

# Ann Arbor Summer '85 Festival

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

*presents*

## A Celebration of Paul Whiteman's Historic Aeolian Hall Concert of February 12, 1924

*Reconstructed and conducted by*

MAURICE PERESS

Ivan Davis and Dick Hyman, *Pianists*

The 1985 Palais Royale Orchestra

Wednesday Evening, July 3, 1985, at 8:00

Power Center for the Performing Arts

Ann Arbor, Michigan

### *True Form of Jazz*

Seventy years ago — Livery Stable Blues . . . . . La Rocca  
With modern embellishments — Mama Loves Papa . . . . . Baer

### *Comedy Selections (arranged and adapted by Ross Gorman)*

Yes, We Have No Bananas . . . . . Silver  
So This Is Venice . . . . . Thomas

### *Contrast — Legitimate Scoring vs. Jazzing*

Whispering . . . . . Schonberger

### *Recent Compositions with Modern Score*

Limehouse Blues . . . . . Braham  
Linger Awhile . . . . . Rose  
Ragedy Ann . . . . . Kern

### *Piano Music by Zez Confrey*

Kitten on the Keys  
Three Little Oddities: Romanza, Impromptu, Novelette  
Nickel in the Slot (with orchestra)

Dick Hyman, *Pianist*

### *Irving Berlin Medley*

Orange Blossoms in California  
A Pretty Girl Is Like a Melody  
Alexander's Ragtime Band

Dick Hyman and Orchestra

INTERMISSION

*Adaptation of Standard Selections to Dance Rhythm*

Pale Moon .....	Logan
To a Wild Rose .....	MacDowell
Chansonette .....	Friml

*Flavoring with Borrowed Themes (The Volga Boatman)*

Russian Rose .....	Grofé
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A Suite of Serenades .....	Herbert
Spanish, Chinese, Cuban, Oriental	

A Rhapsody in Blue .....	Gershwin
(original jazz band scoring by Ferde Grofé)	

Ivan Davis, *Pianist*

*The Baldwin pianos are provided courtesy of King's Keyboard House, Ann Arbor.*

*This program is made possible in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.*

A message from Maestro Peress . . .

Sixty-one years later — On the Road. *I never suspected there would be any continued interest in Whiteman's Aeolian Hall Concert beyond the performance I researched and recreated for the 60th Anniversary on February 12th, 1984, in New York's Town Hall. "Same block, same hour, same day. . ."*

*Now, having toured with the program, as far from home as Italy, and having repeated it many times, I find myself wearing Whiteman's moccasins and am constantly amazed by the power of this music and its effect on audiences and performers alike. All seem to be brimming with pride. For myself — and I suspect this could explain what I feel in the hall — it is reliving a precious moment in our cultural history, a moment which captures in sound the young and alert, naive optimism of America, a musical expression of our best selves.*

### **An Experiment in Modern Music — 1924**

On February 12, 1924, bandleader Paul Whiteman presented a program he called "An Experiment in Modern Music" at New York's now-defunct Aeolian Hall on West 43rd Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. Whiteman's purpose in putting together the concert was to "legitimize" jazz, which was at that time considered a rather exotic and sometimes scandalous entertainment. On stage was Whiteman's "Palais Royale" jazz band, augmented by seven violins and a pair of French horns, that offered a variety of jazz-inspired arrangements and piano solos by Zez Confrey. Two works were commissioned especially for the occasion — Victor Herbert's "A Suite of Serenades," which turned out to be his last important composition, and an original work for piano solo and jazz band by George Gershwin, "A Rhapsody in Blue." It was the Rhapsody, with the composer at the piano, that turned Whiteman's experiment into an instant musical legend.

Master promoter that he was, Paul Whiteman gathered an audience as any that ever graced a musical event. In attendance were Jascha Heifetz, Fritz Kreisler, Serge Rachmaninoff, Mischa Elman, Leopold Stokowski, John Philip Sousa, Victor Herbert, Igor Stravinsky, Virgil Thomson, Willem Mengelberg, Ernest Bloch, and Walter Damrosch, who proclaimed after the concert that Whiteman had "made a lady out of jazz."

Most of the original orchestrations and parts have survived so that not only the content of the program, but the sound of the program is recreated for this celebration. It is the hope of Maurice Peress that this concert will rehabilitate Paul Whiteman's memory. "He is too often portrayed as a commercially-minded clown," Mr. Peress said in a New York *Times* interview, "but Whiteman was ahead of his time. He commissioned works from Copland, Stravinsky, and Duke Ellington. In addition, he was the first important bandleader to hire black musicians. Paul Whiteman did an immense amount for twentieth century music, and we should never forget it."

Tickets for the original event in 1924 were priced from 50 cents to \$2.20.

*The following notes, titled Mr. Whiteman's Associates, were printed in the 1924 program, condensed from the "Seven Lively Arts" by Gilbert Seldes:*

It is refreshing to keep an eye upon **Victor Herbert** because of his persistent refusal to remain in one place. He is the composer of many of our popular musical comedies, yet he is no stranger to the Metropolitan and its grand opera flavor. Although he ought to dislike modern popular music and moan for the good old days of Viennese operetta, he is not only open-minded on the subject, but actually composes with the best of them. He brings to Jazz a technical mastery and a clearness of mind which it otherwise frequently lacks. He has ingenuity and good taste, a knowledge and freshness — qualities too rare in popular music to be sacrificed.

**George Gershwin** has written a "Rhapsody in Blue," which he has consented to play, accompanied by the orchestra. Delicacy, even dreaminess, is a quality he alone brings into Jazz music. His sense of variation in rhythm of shifting accents, of emphases and color is faultless. He has, moreover, an insatiable curiosity about everything connected with music in general. He is learning and he is not forgetting, and being one of the youngest of the composers, he is actually one of the brightest hopes of our popular music.

*Ed. note: Gershwin was 25 when he wrote "Rhapsody in Blue"; his death at the age of 38 (of a brain tumor) was mourned as a great loss to American music.*

**ZeZ Confrey** will play some of his own compositions. One certainty about Mr. Confrey is that you cannot hear his music without being aware of the intricacy and complexity of it. The contrasting rhythms in Confrey's work, the exasperating syncopations, the working out of theme and counter-theme are all done in the most masterly fashion. He has a fine dramatic sense — in "Kitten on the Keys" he tightens the interest by repeating one bar five times and then releases the strain magnificently. In all, he seems the composer gifted in direct relation to the Jazz orchestra.

In **Irving Berlin's** first big success — "Alexander's Ragtime Band" — he took all the dash and energy of ragtime as it was and carried them to their extreme point. He writes songs it is a pleasure to sing, but he also writes compositions which are primarily for Jazz orchestra. He is among the most prolific of our popular composers.

*On the subject of scoring, Hugh C. Ernst wrote in the 1924 program:*

The greatest single factor in the improvement of American music has been the art of scoring. Paul Whiteman's orchestra was the first organization to specially score each selection and to play it according to the score. Since then practically every modern orchestra has its own arranger or staff of arrangers. As a result, there are thousands of young people scoring and composing, who otherwise would perhaps never have dreamed of writing music. These same people are creating much of the popular music of today.

### About the Artists

**Maurice Peress** was described as "A Master" on the occasion of his performances as music director of the premiere presentation of Leonard Bernstein's "Mass," the work which inaugurated John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D. C. in 1971. There was, in fact, universal agreement on the superb conducting of this New York-born musician who was the composer's personal choice. Ten years later Mr. Peress conducted the Austrian première of that work at the Vienna Opera House to praise from the host of major European critics in attendance.

From Vienna to Hong Kong, Maestro Peress is internationally recognized as one of America's most dynamic and versatile conductors. During the summer of 1981, he conducted the Hong Kong Philharmonic in a series of concerts in the Hong Kong Festival of the Arts. In the summer of 1982, he participated in the Florida Music Festival, leading a seminar for conductors from all points in North America as well as directing the Florida Chamber Orchestra in an all-Bernstein program. As a former president of the Conductors Guild of the American Symphony Orchestra League, he has led a number of conductors' symposiums sponsored by the League. In the revealing test of a conductor's strengths, knowledge, and abilities — stepping in to replace an ailing conductor with only a few hours notice — Maurice Peress has conducted the Chicago Symphony Orchestra to the acclaim of its musicians, audiences, and critics.

Prominent in the field of American popular music, most particularly in the musical theater, Mr. Peress has conducted performances of *West Side Story* at the New York State Theater, a concert version of *Candide* in Avery Fisher Hall there, and *Porgy and Bess* in Corpus Christi. In 1983 he helped recreate and restore George and Ira Gershwin's original version of *Strike Up The Band* at Philadelphia's historic Walnut Street Theatre.

In the operatic field, Maestro Peress conducted the première of Gottfried von Einem's opera *The Visit of the Old Lady* by the San Francisco Opera Company and, more recently, productions of *Lucia* with the Providence Opera Company and *La Rondine* for the New Orleans Opera Guild. On records, he conducts the New York Philharmonic in Charles Ives's "Central Park in the Dark" and "Music for Organ, Brass and Percussion" with E. Power Biggs, a classical best-seller.

Texas-born **Ivan Davis** made his New York debut in 1959 and soon thereafter appeared on national television as soloist with Eugene Ormandy and The Philadelphia Orchestra. During the following years Mr. Davis performed throughout the United States, including a New York Philharmonic appearance with Leonard Bernstein and a recital on Lincoln Center's Great Performers Series. 1966 saw his London debut at Queen Elizabeth Hall, after which he was immediately engaged and re-engaged with all the major orchestras of Britain. Since 1966 Mr. Davis has received acclaim as artist/teacher and pianist-in-residence at the University of Miami in Coral Gables and as visiting professor at Indiana University. He has also given master classes throughout the country and served on the juries of several international competitions, including the recent Van Cliburn.

Because of his vast knowledge and great love for opera, Ivan Davis became a frequent and popular participant on the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts. He appeared in joint recital with the legendary soprano Magda Olivero at Carnegie Hall and later with the Metropolitan's prima donna, Renata Scotto, in Paris. As in tonight's program, Ivan Davis performed Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" with Maurice Peress on last year's Town Hall concert. He has also recorded the work with Lorin Maazel and the Cleveland Orchestra. Mr. Davis' other recordings include works of Liszt and Rachmaninoff with The Philadelphia Orchestra, solo piano works, and concerti favorites with André Kostelanetz for Columbia Records. On the London/Decca label are concerti of Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, and Liszt with British orchestras, and the award-winning "Great Galloping Gottschalk." His most recent recording, for Audiofon — music of Liszt and Schumann — was called "the greatest piano recording ever made" by music critic Byron Belt.

Mr. Davis studied at North Texas State University before receiving a Fulbright Award to study at Le Accademia de Santa Cecilia in Rome. After taking top prizes in several international competitions, he climaxed his prize-winning career in 1960 by capturing the Grand Prize of the Franz Liszt competition and began his studies with the legendary Vladimir Horowitz.

Throughout his musical career, which began in the early 1950s, **Dick Hyman** has functioned as a pianist, organist, arranger, conductor, and composer. His versatility has resulted in dozens of recordings of his own and literally thousands in support of other artists. While developing his own piano style, Mr. Hyman has investigated the earliest periods of jazz and ragtime and includes this material in a concert he frequently presents entitled "History of Jazz Piano from Ragtime to the Avant-Garde." He also concertizes on the theater organ and has recorded on the Mighty Wurlitzer both as soloist and in duet with cornetist Ruby Braff. His most recent recording consists of the novelty piano pieces of Zez Confrey for RCA Red Seal.

Dick Hyman has performed his concert compositions, which include a piano concerto and the "Ragtime Fantasy," with the Baltimore, Indianapolis, and Austin Symphonies. He leads his group, The Perfect Jazz Repertory Quintet, in jazz festivals and concerts and in annual appearances in New York at Michael's Pub. In 1975 Mr. Hyman conducted the New York Jazz Repertory Company on a State Department-sponsored tour of the Soviet Union, playing the music of Louis Armstrong.

As a studio musician in New York, Dick Hyman has played and conducted for many radio and television programs: Arthur Godfrey, David Frost, Beat the Clock, and "Sunshine's on the Way," which earned him an Emmy Award. He served as music director and won a second Emmy for the PBS special "Eubie Blake: A Century of Music." Mr. Hyman was the orchestrator of the hit musical *Sugar Babies* and the composer of Woody Allen's film *Zelig*, and continued to work with Allen on *Broadway Danny Rose* and *Purple Rose of Cairo*. He also composed the score for the Cleveland Ballet's *Piano Man* and has been associated with the Twyla Tharp Dance Company as conductor and pianist.

Dick Hyman, too, participated in last year's recreation of Paul Whiteman's "Experiment in Modern Music."

The 1985 Palais Royale Orchestra  
featuring:

Raymond Kunicki, *Concertmaster*  
Walter Levinsky, *Soprano-Alto-Tenor*  
*Saxophones, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet*  
Paul McCandless, *Soprano-Alto-Baritone Saxo-*  
*phones, Oboe, Heckelphone, Bass Oboe, Musette*  
Jack Kripl, *Sopranino-Soprano-Tenor-*  
*Baritone Saxophones, Flute, Piccolo*  
Allan Dean and Neil Balm, *Trumpet,*  
*Cornet, Flügel Horn*

Alan Raph, *Personnel Manager*

David Bargeron, *Trombone, Slide Whistle*  
Alan Raph, *Bass Trombone, Euphonium*  
Eddy Davis, *Banjo*  
Vincent Giordano, *Tuba, Bass*  
Larry Wolff, *Piano, Celeste*  
David Close, *Piano*  
Chuck Spies, *Drums, Timpani, Percussion*  
Andrew Stein, *Jazz Violin*

Adam Zeichner, *Orchestra Assistant*