

1969-70 Concert Season

GOTTSCHALK CONCERT

In commemoration of the centenary of the composer's death

1869-1969



GUIOMAR NOVAES

Brazilian pianist

JOHN KIRKPATRICK

United States pianist

ALAN MANDEL

United States pianist

ROBERT PRITCHARD

United States pianist

This concert has been possible thanks to the efforts
and cooperation of the Pan American Association

HALL OF THE AMERICAS
Wednesday, December 17, 8:30 p.m.
PAN AMERICAN UNION
Washington, D.C.

IN MEMORIAM LOUIS MOREAU GOTTSCHALK

(b. New Orleans, May 8, 1829; d. Rio de Janeiro, Dec. 18, 1869)

In 1852, his conquest of Europe completed, Louis Moreau Gottschalk returned to try to conquer his native land. He must have been a phenomenal pianist—Berlioz and Chopin had praised him to the skies before he celebrated his 16th birthday. He was giving promise of becoming a great composer, with such marvelous genre pieces as what Gilbert Chase has called “the Louisiana trilogy” (*La Savane, Banjo, La Bamboula*) all the rage on the other side of the Atlantic.

But Gottschalk’s native land defeated him; here, he was caught in a gilded trap. The sudden death of his father in 1854 forced him to worry about money, and he stepped up the pace of his concertizing. In New York alone, he gave some 80 concerts in less than three years. The virtuoso lived and prospered, but the manufacturer of skillfully mechanical, glittering salon pieces for sentimental misses gradually began to supplant the genuine creator.

Gottschalk did not give up his artistic integrity without a struggle. In 1857, he impulsively abandoned the United States and moved to the West Indies. With headquarters in Cuba, he spent five happy years doing exactly as he wished—wandering through the Caribbean, giving occasional concerts, composing, planning festivals, indulging his flesh in more carnal pleasures. But fate, in the form of impresario Max Strakosch, tempted him to leave his terrestrial paradise, and Gottschalk succumbed to the lure of fame and fortune. In February, 1862, he was in New York once again, back in harness. The pace was killing. “I have given 85 concerts in 4-1/2 months,” he noted in his journal in December, 1862. “I have travelled 15,000 miles on the railroad. At St. Louis I gave seven concerts in six days; at Chicago, five in four days. A few weeks more in this way and I should have become an idiot! Eighteen hours a day on the railroad! Arrive at seven in the evening, eat with all speed, appear at eight o’clock before the public. The last note finished, rush quickly for my luggage, and en route until the next day, always to the same thing! I have become stupid

with it.” But the trap was sprung, the weeks stretched into months, the months stretched into years, and Gottschalk played on, indulging his habit of visiting insane asylums whenever possible, jotting down his thoughts about music and politics, carrying on flirtations with susceptible damsels, playing *Yankee Doodle* with his right hand and *Hail, Columbia* with his left as demanded by patriotic audiences, and frittering away his talent.

After three years on the concert treadmill, he fled from the United States once again, this time to South and Central America. One country after another succumbed to his charm—Mexico, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil idolized him. Then, late in 1869, he collapsed during a performance he insisted on giving in Rio de Janeiro before he had recovered from a bout with yellow fever. A few weeks later, he was dead.

Gottschalk was by no means a consistently notable or even interesting composer. After the spontaneous work of his youth, much of it inspired by uniquely New World rhythms and sounds, his music varied widely in intrinsic worth. Every now and then, he succeeded in recapturing the innocent ear of his younger days, but for the most part, his pretty morceaux proved to be pretty tired joinery. As his life story reveals, Gottschalk had good reason to be tired.

But must we listen only to masterpieces? There is a genuine composer to be found behind the potboilers, which have now aged sufficiently to be fun to hear. Perhaps our generation will listen to the work of this fascinating *petit maitre* with more understanding than did our fathers, who swooned over the infamous *Last Hope* from which Gottschalk reaped such a black harvest of popularity. He wrote far more worthy music, as tonight’s extraordinary program will demonstrate.

Irving Lowens
Music Critic
Washington Evening Star

PROGRAM

I

Minuit a Seville (1856)

The Last Hope (1854)

Le Cri de Delivrance (The Cry of Deliverance) (1863)

Alan Mandel

II

Danza, Op. 33 (1857)

Two Caprices on Rhythms of the Antilles (1862):

1) *O, ma Charmante, Espargnez-mois (O, my Charmer, Spare me)*

2) *Suis-mois (Follow me)*

El Cocoyé (Grand Caprice Cubain di Bravura) (1854)

John Kirkpatrick

INTERMISSION

III

Le Banjo (Caprice Americaine) (1847)

Le Bananier (1848)

Souvenir de Puerto Rico (1859)

Robert Pritchard

IV

Variations on the Brazilian National Anthem (1865)

Guiomar Novaes

STEINWAY PIANO

The Brazilian pianist GUIOMAR NOVAES, known throughout four continents as one of the foremost pianists of our time, gave her first concert at eight years of age. Studying with Luigi Chiafarelli, she first became famous as a pianist while still a child and was sent by the Brazilian government for further study at the famous Paris Conservatoire. Auditioning there for one of only two places available for foreigners, among 389 competitors, she won the unanimous vote for first place of a panel of judges which included Debussy, Fauré and Moskowski, and after studying for two years with Isidor Philipp and his assistant, Helen Chaumont, was awarded the coveted First Prize of the Conservatoire.

A recently published letter of Debussy describing the Novaes Conservatoire audition, says: "She has all the qualities for a great artist, eyes that are transported by music, and the power of complete inner concentration which is a characteristic so rare in artists."

Novaes's sensational debuts in Paris, London, Berlin, Munich, Milan, Torino and Geneva three years after this letter was written launched a career that has been marked by fabulous successes ever since. Invited to one recital in New York, the debut was so successful that she immediately gave a second and third sold out concert and was engaged for a tour of over 40 concerts of this country. James Huneker, the great musicologist, said "not every generation has a Guiomar Novaes" and Henry Finck praised her as the "Paderewski of the Pampas".

Madame Novaes used to play her programs to the great master composer, pedagogue-pianist, Sigismund Stojowski, the pupil of the great Paderewski. She has been decorated by the French government and has received numerous honors in her own country, including the Prize of Merit of Brazil.

The United States pianist JOHN KIRKPATRICK studied at Princeton University and in France with Louta Nounenberg, I. Philipp, C. Decreus, and Nadia Boulanger. Returning to America in 1931, he appeared in recitals and in chamber music concerts, and was known for his performances of United States piano music. His fame was achieved with his rendition from memory of the very difficult *Concord Sonata* by Charles Ives in New York City on January 20, 1939, a feat which was richly awarded by the acclaim that greeted both him and the music. Mr. Kirkpatrick has taught at Monticello College, Mt. Holyoke, Cornell and Yale, and is at present curator of the Ives' Collection at Yale. In 1960 he completed an annotated and exhaustive catalogue of works by Ives. He has been a Gottschalk enthusiast for over fifty years.

The United States pianist and composer ALAN MANDEL received his B.S. and M.S. degrees at the Juilliard School of Music. He completed further training in composition and piano in Salzburg at the Akademie Mozarteum, and in piano in Bolzano, Italy, at the Conservatorio Monteverdi, and received a diploma at both places. He has taught concert piano in Manhattan, and has been instructor in music and lecturer to graduate students in the music department at Penn State, in addition to two years of work with the U.S.I.A. in Vienna, during which time he was lecturer and performer in the major cities of Europe. Among the awards and honors that have been conferred on him are those of the National Association of Composers and Conductors, American Musicological Society, Music Educators National Conference, the Music Teachers National Association, and the College Music Society; two Fulbright grants to the Akademie Mozarteum; and the Brundage award at Penn State for excellence in teaching. Mr. Mandel has given concerts in New York, London, Paris, Vienna, Amsterdam, Salzburg, Munich, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and Pittsburgh. He is assistant professor of music at The American University.

The United States pianist and composer ROBERT PRITCHARD studied with Carl Friedberg, Edwin Fisher, Robert Goldsand, and Arturo Benedetti Michaelangeli. He has made extensive tours of the United States, Europe, Africa and the Caribbean. In addition to organizing the International Louis Moreau Gottschalk Centenary Observance through the aegis of the Pan American Association, which he founded, Dr. Pritchard has for the past decade been identified with such international Cultural Exchange Programs as the Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Negres, Senegal, 1966, conceived by him; the American Festival of Negro Arts, U.S.A., 1965, of which he was founder; and the Asociación Pan Americana para El Festival del Nuevo Mundo, North and Latin America.

By special arrangement this concert will be heard in delayed broadcast over Radio Station WGMS (AM - 570; FM - 103.5) on Saturday, February 28th, at 10:30 p.m.

The next event in this series will be a Christmas concert presented on December 22nd by the Paul Hill Chorale.