



*International
Presentations of
Music & Dance*

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Kazuhito Yamashita

Guitarist

MONDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 6, 1989, AT 8:00
RACKHAM AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

P R O G R A M

- Variations on a Theme of Mozart, Op. 9 SOR
- Sonata No. 1 for Unaccompanied Violin, BWV 1001 BACH
(arranged by Yamashita)
Adagio
Fuga
Siciliano
Presto
- Folios I, II, and III TAKEMITSU

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

- Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95, "From the New World" DVOŘÁK
(arranged by Yamashita)
Allegro molto
Largo
Molto vivace
Allegro con fuoco

RCA Red Seal Records.

Kazuhito Yamashita appears by arrangement with IMG Artists, New York City.

Cameras and recording devices are not allowed in the auditorium.

Halls Cough Tablets, courtesy of Warner Lambert Company, are available in the lobby.

PROGRAM NOTES

Variations on a Theme of Mozart, Op. 9 FERNANDO SOR (1778-1839)

One cannot help but draw parallel life styles of one historical musical figure to another. In the case of Sor, his up and down artistic development is similar to Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and to a certain degree, Haydn. His basic musical training occurred within a religious environment, his military service included administrative obligations, he was patronized by various political and noble personages (e.g., Manuel Godoy, the "Prince of Peace" during the Napoleonic invasion of Spain, and the Duchess of Alba, Goya's subject for certain paintings, catered to his artistic needs), and — in the final act of the mature artist — there was little recognition of his talents by his own countrymen.

Today, there is no question as to his contributions to the guitar literature and especially for his effort in extending the fingerboard harmonic vocabulary. What Mozart and Beethoven did for the piano, Sor did for the guitar. One of this country's keyboard scholars, William S. Newman, wrote in his book *The Sonata in the Classic Era*: "The creative worth of Sor's sonatas is high. The ideas, which grow out of the instrument, yet stand up well enough apart from it, are fresh and distinctive. The harmony is skillful and surprisingly varied, with bold key changes and with rich modulations in the development sections."

A musical form that Sor explored throughout his sixty works is the theme and variation structure. One of his most famous works in this form, popularized by Segovia, is Opus 9, Variations on an air from *The Magic Flute*, which Sor dedicated to his brother. Mozart wrote *The Magic Flute* in the last year of his life, intended as popular Viennese entertainment, but with his touch, it was transformed into a work of art. The theme — *Das klinget so herrlich* (It jingles so softly) — occurs toward the end of Act I, when Papageno, playing his magic chimes, sets Monastatos and his slaves to dancing and saves Pamina from their clutches. The work opens with a dramatic introduction marked *Andante largo*, followed by the theme that is slightly altered from the original and somewhat ornamented. There are five variations and a short coda.

— Ron Purcell (*Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center*)

Sonata No. 1 for Unaccompanied Violin, BWV 1001 . . JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750)

Toward the end of the seventeenth century, the technique of polyphonic performance on a stringed instrument was fully developed, especially with the guitar and lute family. With the violin family, the matter of figured bass accompaniment was the practice of the day. Therefore, one rarely heard an unaccompanied performance on these instruments. Taking hints from the past and basing structures of the utmost complexity upon them, Bach composed two sets of unaccompanied sonatas (partitas), six for violin and six suites for cello.

The sonatas (partitas) for unaccompanied violin were written during Bach's Cöthen period, 1717-23, at the court of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen. In this set for violin, there are three sonatas and three partitas. The main difference between a sonata and partita is the overall contents. The sonata structure is more abstract and normally does not include dance movements, whereas the partitas usually are made up of a sequence of the typical baroque dances, i.e., prelude, allemande, sarabande, and gigue. Bach's sonatas were the forerunners of the early classical sonata beginning with a slow movement, then a fast, followed by another slow and fast movement.

Rhapsodical in style, the opening *Adagio* movement of the Sonata No. 1 is characteristic of Bach. The *Fuga* is an animated movement, with the runs and arpeggios alternating with the polyphony of the fugue. Then, from the sweet, pastoral character of the *Siciliano*, it moves on to the brilliant climax of the *Presto*.

— Ron Purcell

Folios I, II, and III TORU TAKEMITSU (b. 1930)

Tokyo-born Toru Takemitsu is almost as much a poet or painter in sound as a composer. At the age of eighteen, he began two years of private study of composition, but his principal teacher, he has said, was "daily life, including all of music and nature." The music that has most interested him is reflected in his work; it ranges from the expressive chromaticism of Schoenberg and Berg to the romanticized, mystic, nature-studies of Olivier Messaien and the electronic manipulation of natural sounds in the *musique concrète* of Pierre Schaeffer.

In his early years in the arts, Takemitsu joined with a group of painters and a few other musicians in organizing an experimental laboratory in Tokyo to explore new aesthetic paths. Later, he was associated with the Institute for Twentieth Century Music, which studied and performed the newest music from Europe and America, and in 1966, he joined conductor Seiji Ozawa in starting a biennial festival of contemporary music. By 1970, the time had come when

new creative, artistic ideas could begin to move in the opposite direction: outward from Japan to the United States and Europe. Takemitsu was in the forefront of this movement as artistic director of the "Space Theater" for Expo '70 in Osaka that year, and his extraordinary installation there of advanced technological developments that lent themselves for use as media of artistic expression had a wide influence in the rest of the world. In 1975, he visited the United States and gave a seminar in composition at Harvard University.

Two works by Takemitsu have been performed in Ann Arbor: his String Quartet No. 1, subtitled "A Way a lone," composed in 1981 and performed by the Tokyo String Quartet in 1982, and "Rain Tree," a work scored for vibraphone, two marimbas, and crotales, performed by the ensemble Nexus in 1984. His "Folios" for guitar date from 1974.

— Leonard Burkat

Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95, "From the New World" ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

Dvořák moved to the "New World" in 1892 to become director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York. His stay in America, curtailed by homesickness for his native Bohemia, lasted for only three years. Nonetheless, he composed some of his most successful compositions during this time, among them the symphony heard this evening. In explaining the symphony's subtitle, Dvořák stated that it signified "Impressions and Greetings From the New World." While various American musical influences are in evidence — Dvořák is said to have listened to Negro spirituals and native American Indian music with much interest — the composer acknowledged that his work remained "genuine Bohemian music." Even so, he described the presence of the various American influences: "I tried to write only in the spirit of those national American melodies."

An *Adagio* introduction is followed by the main theme with syncopated rhythms and a jaunty character. The second theme is notable, primarily because of its more than casual resemblance to the melody of the spiritual, "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot."

The *Largo* movement is, perhaps, one of the most celebrated in the symphonic repertoire. One cannot help but hear a certain plaintiveness in its principal theme, perhaps even the melancholy of homesickness, in the hauntingly beautiful melody. Two subsidiary ideas break the subdued spell of the movement thus far with a bucolic tune. Dvořák ends the movement with a return to the main melody, and it ends as it had begun, contemplatively, with a few quiet chords.

The *Scherzo* has the character of a ritual Indian dance. After the rhythmic main theme, with its interplay of duple and triple groupings, the Trio section contains two spirited Trios, both exuding a rustic, charming quality. A coda re-introduces the principal theme of the first movement.

The main theme of the concluding movement, *Adagio con fuoco*, eventually gives way to a dancing triplet theme, followed by a romantic melody. Variants of themes from earlier movements are then interwoven with this material, which culminates with the reappearance of the *Largo* movement's opening chords. In the coda, Dvořák presents in combination the opening themes of the first and last movements.

The arrangement of previously composed music for plucked strings has a long history: the earliest pieces for renaissance lute were arrangements and adaptations of vocal music; Bach made his own arrangement of his Fifth Cello Suite for baroque lute; and Tárrega initiated a continuing tradition of arranging music of Albéniz for guitar. In an effort to expand the literature for the guitar and increase the guitar's listening audience, Yamashita has taken a fearless approach to transcribing — "re-writings," as he calls them. In addition to his *New World* arrangement, he has transcribed other large pieces for solo guitar, including Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, Stravinsky's *Firebird*, and Rimsky-Korsakov's complete *Scheherazade*.

During Yamashita's Ann Arbor duo-appearance with James Galway in 1986, the guitarist gave his Hill Auditorium audience a preview of the *New World* transcription, when he performed the *Largo*. Of the *Largo* movement, which he also played in Washington's Kennedy Center on the same tour, the *Post* reviewer wrote: "The highlight of the evening was Dvořák's *Largo* . . . Yamashita played it with power and great tenderness, ending with a stunning strummed *pianissimo*." In another city, Vienna, Yamashita was reported by *Ovation Magazine* to have "mesmerized" a standing-room-only audience with his January 1988 performance of this symphony.

About the Artist

At the age of 28, Japanese guitarist Kazuhito Yamashita is rapidly gaining recognition as one of the world's foremost guitar virtuosos. A dazzling technique and expressive artistry have brought praise from audiences and critics alike, and his recordings and performances of original transcriptions of such works as *Pictures at an Exhibition*, *Firebird*, and the *New World* Symphony have already become legends in guitar circles.

Born in Nagasaki, Mr. Yamashita first began studying the guitar at the age of eight with his father and still credits his father with being the biggest influence on him. At age 16, he won first prize in the Ramirez Competition in Spain, the Alessandria Competition in Italy, and the Nineteenth International Guitar Competition in Paris. In 1978, he performed throughout Japan and one year later made his debut with the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, followed by a concert tour that took him to 20 Japanese cities. The year 1978 also saw his European debut in Paris, where he was greeted as a major new discovery. Two years later, he appeared at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and was immediately engaged for a six-recital tour throughout the Netherlands the following season. His Canadian debut came in 1984 with an appearance at the Toronto Guitar Festival, and his London recital debut came one year later, along with recitals in Austria and Germany.

Among Kazuhito Yamashita's fans is flutist James Galway, with whom he recently recorded an album for RCA Red Seal entitled "Italian Serenade," and with whom Mr. Yamashita made his first American tour in 1987. Their performances in Ann Arbor, New York, Boston, Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Washington, D.C. were a triumph for the young Japanese virtuoso and resulted in two sold-out recital tours for him in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, New York, Boston, Saint Louis, Toronto, and Vancouver, among other cities. His current season includes solo appearances at the 1989 International Guitar Festival, at Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena, chamber music concerts with the Tokyo String Quartet in Boston and New York, and his second appearance in Ann Arbor.

Mr. Yamashita is currently involved in recording collaborations with the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Leonard Slatkin and with the Tokyo String Quartet, both for RCA.

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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.



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