

The University Musical Society

of
The University of Michigan



Presents

Symphony Orchestra of Brazil

ISAAC KARABTCHEVSKY, *Musical Director and Conductor*

CRISTINA ORTIZ, *Pianist*

SUNDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 20, 1977, AT 8:30

HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

P R O G R A M

- Preludio from *Bachianas Brasileiras*, No. 4 VILLA-LOBOS
- In Memoriam (American première) NOBRE
- Concerto No. 3 in C major, Op. 26, for Piano and Orchestra PROKOFIEV
Andante; allegro
Theme and Variations: andantino
Allegro ma non troppo

CRISTINA ORTIZ, *Pianist*

INTERMISSION

- Symphony No. 2 in D major BRAHMS
Allegro ma non troppo
Adagio ma non troppo
Allegretto grazioso
Allegro con spirito

Miss Ortiz records for Angel and EMI

PROGRAM NOTES

Preludio from *Bachianas Brasileiras*, No. 4 HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS
(1887-1959)

Villa-Lobos was born in Rio de Janeiro, and for a brief period attended the National Institute of Music in Rio de Janeiro. In 1912, he traveled throughout Brazil looking for folk-songs and dances peculiar to the different parts of the country. He wrote down the melodies he heard and it was only after he had assimilated the native music of Brazil that he arrived at his own personal style. It has been said of him that "he is Brazil in music, for more than any other composer he seems to be actuated by the interior flame of his race." The *Bachianas Brasileiras*, No. 4, was originally written in 1930 for piano solo. The composer himself transcribed it for orchestra in 1941. The work consists of four movements. The first—Prelude—written in the style of Bach, is often performed by itself.

In Memoriam MARLOS NOBRE
(b. 1939)

Marlos Nobre, one of the most renowned Brazilian composers of our time, was born in 1939, in Recife, State of Pernambuco. From 1954 to 1959 he studied piano, theory, harmony and counterpoint first at the Conservatorium in Pernambuco, then at the Ernani Braga Institute and School of Music of the University of Recife. In 1960 he studied composition with H. J. Koellreuter in Rio de Janeiro, and in 1959-62, with Camargo Guarnieri in São Paulo. In 1963 he was granted a scholarship of the Rockefeller Foundation which enabled him to continue his studies, mainly of the new techniques of composition, at the Torcuato di Tello Instituto, Buenos Aires, with Ginastera, Messiaen, Ricardo Malipiero, and Dallapiccola. Throughout his career, he has won many prizes and appeared in major international events and festivals.

As a composer, Marlos Nobre uses *avant garde* processes of creation, thus providing new alternatives for the Brazilian music. He writes absolute music, abstract in meaning; his music often causes a physical impact, because of the rare richness of the sounds and a marked use of percussion.

In Memoriam, heard this evening, was first performed on September 18, 1976, in Rio de Janeiro, with the Orchestra Sinfônica Brasileira. Marlos Nobre worked on this piece for a long time. He began to write the score in 1971, commissioned by the Federal Council of Education, the Orchestra Sinfônica Brasileira acting as an intermediary. The first version was completed in the same year. The composer, however, was not satisfied and asked the orchestra not to perform it until he had reworked many parts and changed some basic features of its structure. Not until three years later, in 1976, did he consider the work ready to be performed for the public. *In Memoriam* was written in honor of the composer's father. Only after beginning to write the score, did Nobre realize that the music was greatly influenced both by the musical and the human mind of his father, of whom he had a most vivid recollection. As an amateur violin player, his father used to finger his instrument quietly, late at night, after a hard day's work as an accountant. He had distinct preferences for certain themes, such as a waltz which opened with the following notes: E — D-sharp — B. It was the persistence with which these notes came to the composer's mind while writing the score that made him aware that he was composing a work in memory of his father.

Concerto No. 3 in C major, Op. 26 SERGE PROKOFIEV
(1891-1953)

Prokofiev wrote his Concerto No. 3 in C major for Piano and Orchestra in the summer of 1921. It was first performed in Chicago, on December 17, 1921, with the composer as soloist. Prokofiev himself describes this work as follows: "The first movement opens quietly. After a brief introduction, the theme appears in a clarinet solo, and is taken up by the violins. The tempo changes, and the principal subject is stated by the piano. Then a passage in chords leads to the second subject, played in the oboe with a pizzicato accompaniment. The piano takes up this subject and develops it at length. The tempo reverts to *Andante*, and the orchestra returns to the first theme, *fortissimo*. The piano joins in, the theme is given a remarkable broad treatment. The *Allegro* reappears with the principal theme, the second subject is developed with

an increasing brilliance, and the movement ends with an imposing crescendo. The second movement is a theme with five variations. The theme is announced by the orchestra. In the first variation, the piano treats the theme sentimentally. In the second and third variations the tempo changes to *allegro*. In variation four the tempo goes back to *andante*, and the piano and orchestra dialogue meditatively on the theme. Variation five is an energetic *allegro giusto* that leads without pause into a restatement of the theme by the orchestra, commented delicately in the piano. The finale starts with a staccato theme for bassoons and pizzicato strings, interrupted by the stormy entry of the piano. An alternative theme appears in the woodwinds, with a slackening of tempo. The piano replies in the caustic style of the work, and the whole material is developed until it reaches a brilliant coda."

Symphony No. 2 in D major JOHANNES BRAHMS
(1833-1897)

Brahms was born in Hamburg, Germany, on May 7, 1833. His father, from whom he received his first music lessons, was a double-bass player in the Hamburg city theater. Brahms has been called by many the last of the great classical masters. Although it is impossible to deny him the possession of those qualities that mark the composers of the romantic school, it is as a classicist that he must be seen among modern musicians. Throughout his career he adopted musical forms used by Beethoven and the few instances in which he departed from them might well be disregarded, were it not for the fact that they are of such high value that they must be thought of as a logical development of musical form, and not as indicative of revolt against the existing modes of structure. He has a wonderful power of handling classical forms so as to make them seem entirely new. His themes are always noble and have a deep emotional appeal.

Brahms' works range from simple songs like *Wiegenlied* to elaborate and superb choral works like the *German Requiem*, from elegant waltzes to powerful concertos for piano and orchestra, from merry Hungarian dances to beautifully worked symphonies. The Second has perhaps the most individualized form among the four symphonies. The slow movement is the most meditative one in all his orchestral works. The *allegretto* moves in a pastoral atmosphere and in the *Finale* a melody appears, warm and magnetic. The Symphony ends with an energetic Coda.

About the Artists

Attempts to establish a symphony orchestra in Rio de Janeiro date back as far as 1834 when Francisco Manuel da Silva, composer of the Brazilian national anthem, founded the Philharmonic Society of Rio de Janeiro. During the ensuing years several orchestra societies were founded, but it was not until 1940 when Arturo Toscanini, who was visiting Brazil with the NBC Symphony, founded the Symphony Orchestra of Brazil in collaboration with the Brazilian composer, Jose Siqueira. Since then the Symphony has attracted such eminent conductors as Koussevitzky, Bernstein, van Beinum, and Stravinsky, and performed with distinguished soloists such as Rubinstein, Arrau, Stern, Giesecking, Backhaus, Kempff, Flagstad, and Rostropovich.

As Musical Director of the Symphony Orchestra of Brazil, a post he has held since 1968, Isaac Karabtchevsky holds a key position in South America's musical scene. A Brazilian of Russian origin, he embodies the musical heritage of Russia, infused with the dynamism of contemporary Brazil. He is responsible for the success of the Brazilian Symphony in Europe and was the artist chosen to conduct the first musical performance for the inaugural ceremonies in the new Brazilian capital, Brasilia. He is also widely acclaimed as a vital television personality, bringing music to an audience of millions. Tonight's concert is part of the Orchestra's inaugural journey to the United States, and the first time Mr. Karabtchevsky has traveled with his orchestra to this country.

Cristina Ortiz won nearly every prize available in her native Brazil during her childhood, then, at age eighteen, caused a sensation by winning first prize in the Van Cliburn Competition. Since then she has performed extensively in Europe and the United States, and also in Japan, New Zealand, and South Africa. Tonight's concert marks Miss Ortiz' Ann Arbor debut.

