

VIENNA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Philippe Entremont
Conductor and Pianist

Thursday Evening, January 28, 1993, at 8:00
Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Michigan

PROGRAM

Ancient Airs and Dances, Suite No. 3 Respighi
Italiana: Andantino (16th c. anonymous)
Arie di corte (after Giovanni Battista Besardo, 16th c.)
Siciliano: Andantino (16th c. anonymous)
Passacaglia: Maestoso (after Lodovico Roncalli, 17th c.)

Concerto for Piano and Strings No. 12 in A major, K. 414 Mozart
Allegro
Andante
Allegretto

INTERMISSION

Souvenir de Florence, Op. 70 Tchaikovsky
Allegro con spirito
Adagio cantabile e con moto
Allegro moderato
Allegro vivace

Philippe Entremont and the Vienna Chamber Orchestra are represented by ICM Artists, Ltd.,
New York, Lee Lamont, President.

The Orchestra gratefully acknowledges the sponsorship of C. Itoh & Co., Ltd.

Philippe Entremont plays the Bösendorfer piano available through Evola Music Inc., Bloomfield Hills.

The public is invited to greet Philippe Entremont for a record-signing at L & S Music,
715 N. University, Ann Arbor, immediately following this evening's concert.

PROGRAM NOTES

Ancient Airs and Dances, Suite No. 3 *Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936)*

Among Italian composers who flourished in the early 20th century, Respighi ranks second only to Puccini in renown. His fame rests largely on two orchestral works, *The Fountains of Rome* (1916) and *The Pines of Rome* (1924). Championed by Toscanini, those ravishing and richly scored symphonic poems soon became staples of the concert repertoire.

Between *The Fountains* and *The Pines*, Respighi began sifting through music of the distant past for new compositional challenges. His *Concerto gregoriano* (1921), for example, incorporated actual Gregorian chants as melodic material. Through the 1920s he regularly arranged the work of earlier composers such as Bach, Vivaldi, and Monteverdi. Among other “archaic” works, Respighi also composed three suites of *Ancient Airs and Dances* based on Renaissance and Baroque music for lute (an ancient stringed instrument shaped like half a pear with a long neck).

The third suite, finished in 1931, is the most frequently performed. “Transcribed freely for string orchestra,” it shows Respighi’s lithe and sentient approach to music of the past – a startling shift away from the opulence of his famous symphonic poems. Each movement of the suite derives from an obscure lute piece dating from the 16th or 17th century.

The first movement, based on an anonymous 16th century work, is an *Italiana* – a moderate dance in triple meter. It features a gentle melody accompanied by a running pizzicato cello line.

The *Arie di corte*, drawn from a piece by Giovanni Battista Besardo, is like a suite within a suite. Opening with a mournful viola melody and a quasi-strumming accompaniment, this movement passes through a series of contrasting moods and tempos. It rises to an excited pitch, *vivacissimo*, and then closes quietly after returning to the viola theme.

Like the *Italiana*, the *Siciliana* is a moderately paced dance in triple meter based on the work of an unknown composer. Its lilting melody rises and falls in long arcs, punctuated by cello “strumming.” In its two other appearances the melody receives a light pizzicato accompaniment.

The *Passacaglia*, founded on a four-bar bass pattern, proceeds in a stately triple time. The original, by Lodovico Roncalli, appears in a 1692 print that features the only known music by that composer. Like the *Arie di corte*, this final movement gradually rises to a climax then subsides in closing. After a broad *maestoso* section, it moves through a passage marked *energico e piu animato*, highlighted by triple stops in all parts but the bass. The movement closes slowly and majestically, much as it had begun.

Though contemporaneous with the rising tide of Neoclassicism in 1920s Europe, Respighi’s engagement with the past seems more a private, independent path than a response to new trends. Writing in 1931, however, Respighi joined notable company in composing a suite that in some way drew from earlier musical styles. Debussy, Stravinsky, Schoenberg, and others composed such suites in the early decades of the 20th century.

--Jeffrey Magee

Concerto for Piano and Strings No. 12 **in A major, K. 414**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Within a year or so after his dismissal by the Archbishop of Salzburg, Mozart was on the way to establishing his brilliant but brief career as composer, pianist and teacher in the capital city, Vienna. In the winter of 1782 and 1783, he wrote three piano concertos for which he had a complete plan. On December 28, 1782, he wrote to his father in Salzburg, “These concertos are a happy medium between the too easy

and the too difficult. They are very brilliant, pleasing to the ear, and natural without being empty. There are passages here and there in which only connoisseurs will find satisfaction, but at the same time the ignorant cannot fail to be pleased, though without knowing why." Idealistic commentators on Mozart's work, Alfred Einstein for example, read in this letter an elevated moral posture in which Mozart determines to make things difficult for himself but easy for the listeners. The practical just see him preparing to reach a broader audience.

Further support for the practical, or cynical, is given by a newspaper announcement on January 15, 1783, which shows Mozart certain of success and impatient to circulate his new works, even before he has performed them. "Herr Kapellmeister Mozart hereby informs the eminent public of the availability of three recently composed *clavier* concertos. These three concertos, which can be played by a large orchestra with wind instruments as well as by quartet – that is two violins, viola and cello – will appear at the beginning of April, well copied and supervised by himself, available only to those who have subscribed." It is a complete marketing plan. In his later negotiations with music publishers, Mozart offered them the choice of issuing the concertos with or without the parts for two oboes, two bassoons and two horns. This wind section meant that the orchestra would be a large one by the standards of the time, but it is very clear that he had carefully laid out the music in such a way that the instruments would not be missed. The reference to a "quartet" does not restrict the strings to four solo players, for the word was long used (and in French still is) to mean the orchestra's entire string section.

The A-major Concerto, K. 414, is the second of the set of three, and it is a work of distinctive richness and beauty that lends itself to greatly varied characterizations. Critics find in it qualities as different as melancholy lyricism and sunny Tyrolean gaiety. In performance too, individual interpretations may vary over a wide range. The Concerto's first movement, *Allegro*, is especially remarkable for the extraordinary

wealth of its themes, for the large number of melodies that Mozart lavishes on a musical structure that conventionally requires no more than two. The slow movement, *Andante*, is one of his greatest lyrical masterpieces, and the finale, a rondo, *Allegretto*, is a brilliant piece of unambiguous good cheer.

Souvenir de Florence, Op. 70 Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

Tchaikovsky spent the first three months of 1890 in Florence, working happily and productively on *Pique Dame*, one of the best of his ten operas, and in May he wrote to the composer, Ippolitov-Ivanov, that his projects for the summer were to finish orchestrating the opera and to sketch a string sextet. In July the Sextet was done, and he confided to his benefactress, Nadezhda von Meck, that he had written it with "pleasure and enthusiasm, and without the least exertion."

He took the Sextet with him when he went to St. Petersburg for the rehearsals of *Pique Dame* that autumn, and had it played in private for some of his friends there. Among them were two young composers, Glazunov and Liadov, whose comments seem to have persuaded Tchaikovsky that the scherzo and finale needed revision, and in January, 1892, in Paris, the work was done. The first public performance of the Sextet was given on December 7, 1892, at a concert of the St. Petersburg Chamber Music Society, to which it is dedicated. It was published later that year with a descriptive title, *Souvenir de Florence*. It is played here by the full string ensemble.

The entire repertoire of string sextets is neither large nor old. The first of any importance are the two that Brahms worked at on and off from the mid-1850s to 1860s, and he probably got the idea for them from one written in 1848 by Louis Spohr, who was then still an important figure. Dvorák's Sextet of 1879 and even Schoenberg's *Transfigured Night* of 1899 are clearly descended from those of Brahms. Tchaikovsky and Brahms used to enjoy each other's company when they crossed paths on their concert tours, and each

cordially respected the professionalism of the other, although neither really liked the other's music.

Nevertheless, when Tchaikovsky began to work at the difficult problems of writing fluently and interestingly for an ensemble of six string instruments, he almost certainly looked to Brahms' two youthful Sextets for solutions. The content, here, is not at all Brahmsian, of course, and the writing is often reduced to the simple texture of tune-with-accompaniment, but the very existence of *Souvenir de Florence* is unimaginable without Brahms' precedent. The tradition they established may actually have been transmitted to Tchaikovsky indirectly by Dvorák, who was Brahms's disciple. The Czech and Russian had become good friends in 1888, and the Slavic heritage they shared gave them a strong sense of kinship.

Tchaikovsky's other "Italian" work,

Capriccio Italien, is a souvenir of the sounds he heard in Rome, but the Sextet is not a "souvenir" in the same sense. It expresses not so much his pleasure in the place as his satisfaction at having worked so well on his opera there and his cheery optimism about the future. The high-spirited music is full of charm, rich in highly varied colors, in lyrical melodies, in vital rhythms. The first two movements are models of elegant, Italianate, almost classical restraint – the first, *Allegro con spirito*, a kind of loosely assembled serenade, and the second, *Adagio cantabile e con moto*, a lovely song. The last two are unabashedly Russian in subject matter and in mode of expression – a somewhat melancholy scherzo, *Allegro moderato*, and a finale *Allegro vivace*, in which Tchaikovsky turns a peasant dance tune into the subject of a fugue of which he was very proud.

—Leonard Burkat



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The Vienna Chamber Orchestra, currently celebrating its forty-sixth season, is recognized as one of the leading interpreters of the chamber ensemble repertoire. Its stylish performances around the world continue to earn accolades from audiences and critics alike.

The orchestra's successful collaboration with Philippe Entremont began in 1976. Under the direction of Maestro Entremont, now the ensemble's Lifetime Conductor, the Vienna Chamber Orchestra has performed in the major music capitals of Europe and North America and has made several tours of Japan. In addition to performing with Mr. Entremont, the ensemble also works with many of the most illustrious guest conductors and soloists.

The Vienna Chamber Orchestra has made many tours of this country and continues to be a tremendous favorite of American audiences. The ensemble last returned to North America in the spring of 1991 as part of a worldwide tour marking the 200th anniversary of Mozart's death.



The Vienna Chamber Orchestra can be heard on several recordings of works by Bach, Mozart, Haydn, Hummel, Tailleferre and others. Tonight, the ensemble returns to Ann Arbor for the first time since its local debut in 1981.

Philippe Entremont is internationally renowned as an artist of remarkable technique and style, both at the keyboard and on the podium. Lifetime Music Director of the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, which celebrates its forty-sixth season this year, Mr. Entremont is now leading the ensemble on a seventeen-city United States tour, including engagements at Carnegie Hall and at Kennedy Center in Washington, D. C.

This season Maestro Entremont's guest conducting engagements include appearances with the symphonies of Houston, New Orleans and Milwaukee. In Europe, he performs in France, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Italy, Norway and Denmark.

Highlights of last season included guest conducting appearances with the symphony orchestras of St. Louis and Atlanta, concert engagements in Paris, Warsaw, Vienna, Leipzig and Salzburg, and tours of France, Spain, Italy and the Netherlands. He also performed recitals in Asia and the Far East. To honor the bicentennial of Mozart's death in 1991, Mr. Entremont and the Vienna Chamber Orchestra appeared at New York's Avery Fisher Hall, Washington's Kennedy Center, and in Los Angeles as well as in other west coast cities. He also led the orchestra at the opening of the Mozart celebrations at the Teatre Royal in Versailles, performing works that Mozart composed in Paris in 1778.

Mr. Entremont's latest recordings are volumes three and four of a four-disc set of the complete Mozart piano sonatas on the Pro Arte label. His other releases include Chopin and Debussy works on CBS (Sony Classical) and Schubert and Dvorák pieces for piano and string quartet with soloists of the Vienna Chamber Orchestra (Pro Arte). His recordings of Stravinsky, Bernstein, Milhaud, Jolivet, Satie, Dohnanyi, Richard Strauss, Saint-Saëns and Litolff, reissued by Sony Classical, are considered by some to be definitive.

A native of Rheims, France, Philippe Entremont was born on June 7, 1934. In 1953, at age 19, he became the first Lau-

reate and Grand Prize Winner of the Marguerite Long-Jacques Thibaud Competition. That same year he made his American debut, appearing on consecutive days at the National Gallery in Washington, D. C., and with the National Orchestral Association in New York. Since then, he has appeared on five continents both as recitalist and as guest artist with the finest orchestras.

Former president of the Ravel Academy in St. Jean-de-Luz, Mr. Entremont has been the recipient of many honors, includ-

ing the Grand Prix du Disque, the Netherlands' Edison Award, New Orleans' International Order of Merit, and a Grammy nomination. A Knight of the Legion d'Honneur, he was recently awarded Austria's First Class Cross of Honor for the Arts and Sciences.

Tonight's concert marks Maestro Entremont's ninth appearance in Ann Arbor over the last three decades. In addition to several performances in the dual role of conductor and pianist, he has played four solo recitals.

The Vienna Chamber Orchestra Philippe Entremont, Music Director

First Violins

Ludwig Müller**
Christian Eisenberger**
Ann Harvey
Barna Kobori
Steven Hohler
E. E. Engin Yafet

Second Violins

Vesna Stankovic*
Veronika Gottfried
Elisabeth Rupertsberger
Erich Haderer
Regina Florey
Vera Hladikova

Violas

Georg Hamann*
John Moffat
Farshid Girakhou
Dietmar Flosdorf
Anett Homoki
Katharina Horschik

Cellos

Till-Georg Schüssler*
Orfeo Mandozzi
Tamas Varga
Ursula Hielscher

Double Basses

James Martin Rapport*
Franz Bauer

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*Principal