1954 **Sixtieth** 1955
**Anniversary Season**

# CINCINNATI SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

THOR JOHNSON, MUSIC DIRECTOR

**MUSIC HALL**

**SEVENTH PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 26, 27**

# SEVENTH PROGRAM

1954 **Sixtieth** 1955

## Anniversary Season

# CINCINNATI SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

### THOR JOHNSON, MUSIC DIRECTOR

**Friday, November 26, 1954, at 2:15 P.M.**

**Saturday, November 27, 1954, at 8:30 P.M.**

# CINCINNATI SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

under the auspices of

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(Concerts at Music Hall unless otherwise indicated)

## SUBSCRIPTION CONCERTS

| | |
|---|---|
| *October 8-9* | ALL-ORCHESTRAL CONCERT |
| *October 15-16* | GRANT JOHANNESEN, Pianist |
| *October 22-23* | RAYA GARBOUSOVA, 'Cellist |
| *October 29-30* | ROBERTA PETERS, Soprano |
| *November 12-13* | FIRST PIANO QUARTET |
| *November 20 (mat., eve.)* | BALLET RUSSE DE MONTE CARLO |
| *November 26-27* | GUIOMAR NOVAES, Pianist |
| *December 3-4* | SHAKESPEARE-SIBELIUS "THE TEMPEST" |
| *December 10-11* | CLAUDIO ARRAU, Pianist |
| *December 17-18* | YULETIDE CONCERT |
| *January 7-8* | EARL WILD, Pianist |
| *January 14-15* | DIMITRI MITROPOULOS, Guest Conductor |
| *January 21-22* | DANIEL WAYENBERG, Pianist; SAUL CASTON, Guest Conductor |
| *February 11-12* | ERICA MORINI, Violinist |
| *February 18-19* | ARTUR RUBINSTEIN, Pianist |
| *February 25-26* | CAROL SMITH, Contralto; DAVID LLOYD, Tenor |
| *March 25-26* | WALTER GIESEKING, Pianist |
| *April 1-2* | MICHAEL RABIN, Violinist |
| *April 7, 9* | EASTER CONCERT |
| *April 15-16* | BRAHMS' REQUIEM (United States debut of DIETRICH FISCHER-DIESKAU, Baritone) |

(Friday Concerts at 2:15 P.M.; Saturday Concerts at 8:30 P.M.)

## SPECIAL CONCERTS

| | |
|---|---|
| *November 5-6* | LIBERACE |
| *November 19* | BALLET RUSSE DE MONTE CARLO |
| *December 22* | SCOTTISH RITE CHRISTMAS CONCERT (Taft Auditorium) |
| *January 9* | GIRL SCOUT CONCERT (2:00 P.M. and 4:30 P.M.) |
| *February 3, 4, 5* | LONDON FESTIVAL BALLET (2:30 P.M. and 8:30 P.M. on Feb. 5) |
| *March 5* | BERLIN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA |
| *April 3* | AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY CONVENTION CONCERT (2:30 P.M.) |

(Concerts at 8:30 P.M. except as indicated)



# Schedule of Concerts

(Concerts at Music Hall unless otherwise indicated)

## WILLIAM H. ALBERS POP CONCERTS

(Sponsored by Albers Super Markets, Inc.)

| | |
|---|---|
| November 28 | JEAN GEIS, Pianist; CLIFFORD HARVUOT, Baritone |
| December 31 | LEROY ANDERSON, Composer-Conductor |
| January 29 | ROBERTA SEXTON DRAPER and SUE EILERMAN, Duo-Pianists, COLLEGE OF MUSIC; CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC CHORUS |

(All Concerts at 8:30 P.M.)

## NEIGHBORHOOD FAMILY CONCERTS

| | |
|---|---|
| November 7 | HOLMES HIGH SCHOOL, sponsored by MUSIC DEPARTMENT OF THE COVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS<br>Holmes High School Chorus<br>Richard Whiteman, Pianist |
| December 12 | TAYLOR HIGH SCHOOL, sponsored by HAMILTON COUNTY COUNCIL OF PTA, and TAYLOR HIGH SCHOOL PTA<br>Linda Sharon, Violinist<br>Herbert Tiemeyer, Trumpeter |
| January 30 | WESTERN HILLS HIGH SCHOOL, sponsored by CINCINNATI COUNCIL OF PTA<br>William Doppmann, Jr., Pianist<br>Western Hills High School Chorus |
| February 20 | DEER PARK HIGH SCHOOL, sponsored by MILLCREEK VALLEY AREA COUNCIL OF PTA<br>Jorie Garrigue, Violinist |

(All Concerts at 3:00 P.M.)

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERTS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| October 26 | January 18 | March 22 |
| October 27 | January 25 | March 23 |
| November 9 | January 26 | March 29 |

(All Concerts at 2:15 P.M.)

## JUNIOR HIGH CONCERTS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| November 16 | February 8 | April 5 |

(All Concerts at 2:15 P.M.)

## TOUR CONCERTS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| February 27, Marietta, O. | March 7, Mobile, Ala. (2) | March 14, Greenville, S. C. |
| February 28, Danville, Ky. | March 8, Pensacola, Fla. (2) | March 15, Chapel Hill, N. C. |
| March 1, Louisville, Ky. | March 9, Ft. Myers, Fla. | March 16, Winston-Salem, N. C. |
| March 2, Decatur, Ala. | March 10, Sarasota, Fla. | March 17, Danville, Va. |
| March 3, Auburn, Ala. (2) | March 11, Winter Haven, Fla. | March 18, Lynchburg, Va. |
| March 4, Albany, Ga. | March 12, Miami, Fla. | March 19, Roanoke, Va. |
| March 5, Thomasville, Ga. (2) | | April 17, Oxford, Ohio |

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George Carey, *Principal*
Glenn Robinson

# Program

**LALO Overture to the Opera "Le Roi d'Ys"**

**HINDEMITH, PAUL Symphony in E-Flat**
First Cincinnati performance

I Sehr lebhaft
II Sehr langsam
III Lebhaft
IV Mässig schnelle Halbe

*Intermission*

**CHOPIN Concerto No. 2 in F Minor, for Piano and Orchestra, Opus 21**

I Maestoso
II Larghetto
III Allegro vivace

GUIOMAR NOVAES

*Miss Novaes plays the Steinway*

*The official piano of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra is the Baldwin*

*Remington and London ffrr records*

Patrons are not admitted during the playing of a composition. Anyone who must leave before the end of the program is requested to do so during an interval between numbers.

# Notes on the Program

**By Arthur Darack**

## LALO, VICTOR ANTOINE EDOUARD

(Lille, 1823—Paris, 1892)

### Overture "Le Roi d'Ys"

First performed in 1888 at the Paris Opera. First performed by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in 1916.

To know what a composer once looked like will tell you as much about his music as the appearance of an automobile will tell you when it was last lubricated. But there is a contemporary account of Lalo and on the assumption that some readers may detect a connection between appearance and lubrication it is printed as follows: "He was slight of stature, he limped a little as the result of paralysis which attacked him during the rehearsals of *Namouna* (a ballet). He was otherwise of distinguished appearance — fastidious in dress, with a great deal of color in his cheeks, bright-eyed, with snow-white hair and a white beard and moustache which gave him the appearance of an Austrian diplomat."

Philip Hale said "His judgment of contemporary musicians was spiced with wit which was at times malicious. His temperament was French; he was honest; he insisted on clearness in art."

Lalo made his fortune with his *Symphonie Espagnole,* for violin and orchestra. But he did not do this precociously. For years Lalo gave up composition because of a reason that is unique in music history; he thought he might not have the talent for it.

I have myself given up composition for several years; I have known others to do the same and there have been illustrious men — Rossini, for example — who found it, at one time or another, impossible to compose music. But Lalo is, to my knowledge, the only man of music who ever entertained the possibility that he was unfit for the career of composer. This astounding and

altogether lovely admission entitles him to a glory far beyond what came to him as a result of his *Symphonie Espagnole* and other works — works which showed that he was, in fact, a composer, quite able at the profession.

It is to Lalo's wife, an accomplished prima donna, that we owe Lalo's renewed belief in his talent. Mademoiselle Bernier de Maligny, a pupil, became his wife when he had reached age forty-two. He was thus far from impetous in his decision both to take a wife and attend to her advice.

The first musical consequence of Lalo's marriage was an opera, *Fiesque,* which won him third prize in a national competition conducted by the *Théâtre Lyrique.* Third prize was not much but Lalo was encouraged.

At first luck was with the composer. Emile Perrin, director of the *Paris Opéra,* judged *Fiesque* the best of the submitted scores and offered to produce it. Then a series of misfortunes set in so that the poor composer must have had grave reasons to re-examine his new way of life. The Franco-Prussian War commenced. Once this was seen to be no barrier, the theater burned to the ground. The Brussels Opera accepted *Fiesque* but thereupon proceeded into bankruptcy. History, fortunately, shows no connection between Lalo's opera and the dire events which ensued contemporaneously with it.

Lalo eventually made his way with a *Divertissement* for orchestra, a Violin Concerto and then the *Spanish Symphony* which is itself a kind of violin concerto.

The opera, *Le Roi d'Ys,* was begun in 1875, finished in 1878, but allowed to gather dust for ten years, when it was revised. It became a staple at the *Opéra Comique,* following its premiere in 1888.

America saw it first in 1890 at New Orleans; it came eventually to the Metropolitan in 1922 but, excepting the overture, it has never enjoyed in America anything like its Parisian success.

Edouard Blau was librettist; the story follows:

The young knight Mylio is pursued by the two daughters of the King of Ys (or Is). Daughter Rozenn has the inside track because she is gentle whereas Margared is something of a shrew. Margared has been promised in marriage to a prince Karnac, who has been at war with the city of Ys, on the assumption that the marriage would deter Karnac from his aggressions. Karnac agrees, hostilities end, and the marriage preparations are commenced.

But Mylio returns and with it Margared's passion. She calls off the wedding and Prince Karnac challenges Mylio to battle. Karnac is defeated and Rozenn and Mylio are now about to be married. Margared refuses to accept defeat. She explains to Karnac that if he opens the dykes to the City of Ys he may yet triumph over Mylio. The city is flooded; the people take to the hills and Margared becomes remorseful sufficiently to drown herself. Saint Corentin appears and causes the waters to recede and the opera to end happily.

*Andante;* D Major; 3/4. The overture is built on themes from the opera. A clarinet melody in the introduction is sung by Mylio in the first act, "If the sky is full of flames."

A trumpet flourish ends the introduction and leads to: *Allegro;* D Minor; 2/2.

The first theme is associated with Margared and, specifically, a melody from Act II, "When I saw you."

"Rozenn's Air," "Why do you suffer in silence," is played by solo 'cello, later in the overture.

The work has some of the intrigue of its subject but it is developed along concert overture lines so it is largely unprogrammatic.

## HINDEMITH, PAUL

(Hanau, Germany, 1895—Now living in New Haven, Conn.)

### Symphony In E-flat

First performed by Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, November 21, 1941. First performance by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra takes place at these concerts.

The four movements of this symphony were written in September, October, November, and December of 1940. Though no key signatures appear, the symphony is in E-flat. But scales derived from the work would be major, minor, or something quite different. Hindemith's conception of key center or tonality deals rather ungently with the traditional notions which concern themselves with these things.

The symphony is scored for three flutes and piccolo, two oboes and English horn, two clarinets and bass clarinet, two bassoons and contra-bassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, Glockenspiel, triangle, tambourine, timpani, and strings.

1. *Sehr lebhaft* (very lively); 2/2; E-flat. The "personality" of this movement is tough, confident and exuberant, with a kind of locomotive regularity.







The music moves forward steadily and with little interruption. Even the contrasting second theme, while more lyrical than the march-like principal subject, calls for little lessening of the momentum. To be sure, there are peaks and valleys of sound volume; there are moments of softening and something suggesting repose. But despite the presence of two themes, in a regular sonata movement, (the second theme is derived from the first), there is a single-mindedness about the whole movement that keys it up and keeps it on edge.

The coda, in faster tempo, introduces a new meter, 3/2, and uses the two themes in metrically altered schemes so as to give the effect of greater breadth. The original duple meter is restored shortly before the close.

2. *Sehr langsam* (very slowly); G-sharp (or its equivalent, A-flat; 4/4.) The main theme is played at once by English horn, clarinets, trumpets and trombones over a slow timpani pedal point (repeated note in the bass).

Hindemith is explicit on one thing — there is a reason for every note he commits to paper. Nothing is left to chance or the idle fancy of the moment. If this is true, we may wonder at the thick, unrelieved scoring (without strings) of a melody which in itself seems to require the warmth and fusion of the string sound. When the melody is given to strings it appears only in first violins, with strong, sobering counterpoint against it in second violins and lower strings. The melody is treated here, one might say, with hindsight and wisdom rather than with intoxication or any special intention to make it sensuously effective.

In contrast with the first movement, where Hindemith was quite deftly and simply manipulating straightforward sonata-allegro form, he is, in this slow

movement, wrestling with a greater problem—the writing of a powerful, intellectually distinctive slow movement that he wished to be "highly charged" but not with sentimentality or any "expression of the moment."

Once the strings have had their say with the theme, a second melody appears in the oboe, against sharp chords in strings. It is repeated by 'cellos, then, in a change of key, by violins and violas against rhythmic counterpoint elsewhere.

The theme is developed through some fifteen measures, ending in a clarinet and bassoon solo.

The first theme is now returned, in the key of E, played by first violins. This begins a general development which, appropriately enough for Hindemith, starts with a canonic treatment of the theme by violas, once the violins have started off.

The eighth notes give way to sixteenth notes and there follows an ascent to a full orchestral climax. Afterwards, a somewhat reluctant repeat of the principal theme ensues, followed by a big coda.

The role of the timpani is important throughout this movement. Its opening pedal point is echoed and re-echoed at several points.

3. *Lebhaft* (lively); E-flat; 3/4. This boisterous movement has all the trappings of a scherzo and trio except the given name. It sounds like a scherzo might in this day and age; it is put together in a manner appropriate to the

type and its position and function in the symphony parallel the traditional scherzo movement.

What is different is the Hindemith musical personality as it appears in the preoccupation with counterpoint, even in a movement that is traditionally an example of bare homophony; in the Hindemith harmony with all its alterations of classical notions and in the closely cropped but vehement melodic writing.

The scherzo theme is heard (following a repeated two-note string sequence) in English horn, clarinets and bassoons. The trio theme appears first in oboe in a somewhat slackened tempo.

4. *Mässig schnelle Halbe* (moderately quick half notes); 2/2; E-flat. This movement, a curious rondo, presents a militant first theme and its several repetitions against varied counterpoint, a second theme, introduced by violas and 'cellos, and an interrupting section marked "Intermezzo." The Intermezzo, with its separate metrical pulse of 3/2, contains its own theme, played first by flute and piccolo, next by oboe, and it contains also the principal theme of the movement. This is worked in by second violins against a persistent counterpoint. A feature of the instrumentation is the use of cymbal, pianissimo, in an oddly colored effect.

Following the second "cymbal episode," the meter reverts to duple, the tempo is restored and the rondo theme returns in a fugal texture to which is added the second rondo subject.

A general pause precedes the coda which takes up the chief theme of the rondo.

The brief epilogue is marked *"lebhaft, mit höchster Kraft"* (rapidly, with utmost power).

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Paul Hindemith wears a reputation in our century somewhat analogous to that of J. S. Bach in his time. Hindemith is known as a prolific composer and a distinguished performer on an instrument—the viola. His mastery of composition is demonstrated in a few works which contemporary musicians regard as modern masterpieces, but he has written great quantities of music which may in time give him a somewhat higher popular estimation than he enjoys at present. So it was with Bach.









Hindemith regards Bach as his primary model and ideal. His music is invariably polyphonic and like Bach he has attempted to broaden the horizons of tonality without straining or destroying the traditional views. If his music does not sound like Bach, that is because Hindemith believes Bach was adaptable to each age and our own age places its distinct obligations on a composer who would write serious music. Bach's philosophy of composition has been fruitful to Hindemith but modern music has been no less influential. In turn, Hindemith has cast a long shadow over 20th century music.

Hindemith has written a number of books which include as their subject matter basic musical instruction for beginning students, theoretical treatises on the acoustic foundations of music, and writings of general interest on music.

Hindemith is something of a musical ascetic. He adopts an early Christian attitude toward music's charms but he believes, with Saint Augustine (and Aristotle) that it can be a vital moral force in man's development if it is used properly. Hindemith means by this just what Augustine meant. We must not

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seek pleasure in music but, rather, instruction—and instruction should be through the mind's transforming musical stimuli into moral precepts. Just as Augustine was unable to formulate exactly how this was to be accomplished, so Hindemith, who is somewhat less competent in philosophy, contents himself with repeating the maxim that we ought to do thus and so because if we do not we will sink even lower than we are at present.

From the beginnings of history, musicians have sought to show that music was something greater than pleasure, something less than science but partaking of its nature and complementary to religion in moral instruction. Great musicians like Bach, Palestrina, Haydn and Mozart have demonstrated that music can add immeasurably to the pleasures of the religious experience by providing masterworks to be used in conjunction with religious instruction. But it has remained for Hindemith and a few other writers to insist that music is religion.

All that may be inferred from the success of the great religious music of Bach and Palestrina is that such music first is great music by standards which are more apparent than any criteria which would make religion or moral instruction out of it. In the absence of such criteria—and Hindemith has failed to produce any—most people will judge Hindemith by his considerable composer's skill rather than by his laudable but so far unsuccessful attempts to improve us all. It is one thing to write music "for the glory of God," as Bach believed he was doing; it is another thing to suppose one's music is that glory. It may well be, but one would think that modesty might inhibit a proclamation of the belief.







## This Week's Soloist . . .

# GUIOMAR NOVAES

The Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra is proud to welcome back this renowned woman pianist after an absence of eighteen seasons. A child prodigy, Mme. Novaes fulfilled the youthful promise recognized by Debussy, Fauré, and Moskowski at the Paris Conservatoire. She first performed at the age of seven, and was eventually brought to the attention of the Brazilian government which later financed her study abroad. She has been decorated by the French Government for her interpretation of that nation's music and has received numerous tributes from many lands.

The artist is the widow of the late Octavia Pinto, Brazilian engineer, architect, and composer, and the mother of two children. Mme. Novaes believes her happy marriage and the companionship of her children greatly contributed to her growth as an artist. She is deeply interested in the musical training of the young and in 1941 established the Guiomar Novaes Prize, enabling North American artists to tour South America.

## CHOPIN, FRÉDÉRIC FRANÇOIS

(Zelazowa Wola, Poland, 1810—Paris, 1849)

### Concerto No. 2, in F Minor, for Piano and Orchestra, Opus 21

First performed in Warsaw in 1829 (at a private concert). First performed by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in 1897 with Richard Burmeister as soloist.

From the view of audiences and pianists, Chopin's F Minor Concerto is one of the most attractive compositions in the repertory. Yet in 1843 it failed of its effect on at least one hearer. The *London Times* reported thus: "The novelty of the evening was Chopin's Piano Concerto in F minor. It is the first work

on a large scale which Chopin has attempted . . . It is as that of one who has ventured into a new region and aims at eccentricities without producing any great effect . . . It was dry and unattractive."

Chopin was a novel experience in 1843 but Robert Schumann recognized Chopin's style and stature and did not hesitate to proclaim his findings. "He [Chopin] is the pupil of the first masters—Beethoven, Schubert, Field. We assume that the first molded his mind in boldness, the second his heart in tenderness, the third his hand in flexibility . . .

"When speaking of grace, enthusiasm, presence of mind, nobility and







warmth of feeling, who does not say Chopin?" He added: "But also, when it is a question of oddity, morbid eccentricity, even wildness and hate."

A German critic, writing in 1833, summed him up differently: "Where Field smiles, Mr. Chopin makes a snickering grimace; where Field sighs, Mr. Chopin groans; Field shrugs the shoulders, Mr. Chopin arches his back like a cat; Field adds spice to his meal; Mr. Chopin throws in a handful of pepper . . . If one were to hold Field's charming romances before a crooked mirror, so that every finer expression is exaggerated, then one would get Chopin's handiwork." (Slonimsky, *Lexicon of Musical Invective*).

Field, who figures so much in these paragraphs, was a composer of Nocturnes for piano which are not without their charms and Chopinesque turns of phrase. But his chief distinction today arises from the fact that he was once used as a standard to ridicule Chopin. The fact that he came first is irrelevant; Karl Stamitz, whose music was an influence on Mozart, also preceded the Salzburg master.

Chopin composed his F Minor Concerto (first in order of composition but second to the E Minor Concerto in point of publication) when he was but eighteen years of age. Yet by this time he was a mature genius, whose style and idiom were almost fully formed. As he grew older his art became broader and deeper and his studies of earlier music added several new compositional facets which enabled his frail musical constitution to carry greater weight. But from the instant the piano enters upon the scene in either of the two piano concertos, both written before Chopin's twenty-first birthday, the hearer knows he is being entertained by Chopin and no one else.

Chopin appears to us today as a solitary genius who developed an intimate, moody style, not equalled by his contemporaries or predecessors and often imitated but never with great success. It is true that Chopin remains one of the most daring, original geniuses in the history of music—hence the invective criticism—but his style is not quite the hot-house confection it is often supposed.

Chopin extracted elements from many and varied sources. You can find his melisma (decoration) in Italian opera (Bellini) and you can find it in Beethoven, the slow movement of the piano sonata, Opus 106 ("Hammerklavier"), for example. You can catch a fleeting glimpse in the Field Nocturnes. You can find J. S. Bach in Chopin, strange as it may seem. But no composer was more original, despite his clearly definable ancestry, and in pursuit of this you must go to Chopin himself.

In part, Chopin found inspiration from composers who are unknown and forgotten today. Kalkbrenner, Hummel, Dussek and, to be sure, Field, are

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names which come to mind. How such incredible originality and fire could have been sparked by such timidity and dullness is not easy to say. We may throw up our hands and say "he was a genius," hoping to end the matter. But we have explained nothing for the term genius is itself in need of explanation.

It is in Chopin's harmonies that we find his strongest and most original equipment. The embellishment of harmony proceeds out of the basic chord and if the embellishment continues to this day to excite admiration and pleasure it does so because of the underlying chordal base.

Chopin's harmonies may be likened to a stone cast into a pool. The subsequent ripples (decorations) appear to be of greater consequence than the initial cause but the ripples are quite impossible without the impact of the stone.

By contrast with the harmony of Schubert or Beethoven, Chopin's harmonic structure is less likely to remain in a particular tonal groove. It darts here and there, stirring up flashing eddies of harmonic interest away from the main center. These momentary "instabilities" or, to be more precise, harmonic alterations, added a spice to the 19th century harmonic language which was quite unknown prior to Chopin.

Chopin's basic piano figurations stem from Mozart and Beethoven. But in following out his own harmonic language, Chopin found it necessary to invent whole new types of keyboard patterns. The trill was virtually abolished, by comparison with its frequency in the piano music of Mozart and Beethoven. Chopin felt that this particular embellishment was a terminal type—that little could proceed out of it. He evolved a whole new set of figurations based on the trill.

Something similar resulted from his examination of the scale and arpeggio, the twin rocks upon which most piano writing had been built. Chopin did not discard the scale or arpeggio. He simply changed them. As a result, you do not often find a pure, unaltered major or minor scale in Chopin. (The chromatic scale is different. Chopin adored it.) So it went through the repertory of classical harmony, melody and decoration.

Chopin's structures—scherzo, nocturne, impromptu, etude, waltz, polonaise, etc.—all have prototypes in name. But the Chopin scherzo is related to Beethoven's scherzo in name only. There is no precedent for the musical style and expression of the Chopin scherzo. This is true also in the etude, the ballade and in the waltz.

It is thus correct to estimate Chopin—this withdrawn, sickly Polish aristocrat who frequented the fashionable salons of Paris—as a revolutionary composer. He breathed in the air of the new Romanticism, the unsettled, stirring, fumbling attitudes circulating in musical quarters, and returned nothing less than full-blown, organized, penetrating and triumphant Romanticism. Almost by himself, he established a startlingly new piano speech which was to color and direct the idiom until this day.

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The two concertos are a beginning and an end. Chopin could not write symphonic music and, happily, he discovered this early enough so that he did not waste his energy over uncongenial tasks. With the E Minor Concerto, Chopin abandoned the effort.







In a sense, Chopin's growing pains produced the two concertos. He needed such works for concertizing. Once he became established in Paris, however, he no longer had the slightest interest in concert-giving. The concerto was a social medium, a display piece addressed to the crowd. Chopin, for all his revolutionary achievements, could only flourish in a small, aristocratic salon, away from the crowd, among sensitive and select friends. He believed that hypocrisy was the inevitable concomitant of the big audience. Once when his F Minor Concerto was well-applauded he said: ". . . there are people enough in all countries who like to assume the air of connoisseurs."

An added fillip accompanies the genesis of the F Minor Concerto. Chopin was in love with Constantia Gladowska, a pupil at the Warsaw Conservatory where Chopin also studied at the time. It is believed that the languid slow movement was inspired by Constantia. In any case, we know for certain that the ballet, "Constantia," was inspired by the concerto. This may be less sentimental but surely more tangible evidence for the inspirational characteristic of the work. (This ballet was choreographed first in 1944. It was last seen in Cincinnati when the Slavenska-Franklin company performed it during the season of 1953-54.)

Unhappily, the romance with Constantia came to nothing, despite their professional collaboration and an exchange of vows and rings. How valuable the rings were we do not know. But the vows amounted to so little that Chopin did not even dedicate the work to Constantia. It was the Countess Delphine Potocka, a social light of Paris and a friend of Chopin who attended him at his final illness, who received the dedication. (But we cannot doubt the very

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genuine love Chopin had for Constantia. He spoke of her in his letters, in yearning language.)

1. *Maestoso;* F Minor; 4/4. There are two principal themes in this movement and several subsidiary melodies which are more connective than thematic in function. As in the E Minor Concerto, the piano here has everything of importance,—from its flashing, downward opening swoop to the delicious melodies and their decoration and embellishment. Clearly it is the solo instrument that dominates. The orchestra must be content with an occasional summing up or an underscoring of what it is that the piano is doing. Even the orchestral introduction is but a drab, colorless presentation of melodies which become vividly and gorgeously transformed by the keyboard writing.

The development section is notable for its smoldering beginning with piano arabesques up and down the keyboard until it bursts into a regular Chopinesque flame at the end in a glittering chromatic scale.

2. *Larghetto;* A-flat Major; 4/4. This movement, an accompanied Chopin Nocturne, may well be Chopin's musical message to his beloved Constantia.

## PUBLIC LIBRARY KEYNOTES

Jacques Barzun in the preface to Arthur Loesser's MEN, WOMEN AND PIANOS: A Social history, says: "Taking the piano as a 'center' for writing the social history of the last three hundred years was an inspired idea. . . . The piano is drawing-room furniture, a sign of bourgeois prosperity . . . the individualist's instrument for nursing the illusion that he is a host in himself . . . with bare hands and intermittent foot."

The first section deals with Germany; section six is devoted to the United States of America. Mr. Loesser lives in Cleveland and refers more than once to this neighboring city. Harking back through the years to Mrs. Trollope's displeasure with our community, he says: "Mr. and Mrs. W. Nixon were operating a Musical Seminary in 'the Queen City of the West.' By 1834, Mr. Nixon had written and had published, right there in Cincinnati, a GUIDE TO INSTRUCTION ON THE PIANOFORTE. Books on music were not common anywhere in the United States, all the less so when arising from the banks of the Ohio."

This charming little book, red leather bound and a cherished item in the Public Library's Cincinnati Collection, is fascinating to quote. Here is the first paragraph of the introduction.

"To embellish society, to enliven retirement; to add another ray to joy, and, in sorrow, to afford a solace, by encircling with a halo the mists that o'ershadow it;—to relieve study . . . to calm the ruffled passions . . . is the fertile and extensive province of music." —A.S.P.

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If music is the "language of love," as the saying has it, no more eloquent "letter" than this has appeared in the repertory. It is moody, melancholy, soft and tender and where it rises momentarily, the force is not a planned exercise in strategy. It is all improvisatory, free and impulsive but not in the least happy.

3. *Allegro vivace;* F Minor; 3/4. Concerto writing before Chopin usually hit upon the rondo for a finale. The rondo was admirable for displaying one or two themes in sufficient repetition so that the customers could have something to whistle on the way home. Chopin saw no need to alter this tradition but his rondo is more highly developed, structurally than the classical rondo, and the themes are not so easily whistled.

The piano writing here is all in quick, mercurial patterns of triplets. Speed, articulation and finesse are exacted of the player for there is little time to sustain a melody or round off a melting phrase. This is Chopin at his most elegant if not his most profound.

The concerto was scored for two flutes, two oboes, two bassoons, two trumpets, bass trombone, timpani and strings.

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