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Music & Dance*

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



Photo by BILL RAY

VLADIMIR  
HOROWITZ

**Sunday Afternoon, November 9, 1980, at 4:00**

**Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Michigan**

P R O G R A M

Sonata in A major, Op. 101 . . . . .	BEETHOVEN
Not too animatedly and with most fervent expression	
Vivace alla marcia	
Slowly and longingly	
Quick, yet not too much so, and with resoluteness	
Impromptu in G major, Op. 90 . . . . .	SCHUBERT
Six Etudes, Op. 8 . . . . .	SCRIABIN
No. 2 in F-sharp minor	
No. 1 in C-sharp major	
No. 8 in A-flat major	
No. 10 in D-flat major	
No. 11 in B-flat minor	
No. 12 in D-sharp minor	

I N T E R M I S S I O N

Ballade in F minor, No. 4, Op. 52 . . . . .	CHOPIN
Etude in C-sharp minor, Op. 25 . . . . .	CHOPIN
Etude in G-flat major, Op. 10 ("Black Key") . . . . .	CHOPIN
(played without interruption)	
Waltz in A-flat major, Op. Posthumous . . . . .	CHOPIN
Scherzo in B minor, Op. 20, No. 1 . . . . .	CHOPIN

This afternoon's recital is Mr. Horowitz's fifteenth performance in Hill Auditorium.

*Steinway piano*

*Columbia, RCA, and Seraphim Records*

Representative for Mr. Horowitz: Harold Shaw, Shaw Concerts, Inc.

The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not allowed.

## PROGRAM NOTES

Sonata in A major, Op. 101 . . . . . LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

In a black year, sick, tormented, frantically at odds with an obdurate world, and now a complete "solitary" because of his impenetrable deafness, Beethoven created this exquisitely simple, happy, romantic sonata.

It is the least pretentious and most intimate and informal of the last great group of five sonatas which, within a space of six years, he contributed to the literature of the new keyed instrument which he called Hammerklavier. It is not without significance that he dedicated the work to Dorothea, Baroness von Ertmann. She was for a time Beethoven's pupil and one of the most perceptive interpreters of his music. Reichard said of her that she had "a singing soul in each finger-tip," an especially appropriate attribute for this work. In later years, she told Mendelssohn of the moment, after the loss of a beloved child, when Beethoven appeared suddenly in the doorway, seated himself at the piano, played to her, and departed without a word. There is a pathetic implication in his dedicatory message when he says that she must accept this as a message "from one you have often been compelled to misjudge," but "a great deal was due to circumstances, especially when my manners were less understood than they are now."

It was a time when Beethoven himself, playing this very sonata, was unable to hear a note of his performance.

The introductory movement of the sonata falls on the ear like an improvisation, a Beethoven song without words, the whole movement emanating from a short central lyrical theme. It is to be played "Etwas lebhaft und mit der innigsten Empfindung"—"somewhat animatedly and with innermost sentiment."

What follows . . . "Marschmassig" . . . is something else. The form is a rough replacement of the scherzo idea, but in a "four" and not a "three" rhythm, for the fragments of the energetic theme tossed about in unusual rhythmic ways, and for the middle section a canonic treatment, with some sharp dissonances of another motive.

We then hear the longing melody, "sensuchtsvoll," which is an intermezzo, and not a complete movement, a melody of a conventional type which flowers into a free cadenza and finds its answer not in a conventional finale, but in the sudden unexpected appearance of the lovely melody which opened the sonata.

The vigorous initial theme and the scraps of tune in the popular Rhenish manner form the substance of the last movement. The first theme is fugued; the second also is woven into the fabric. The coda comes when the fugue (as it were) threatens to return, and all sorts of orchestral effects—kettle-drums, the pizzicati of the basses, cries of the wind instruments and so on, seem to mock it, with the surprising modulations and explosive accents that Beethoven brings to bear in these situations—the perfect consummation.

Impromptu in G major, Op. 90 . . . . . FRANZ SCHUBERT

The Schubert Impromptus and Moments Musicales, short piano pieces, are in a genre by themselves. Each one is a simple, lyrical idea, or two related ideas which make a song without words inimitably expressive of Schubert. There is no effort in these unpretentious creations to invent a new piano style, discover some novel method of technic, or otherwise establish a stylistic copyright of the composer's product. The little fat-backed, be-spectacled Schubert, whose shyness was an agony, produced these small pieces with the same spontaneity that he composed his songs, and with, if anything, less intellectual responsibility, being freed here from conformance to any poetic text. He sings here as a sheer melodist, and no composer has ever sung like him.

The first of the Impromptus of Op. 90 is the sustained melody in the key of G major (changed from that of G-flat on the request of a publisher) which could not be simpler in its form or harmonic facture.

Six Etudes, Op. 8 . . . . . ALEXANDER Scriabin

Though these etudes of Scriabin derive their inspiration from Chopin and are so romantic in feeling, and although composed in 1894, still in the 19th century,

we are already aware of the strains of mysticism which permeate all of Scriabin's later works.

The six etudes which we are hearing today are part of the twelve etudes which comprise Opus 8. They are extremely difficult and, pianistically, very intricate.

Mr. Horowitz begins with Etude No. 2, which is very dramatic. Then he plays No. 1, which is virtuosic and difficult. Etude No. 8 follows—more “Scriabinesque”—and we hear more of the strains of the mysticism of the future. No. 10 is a *tour de force*, extremely difficult with its double notes. The haunting melody of No. 11 follows—with its touch of sadness. No. 12 is the most popular and dramatic of all of the etudes with its tremendous climax.

Ballade in F minor, No. 4, Op. 52 . . . . . FREDERIC CHOPIN

Perhaps the king of the Ballades is the Fourth and last in F minor. It is not an imaginary drama like the First or Second, nor yet a sublimated folk-legend like the very popular Third. This is pure music, an unfoldment of a lyrical idea in terms as natural and exquisite as the convolutions of some tendril or blossom. Under this lyricism is a great strength which comes to its final summation as the result of a peerless logic, boldness, and originality of structure. These qualities proceed from Chopin's discovery—made with so little publicity!—of the secret of a melody here permitted to determine by its own dynamism the course of its development. Nothing is more revealing than an examination of this masterpiece, which, with all the apparent profusion and waywardness of its progress, is actually obedient to strict laws which emanate from its inner being. There is the introduction, so brief, so magically evocative of another world. There is the principal theme, in the manner of a serenade—that Ariel's song, which, through its various repetitions and metamorphoses, leads, with other material, to the crashing chords and the mysterious harmonies that Huneker called a “soul-suspension”; and the coda, which, said Niecks, “palpitating and swelling with passion, concludes the Fourth, and alas! last ballade.”

Etude in C-sharp minor, Op. 25 . . . . . CHOPIN

Mr. Horowitz chose to play this C-sharp minor Etude because it is one of the most beautiful of the Etudes—more like a highly moving nocturne.

Etude in G-flat major, Op. 10 (“Black Key”) . . . . . CHOPIN

The G-flat major Etude speaks for itself!

Waltz in A-flat major, Op. Posthumous . . . . . CHOPIN

This waltz is as delicate, tender, romantic a work as ever composed by Chopin. It, too, is nocturne-like and touchingly beautiful.

Scherzo in B minor, Op. 20, No. 1 . . . . . CHOPIN

Here is the first of the four scherzi in which Chopin achieved an expression which has no parallel in piano music. The classical scherzo is basically a dance piece, usually in triple rhythm and in a tripartite form. In these two respects the Chopin scherzi can be said to adhere to precedent. But outside of that generic relation Chopin is completely himself. The form becomes the vehicle of some of his most original and dramatic expression. The B-minor scherzo was composed in 1831-32. 1831 was the year of the capture of Warsaw by the Russians and all know how profoundly the event moved Chopin. The piece certainly stems from that time and that mood. The scream of defiance on the unprepared dissonance, high up on the piano, the answering roar from the bass, introduce passages of a lashing frenzy. The middle section constitutes the one instance in the music of Chopin's maturity in which he makes use of a Polish folk-song. It is the Noel, “Sleep, Baby Jesus,” scored in the most beautiful manner for the inner voices of the harmony. The dream is suddenly interspersed by the return of the frantic chords of the introduction. What is not the least astonishing feature of this relatively youthful work is the originality and coherency of the form. Note also that however furious the passion, or explosive the mood, the ideas loosed with apparent abandon are nevertheless held firmly in leash for the climax by a master, aged twenty-one.

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UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

Burton Memorial Tower, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109

Phone: 665-3717, 764-2538