

1962

Eighty-fourth Season

1963

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Charles A. Sink, President

Gail W. Rector, Executive Director

Lester McCoy, Conductor

Fifth Program

Eighty-fourth Annual Choral Union Series

Complete Series 3367

THE LENINGRAD PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

EUGEN MRAVINSKY, *Conductor*

as a part of the Cultural Exchange Program

maintained by the

Governments of the United States and the U.S.S.R.

MONDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 12, 1962, AT 8:30

HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

P R O G R A M

Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro* (1786) MOZART

Music for String Instruments, Percussion and Celesta (1936) BARTÓK

Andante tranquillo

Allegro

Adagio

Allegro molto

Soloists: *Honored Artist RSFSR V. OSADCHUK, tympani*

Artist RSFSR E. SINITZINA, harp

O. KRYLOVA, piano

N. NURIDJANYAN, celesta

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 5, Op. 47 (1937) SHOSTAKOVICH

Moderato; allegro non troppo

Allegretto

Largo

Allegro non troppo

Deutsche Grammophon Records

The Steinway is the official piano of the University Musical Society.

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

PROGRAM NOTES

Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro* (1786) WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791)

Based on a comedy by Beaumarchais with a libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte, *The Marriage of Figaro* was written in a house on the Schulerstrasse in Vienna, which is now a museum open to the public. There it was first produced in 1786. In *The Victor Book of the Symphony* Charles O'Connell calls it "one of the most brilliant pieces of writing for strings in the orchestral repertoire . . . full of the grace and delicacy that has always marked the music of Mozart; it has in addition a nervous vitality and humor that are most engaging. . . . Toward the end occurs one of the most exciting crescendo passages to be found in all Mozart's music; and the conclusion has a brevity and wit that are surprisig and delightful."

Music for String Instruments, Percussion and Celesta (1936) BELA BARTÓK (1881–1945)

In the middle 1930's, Bartók, that tireless collector of national songs and dances, and a composer who with the liveliest interest grasped the newest tendencies of European music, reached the height of his creative work in the composition bearing the unusual title "Music for String Instruments, Percussion and Celesta." It was commissioned by the Basel Chamber Orchestra under Paul Sacher to mark that organization's tenth anniversary in 1937.

This work impresses one by the wealth and variety of the tonal material and by the grand sweep of contrapuntal technique strikingly exemplified in that most difficult and rarely used type of polyphonic construction, the "fan-shaped fugue" of the first part and of the *Allegretto* episode of the third part. Despite the diversity of the melodic material, its sonority leans upon typical Hungarian folk rhythms and intonations which give the work its stylistic unity.

According to David Ewen's *Complete Book of Twentieth Century Music*, "The ensemble for which this composition is written is two string quartets (merged in the first movement, but treated independently thereafter), the percussion, double basses and celesta. The third movement has been described by Lawrence Gilman as a 'mystical nocturne,' creating a hazy atmosphere of quiet and mystery. The work closes with an energetic *Allegro molto*, one of whose principal subjects is a peasant dance in the Lydian mode."

Symphony No. 5, Op. 47 (1937) DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906–)

Shostakovich wrote his first symphony (Op. 10) in 1925 when he was nineteen years of age. This work revealed a creative genius of such outstanding talent, and a craftsman of such extraordinary ability, that it won immediate world-wide recognition. The "October Symphony," his second, written in commemoration of the tenth anni-

versary of the Bolshevik revolution, and the "May Day Symphony," his third, composed in honor of the working classes' holiday on May the first, in which he envisaged a world socialism, did not, in spite of their programmatic intentions, repeat the success of the first. A conflict which had begun to appear between the artist's natural expression and Soviet official sanction, came to a climax when he produced his opera "Lady Macbeth of Mzensk" (1935). This opera, according to the critics in *Pravda*, the chief paper of the Communist party, was "founded upon formalistic ideas and bourgeois musical conceptions," and was "a concession to bourgeois taste." The Union of Soviet Composers and other official, but nonmusical organizations, placed Shostakovich in disfavor, and his career as a composer was definitely jeopardized for a period. After completing the Fourth Symphony, he himself withdrew it from performance believing it would not please the State. The Fifth Symphony played on this evening's program was composed on the basis of the criticism that had been leveled against him and was performed in celebration of the October revolution (1937). With it, Shostakovich was officially restored to grace, for according to the critic Andrew Budyakovsky, in the *Moscow Daily News*, "The composer, while retaining the originality of his art in this new composition, has, to a great extent, overcome the ostentatiousness, deliberate musical affectation and misuse of the grotesque which had left a pernicious print on many of his former compositions. His fifth symphony is a work of great depth, with emotional wealth and content, and is of great importance as a milestone in the composer's development. The fetters of musical formalism which held the composer captive so long, and prevented him from creating works profound in conception, have been torn off. He must follow up this new trend in his work. He must turn boldly toward Soviet reality. He must understand it more profoundly and find in it a new stimulus for his work."

This criticism seems curious in the extreme, for in this symphony, Shostakovich, meek and penitent after his official chastisement, had created a completely traditional and abstract symphony. The fifth symphony is formed with classic simplicity and orchestrated with utmost clarity. The themes for the most part are broadly melodic, their treatment plastic, and their development logically and, in some instances, ingeniously carried out.

THE LENINGRAD PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

The Leningrad Philharmonic is the oldest orchestra in Russia, and its history stretches back into the latter part of the nineteenth century when it was founded. It was called the State Symphony Orchestra until 1921 when it became a member of the Leningrad Philharmonic Society. Concurrent with the United States visit of the Leningrad Philharmonic, the Robert Shaw Chorale and Orchestra is concertizing throughout the U.S.S.R.

1962 — UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY PRESENTATIONS — 1963

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

H I L L A U D I T O R I U M

- *"MARRIAGE OF FIGARO" (C. U. Series) . . . Saturday, November 17
"RIGOLETTO" (Extra Series) . . . (2:30) Sunday, November 18
GERARD SOUZAY, *Baritone* (C. U. Series) . . . Tuesday, January 8
HAMBURG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (Extra Series) . Wednesday, January 16
ISTVAN KERTESZ, *Conductor*
PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (C. U. Series) . Thursday, February 14
WILLIAM STEINBERG, *Conductor*
TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (C. U. Series) . . . Tuesday, March 12
WALTER SUSSKIND, *Conductor*; ANNIE FISCHER, *Pianist*
BIRGIT NILSSON, *Soprano* (Extra Series) . . . Monday, March 18
SAN FRANCISCO BALLET (replacing Tokyo Ballet in
the Choral Union Series) . . . Friday, March 22
* Standing room only

Special Recital

- ARTUR RUBINSTEIN, *Pianist* . . . Thursday, February 7
Tickets: \$4.00—\$3.50—\$3.00—\$2.25—\$1.50

R A C K H A M A U D I T O R I U M

Special Chamber Music Concert

- CHICAGO LITTLE SYMPHONY . . . (2:30) Sunday, December 9
THOR JOHNSON, *Conductor*

Program:

Symphony No. 83 in G minor, "The Hen" (Haydn); The White Peacock, from "Roman Sketches," Op. 7, No. 1 (Griffes); Concerto in B-flat major for Harp and Orchestra (Handel); Fantasy, Chorale, and Fugue (Wallace Berry); Concerto in C major for Oboe and Orchestra (Eichner); Odoru Katachi for Percussion and Orchestra (Tircuit); Divertimento in D major, Op. 67 (Graener).

Tickets: \$2.50 and \$2.00

Chamber Music Festival

- BUDAPEST STRING QUARTET . . . February 20, 21, 22, 23, & (2:30) 24
Complete cycle of Beethoven string quartets
Series Tickets: \$10.00 and \$7.00
On sale November 5

- JULIAN BREAM, *Guitarist and Lutist* . . . (2:30) Sunday, March 31
Tickets on sale January 10 — \$2.50 and \$2.00

For tickets and information, address:
University Musical Society, Burton Memorial Tower