



*International
Presentations of
Music & Dance*

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Detroit Symphony Orchestra

GUNTHER HERBIG
Music Director and Conductor

HEINRICH SCHIFF, *Cellist*

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, FEBRUARY 2, 1986, AT 4:00
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

Ritual and IncantationsHALE SMITH

Cello Concerto in D minor LALO

Lento, allegro maestoso
Intermezzo: andantino con moto
Andante, allegro vivace

HEINRICH SCHIFF, *Cellist*

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, Op. 97 ("Rhenish")SCHUMANN

Lebhaft
Scherzo: sehr massig
Nicht schnell
Feierlich
Lebhaft

Detroit Symphony: London and Mercury Records.

Gunther Herbig: Vox Records.

Heinrich Schiff: Phonogram, EMI/Electrola, Deutsche Grammophon, Philips, and Amadeo Records.

Activities of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra are made possible with the support of the State of Michigan, through funds from the Michigan Council for the Arts, and through funding from the City of Detroit.

PROGRAM NOTES

by MICHAEL FLEMING

Ritual and Incantations HALE SMITH (b. 1925)

Hale Smith was born in Cleveland, where he studied piano with Dorothy Price and composition with Marcel Dick at the Cleveland Institute of Music. In 1958 he moved to New York, where he worked as a music editor for several publishers, arranged for jazz groups, and composed. In 1969 he became advisor to the Black Music Center at Indiana University, and the next year joined the faculty of the University of Connecticut, from which he retired in 1984 with the title of professor emeritus.

His major orchestral works include *Orchestral Set* (1952, revised 1968), *Contours* (1961), *Ritual and Incantations* (1974), and *Innerflexions* (1977). He defines himself as "a black composer who has extensive experience in jazz and non-jazz areas. When I write of these experiences, my way of sensing rhythm, pitch relationships, formal balances, and so on, are influenced by my background."

Ritual and Incantations was commissioned by the Thorne Music Fund and first performed in Houston on September 7, 1974. It is, according to the composer, an "objective evocation of ritualistic and incantatory phenomena, exploring the types of responses an audience might have, and dealing with images of that sort." The techniques used, especially overlapping, repeated rhythmic patterns of various lengths, are derived from West African practice, but Smith points out that the work does not incorporate folk materials.

The principal materials of the piece are set forth at the beginning. These are combined, overlapped, and developed by the orchestra, in keeping with Smith's dictum that "composition is the art of discovering the implications of one's musical ideas." The roles of the various divisions of the orchestra are reversed from conventional practice, with the large percussion section at the forefront, the winds and brasses varying between melodic and chordal roles, and the strings kept generally in the background. There is a double buildup, beginning at the bottom of the orchestra and gradually spreading upwards, and growing rhythmically more complex. The first violins, in their highest register, bridge the gap to the second, shorter half, in which the fabric expands from the top to the bottom.

Cello Concerto in D minor EDOUARD LALO (1823-1892)

For listeners in the Anglo-Saxon world, Lalo is almost a one-work composer, represented often on concert programs by his spicy *Symphonie espagnole* for violin and orchestra, seldom by any of his other pieces. There is no denying the popular appeal of this and his other works for solo instrument and orchestra, but in the context of French music in the nineteenth century, he is still more important.

During much of Lalo's lifetime, French taste was determined by the opera and the ballet, both defined by the middle-class tastes of the period. Even Beethoven's symphonies had made slow headway in France, and in the second half of the nineteenth century, to label a work "Wagnerian" was to condemn it. If Debussy and his contemporaries were able to move beyond nationalistic categories, to create a French music of universal appeal, no small credit goes to the pioneering work of Lalo.

Lalo first came to public attention in the 1870s with a group of orchestral works: a violin concerto and the *Symphonie espagnole*, both written for the Spanish virtuoso Pablo de Sarasate; the cello concerto played today; and the *Rapsodie norvégienne*. He had been discouraged from composing for the stage by the lukewarm reception of his opera, *Fiesque*, written in 1866-67, but he made a second attempt in 1875, setting Edouard Blau's *Le roi d'Ys*. The Paris Opera turned it down, asking instead for a ballet, which he supplied, with the warning that he knew nothing about the genre. Still, he refused to give up on opera, and when *Le roi d'Ys* was finally staged, at the Opéra-Comique on May 7, 1888, it was an unexpected hit. Gallic traditionalists decried it as Wagnerian, as they had when excerpts had been presented in concert form years before. But there was no turning back: Wagner had to be reckoned with, and by the judgment of posterity, Lalo reckoned with him very ably.

To some Francophile diehards, the Cello Concerto of 1877 might equally well have sounded Germanic. But by then, Franck and his school had established the right of French composers to think serious thoughts, and this and Lalo's other orchestral works of the period were well received.

The composer solves the perennial problem of balancing cello and orchestra by keeping the latter well in the background. Fully scored as the orchestral tuttis are, they offer little more than introduction, conclusion, and occasional commentary. In the first movement, he establishes the cellist's primacy at once, allowing him to enter, after a short ritornello, with an improvisatory passage that will return in expanded form to become the cadenza. One might wish that the orchestra would occasionally speak up, but the cello line is garrulous enough to hold the listeners' attention, exploiting as it does the most songful range of the instrument.

In the middle movement, labeled *Intermezzo*, the composer fuses slow movement and scherzo, twice alternating a sentimental strain and a livelier one with a piquant orchestral accompaniment. After a quasi-recitative introduction, the cellist is turned loose at last in the finale to show the full range of his virtuosity, only hinted at so far. The principal theme has just a touch of the Spanish rhythm that listeners found so enticing in the 1870s and that Lalo had learned to exploit to the fullest.

Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major ("Rhenish") ROBERT SCHUMANN
(1810-1856)

Schumann was apprehensive when his old friend Ferdinand Hiller wrote to offer him the municipal music directorship in Düsseldorf in the autumn of 1849. The Rhineland town held many attractions, including a music festival dating back to 1818 and a lively choral society and orchestra. The atmosphere in Dresden, where the Schumanns lived, was confining, but still he hesitated.

"The other day I looked for some notices of Düsseldorf in an old geography book," he wrote back to Hiller, "and among the places of note in that town I found mentioned three convents and a mad-house. I have no objection to the former, but it made me quite uncomfortable to read about the latter. . . . I have to be very careful in guarding against all melancholy impressions of that kind. And though, as you are aware, we musicians often dwell on sunny heights, yet when the unhappiness of life comes before our eyes in all its naked ugliness, it hurts us all the more. . . ."

Reservations notwithstanding, Schumann accepted the post; in retrospect, however, his letter seems uncannily prophetic. He began his tenure in Düsseldorf "on sunny heights" and ended it in the depths of mental collapse. In 1853, after a concert at which Schumann was unable even to give the downbeat, he withdrew altogether and was placed, at his own request, in a sanatorium at Enderich, where he died.

For the first few months, however, Düsseldorf seemed a paradise, and Schumann poured forth music unstintingly. The Cello Concerto was written in two weeks in October 1850, and the *Rhenish* Symphony (No. 3), between November 2 and December 9. It seems that Schumann never actually used the nickname "Rhenish," but there is no doubt about the symphony's relation to the picturesque vistas and open-hearted people of the Rhineland. In the manuscript, the second movement is labeled "morning on the Rhine," and the fourth was originally styled "accompaniment to a solemn ceremony." The inspiration for the latter was the enthronement of the archbishop of Cologne as a cardinal, an event that the Schumanns attended and that evidently left a deep impression.

Alone among Schumann's symphonies, the Third begins without an introduction. The principal theme has an irresistible momentum, created by the conflict between three-beat and six-beat meter. Despite the heaviness of the orchestration, which makes the conductor's task difficult, the movement is a single outburst of joy, reaching its peak near the end as the horns join in chorus to reiterate a tune that never grows stale, however often it recurs.

The second and third movements offer relief from these high spirits, like similarly placed interludes in the symphonies of Brahms. The second is a slow *Ländler*, the principal section ingeniously interwoven with the trio; the third is a songlike intermezzo, whose warming glow is due in no small part to a style of orchestration that in retrospect we can label "Brahmsian," though Schumann's discovery of the young eagle was three years away.

The fourth and fifth movements form a unit, the voices that have been hushed in contemplation in the former bursting forth with a shout in the latter. All his life, Schumann was a devoted student of Bach, and here he pays his homage in a very credible re-creation of baroque textures and motifs. The trombones have been held in reserve until now, and as soon as they are heard, we are transported into a higher realm. A timeless rite is enacted, and as it draws to a close, the trumpets break the stillness, ushering in a solemn dance in which earth and heaven are joined.

About the Artists

Since its founding 72 years ago, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra has earned a reputation as one of the country's leading orchestras, receiving high acclaim at home and on tour. In the last decade the Orchestra has gained international attention through festivals, opera productions, and tours to the East Coast with performances at Carnegie Hall and Washington's Kennedy Center. In 1979 the Detroit Symphony made its first European tour, performing 24 concerts in eight countries. Dramatic successes in major music capitals such as London, Paris, and Berlin placed the Orchestra in the international spotlight, drawing critical praise and standing ovations. After an absence of almost two decades from recording, the Detroit Symphony returned to that field with a major international label, London Records. The first disc was made in Detroit in the spring of 1978, followed by the release of fourteen discs. In 1983 the Grand Prix du Disque was awarded to the Orchestra and Antal Dorati for their compact disc recording of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*.

Since Gunther Herbig's arrival in 1984, the Orchestra has given its second Carnegie Hall concert, performed at the 1985 Casals Festival in Puerto Rico, and played a special concert in Washington's Kennedy Center celebrating the 99th birthday of the Statue of Liberty. The Orchestra has jointly commissioned — along with Carnegie Hall and the American Symphony League — a piano concerto from Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, scheduled for its world première in June 1986.

Detroit Symphony concerts are regularly broadcast on radio in some twelve major cities, including New York, Chicago, and Washington, and on more than fifty national public radio stations by satellite feed. The broadcasts are produced by WQRS-FM and sponsored by General Motors Corporation.

Music Directors of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra

1914-1917	Weston Gales	1951-1962	Paul Paray
1919-1935	Ossip Gabrilowitsch	1963-1973	Sixten Ehrling
1936-1942	Victor Kolar and Franco Ghione	1974-1977	Aldo Ceccato
		1977-1981	Antal Dorati
1944-1949	Karl Krueger	1984-	Gunther Herbig

Gunther Herbig is rapidly gaining the critical attention and recognition on this continent that he has enjoyed for some time in Europe, England, and the Far East. Born in Czechoslovakia of Austrian parents, Maestro Herbig began musical instruction at the Franz Liszt Academy in Weimar. He studied conducting with Herman Abendroth, Hermann Scherchen, and Arvid Jansons, and was one of the six students out of nearly 160 applicants selected for two years of intensive study with Herbert von Karajan. From 1962 to 1966 he was music director in Potsdam, Germany, where he directed operas, orchestral concerts, oratorios, and choral works. He then moved to the Berlin Symphony as conductor under Kurt Sanderling for six years before becoming music director of the Dresden Philharmonic in 1972, a post he held through 1977. He then returned to the Berlin Symphony as general music director until 1983. From 1979 to 1981 he served as principal guest conductor of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and returns there regularly for guest appearances. As a guest conductor he has appeared with the major orchestras of North America and Europe and has toured with the Dresden Philharmonic, Leipzig Gewandhaus, and the Berlin Symphony in Europe, Japan, and Mexico. His other activities include recording, and radio and television appearances.

Maestro Herbig's appearance with the Detroit Symphony in Carnegie Hall in October 1985 marked his own debut there, during their highly successful East Coast tour last fall. His current achievement in Detroit is a nine-day festival to begin on February 21 — called "Images," it is a festival of music inspired by poetry, literature, and painting, Maestro Herbig's endeavor to formally recognize the multiple sources of inspiration which affect a composer's work.

Heinrich Schiff has developed an international career since his debuts in Vienna and London in 1973. He has performed under distinguished conductors such as Sir Colin Davis, Bernard Haitink, Claudio Abbado, Neville Marriner, Klaus Tennstedt, Antal Dorati, and Kurt Masur, and appeared as guest soloist with the London and Stockholm Philharmonics, London Symphony, Gewandhaus of Leipzig, Concertgebouw of Amsterdam, and the orchestras of Cleveland and Cincinnati, Berlin, Hamburg, and Dresden. His festival appearances include Edinburgh, Salzburg, Warsaw, Vienna, and Berlin. Mr. Schiff's first recording in 1978 won him the Deutsche Schallplattenpreis (the German equivalent of the Grammy award) as the "Artist of the Year." Born in Gmuden, Austria, to a musical family, Mr. Schiff began piano lessons at age six and cello studies at age nine. He plays a 1698 Stradivarius cello.

This afternoon's performance marks the 60th concert of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in Ann Arbor since it first appeared here in 1919. The Musical Society is pleased to present Gunther Herbig and Heinrich Schiff in their Ann Arbor debuts.

A Special Benefit Performance

by

Benny Goodman and his Big Band

Opening Act: James Dapogny's Chicago Jazz Band
Saturday, March 22, at 8:00 p.m., Hill Auditorium

Tickets now on sale:

Special Benefit Circle, Main Floor — \$50

250 seats, first ten rows of center sections

includes a \$25 tax-deductible donation to the Musical Society

\$25 Remaining main floor

\$15 First eight rows, second balcony

\$20 All first balcony

\$12 Remaining rows, second balcony

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*These members may voluntarily revolve seating within the section on a regular basis.

The Detroit Symphony Orchestra
respectfully dedicates this concert
to the memory of
the seven crew members
of the space shuttle Challenger.

The concert will begin with
the National Anthem.

DETROIT
SYMPHONY
Gunther Herbig, Music Director