esteem; four recordings have been released, one each year since 1985, encompassing all of Ravel's most popular orchestral works and the two piano concertos, among other works. Other discs feature music of Franck, Schubert, Debussy, and Schumann. During the present season, two live recordings will feature Dvořák's *Stabat Mater* and Britten's *War Requiem*.

**Armin Jordan** is the first chief conductor of the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande since Ernest Ansermet left the position in 1968. Born in Lucerne in 1932, Maestro Jordan has been associated with the OSR since 1957 and its regular guest conductor for the past 25 years. In addition, working with the OSR, he has acted as music director of the Basel Opera since 1971, was the first principal conductor in the history of the Zurich Opera, and was former music director of the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra.

Armin Jordan first attained international recognition in 1963, when he made his first conducting appearance at major cities and festivals in Germany, Austria, France, Italy, and Greece. He has conducted all the symphony orchestras of Switzerland and has appeared as guest conductor with most of Europe's major opera companies and orchestras. Among Jordan's musical triumphs are performances of Wagner's *Die Walküre* at the Seattle Opera and outstanding performances of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* in Geneva. His recent conducting in the new production of *Salome* at the Basel opera house has been acclaimed by the international press as unequalled.

A winner of the prestigious "Grand Prix du Disque in honorem" of the Charles Cros Academy in Paris, Armin Jordan has an extensive discography that includes recordings with the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, L'Orchestre National de France, the Philharmonic Orchestra of Monte Carlo, the Basel Symphony Orchestra, and the New Philharmonic Orchestra of Radio France. His recording of the soundtrack to Hans Jurgen Syberberg's film *Parsifal* (in which he appears in the role of Amfortas, Wolfgang Schone singing) has garnered international praise.

Though tonight's concert marks the first Ann Arbor appearance of both Maestro Jordan and the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Armin Jordan's first tour of North America with the OSR occurred in 1985.

One of today's most prominent artists, **Martha Argerich** is a familiar presence in the concert halls of Europe, the Soviet Union, the Near East, and the Far East. In North America, she has performed as guest soloist with the symphony orchestras of Boston, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, Montreal, and Toronto, among others.

Ms. Argerich's discography includes more than a dozen Deutsche Grammophon recordings, encompassing works from Bach to Lutoslawski. She has recorded Chopin and Schumann duos for piano and cello with Mstislav Rostropovich, as well as Beethoven and Schumann sonatas with violinist Gidon Kremer. Among her most recent recordings are a Schumann collection featuring *Kreisleriana* and *Kinderscenen*, Bach cello sonatas with Mischa Maisky, the Ravel Piano Concerto in G with Claudio Abbado and the London Symphony, and a recording of Beethoven violin sonatas with Gidon Kremer, the second installment of the complete series.

Born in 1941, Martha Argerich gave her first professional performance at the age of eight in Buenos Aires, her native home. At the age of 16, she won both the Geneva International Competition and the Ferruccio Busoni International Competition in Italy. In 1965, she returned from a self-imposed retreat to become the first artist from the Western hemisphere to win first prize at the Chopin Competition in Warsaw. This spectacular success led to her United States debut in 1966, on Lincoln Center's Great Performers Series.

She now appears in Ann Arbor for the first time.

## Concert Guidelines

To make concertgoing a more convenient and pleasurable experience for all patrons, the Musical Society is implementing the following policies and practices throughout the season:

**Starting Time for Concerts** The Musical Society will make every attempt to begin its performances on time. Please allow ample time for parking. Latecomers are asked to wait in the lobby until seated by ushers at a predetermined time in the program so as not to disturb performers or other patrons.

**Children** Children attending a University Musical Society event should be able to sit quietly in their own seats throughout the performance. Children not able to do so, along with the adult accompanying them, may be asked by an usher to leave the auditorium. (Every child must have a ticket.)

**Of Coughs and Decibels** Reprinted from programs in London's Royal Festival Hall: "During a recent test in the hall, a note played *mezzo forte* on the horn measured approximately 65 decibels of sound. A single 'uncovered' cough gave the same reading. A handkerchief placed over the mouth when coughing assists in obtaining a *pianissimo*."

Please take advantage of Warner Lambert's generosity in providing Halls Cough Tablets in the lobby prior to and during intermissions of the concerts.

**A Modern Distraction** With the advent of the electronic beeping and chiming digital watches, both audience members and performing artists will appreciate these being turned off or suppressed during performances. In case of emergency, advise your paging service of auditorium and seat location and ask them to phone University Security at 763-1131.

**Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Armin Jordan, Music Director**

*First Violins*

Robert Zimansky  
First Concertmaster  
Jean Piguet  
First Concertmaster  
Abdel-Hamid El Shwekh  
Assistant First Concertmaster  
Sachiko Nakamura  
Concertmaster  
Medhat Abdel-Salam  
Monique Buvelot  
Theodora Christova  
Cristina Draganescu  
Roger Elmiger  
Dominique Guibentif  
Frank Manigler  
Dorin Matea  
Bénédicte Moreau  
Hisayuki Ono  
Drasko Pantelic  
Salomé Rapp  
Hans Reichenbach  
Bernard Sciolli  
Marie Sirot

*Second Violins*

Régis Plantevin\*\*  
Hans-Walter Hirzel\*\*  
Mireille Mercanton\*  
René Schmied\*  
Georges Alvarez  
Kerry Benson  
Noémi Bochet  
Yoko Fujita  
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François Siron  
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*Violas*

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Jean Vaullerin\*\*  
Zoltan Kacsoh\*  
Barry Shapiro\*  
Jean-Pierre Buvelot  
Claude de Choudens  
Carol Figeroid  
Laurent Lavoisier  
Herbert Orehl  
Pierre Reymond  
Paul Rudhardt  
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\*\*principal

\*assistant principal

*Cellos*

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Stephan Rieckhoff\*\*  
Monika Szczudlowska\*  
Tatiana Valleise\*  
Jakob Clasen  
Cheryl House  
Karl Kuhner  
Françoise Richard  
Raphael Tanner  
André Wanders  
Willard White

*Double Basses*

Martin Humpert\*\*  
Steven Zlomke\*\*  
Jonathan Haskell\*  
Gabor Denke  
Daniel Gobet  
Anton Novak  
Alain Ruaux  
Théodore Siegrist  
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*Flutes*

Jean-Claude Hermenjat\*\*  
Lô Angeloz\*\*  
Robert Thuillier\*  
Bernard Demottaz  
Jane Elliott

*Piccolos*

Bernard Demottaz  
Jane Elliott

*Oboes*

Jérôme Capeille\*\*  
Roland Perrenoud\*\*  
Vincent Gay-Balmaz\*  
Sylvain Lombard  
Jean-Pierre Surget

*English Horns*

Jean-Pierre Surget\*\*  
Sylvain Lombard

*Clarinets*

Aart Rozeboom\*\*  
Michel Westphal\*\*  
Benoît Willmann\*  
Emile Delrieu

*Clarinet E-flat*

Benoît Willmann\*

*Bass Clarinet*

Emile Delrieu

*Bassoons*

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Roger Birnstingl\*\*  
Afonso Venturieri\*  
Norjo Kato  
Jean Reymond

*Double Bassoons*

Norio Kato  
Jean Reymond

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Gregory Cass\*\*  
Bruno Schneider\*\*  
Florian Schmocker\*  
Brian Mihleder\*  
Isabelle Bourgeois  
Jacques Robellaz

*Trumpets*

Dennis Ferry\*\*  
Stephen Jeandheur\*\*  
Gérard Métrailler\*  
Michel Cuvit  
Michel Debonneville  
Jean-Claude Geiser

*Trombones*

Yves Guigou\*\*  
Andrea Bandini\*\*  
Edouard Chappot  
Kurt Sturzenegger

*Bass Trombone*

Kurt Sturzenegger

*Tuba*

Pierre Pilloud\*\*

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**UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY**

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*Please note an artist change in tonight's concert  
of the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande:*

Malcolm Frager will perform Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 2, the same work programmed for Martha Argerich before illness forced her to cancel.

Malcolm Frager "was a spectacular technician at twenty-five...nearly thirty years later, the technique is still spectacular, but the maturity of outlook, the warmth of humanity, and the pure delight in beauty now are central to his point of view." (Chicago Sun-Times) Mr. Frager's tours have taken him to 77 countries on five continents, including engagements with virtually every major orchestra in the United States and Europe.

Born in 1935 in St. Louis, he began playing the piano at the age of four, gave his first recital at six, and made his debut with the St. Louis Symphony when he was ten. At the age of 14, he went to New York to study with Carl Friedberg, a pupil of Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms. Mr. Frager won first prize at both the Leventritt Competition in New York and the Queen Elisabeth of Belgium Competition in Brussels, which launched his international career in 1960. Prior to that, he graduated *magna cum laude* from Columbia University, where he studied languages, majoring in Russian; he speaks seven languages, a decided asset on his international tours.

Malcolm Frager has appeared in Ann Arbor on two previous occasions: a recital in 1967 and as soloist with The Philadelphia Orchestra at the 1972 May Festival.