

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

CHARLES A. SINK, PRESIDENT

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Seventh Concert

1946-1947

Complete Series 2941

Sixty-Eighth Annual
Choral Union Concert Series

VLADIMIR HOROWITZ, *Pianist*

FRIDAY EVENING, JANUARY 17, 1947, AT 8:30
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

- Sonata in A major, K. 331 MOZART
Andante grazioso and variation
Menuetto
Alla turca—allegretto
- Two Songs Without Words MENDELSSOHN
B minor, Op. 67
G major, Op. 62
- Sonata No. 2, Op. 45 KABALEVSKY
Allegro moderato festivamente
Lento cantabile
Presto
(Composed in 1945. First performance in Ann Arbor)

INTERMISSION

- Variations on a Theme by Clara Wieck SCHUMANN
- Impromptu in A-flat major CHOPIN
Four Etudes, Op. 10 CHOPIN
E-flat minor
C-sharp minor
E major
C minor

Legend: St. Francis of Paola Walking on the Waters LISZT

NOTE.—Vladimir Horowitz has been heard in the Choral Union Series on previous occasions as follows: Nov. 12, 1928; Jan. 31, 1930; Mar. 6, 1933; Jan. 15, 1941; and Jan. 15, 1945.

Mr. Horowitz uses the Steinway piano.

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

ANALYTICAL NOTES BY OLIN DOWNES

Sonata, A major, Koechel No. 331 MOZART

Mozart's eighteen piano sonatas, the first of which did not appear until 1774-75, are anything but uniform in character. Some of them are romantic in spirit. Others are on the decorative side. This sonata in A major is rococo. It dispenses with the customary first movement, beginning immediately with the six variations upon the theme. The theme has only one note, the D sharp in the twelfth measure, which is foreign to the major tonality in which it is written. Not only is the tonic key so notably enforced here: all the movements of the sonata are in the same key, though not mode, and in this respect the sonata harks back to the suite. The second movement, the Minuet, is festive in mood, bolder in modulation, and in its trio related to certain measures of the preceding section. The finale is the famous "rondo à la Turque." Its tempo mark, *Allegretto*, should be rigidly maintained. It is a semi-humorous picture of the Janizaries, with their drums and cymbals, their exotic tunes, and regimental strut.

Two Songs Without Words MENDELSSOHN No. 35, B minor No. 25, G major

These are two of the little masterpieces that Mendelssohn produced with the ease and spontaneity that another would feel in writing a letter to a friend. Yet the "Songs Without Words" are inimitable models of expression, workmanship, and a mastery of form so complete that the perfection is hardly noticed. At the same time their manner is unmistakably personal. Should any one of them fall upon the ear, without the listener's knowledge of its origin the perceptive listener would say immediately — "Mendelssohn."

Sonata, No. 2, Op. 45 DMITRI KABALEVSKY (1904-)

Kabalevsky, whose principal teacher of composition was Miascovsky, is known in America thus far by several orchestral works, namely, his Second Symphony, Second Piano Concerto, the overture, "Colas Breugnon," the Sonatina, Op. 13, and the Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 38, for the piano, which Mr. Horowitz introduced in America last season. The sonata heard tonight is in three movements, and follows with a modern elasticity of method and style the traditional form.

The key theme, of a dithyrambic character, could be proclaimed by the brass choir of an orchestra. It is launched with swinging bass descending from the fifth to the tonic of the prevailing tonality of E flat. These two notes emerge frequently in pages that follow, and for a time keep obstinately to the key, despite modulation in other parts.

The second and lyrical theme is in D major, with harmonic excursions "borrowed" from nearby keys. A new motive, vigorously rhythmical, which could be a march of men or tread of cavalry, supplies the final idea of the exposition. This motive figures prominently in the free fantasia, with references to the second theme and a powerful climax of conflicting chords and sharp rhythmical accents. The recapitulation brings back the swinging bass and the main theme, curtails the second theme, and ends *Largamente, drammatico*, with the motto theme amplified. It concludes in the tonic minor.

The second movement is simply melodic period of a nostalgic sort, and harmonies enriched by a haze of passing tones. A more emotional theme in the key of G minor appears; it is amplified with additional figurations. The first theme returns, to end like a vision disappearing in the distance.

The third movement is a rondo, joyous in mood, extensively developed. It begins toccata fashion, with a duly contrasted figure. This is extended, then followed by a third swinging phrase derived from material already stated. The virtuoso resources of the piano are heavily drawn upon. In the course of free development come certain augmentations of notes of the first theme, in unisons and octaves, Borodin fashion, old-style Russian in effect. At the end, with an effect of accumulating speed and power, the initial theme returns.

Variations on a Theme by Clara Wieck

Third movement from Sonata in F minor, Op. 14 . ROBERT SCHUMANN

The F-minor Sonata, subtitled "Concert without orchestra," was composed in 1835, and revised as late as 1843.

The sonata has as its predominant idea the theme of Clara Schumann which is the subject of the variations of the slow movement. This theme appears in the other three movements of the work, and there are those — Robert Haven Schauflier among them — who find that it is present in the germinal form of its first five notes, descend-

ing step-wise, and variously grouped and rhythmed, in both of the other Schumann sonatas (in F-sharp minor and G minor) as well as the opening of the great Fantasia.

Thematic relations and involutions of musical structure aside, the theme bears intimate and unmistakable testimony to the love of the composer for his Clara. As it stands, the theme is twenty-four measures long, in three parts. The first eight measures are the most uneventful in harmony and melodic direction. The second eight, with the melody in inner parts of the harmony, have now a more introspective character. The third and last eight measures are Schumann incarnate, and difficult to attribute to anyone but him.

The course of the variations is interesting in this as in other respects. The first variation is devoted exclusively to the first eight measure period — no more. The theme is in two-voiced harmony against a flowing accompaniment. The second variation retains the flowing movement, but utilizes all three parts of the theme, especially the last, and is considerably longer and a more complete structure. The third variation, following precisely the design of the theme in all its parts, is in dance rhythm, with characteristic syncopations, in the "Carnival" spirit. The fourth variation is the richest, freest, and most emotional of them all, with polyphonic dialogue, now tender, now agitated, of the voices, and a short coda. The sum of it is a series of variations in which fugitive emotions and thoughts pursue each other, freely emanating from a central idea which is less like a formal subject of variations than the communication of an obsessing image that haunts the tone-poet.

Impromptu, A-flat major CHOPIN

"To write of the four Impromptus" — wrote James Huneker — "in their key of unrestrained feeling and pondered intention would not be as easy as recapturing the first 'careless rapture' of the lark." Mr. Huneker feels that the A-flat Impromptu deserves particularly its title, in its "prankish, nimble movement"; in the harmonic clashes, so well and unobtrusively ordered, between treble and bass; in the happy contrast afforded by the middle part, with its sustained melody, set in duple as against triple measure, the short coda with its "chiaroscuro," and the tranquil chords which bring the end.

Four Etudes, Op. 10 CHOPIN

- No. 6, E-flat minor
- No. 4, C-sharp minor
- No. 3, E major
- No. 12, C minor

Of the epochal set of the Chopin Etudes, Op. 10, the one in E-flat minor is perhaps the least played and is one of the subtlest and finest of them all. The poignant melody is simplicity itself. The accompaniment may be considered from two stand-points: (1) as a rich tapestry of tone, forming the one appropriate background for the lyrical idea; (2) as a continuous melodic line, moving side by side with the main theme, ending softly but momentously on the G-natural — "tierce de Picardie" — occurring here as a matter of harmonic form but also as an expression of resignation which brings the peaceful end.

The Etude in C-sharp minor is the brilliant interchange between the hands of coruscating figures, chords, octaves, set to a vigorous rhythm, and presented with conclusive authority. The E-major Etude might be modeled after the best of Mendelssohn, in its faultless setting of an ingratiating theme. The last Etude of the present group has properly the appellation of "revolutionary," with the impassioned declamation of the right hand over the roaring passage-work in the bass — a consummately dramatic expression, inspired, as is well known, by the news in 1831 of Poland's downfall.

Legend: St. Francis of Paola Walking on the Waters LISZT

This is the second of the two St. Francis "legends" that Liszt composed in the 1860's. It is inspired by a painting of Steinle, "St. Francis of Paola Walking on the Waters." Liszt's footnote to the score reads, in part:

"Among the numerous miracles performed by St. Francis, legendary lore particularly stresses that which he accomplished in crossing the Straits of Messina. The boatmen refused to take on board a person of such humble appearance; he paid no further heed to them and with a firm step strode forth over the waters."

In the painting, "according to the tradition of Catholic iconography . . . St. Francis is shown standing on the turbulent waves . . . His mantle is spread beneath his feet. One of his hands is uplifted as though to command the elements; the other holds a burning brand, symbol of the inner fire which glows in the disciples of Jesus Christ; and his gaze is calmly fixed on the sky, where in eternal glory shines the motto of St. Francis, the supreme word, 'Charity'."

Seventh Annual
CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL

Lecture Hall—Rackham Building

BUDAPEST QUARTET

JOSEF ROISMANN,
Violin

BORIS KROYT,
Viola

EDGAR ORTENBERG,
Violin

MISCHA SCHNEIDER,
Violoncello

Friday Evening, January 24, 8:30

Quartet in A major, K. 464 MOZART
Quartet in E-flat major (1945) HINDEMITH
Quartet in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2 BEETHOVEN

Saturday Afternoon, January 25, 2:30

Quartet in C major, Op. 33, No. 3 HAYDN
Quartet in G minor, Op. 10 DEBUSSY
Quartet in E minor, Op. 116 SMETANA

Saturday Evening, January 25, 8:30

Quartet in D major, Op. 18, No. 3 BEETHOVEN
Quartet No. 2 PROKOFIEFF
Quartet in B-flat major, Op. 67 BRAHMS

A limited number of tickets are still available at the offices of the University Musical Society, Burton Memorial Tower.

COMING EVENTS

CHORAL UNION SERIES: Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Karl Krueger, Conductor, February 17; Lotte Lehmann, Soprano, February 26; and Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Désiré Defauw, Conductor, March 16.

EXTRA CONCERT: Alec Templeton, Friday, February 21. Tickets: \$1.50—\$1.20—\$1.00.