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NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC PREVIEW

February 4, 1960

BEFORE CHAVEZ

I am happy to welcome you to this sixth week of our Mahler Festival - a two-month long event which seems to be giving much pleasure to our public. Nothing could give me greater pleasure than to see the excited reception Mahler's works have been accorded these last weeks. Who would have thought it possible, years ago, that so forbidding a name as Mahler - that interminable, overblown, overwrought monster Mahler - could finally come into his own with the public, as the great and original genius he is? I think perhaps one reason that a Mahler Festival can be so successful is the variety within his music; we have heard so far the deeply philosophical symphonies # 5, 9, and 10; the youthful, energetic ~~astonishing~~ symphony # 1; and the more lyrical and tender symphony # 4. Tonight we hear another aspect - four ravishing songs; next week an utterly different cycle of songs, the heartbreaking and yet exalting Kindertotenlieder; then the great monumental Resurection Symphony. And finally Bruno Walter will conduct Das Lied von der Erde, that unique song-symphony. It all adds up to a highly varied, complete world of art in itself.

The songs we are to hear tonight are by no means unfamiliar; they appear with fair regularity on vocal recitals. But it is far

less often that we hear them with orchestra; somehow in their orchestral dress they communicate even more richly and strongly the glow of romanticism that lights them from within. For that's really what they are: the essence of romanticism. And it is a curious coincidence - if indeed it is a coincidence - that they should be preceded by a Mexican symphony that bears the subtitle "Sinfonia Romantica". But this romanticism of Chavez is a whole other kettle of fish. I know Mr. Chavez well, and I can tell you that he is an utterly warm-hearted and life-loving person. But he is also a Mexican, and a good part Indian, which suggests the very opposite of romanticism. It is the unusual blend of these two elements - the impassive Indian and the romantic Latin - that produces the original and unusual music we are going to hear tonight. For example, You will hear melodies that begin almost conventionally, warmly romantic, like this -

PLAY (at piano)

[PLAY]

but suddenly stop in mid-phrase, as though cut off. The effect is one of sculptured stoniness, unyielding, typically Indian. It is almost dead-pan - have you ever seen a Mexican Indian dance? It is unlike anything else: the face never changes, the body hardly bends. It is stiff, archaic, like an Aztec idol. And so is this music - strong, sculptured, rigid, and yet infused with Chavez' own peculiar ~~version~~ brand of romanticism. ~~The Aztec idol, but~~ I think you'll find it fascinating. ~~softened by a bit of Spanish olive~~ oil.

END

~~BEFORE MAHLER~~

BEFORE MAHLER

We have begun with Mexican romanticism - a thing apart; and we shall finish with Russian romanticism. But now, at the midpoint, we are dealing with the root of all romanticism - the German Lied. These four songs of Mahler epitomize what we have come to think of as the romantic German spirit: the first one (Ich atmet' einen linden Duft) carries the sentiment we associate with Schubert and Heine, and even Goethe; the second (Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen) is one of those personal romantic confessions, which may make you think of the Marschallin's Monologue in Der Rosenkavalier; the 3rd one (Das Irdische Leben) gives us that Gothic aspect of German romanticism, involved with the morbid and fantastic - much as Schubert's Erl-King does (although this one will probably ~~may well~~ remind you of Menotti, as well). And the fourth song - Um Mitternacht - is the romantic essence of religious faith.

But oddly enough the orchestration of these songs is not what we usually think of as romantic orchestration - that is, lush and rich. It is very sparing indeed, and miraculous in the effect it makes with a very few instruments at a time. The first song, for example, uses only 1st violins and violas, celesta and harp, and a few wood-winds. The last one uses no strings at all. I thought it might be an instructive and entertaining idea to do for you the first song as it was written with piano accompaniment, and then repeat it with the orchestral accompaniment, so that you can see clearly and immediately Mahler's wizardry with the orchestra. Of course, this means that poor Miss Tourel has to sing it

twice; but she has graciously consented to do so, and we are most grateful. Here is Miss Tourel.

YP-TV #1
17 Oct. '64

What Is a Sonata?

It's wonderful to be back ~~together~~ with you again, ~~after a long, beautiful summer; and it's also a joy to be standing here in front of my own dear orchestra~~. I've missed you, missed talking to you about music; and I've missed working with this great orchestra. As you may know, this is what is called a "sabbatical year" for me — a year of rest. ~~The Bible commands us to rest every seventh day.~~ Of course, I'm not resting at all; I'm very busy composing music, which is the hardest work of all! ~~and the same~~, But as a conductor, I'm resting for one season; and the only exceptions I've allowed myself to make will be these four Young People's Concerts, which I just couldn't give up. (Besides, they give me a chance to keep my hand in, so that I don't get rusty. I don't want to have forgotten how to conduct when I come back next year!)

Now that you've had a nice restful summer vacation, and all look so bright & ready to work, I've picked a real hard subject for this opening program. We're going to dig into that terrifying old thing called Sonata Form. I've avoided ~~that~~ this subject for years, not so much because it's so difficult, but because so many words have already been spilled ~~around~~ about it in so many music-appreciation classes and lectures and what-not; and it usually

~~[illegible]~~ winds up sounding like a road-map with a lot of strange names like Exposition & Recapitulation. But I hope that by the end of today's session, the idea of the word Sonata is going to have much more meaning for you than that.

Here's the way we're going to do it. We're going to start by playing for you the 1st movement of Mozart's great Symphony in C-major, known as the Jupiter Symphony. I'm not going to tell you anything about it in advance; we'll just play it for your pleasure. Then, at the very end of the program we'll play it for you again; and by that time I hope you'll be hearing it with new ears.

But you're probably wondering why we're playing a Symphony on a program that's about the Sonata. Well, the answer to ~~the~~ that one is easy; a Symphony is a sonata. You see, a Sonata is a piece, usually in several movements, that has a certain musical form; ~~called Sonata form~~, & when that form is used in a piece for a solo instrument, like a piano, a violin or flute, or organ, the piece is called a Sonata. But when the same form is used in a piece for 3 instruments, it's called a Trio; & with 4 instruments it's called a Quartet; with 5, a Quintet, with 8 an octet, and so on. And when this form is used in a piece for a full orchestra, it's called a Symphony. Simple.

A Symphony is merely a Sonata for orchestra.

And that's all I'm going to tell you for the moment. Now let's just sit back & enjoy this fine, strong, joyful first movement of Mozart's Jupiter Symphony.

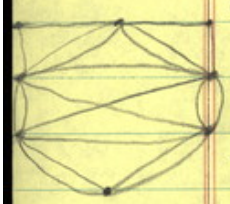
ORK. (appr. 8'?)
(Break)

Now that we've had the pure pleasure of hearing that divine music, let's get to work and ~~turn it~~ find out why it gives us such pleasure. Of course I could talk for days about the wonders of that single movement; the melodic lines, the orchestration, the economy of means, the richness of ideas. But the thing that interests us today, is the form — the musical shape of the piece. ~~Why does it seem so satisfying, so complete?~~ You know, the shape of ~~music~~ a musical composition is the hardest thing for most people to grasp; they can remember a tune or a rhythm easily enough — even harmonies & counterpoints. But the form is harder to understand, probably because it takes place in time instead of in space, ~~when you see~~ like the form of a painting, or a church, or this stage. When you look at this stage, you see its form ~~you see~~ more or less all at once, & you can take pleasure in its proportions, its balance, or whatever. But with music, it takes

time to hear the form; you have to keep all the notes you've heard in your head while you're listening to the new ones, so that by the time the piece is over, it all adds up to a continuous form. That's not easy. But if you know a little about the form in advance, for instance, if you know the piece is going to be in Sonata form, it all becomes much easier, because you can almost predict what musical shapes are going to happen. That's what we're going to do now.

Surprises?

This word Sonata originally meant just a piece of music. It comes from the Latin word sonare, to sound; so a Sonata is anything that is sounded by instruments, as opposed to a cantata, which is anything that is sung (from cantare, to sing). But it's only in the last 200 years or so that the word Sonata has acquired a special meaning, which describes the form of a piece. Up to that time a Sonata could be in any old form at all; but in the years right after the death of Bach, between 1750 + 1800, the new young composers began to write Sonatas (+ quartets + symphonies) that were built in this special form. These compositions almost always had four movements; first a fast movement, like the Jupiter movement we heard before; then a slow, song-like second movement; then an elegant dance movement, called a Minuet; and finally another fast, usually humorous movement, called a



Rondo. But the main thing that clinched it was always the first movement: that had to be in what we call Sonata-form. And this first-movement form laid the foundations of the symphony as we have known it from that time, which we call the Classical Period, with its two giants Haydn + Mozart, right ~~up~~ on through Bee Thoven + Brahms + Mahler, into our own 20th century. So ~~I~~ you see how important it is that we know what that basic classical form is — the form of the 1st movement of a Sonata.

~~Actually, it's not really more complicated than a simple song in the average popular song, which usually~~

How can we explain this immense popularity + growth of Sonata-form over 200 years? What makes it ~~as we've before~~ so satisfying, so complete? Two things really: 1st, its perfect ~~3-part~~ 3-part balance, and second, the excitement of its contrasting elements. Balance + contrast: in those two words we have the main secrets of sonata form.

Let's consider first that 3-part ~~balance~~ design: ~~It's not you all know~~ We see it all around us: think of a bridge with two great towers rising on either side of the river, + the connecting span sweeping

over the water between them. You must all have felt the pleasure + satisfaction that comes from looking at that 3-part structure. Or think of an elm-tree, with its central trunk, + the umbrella-shaped branches arching out on both sides. Or the 3-part balance of a human face, with its centerpiece of nose + mouth, and its two ~~balanced~~ mirror-like side-pieces of eyes + ears. These are all examples of 3-part form. (To Piano)

Now of course any ~~thing~~ form as basic + natural as that must ~~have~~ be just as natural in music. And so it is; the most basic form of a simple song is usually a 3-part form. Take the old folk-song that we all know as "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star". There's a first part, which we'll call A (play); then a middle part, which we'll call B (play); + finally a return to the first part, A (play) — and the song is over. There's a clear, exact 3-part form: A, B, A.

~~And we can follow this form, as it grows in size, into the area of~~

Now let's see how this simple little construction grows in size when it's used in a slightly ~~longer~~ longer song-form, whether it's an art-song or a popular song. In fact, ~~for instance~~, most pop tunes stick to this A-B-A pattern, whether they're by Irving Berlin or the Beatles. The only difference here — and this is important, as you'll see later — is that

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usually the first A-section is repeated right away, before the B-section comes; so that the pattern is really A-A-B-A. But it's still made out of those same 3 parts. Let's take a pop tune — ~~+ see~~ In fact — let's take a typical Beatles tune, like "A Hard Day's Night" ~~And I Love Her~~ — + see what happens.
(~~or Hard Day's Night or I Should a known Better~~)

(Play + sing, naming ~~in~~ sections).

Well, that's a small step forward from "Twinkle Twinkle little Star", but it's a step. It's grown in size, + it has that extra deluxe feature — the repeat of the 1st A section. Now let's follow the growth of a 3-part song even further, as it expands into a big operatic aria, for example, Micaela's beautiful aria from the opera Carmen. This is a little more complicated, or, let's say, sophisticated; it doesn't break up quite so neatly into an exact A-B-A; but I'm sure you'll be able to follow its three parts: ~~the two lyrical A-sections spinning out on either side of~~ The sweet, lyrical first part, the more excited and dramatic middle part, and the return again to the quiet first part. And here to sing it for us is ——

Carmen.

(8)

Well, now that we have ~~gained the~~ learned to recognize a 3-part form, I think we're ready to take the plunge into Sonata-form itself. Because a Sonata movement is really only a more expanded version of a 3-part form, even to the mirror-like balancing of its 2 A-sections on either side of the B section. But here's where those nasty road-map names come in: The 1st part, or A-section is called the Exposition: This is ~~the~~ where the themes of the movement are stated for the first time — or exposed, if you will: therefore the word Exposition. This is followed by a B section, in which one or some ones of those themes are developed in lots of different ways; & this is called the Development Section. And finally, just as you expected, we get the A section stated again; & this 3rd part is usually called the Recapitulation. Wow; that's a tough one. Actually, I'm not too crazy about those terms, anyway; I much prefer to think of these 3 parts as Statement, Development, & Restatement. It's simpler, & makes more sense. But what can we do? We have to use the words that are most commonly used in order to be understood; so I guess we're stuck with ~~we'll have to~~ ~~use the~~ Exposition, Development, & Recapitulation.

But whatever words we use, the idea of the 3 parts is still clear & simple; the main thing

is the feeling of balance we get from the return of the 1st section after the development. But you remember I said that there were two main secrets to the Sonata; balance, and contrast. And this idea of contrast is just as important as the other; it's what gives the sonata its ~~energy~~ drama, conflict, + excitement.

Now ~~where~~ how does this contrast take place? I'll show you; ~~but~~ and here we're going to have to get technical for a minute or two. But I'm sure you won't mind that; ~~we've dug into musical problems before + survived. Now~~ because what I'm going to show you now is very important — really the root of this whole Sonata business. And that is the sense of key, of tonality. Most music that we hear is written in one key or another; you've all had the experience of singing a song in a key that felt uncomfortable to your voice, + wishing it could be sung in a lower or higher key. For instance, that Beatle song we played before (play) is in this key — ~~D minor~~ G major (play). But it could also be in ~~A minor~~ A major (play) or in C major (play) or in any of 12 different major keys. But whatever key it's in — let's say C major — you feel a key-note, a center, or home plate, where the music belongs, starts out from, + gets back to. That home plate center is called the tonic (play); the tonic note is the 1st note of that scale (play), + the tonic chord is the chord you build on the tonic note. (play)

(10)

Now all the other notes of the scale also have names; but I won't bother you with them except for this one: the dominant. That's the name given to the 5th note of any scale — in this case the note is G; + the dominant chord is built on that note (play).

(play)

Now comes the main event — how these two key-centers, tonic + dominant, are related to each other. If I play a tonic + a dominant chord, in that order, what do you feel? (Play) Something is left unfinished, unresolved, isn't it? You feel a desperate urge to get back to the tonic, don't you? So I'll play them in reverse order — dominant to tonic (play) — and now you feel satisfied, don't you? So you see, that tonic is like a magnet; you can pull away from it, going to other keys, or tonal centers; but in the end it always has to pull you back.

Play

And out of this magnetic pull, away from + back to the tonic, a classical sonata is built. ~~The composer starts in the tonic key (play), but then~~ That's where the conflict, the ~~conflic~~ tension lies — in the contrast of keys. The composer will ~~usually~~ naturally begin his sonata in the tonic key (play), and his opening theme will be in that key; but then, like a magician, will begin to lure us away from it to a new key — usually the dominant; not just to the dominant chord, but into the dominant key; + in this

~~And this second theme~~

(11)

And this new theme is almost always contrasts with the first theme in other ways than just key: if the first theme is rugged, the 2nd will possibly be more lyrical; or vice versa. But always there is the contrast of key.

new key, he gives us his second theme, or group of themes. So there we are, solidly established in a new key; + the exposition is over. OVER What has this exposition been? Simply a ~~trip~~ running away from home — a pull away from that magnet called the tonic. And the rest of the movement is nothing but the drama of resisting that magnetic pull, then eventually giving in, + coming home. It's as though we try to roam, to explore, escape, be free; ~~investigate~~; but always there's that magnet sitting there, pulling us back. That's what happens in the 2nd part, or development section — ~~what is called the development~~ The composer lets his ~~themes~~ imagination roam free; the themes he has stated in the exposition go wandering around in one foreign key after another — like a trip around the world. But finally the magnet wins out, + we arrive back home, in the tonic; + the whole exposition is ~~repeated~~ recapitulated — remember that word? Only in this 3rd section, the recapitulation, ~~the~~ which is the mirror-image of the exposition, we never leave the tonic; that second theme, a group of themes, which we first heard in the dominant, is not allowed to wander away this time; this time we must hear it in the tonic key, so that when the movement is over, we are safely at home, and all that drama of pulling away from the magnet is finished. The magnet always wins, because that's how people are. In the end, people always want to come home.

Now let's see how all this works out in a real

~~Now the classical sonata~~

Now at this point in the classical sonata we usually bump smack into a repeat sign, which means that the whole A section, or exposition, has to be played again. Just like the Beatles: remember? A-A-B-A. And so for the 2nd time, we have a full exposition, ~~from tonic~~ starting in the tonic & winding up in the dominant.

Because it's in time, it repeats to help you remember.

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Mozart Sonata. Here is the 1st movement of his most famous sonata, in C major. And, of course, it begins in C major.

Play 4 bars.

That's the 1st Theme. But now..

Play transition

What has happened? We have been lured away into the dominant, G major; & in this new key we hear the 2nd Theme:

Play

And a little ~~[illegible]~~ fanfare-tune brings the Exposition to a close.

Play.

Now there's that repeat sign, some have to play the exposition all over again.

Play.

Which brings us to the Development Section. This is a very short sonata, as you can see; & so the development is also very short. In fact, the only theme Mozart develops ~~[illegible]~~ is that little fanfare we just heard; but he puts it through its paces.

Play to Recap.

And now he pulls a real surprise. We have arrived at the recapitulation, which by all rules should be back in the tonic key of C. But no: Mozart holds out on us; he is still resisting that magnet of the tonic; & so he gives us the recapitulation in the unexpected key of F.

Play to 2nd Theme.

But now Mozart yields, & the magnet wins after all. The

rest of this little movement is all safe & ~~cozy~~ warm, back home in C major.

Play to end.

Now that wasn't too terribly hard was it? Do you see now what I meant by balance & contrast? The balance of the 3-part form, & the contrast of the tonic with the dominant. Of course there's much more to it than we can explain in this brief hour: the contrasting key is not always the dominant; rules get broken right & left. And of course there's the whole business of introductions & codas — extra sections at the beginning & end of a sonata movement; but there's plenty of time for you to learn about those. What matters now is that you see the main things: the magnetic tonic, & the A-B-A form. Armed with that information, you should be able to recognize & follow any classical sonata-form movement. Just to see if I'm right, I'm going to throw you a curve: we're going to play you the last movement of Prokofieff's Classical Symphony — a modern work, but a deliciously spoofing imitation of ~~[illegible]~~ the 18th century classical form. It is a perfect example: see if you can follow it.

ORK (Titles supered?)

(Break)

(14)

Were you able to follow the form of that movement by Prokofieff? If so, you are well on your way toward being a real music-listener. Because, as I said before, anyone can hear a tune or a rhythm, & even enjoy it; but ~~only a~~ a true listener hears much more: he hears the form of a piece, just as clearly as he sees the ~~form of that 3-part~~ 3-part form of a bridge.

And so now, confident that you are all new experts on the subject of Sonata-form, I am going to keep the promise I made at the beginning of this program, & play again that great first movement of Mozart's Jupiter Symphony. There will be no surprises this time; ~~don't need any hints or warnings~~: The 2nd Theme is in the dominant; the recapitulation is in the tonic. There is no introduction, & no coda. The only thing I must tell you is that for reasons of time we will not obey the repeat sign at the end of the exposition. Otherwise, you're on your own.

OKIC, (Superteller?)

Leonard Bernstein