

The University Musical Society

of
The University of Michigan



Presents

The Prague Chamber Orchestra

FRIDAY EVENING, MARCH 19, 1976, AT 8:30
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

- Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550 MOZART
Molto allegro
Andante
Menuetto: allegretto
Finale: allegro assai
- Serenade No. 2 for Two Violins and Viola MARTINU
Allegro
Poco andante
Allegro con brio

INTERMISSION

- Chamber Music for Strings, Op. 21 KALABIS
Andante ma non troppo
Allegro, andante
Allegro, adagio molto
- Symphony No. 103 in E-flat major ("Drum Roll") HAYDN
Adagio, allegro con spirito
Andante
Menuetto
Allegro con spirito

Supraphon and Orion Records

PROGRAM NOTES

Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550 WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

The summer of 1788 in which Mozart wrote his last three symphonies had brought nothing but disappointments. The great success of *Don Giovanni* in Prague was not repeated in Vienna. Mozart found himself in great financial difficulties, and he was eventually forced to appeal to his friends for help. He had hoped to re-establish himself in the favor of the Viennese public with his three new symphonies, but the symphonies were probably not performed during his life time and he certainly derived no financial benefit from them. No sooner had he finished the first of these than his six-months-old daughter died. This sad loss must have had its effect on the second work of the group—the Symphony No. 40, in G minor. About a year earlier Mozart had written a string quintet in the same key. The sadness of the G-minor Quintet is too near despair to be sustained throughout the work. The Symphony, however, is on a larger scale, and the less intimate dimensions of the work call for a greater degree of austerity. Furthermore, the dramatic tension of the first movement is relieved by the *Andante*, and that of the *Menuetto* by the G major *Trio*, and so the finale can return once more to the dark tonality of G minor. It would be wrong to read too much that is personal into this Symphony. Mozart was too great a genius to want to express his misfortunes in music. The feeling in this Symphony is subordinated to a classical conception of form which never found a more beautiful and profound expression than in those works of Mozart, which, like the Symphony in G minor, are among the greatest achievements in the music of all time.

Serenade No. 2 for Two Violins and Viola BOHUSLAV MARTINU (1890-1959)

The music of Martinu was subjected to two important influences. One is found in his use of form, in his partiality to the Baroque structure of the concerto grosso. The other is discernible in his style, so often dependent on Czech folk elements. Though he drew copiously from Czech folk music (not so much from actual melodies as from the stylistic traits of these melodies), Martinu was by no means a present-day Smetana. The Czech influence is subtle, sometimes elusive; it is not possible to regard Martinu's music as a glorification of extension of Czech folk art, for the French manner had also contributed much to his writing in the way of clarity, economy, refinement, precision.

The Swiss conductor, Ernest Ansermet, has remarked that any pithy characterization of Martinu's music is not easy. Martinu's forms are, for the most part, traditional. His harmonic language (though sometimes complex) is also usually orthodox. His melodies, even when they have assimilated Czech elements, are not unique. But Ansermet goes on to put a finger on the essential quality that distinguishes Martinu's music—its expressiveness, attained "through media of his very own." There are few composers of our times who have achieved such true sentiment as is found in many Martinu works without resorting to conventional Romanticism.

DAVID EWEN, *The World of Twentieth Century Music*

Chamber Music for Strings, Op. 21 VÁCLAV KALABIS (b. 1923)

Václav Kalabis, born in Cervený, Kostelec, belongs to the leading representatives of the middle generation of Czech creative musicians. He studied composition at the Prague Conservatory of Music with Professor Emil Hlobil and at the Prague Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts under Professor Jaroslav Ridký. He learned all about his sphere of interest in theory and in practice. He has been choirmaster, music pedagogue, is music director and editor of the Czechoslovak Radio.

Kalabis is that type of artist for whom composition is the synthesis of an inner necessity and the conscious process, a perfectly balanced synthesis. He has clearly defined opinions on problems in the sphere of composition, and he talks to the point when he speaks, and in precise terms. His compositions tell of a pure and rich fund of musicality. This musicality, of course, is controlled by a consciousness of the rules of composition, but the opposite can also be maintained: there is an everlasting effect of the sensibilities on his intellect. Kalabis considers

the problems of the construction and the tectonics of the works of music to be the most important of the above-mentioned rules. All the elements of his composition testify to a very responsible approach towards musical creativity: the choice of subject material—the relationship of the motifs inside the movements—their mutual relationship within the framework of the whole composition—the choice of composition technique—the advantageous spacing of gradations, climaxes and anti-climatic waves—sober, but highly functional instrumentation. Kalabis ponders over and plans each of his works for a long time: his work tempo is definitely not hurried. But every composition means a contribution towards the composer's image and also for Czech musical culture.

The basis of Kalabis's musical fund is lyrical. The manner, however, in which the composer forms the chosen music material, adds characteristics that are definitely dramatic, particularly in the contrasts of planes set together with the certain hand of an architect: in the tension originating from the confrontation of planes of concentrated musical action and repeated relaxation. This is evident lucidly in the works that are homogeneous in sound, that do not depend on the possibilities afforded by a large orchestral apparatus, namely in the Chamber Music for Strings, composed in 1962/63.

Symphony No. 103 in E-flat major ("Drum Roll")

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN
(1732–1809)

Symphony No. 103 was written in 1795. It is known as the "Drum Roll" Symphony because of the dramatic, and romantic, manner in which the work begins with its solo on the kettledrum. In this work there are several characteristics which show that Haydn never ceased to solve the challenging problem of symphonic writing without originality and distinction. Haydn was interested in orchestration and was often venturesome in his handling of the orchestral instruments. The make-up of Haydn's orchestra had just about settled into what is considered the standard ensemble which Beethoven inherited. The instrumentation of Symphony No. 103 is an example. The woodwind group includes, in pairs, the flute and bassoon, and both the oboe and clarinet—the clarinet was a recent addition to the orchestral family. Not only does the woodwind group function as an independent group, contrasting with the strings, but each woodwind instrument is given melodic parts which display its solo possibilities; it may be observed that the important solo parts are usually given to the flute, the oboe or the bassoon, and that in the second and third movements of Symphony No. 103 the clarinets are idle.

The brass instruments, pairs of horns and trumpets, are used sometimes in conjunction with the woodwinds, sometimes with the strings; and, they are used to give body or volume to the tone, and to provide contrast. The range of the brass instruments is limited and only occasionally are they given melodic parts as, for example, in the last movement of Symphony No. 103.

Haydn's percussion section generally consists of two kettledrums tuned to the tonic and dominant of the key of the piece to be played. The kettledrums were employed for loud *tutti*s and, occasionally, for an effective roll in a soft passage. In Symphony No. 103 Haydn is quite bold in allotting a solo to the kettledrum.

Haydn seeks variety in the employment of the strings. The strings play in full four-part harmony; they also may play in three- or in two-part harmony; they are very effective in unison passages as Haydn so well demonstrates in Symphony No. 103. A solo is sometimes given to the violin. The strings are assigned special effects such as *pizzicato* and *tremolo*. Haydn makes use of the contrast between scoring for the full orchestra and a lightly scored texture for expressive purposes. The viola begins to appear more as a melodist; it is not entirely relegated to filling out the harmony. And the cello is occasionally assigned melodic parts which it sings in its upper register.

Several other characteristics of Haydn's symphonic writing, illustrated in the "Drum Roll," may be mentioned in addition to the orchestration. The dramatic Introduction to the first movement serves not only as an opener, it is integrated into the content and structure of the movement. The second movement is unusual in the matter of treating two themes, one major and one minor, in a series of variations. The minuet of the third movement takes on more symphonic proportions; in it Haydn demonstrates that contrapuntal treatment may be incorporated into the dance movement. In the last movement Haydn departs from the more usual symphonic treatment and writes a movement, primarily contrapuntal in texture, based on one theme.

Announcing a Very Special Return Engagement!

Vladimir Horowitz

will perform a recital in Ann Arbor's Hill Auditorium
Sunday afternoon, April 11, at 4:00 p.m.

Ticket information:

Public sale begins Monday, March 22, at 9:00, in our Burton Tower office. Mail orders will be accepted as long as seats are available. If your choice of location is not available, next best remaining seats will be substituted. (When ordering by mail, enclose self-addressed, stamped envelope; check payable to University Musical Society.) ABSOLUTELY NO PHONE ORDERS.

Main floor: \$15, \$12, \$10; First balcony: \$12, \$10, \$8; Second balcony: \$7, \$6, \$5.

May Festival

Four concerts — April 28, 29, 30 and May 1

The Philadelphia Orchestra / EUGENE ORMANDY, *Conductor*

The Festival Chorus / AARON COPLAND, *Guest Conductor*

ANDRÉ WATTS, *Pianist*

MARILYN HORNE, *Soprano*

Wednesday: Haydn: Symphony No. 31 ("Hornsignal"); Leslie Bassett: "Echoes from an Invisible World"; Weber: Invitation to the Dance; Copland: Suite from *Billy the Kid*; Ravel: La Valse.

Thursday: Sibelius: Symphony No. 7 in C; MacDowell: Piano Concerto No. 2; Strauss: Death and Transfiguration; Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue.

Friday: Copland: Fanfare for the Common Man, Clarinet Concerto (Anthony Gigliotti), Suite from *The Tender Land* (Festival Chorus); Barber: "School for Scandal" Overture; Ives: Decoration Day; Schuman: New England Tryptich.

Saturday: Beethoven: Overture to "Coriolanus"; Persichetti: Symphony No. 4; Ravel: "Shéhérazade" Song Cycle; Rossini: "Una voce poco fa" from *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*; Strauss: *Rosenkavalier* Waltzes

Encore!

To insure the ongoing cultural presentations of the University Musical Society in these times of increasing financial demands, a new membership organization called *Encore* has been formed, embracing all current contributors to the gift program (established in 1968) and reaching out to all concertgoers who wish to see these many fine performances continued. The privilege of advance notice for all events is given to *Encore* members, in addition to other courtesies extended throughout the year. For further information about *Encore* and membership categories, contact the office of the Musical Society in Burton Tower.

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