

University of Missouri-Columbia
CONCERT SERIES
Fifty-first Season

***SAINT LOUIS
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA***

JERZY SEMKOW

Music Director and Principal Conductor

LEONARD SLATKIN

Principal Guest Conductor

SANTIAGO RODRIGUEZ

Pianist



Jesse Auditorium

Sunday, March 19, 1978

3:15 p.m.

Chancellor's Second Annual Festival of Music



SAINT LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PROGRAM

Overture to "Genoveva", Opus 81 Schumann

Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor for Piano and
Orchestra, Opus 23 Tchaikovsky

- I Allegro non troppo e molto maestoso
- II Andantino semplice
- III Allegro con fuoco

Intermission

Concerto for Orchestra Bartok

- I Andante non troppo; Allegro vivace
- II Giuoco delle coppie: Allegro scherzando
- III Elegia: Andante non troppo
- IV Intermezzo interrotto: Allegretto
- V Finale: Presto

The Steinway is the official piano of the Saint Louis Symphony
Orchestra.

The Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra records for Vox Productions,
Inc.

Peter Pastreich, Executive Director
James N. Cain, Manager
Judith Frankfurt, Assistant Manager

NINETY-EIGHTH SEASON, 1977-78

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Council.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Overture to "Genoveva," Opus 81

Robert Schumann

Born June 8, 1810, in Zwickau, Saxony

Died July 29, 1856, at Eendenich (near Bonn)

Schumann composed his only completed opera between 1847 and 1850 and conducted the premiere on June 25 of the latter year, in Leipzig. The Overture to "Genoveva" first figured in programs of the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra on February 18, 1909 when it was conducted by Max Zach, and was last heard in these concerts on March 2, 1978.

The score calls for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones and timpani.

Schumann's is one of the last names most of us would associate with opera, but he was not inactive in that realm. In 1844 he progressed as far as one chorus and one solo aria for a projected opera called Der Corsar, for which Oswald Marbach had fashioned a libretto after Byron. In the early 1850's he considered both Goethe's Hermann und Dorothea and Schiller's Braut von Messina for operatic treatment, but in both cases settled on concert overtures instead (Opera 136 and 100, respectively). In the years between these projects he did complete and, as noted above, actually produced the opera Genoveva, which was revived by Liszt in Weimar five years after the Leipzig premiere, but which disappeared from the stage more or less permanently after that, so that in effect even the one completed operatic project left us with only an overture.

Genoveva was a popular subject for poets and painters of Schumann's time, and the tale was made into an opera again by Nathanael Berg as recently as 1947. The libretto for Schumann's opera, written by Robert Reinick (with substantial emendations by Schumann), was based on portions of two plays, Leben und Tod der heiligen Genoveva, written in 1799 by Ludwig Tieck (remembered especially as the author of the texts Brahms set in his Magelone songs), and Genoveva, produced by Friedrich

Hebbel in 1843. The story is set in the Age of Chivalry: On his departure for the wars, Prince Siegfried entrusts his wife, Genoveva, to the care of Golo, who, unknown to Siegfried, hopes to win her for himself. Genoveva resists Golo's advances, spending her days patiently with her small son and the animals of the woods; Golo, enraged, seeks to avenge himself by telling Siegfried she has been unfaithful, and the prince orders him to put her to death. Siegfried learns the truth just in time to prevent his order from being carried out: virtue is triumphant, nastiness punished, etc.

The Overture, one of Schumann's most attractive pieces, shows how well he could write for orchestra, after all. A mood of darkling drama is established in the slow introduction; a turbulent theme initiates the Allegro, which continues to build in intensity--enchantly punctuated by horn-calls and evocations of woodland depths--until the happy end is signaled by the exultant brass in the brief and brilliant coda.

Richard Freed

Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor
for Piano and Orchestra, Opus 23
Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Born May 7, 1840, in Kamsko-Votinsk, Russia
Died November 6, 1893, at St. Petersburg

Tchaikovsky composed his First Piano Concerto in 1874 and 1875, and it was first performed in the latter year in Boston, with Hans von Bülow as soloist. The Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra first performed this work on March 5, 1908, with Rudolph Ganz at the piano and Max Zach conducting; the Orchestra's most recent performance of the Concerto was on August 5, 1977, with Gerhardt Zimmermann conducting.

The orchestra for the Concerto comprises two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani and strings.

It was on Christmas Eve in 1874 that Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, aged thirty-four, stopped off at the Moscow Conservatory on his way to a holiday dinner and there met, in one of the classrooms, his mentor, friend and employer Nicholas Rubinstein, brother of Anton Rubinstein and the most renowned pianist in the city. Tchaikovsky, who had come from St. Petersburg eight years before to occupy a modest teaching post in Nicholas's newly

established school--and a modest room in Nicholas's own house--arrived at the Conservatory door with some doubts. Under his arm was the piano part of his First Piano Concerto, as yet unorchestrated, the product of two months' uphill work and representing, in its heavily inked pages, a considerable investment in terms of pride and hope. Tchaikovsky had only just begun to make his mark in musical Moscow; he needed the advice of a professional pianist on the purely technical aspects of the new work, and, Rubinstein being the obvious person to turn to, Tchaikovsky turned to him, ignoring an "inward voice" that warned him not to. Present at this audition also was one Nicholas Hubert, an instructor in theory at the Conservatory, a nice fellow who never made up his own mind. What happened was described four years later by Tchaikovsky in a letter to his patroness, Mme. Nadezhda von Meck:

"I played the first movement. Never a word, never a single remark. Do you know the awkward and ridiculous sensation of putting before a friend a meal which you have cooked yourself, which he eats--and holds his tongue? Oh, for a single word, for friendly abuse, for anything to break the silence! For God's sake, say something! But Rubinstein never opened his lips. He was preparing his thunderbolt, and Hubert was waiting to see which way the wind would blow....I gathered patience, and played the concerto straight through to the end. Still silence.

" 'Well?' I asked, and rose from the piano. Then a torrent broke from Rubinstein's lips. Gentle at first, gathering volume as it proceeded, and finally bursting into the fury of a Jupiter-Tonans. My concerto was worthless, absolutely unplayable; the passages so broken, so disconnected, so unskillfully written, that they could not even be improved; the work itself was bad, trivial, common; here and there I had stolen from other people; only one or two pages were worth anything; all the rest had better be destroyed, or entirely rewritten....But the chief thing I cannot reproduce: the tone in which all this was said. An independent witness of this scene must have concluded I was a talentless maniac, a scribbler with no notion of composing, who had ventured to lay his rubbish before a famous man...."

Tchaikovsky left the room without a word, "cut to the quick". Rubinstein followed him, continued his tirade, and suggested that the work be completely revised. "I shall not alter a single note," Tchaikovsky replied, "I shall publish the work precisely as it stands." And he did. He is also, according to his brother Modest, supposed to have struck out the dedication to Rubinstein--a dramatic report but apparently inaccurate, for the

dedication was in fact to Sergei Ivanovich Taneyev, an eighteen-year-old piano student at the Conservatory. Tchaikovsky did change this dedication before publication and addressed the work instead to the celebrated pianist-conductor Hans von Bülow, with whom he was personally unacquainted but who admired his music and helped to make his works known in Germany. (Bülow himself played the solo part in the premiere in Boston in 1875). An interesting postscript to the entire affair is that Rubinstein eventually apologized for his behavior and his opinion, and became one of the Concerto's principal protagonists.

The first movement of the Concerto, Allegro non troppo e molto maestoso, is one of those affairs about which music commentators are apt to wax irritable--and with some reason. For one thing, it opens with one of the most powerful thematic statements to be found in nineteenth-century orchestral music, a magnificent melody set against giant, ground-eating strides of the piano, which Tchaikovsky puts forth with tremendous strength--and then simply abandons. Anyone hearing this concerto for the first time would be justified in expecting this heroic proclamation to form the backbone of the movement. But it falls by the wayside, in a sense wasted in the general scheme of things. Another problematic factor is that the real first subject, when it eventually arrives (heralded by horns and trumpets), is rather disappointing, a scampering eighth-note figure based on a Russian folk tune far less distinct than the introductory theme.

The second subject is two-fold, a gentle chordal statement first given out by the woodwinds, followed by an even gentler and more memorable rising scale-figure heard in muted violins. This becomes the most important melody in the movement as a whole. The prodigious cadenza is by Tchaikovsky himself.

The rather brief ABA slow movement, Andantino semplice, unfolds in its midst a fast scherzo section. The Andantino opens with a sweet, pastoral flute melody, taken up by the piano; a short transition leads to another pastoral theme by the oboe, not heard again when this section of the movement returns. The flute melody reappears, this time in the horns, and eventually a pair of cellos has a go at it as well. In the Prestissimo middle portion of the movement the piano takes flight alone; then, in violas and cellos, occurs a French chansonette, Il faut s'amuser, danser et rire, which the composer had loved as a child.

The thunderous finale, Allegro con fuoco, is based on a Ukrainian folk song introduced by the soloist. Part of the jubilation of this movement arises from the fact that this song, in B-flat minor, expands into a triumphant major key (G-flat) as it arrives at its full-blown orchestral presentation. An easy, broad, yielding second subject is in marked contrast, and both ideas, along with several lesser contributions by the piano, are dealt with at length during the course of the movement. The feeling of development, of shifting, unsettled, exploration, continues even after the return to the original key of B-flat minor. Psychologically, the real return home comes at the climax of an impressive, slow-growing crescendo when the soloist charges headlong up to the very threshold of the second subject, now presented in full grandeur by the orchestra as a whole.

Shirley Fleming

Concerto for Orchestra
Béla Bartók

Born March 25, 1881, in Nagyszentmiklós, Hungary
(now Sannicolaul Mare, Rumania)

Died September 26, 1945, in New York City

The Concerto was composed between August and October of 1943 and first performed on December 1, 1944, by the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Serge Koussevitzky, who had commissioned it. The Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra performed the Concerto for the first time on January 15, 1949, Vladimir Golschmann conducting, and presented the work most recently in the concert of February 24, 1978.

The score, dedicated to the memory of Natalie Koussevitzky, calls for three flutes and piccolo, three oboes and English horn, three clarinets and bass clarinet, three bassoons and contra-bassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, side drum, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, tam-tam, two harps and strings.

The final years of World War II saw the creation of a number of major orchestral works by such composers as Britten, Copland, Hindemith and Shostakovich which established themselves immediately in the public favor

and have retained their appeal with conspicuous success. Outstanding among all these, then and now, are the Fifth Symphony of Prokofiev and the Concerto for Orchestra of Bartók, each of which appears now as its respective composer's most successful work for orchestra. In the directness and intensity of their impact, these two works show a remarkable similarity, despite the different styles involved. Prokofiev describes his Fifth as "a symphony on the spirit of man," while the term Bartók used in speaking of his Concerto was "life-assertion"; in both are broadly expressed elements of mourning, and of triumphant good humor.

Bartók's health was poor when he came to America in 1940, and he virtually abstained from creative effort until he received the commission for the Concerto for Orchestra from the Koussevitzky Music Foundation in May 1943, delivered to him in the New York hospital to which he had been confined three months earlier. Within a few weeks his wife was able to write to the violinist Joseph Szigeti, who had been instrumental in arranging the commission: "One thing is certain: Bela's conviction that 'under no circumstances will I ever compose a new work again' is over." Bartók was well enough to leave the hospital shortly after that; he started work on the Concerto at Saranac Lake in late August and by October 8 the score was finished. In introducing the work in Boston at the end of the following year, Koussevitzky pronounced it "the best orchestral piece of the last twenty-five years." Bartók subsequently added a twenty-two-bar coda to the original Finale, and the Concerto quickly took a prominent place in the repertory of orchestras everywhere.

The Concerto for Orchestra fulfills the implication of its title in that it does include sections which display the various choirs of the orchestra, but it might be regarded also as a symphony in five movements, organized symmetrically around a central slow movement which is separated from the outer ones by a pair of scherzos (the same structure Bartók had used for his Fourth String Quartet in 1928). "The general mood of the work," Bartók wrote, "represents, apart from the jesting second movement, a gradual transition from the sternness of the first movement and the lugubrious death-song of the third to the life-assertion of the last one."

What the composer described as "sternness" in the first movement, with its prominent passages for brass, is modified by lyrical and whimsical episodes. Themes in the first two movements have been cited by various Hungarian commentators as expressions of homesickness

on Bartók's part, and this feeling is reinforced in the central Elegia, in which material from the first movement reappears in a slightly altered form. The first of the two scherzos, which precedes the Elegia, is the most frankly display-type movement in the sequence, a "Game of Pairs" played first by a bassoon couple, then by oboes, clarinets, flutes and muted trumpets in turn.

The burlesque section of the fourth movement (Intermezzo interotto) has been the subject of a considerable variety of speculative interpretations. Peter Bartók, the composer's son, has been quoted as saying that the music was a parody of a theme in the first movement of Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony, which his father heard on the radio either during his hospital stay or while actually at work on the Concerto; he has also been quoted as identifying it as a reference to the song about the girls at Maxim's in Lehár's operetta The Merry Widow--which happens to be the tune Shostakovich parodied in his Symphony. Aside from the question of quotation, György Sándor is on record as having been told by Bartók that the fourth movement represents a lover's serenade, interrupted by a gang of drunken revelers.

A further musical quotation, far less conspicuous than the controversial one in the fourth movement and possibly made unconsciously, is a fleeting and unrepeated reference to the first of Grieg's four Norwegian Dances in the bustling opening of the Concerto's final movement, which is itself dancelike, open-hearted and close to the earth in feeling.

SAINT LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

1977-78 SEASON

JERZY SEMKOW, Music Director and Principal Conductor

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GERHARDT ZIMMERMANN, Assistant Conductor

THOMAS PECK, Chorus Director

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Louis D. Beaumont Chair
and Acting Concertmaster
Lazar Gosman
Acting Associate Concertmaster
Takaoki Sugitani
Assistant Concertmaster
James Krohn
Assistant Concertmaster
Darwyn Apple
Charlene Clark
Lawrence Diamond
Silvian Iticovici
Jenny Lind Jones
Eiko Kataoka
John Lippi
Rudolfs Mikelsons
Manuel Ramos
Robert Swain
Helen Tung
Miran Viher
Haruka Watanabe
Hiroko Yoshida

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Fryderyk Sadowski
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Dr. Frederick Eno
Woodruff Chair
Beverly Schiebler
Associate Principal
Deborah Bloom
Elizabeth Crowder
Carol Wolowsky Denos
Lorraine Glass
Louise Grossheider
Dale Andrea Hikawa
Louis Kampouris
Raya Kodesh
Thomas LeVeck
Thomas Pettigrew
Judith Riediger
Leon Schankman
Marka Wilcox

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Acting Principal
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Gerald Fleming
Lee Gronemeyer
Leonid Gutman
Lynn Hague
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Margaret Salomon
Anthony Verme
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Katherine G. Gladney
Chair

Yuan Tung
Associate Principal
*Catherine Lehr
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Joseph Kleeman
Ralph Maisel
Donald Martin
Richard Muehlmann
Janice Roberts Murphy

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Frances Woodhams
Principal.
Elizabeth Eliot Mallinckrodt
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Maria Pinckney
Ayako Watanabe

FLUTES

Jacob Berg
Principal
Janice Coleman
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Jan Gippo

PICCOLO

Jan Gippo

OBOES

Peter Bowman
Principal
Thomas Parkes
*Barbara Herr
Marc Gordon

ENGLISH HORN

Marc Gordon

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Principal.
Walter Susskind Chair
Christine Ward
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E FLAT CLARINET

Robert Coleman

BASS CLARINET

James Meyer

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*Robert Motrl
Bradford Buckley

CONTRA BASSOON

Bradford Buckley

HORNS

Roland Pandolfi
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Kenneth Schultz
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Principal.
Symphony Women's
Association Chair
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*Malcolm McDuffee
Gary Smith

TROMBONES

Bernard Schneider
Principal
Roger Davenport
Melvyn Jernigan

TUBA

John MacEnulty III

TIMPANI

Richard Holmes

PERCUSSION

Richard O'Donnell
Principal
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Thomas Stubbs

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Martin McManus, *Assistant*

*Assistant Principal

†1977-1978 Exxon/Arts Endowment Conductor

For these concerts, the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra is utilizing the revolving seating method for section string players. Untitled string players change seats weekly and are listed alphabetically in the roster.