

1966

Eighty-eighth Season

1967

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY
THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Charles A. Sink, President

Gail W. Rector, Executive Director

Lester McCoy, Conductor

First Program

Eighty-eighth Annual Choral Union Series

Complete Series 3524

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

JEAN MARTINON, *Conductor*

SATURDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 8, 1966, AT 8:30

HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

Overture, "The Consecration of the House," Op. 124 . . . BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 4, "Inextinguishable," Op. 29 NIELSEN

Allegro

Poco allegretto

Poco adagio

Allegro

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 4, "Altitudes," Op. 53 MARTINON

La Porte des étoiles

Le Jardin vertical

La Traversée des Dieux

A R S

L O N G A

V I T A

B R E V I S

PROGRAM NOTES

BY ARRAND PARSONS

Overture, "The Consecration of the House," Op. 124 LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Beethoven composed this overture at Baden in September, for the opening of the new Josephstädter Theater, Vienna, October 3, 1822.

Schindler, in his biography of the master, wrote that, in company with Beethoven and the latter's nephew, he was taking a walk, when the composer stopped and asked both to "go ahead a little distance and wait for him. It was not long before he joined us, when he said that he had jotted down two themes for an overture. At once he expressed his plan for working them out, to the effect that one was to be elaborated in the free style, the other in the manner of Handel . . . The work was completed barely in time for the performance, the players' parts not being ready until the preceding afternoon, when they were found to be full of mistakes. The rehearsal took place at the last moment—when the audience was arriving, in fact; but even with these drawbacks the piece scored a great success, and Beethoven was called out repeatedly."

Symphony No. 4, "The Inextinguishable," Op. 29 . . . CARL NIELSEN

Until recent times the popularity of the music of Carl Nielsen has been confined largely to his native Denmark, to Scandinavia, and to Britain. Since the 1950's, however, Nielsen's symphonies and other works have been brought to an ever-growing audience in both the United States and Europe. Nielsen was born in the same year as Jean Sibelius of Finland and a year after Richard Strauss. He is a composer oriented in the nineteenth century but who reaches out to grasp some of the essence of the twentieth.

Most of Nielsen's six symphonies have been given descriptive titles: No. 2, *The Four Temperaments*; No. 3, *Sinfonia Expansiva*; No. 4, *The Inextinguishable*; and No. 6, *Sinfonia Semplice*. Nielsen began work on the Fourth Symphony in 1914; the idea for the work came to him even before he left his position as conductor of the Royal Theatre orchestra in order to devote more time to composition. The score was completed early in 1916 and the first performance was played on February 1 of that year.

The composer's note in the score explains the significance of the title of the symphony: "By using the title *The Inextinguishable* the composer has tried to suggest by a single word what music alone has the power fully to express: the basic will to live. Music is life, and, like life, inextinguishable; so the title which the composer has given to his work may seem superfluous. He has employed it, however, in order to underline the strictly musical nature of his task. Not a 'programme' but a 'finger-post' pointing into the field of music itself."

Nielsen grew up in the nineteenth-century Romantic tradition; he admired both Wagner and Brahms. Particularly from the symphonies of Brahms he learned of musical architecture. Nielsen was also of his time; he was not an innovator such as Schönberg or Stravinsky. But it is evident that he found the new musical language of the new century appealing and he sought to find in it those elements which would reinforce his own basically lyrical nature. Much of the harmony, particularly at climaxes, has a nontraditional sound. Nielsen employs what is called a progressive tonality, that is, the key center at the end of a movement is not that of the beginning. It is evident, too, that he explored the possibilities of instrumental color, that of single instruments and that of the various family groups of instruments.

The four movements of the Fourth Symphony are joined together so that the effect is of one continuous movement. In this work Nielsen employs a motto theme, that is, a theme introduced near the beginning of the work is brought back in other sections later on, serving the cause of unity. The motto theme of the Fourth is a lyrical motive which serves initially

as the second theme of the first movement. Further use of the motto idea occurs in the *adagio* movement where the principal theme appears as something of an elaboration of the motto.

I. This movement, marked *allegro*, follows the plan of the sonata-allegro with modifications. The first theme has its motives of triplets and dotted rhythm patterns. The second theme is decidedly contrasting. It is the motto theme of the symphony and is heard first in the clarinets with a counter melody in the bassoon.

Following a development section, the first theme returns, but there is only a brief reminder of the second theme. The composer is saving the second theme for use later on.

II. *Poco allegretto*. The second movement is based on a three-part structure, and in style bears some resemblance to a Brahms intermezzo. The opening section emphasizes the winds; and the middle section presents pizzicato strings to contrast the wind timbre. This leads directly into the third movement.

III. *Poco adagio quasi andante*. This lyrical and expressive movement brings out the strings and the timpani. The downward flowing principal theme appears to be an elaboration of the motto theme. A contrasting second theme section presents a quintet of solo strings in a passage of great tranquility. Wind and string groups are used antiphonally and in combination as the various themes are developed. The contrapuntal elaboration is extensive and leads to a sonorous climax for the entire orchestra. There is a reminiscence of the principal theme and then a *con anima* passage for strings leads directly to a grand pause which serves as a spring board into the finale.

IV. *Allegro*. The finale is based on the rondo scheme: the alternating of the principal theme, the refrain, with other material. The first contrasting section is set off by an elaborate passage for kettle drums. In the course of the movement the motto theme returns, and it is this theme that dominates for the full orchestral close.

Symphony No. 4, "Altitudes" JEAN MARTINON

The fourth symphony of Jean Martinon, which bears the title "Altitudes," was commissioned by the Orchestral Association in celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. As a preface to the score the composer has inscribed the following lines: "For what do they search, these climbers of mountains? Like the pioneers of cosmos, they seek the presence of God. God! the purest and the most formidable word that mankind has ever invented."

The composer has explained that his new symphony is not a descriptive or narrative composition, although the inspiration for the work came from mountains—the Alps "and all other mountains that we do not know." Mountainous heights, however, are only one aspect of the "altitudes" implied in the Symphony: in the mind of the composer there is the height of man's achievements through his inventive genius and perseverance; the aspirations of the inner life, the "spiritual ascent . . . the ascent of the soul toward an immeasurable infinity."

Mr. Martinon stated that while composing the Symphony "my thoughts were always of my orchestra—this magnificent instrument, a real Stradivarius for the conductor. Every detail of my score brought to mind each one of the marvelous musicians. I imagined this melody played by a certain group, that rhythm by another section, and this chord by another, . . . In brief, it is with love that I dedicate to them this Symphony. I hope it may prove worthy of them."

A conductor, composer, and violinist, Jean Martinon began his musical studies in Lyon, the city of his birth. Later, at the Paris Conservatory, he was a student of Albert Roussel in composition and of Roger Désormière and Charles Munch in conducting. He has continued to work in all three areas of accomplishment. He came to Chicago to begin the 1963 season of concerts as the seventh conductor since the founding of the Orchestra by Theodore Thomas in 1891.

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY
INTERNATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

All presentations are at 8:30 P.M. unless otherwise noted.

GUIOMAR NOVAES, *Pianist* (Choral Union Series) . . . Wednesday, October 12
Program: Bach Toccata in D minor; Beethoven Sonata Op. 31, No. 2; Chopin Preludes

"THE PLAY OF DANIEL"

Performed by the New York Pro Musica
in the Sanctuary of the First Methodist Church
Thursday, Friday, Saturday, December 8, 9 and 10

Tickets: \$5.00—\$4.00—\$3.00

Messiah

GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL
In Hill Auditorium

December 2 and 3, 8:30; December 4, 2:30

JOAN MOYNAGH, *Soprano*
CAROL SMITH, *Mezzo-Soprano*

LOREN DRISCOLL, *Tenor*
THOMAS PAUL, *Bass*

UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION WITH ORCHESTRA
MARY McCALL STUBBINS, *Organist*; LESTER McCoy, *Conductor*

Tickets: \$2.50—\$2.00—\$1.50—\$1.00

**THE FIFTH ANNUAL
Dance Festival**

Three performances in Hill Auditorium

*HOSHO NOH TROUPE Monday, October 24

From Suidobashi Noh Theatre, Tokyo. Presented in collaboration with the University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies. The program: "Sumidagawa," and "A Han-Noh."

ROBERT JOFFREY BALLET Wednesday, October 26

Young American "classic" company, with orchestra, specializing in both classic and modern choreography.

FIESTA MEXICANA Saturday, October 29

From Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City, in its first United States tour. Program includes "Deer Dance"; Dances from the Mayans and the Aztecs; Songs and Dances of Vera Cruz; with native orchestra.

Series Tickets: \$8.00—\$6.00—\$5.00 Single Concerts: \$4.00—\$3.00—\$2.00

* "Music of the Japanese Noh Drama"—Lecture-demonstration Tuesday evening, October 18, 8:30 P.M., at School of Music Recital Hall. Professor William P. Malm (Open to the public without charge).

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY, Burton Tower