



100 Years
of Great
Performances

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra

DMITRI KITAENKO

Music Director and Conductor

SATURDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 3, 1979, AT 8:30

HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

A Night on the Bald Mountain MUSSORGSKY
Romeo and Juliet, Overture-Fantasy TCHAIKOVSKY

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 3 in C minor, Op. 44 PROKOFIEV
Moderato
Andante
Allegro agitato
Andante mosso; allegro moderato

Angel, Mercury, Monitor, London, Everest, and Vox Records.

The Musical Society is proud to participate in a prestigious two-month-long Russian Arts Festival on The University of Michigan campus, which begins with tonight's concert by the Moscow Philharmonic and includes a Festival of Russian Dance on March 24, also in this auditorium. The centerpiece of the Festival is an exhibition at the University Museum of Art, "The Art of Russia, 1800-1850," featuring paintings, graphics, and decorative objects on loan from museums in the Soviet Union. The complete offering of concerts, drama, dance, lectures, and contemporary films may be obtained from the planners of the Festival, the Center for Russian and East European Studies in Lane Hall.

PROGRAM NOTES

A Night on the Bald Mountain MODEST MUSSORGSKY (1839–1891)

In the winter of 1871–72, Mussorgsky, joining three other celebrated Russian composers who were his friends as well, undertook to write an opera. As might be predicted in such a unique attempt, the composers—Borodin, Cui, and Rimsky-Korsakov—never completed the fairy tale opera, “Mlada.” For Mussorgsky there was a happy “fallout” from this venture, however, a tone poem that proved to be one of his most popular works. It was originally called “The Dream of the Peasant Lad,” and Mussorgsky thought of using it as part of another opera he was working on. But that was not to be. The piece has managed to make it on its own.

The tone poem depicts the Witches’ Sabbath on St. John’s Eve, June 23. The Feast of St. John the Baptist is celebrated to coincide with the summer solstice, a time of year that has been celebrated since ancient times. According to an old Russian tradition, the god Tchernobog appears as a black goat and presides over the festivities, held on Bald Mountain.

Within the score there is enough indication by Mussorgsky of his programmatic intentions. He noted, “Subterranean sounds of supernatural voices. Appearance of the spirits of darkness, followed by that of Satan himself. Glorification of Satan and celebration of the Black Mass. Witches’ Sabbath, interrupted at its height by the sounds of the far-off bell of the little church in the village. It disperses the Spirits of Darkness. Daybreak.”

Romeo and Juliet, Overture-Fantasy PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840–1893)

Tchaikovsky was a young man and an inexperienced composer when he started to write a descriptive overture for orchestra based on Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, and he worked over the idea with his friend Balakirev, a self-taught composer with extraordinary natural gifts. None of Balakirev’s fine compositions would earn him a career or a place in history like Tchaikovsky’s, but he possessed in abundance one quality that Tchaikovsky completely lacked—self-confidence.

Almost every step in Tchaikovsky’s work on this score was taken under his friend’s scrutiny. It was Balakirev who suggested the subject, the musical style and form. While the work was in progress, he criticized the themes and their organization, and when Tchaikovsky tired of it and allowed his attention to wander elsewhere, Balakirev steered him back to *Romeo*.

In November 1869, the score was done, and in March 1870, it was given its first performance by the Orchestra of the Imperial Russian Music Society of Moscow, conducted by Nikolai Rubinstein. Alas, it was a sad failure, and Tchaikovsky (and Balakirev) set to work on a revised version. This was performed in Saint Petersburg in 1872, but was still not satisfactory. In the summer of 1878, Tchaikovsky briefly considered writing a *Romeo and Juliet* opera, but then turned back to his failed Overture. By September 1880, it finally became the Overture-Fantasy we know today, one of the most popular orchestral compositions of the entire nineteenth century.

The musical structure is not very remote from the classic sonata-form, preceded by a slow introduction. Friar Lawrence is depicted in the somber, hymn-like opening; and in the main section of the work, the bustling first subject represents the street brawls of the Montagues and Capulets; the lyrical second subject, the young lovers. The score calls for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, harp and strings. It is dedicated to Balakirev.

—LEONARD BURKAT

Symphony No. 3, in C minor, Op. 44 SERGEI PROKOFIEV
(1891–1953)

Prokofiev was the last great Russian composer who lived and worked in the West as well as in the Soviet Union. He was born in a remote Ukrainian village where his agronomist father worked as manager of a large estate and his mother gave him his first music lessons. Later he studied at the Conservatory in Saint Petersburg and became a brilliant pianist. After the Revolution, Prokofiev came to America and then settled in Paris, where he was an influential figure until he returned to Russia in 1933.

The history of Prokofiev's Third Symphony is intimately intertwined with that of an opera, *The Flaming Angel*, which he completed in Paris in 1927. When the orchestral parts failed to arrive in Berlin in time for the scheduled première, the performance there was canceled and the work was not staged until 1954. After Serge Koussevitzky conducted a concert performance of excerpts from the opera in 1928, Prokofiev noticed that he had treated some of his opera themes symphonically, and he reorganized them into this work. "I consider [it] to be one of my best compositions," he said. "I do not like it to be called *The Flaming Angel Symphony* [and] prefer [it] to be regarded as pure symphony. The main themes were composed as symphonic music long before I began the opera, and when I subsequently used them for the Symphony, they returned to their native element [adapted and abridged]."

The tempo of the opening movement is *Moderato*, but the music is turbulent and dramatic. It is based on three themes that are taken in development to a point of tremendous climax, then quietly recalled. "In contrast with [this] violent and passionate style," Prokofiev said, "the second movement is a calm and contemplative *Andante*." The third movement, *Allegro agitato*, which was related in the composer's mind to the finale of Chopin's Second Piano Sonata, he called "a scherzo of which the underlying sentiment is hardly gay. It begins as a kind of perpetual-motion played by the strings. The trio is a *canzonetta*." In the finale, the dark world of the first movement returns.

The Symphony was first performed by Pierre Monteux and the Paris Symphony Orchestra in 1929. It is scored for woodwinds in threes, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba, timpani, percussion, two harps, and strings.

—LEONARD BURKAT

About the Artists

The Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra was founded in 1951 by the distinguished conductor of the Bolshoi Opera, Samuel Samosud, and under his supervision undertook performances of new Soviet symphonic music and the concert performance of operas seldom heard in the Soviet Union. In 1960 Kiril Kondrashin, well-known to American audiences, was appointed Director, and during his fifteen-year tenure conducted the Orchestra in two tours of the United States, one in 1965 which included two concerts in Ann Arbor, and another in 1970. In 1963 the Orchestra toured Hungary, Yugoslavia, England, and France. The Orchestra's many recordings have proven enormously popular throughout the world, garnering such awards as France's *Grand Prix du Disque*.

Dmitri Kitaenko received his musical education at the Leningrad Conservatory, the Moscow Conservatory, and the Academy of Music and Fine Arts in Vienna. Upon returning to Moscow he joined the Stanislavsky Theater where he became chief conductor, and still continues in that capacity. In 1969 Kitaenko was invited to compete in the international conducting competition founded by Herbert von Karajan and won second prize out of three hundred applicants. Maestro Kitaenko has conducted all the major orchestras of the Soviet Union and guest-conducts throughout Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Eastern Europe, and Latin America. He made his debut tour of the United States with the Moscow State Symphony in 1975. Tonight marks his Ann Arbor debut.

Founders Day Concert
Saturday, February 24 at 8:30, in Hill Auditorium

A most significant event is recalled in this concert which celebrates in music and dance the formal adoption of the constitution of the University Musical Society on this date in 1880. As Wystan Stevens, Ann Arbor's city historian, provides special narration, the Festival Chorus and Choral Union will chronicle the 100-year history of the Musical Society which has consistently presented the cream of the world's performing artists to this music-loving community. All seven Choral Union conductors since 1879 will be represented by works they have composed and/or conducted. Compositions of former conductors Albert Stanley and Earl Moore, and current conductor Donald Bryant, will be included in the first half of the program, followed by choruses and dances from Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, songs of Franz Schubert, and Randall Thompson's *The Peaceable Kingdom*. A "Gallery of 100"—enlarged photographs of famous artists who have performed on Ann Arbor's concert stages in the past century—will surround concertgoers in the main floor lobby for their enjoyment during intermission.

As their centennial "bonus" this season, subscribers to the Choral Union Series receive free tickets (upon request) for this concert; other concertgoers may purchase tickets at \$4 (general admission) in our Burton Tower office.

. . . and a Reminder

Those holding tickets for Nicolai Ghiaurov, originally scheduled in the Choral Union Series for March 17, will want to mark their calendars for Thursday, April 12, when he will be replaced by **Marilyn Horne**, Soprano. The Ghiaurov tickets should be retained for admission to the Horne recital. Additional seats remain for sale, from \$4 to \$12.

Ann Arbor May Festival, 1979

Wednesday-Saturday, April 25, 26, 27, 28, in Hill Auditorium

The PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA and UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION

EUGENE ORMANDY and RICCARDO MUTI, *Conductors*

ALICIA DE LARROCHA, <i>Pianist</i>	VICTORIA DE LOS ANGELES, <i>Soprano</i>
ALMA JEAN SMITH, <i>Soprano</i>	ZURAB SOTKILAVA, <i>Tenor</i>
ALEXANDRINA MILCHEVA, <i>Mezzo Soprano</i>	MARTTI TALVELA, <i>Bass</i>

Wednesday, April 25—*Ormandy and de los Angeles*: Hindemith: "Mathis der Maler"; Ravel: *Shéhérazade*; Prokofiev: *Scythian Suite*; Mozart: "Voi che sapete" from *Marriage of Figaro*; Rossini: "Una voce poco fa" from *Barber of Seville*; Wagner: "Dich teure Halle" from *Tannhäuser*.

Thursday, April 26—*Muti*: Mendelssohn: *Symphony No. 3*; Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 5*.

Friday, April 27—*Muti and Larrocha, All-Beethoven*: *Symphony No. 6*; *Piano Concerto No. 3*; *Overture to Leonore No. 3*.

Saturday, April 28—*Ormandy, Choral Union, Soloists*: Verdi: "Manzoni" *Requiem*.

Plus a special "Bonus" recital for series subscribers: Monday, April 23 at 8:30, Hill Auditorium
ALICIA DE LARROCHA and VICTORIA DE LOS ANGELES
performing music of their native Spain.

Series orders accepted at \$42, \$32, \$18, and \$14; single tickets on sale March 1.

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

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