

Second Season

The Orchestra of America

Richard Korn
Musical Director

1960-1961
Carnegie Hall

Wednesday Evening, March 22, 1961 at 8:30

Broadcast over the WNYC Radio Network

Beginning at 8:30 P.M.

RICHARD KORN, Conductor
Vida Chenoweth, Marimba
Roman Totenberg, Violin

PHILIP JAMES Overture, "Bret Harte"

***WILLIAM SCHUMAN** Concerto for Violin and Orchestra

Part I

Allegro risoluto

Molto Tranquillo — Tempo Primo

Cadenza — Agitato Fervente

Part II

Introduzione (Adagio —

Quasi Cadenza)

Presto Leggiero — Allegretto

Adagietto

Poco a Poco Accelerando al Allegro

Vivo

ROMAN TOTENBERG

intermission

***PAUL CRESTON** Concertino for Marimba and Orchestra

Vigorous

Calm

Lively

VIDA CHENOWETH

RANDALL THOMPSON Symphony No. 2

Allegro

Largo

Vivace

Andante moderato — Allegro con

spirito — Largamente

* Second New York Performance

Baldwin Piano

THE ORCHESTRA OF AMERICA

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RICHARD KORN

Richard Korn, described by Donald Brook in his book, "International Gallery of Conductors," as having "refreshing intellect, mastery of the orchestra, poise, a sensible, steady beat and remarkable vitality," is known throughout Europe, Japan, Israel and America for his "inquisitive and courageous" (New York Times) approach to programming.

Mr. Korn, who has conducted leading orchestras in this country and abroad, has always elected to include American music on his programs. His interest in "native composers" led inevitably to the musical direction of the Orchestra of America which is devoted solely to a re-discovery of our musical heritage of the past and present.

Mr. Korn and the Orchestra of America for the second consecutive year, have received the National Federation of Music Clubs Citation.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

PHILIP JAMES Overture, "Bret Harte"

Philip James was born in Jersey City, N. J. on May 17, 1890. He studied music in New York and Paris under such instructors as Joseph Bonnet, Rubin Goldmark, Homer Norris, Rosario Scalero and Elliot Schenck. After World War I, Mr. James became Band Leader and Commanding Officer of General Pershing's Headquarters Band. Following this, he conducted operettas for Victor Herbert, and later served as conductor of the New Jersey Orchestra, The Brooklyn Orchestral Society and the Bamberger Symphony Orchestra. He has been guest conductor of many of the great orchestras of the country and has served as a faculty member of Columbia University and Head of the Music Department of New York University.

Concerning the overture, Mr. James writes as follows:

"Bret Harte is the third of three overtures I have written with that title. The first was never performed and has since been destroyed. The second had one performance by the Beethoven Orchestra in Carnegie Hall (January 13, 1928) conducted by Georges Zaslowsky. All three overtures are quite different although using largely the same thematic material. The present overture, composed in 1934, is not programmatic, although its title might have that implication. It is absolute in form, using motives based on bits of songs belonging to the time and people written of by Bret Harte in his *Luck of Roaring Camp*, *Outcast of Poker Flat*, etc. I have tried to engender, through the medium of music, the romance, the boisterousness, the animation, and the many other qualities of the people of Bret Harte and the West — a people and a section of our country whose glamour has been bedimmed, all too often, through the eyes of Hollywood as well as by the mawkishness of many of our radio and T.V. 'hill-billy' singers and programs."

WILLIAM SCHUMAN Concerto for Violin and Orchestra

William Schuman was born in New York on August 4, 1910. He studied counterpoint with Charles Haubiel, and in 1935 attended the Mozarteum Academy in Salzburg. Thereafter he became an instructor at Sarah Lawrence College and undertook further studies with Roy Harris. From 1945 to 1952 he was director of publication for G. Schirmer, Inc., and since 1945 has also been President of the Juilliard School of Music. His compositions have won many important awards.

The Violin Concerto was premiered in 1958 by Isaac Stern with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. It was thereafter revised, also in 1958. In its present and final form it was performed last season by Joseph Fuchs with the Juilliard School orchestra, and by Mr. Totenberg at Aspen and in London with the B.B.C. Orchestra.

There is no introductory *tutti*; the solo violin announces the main theme of the first movement at the outset. It also leads a slow section in a sustained theme which is taken up by the clarinet over a counterpoint in the solo violin. The horn brings back the first theme; passage-work leads to a cadenza, after which the solo violin enters with the theme of the slow section, and the first part closes with an animated coda.

Part II opens with an extended and improvisatory introduction in which the brass and timpani predominate. The strings then begin a fugue, in which the winds gradually join and engage in a dialogue with the solo violin. A *scherzando* section follows, the orchestral background consisting mainly of irregularly spaced chords in the trombones. There is another slow section, after which the work gathers momentum and closes with great energy.

PAUL CRESTON Concertino for Marimba and Orchestra, Opus 21

Paul Creston (born in New York City, 1906) is one of the most widely played of our contemporary composers. He studied piano with Giuseppe Randegger and Gaston Dethier, and organ and composition with Pietro Yon. He was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1938-9 and for a number of years has been organist of St. Malachy's Church in New York.

The Concertino for Marimba, which was commissioned by Frederique Petrides and dedicated to her, was completed in March, 1940. It is in three movements and is designed to demonstrate the capabilities of the marimba as a solo instrument with orchestral accompaniment.

The first movement, marked "Vigorous," is based on two main themes, a strongly rhythmic one and a lyric one, both of which are announced in the orchestral introduction. The development of these themes occurs mainly in the solo part, and within the 3/4 meter are incorporated various rhythmic structures.

The second movement, marked "Calm," consists of an introductory theme first presented by solo flute, immediately followed by the main theme (in chordal structure) played by the marimba with four mallets. The general mood of tranquility is retained throughout, except for a minor climax developed toward the middle of the movement.

The last movement, marked "Lively," is a combination scherzo and finale, in 6/8 time. Rhythmic variety is the chief objective of this movement, the lyric and dramatic elements are interspersed throughout.

There are no isolated cadenzas to reveal the virtuosity of the soloist, as the composition as a whole affords numerous opportunities to display this phase.

RANDALL THOMPSONSymphony No. 2

Randall Thompson was born in New York City in 1899. He received his B.A. and M.A. from Harvard University. His awards include the Guggenheim Fellowship and that of the American Academy in Rome, as well as the Eastman Publications Award. He has taught at Wellesley and at the University of California; has been Director of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, Head of the Department of Music at the University of Virginia, and Professor of Composition at Princeton University, and is at present Professor of Music at Harvard.

Symphony No. 2 was composed from July 1930 to September 1931. It received its first performance at an American Composer's Concert on March 24, 1932, Howard Hanson conducting. It was first performed in New York by Bruno Walter and the New York Philharmonic on November 2, 1933 and since has been widely performed.

John Tasker Howard has written, "If Randall Thompson had composed nothing more than the slow movement of his Second Symphony, he would be entitled by virtue of that work alone to a high place among our contemporary composers. For here is the voice of a true poet, calmly reflective, breathing its yearnings and aspirations through a Negro-like theme suggestive of *Deep River*. The entire symphony is simple and unaffected, and carries out successfully the composer's intention to be 'primarily melodious and objective'."

Mr. Thompson has said of the symphony, "It is based on no program, either literary or spiritual. It is not cyclical. I wanted to write four contrasting movements, separate and distinct, which together should convey a sense of balance and completeness." He analyzes it thus:

1. Allegro, E minor, 2/4 time. The movement runs from beginning to end without change in tempo. The principal theme is announced immediately by the horns, forte, and answered by the trumpets. From this motive is derived a series of rhythmic figures which form the toccata-like background of the entire movement. The subsidiary theme (G minor, oboes, English horn, and bassoon) is of a more reticent nature, but the 'celli accompany it in a persistent rhythm.

The development section begins quietly, and forms a gradual crescendo, at the apex of which the first theme returns in an ominous fortissimo against a counter-rhythm on the kettledrums. A more extended transition leads to a sinister presentation of the second theme (C minor, muted trumpets answered by bassoon and clarinets antiphonally). At the close, a major version of the second theme in augmentation is sounded fortissimo by the horns and trumpets against the continuous pulse of the strings. The movement subsides, apparently to end in the major. An abrupt minor chord brings it to a close.

2. Largo, C major, 4/4 time. The violins play a warm, quiet melody against pizzicato chords in the 'celli. A contrasting melody is sung by the

oboe. The movement is not long, but its mood is concentrated. It ends simply, on a C major chord with lowered seventh.

3. *Vivace*, 7/4 time. Scherzo with trio. The first section begins in G minor and ends in D minor. The trio (*Capriccioso*, 6/8 and 9/8 time) progresses from B major to G major. The first section returns transposed. Now beginning in C minor and ending in G minor, it serves as a kind of extended "subdominant answer" to its former presentation. There is a short coda making an intensified use of material from the trio.

4. *Andante moderato* — *Allegro con spirito* — *Largamente*, E major, The slow sections which begin and end this movement serve to frame the *Allegro*, a modified rondo. The theme of the *Allegro* is a diminution of the theme of the first and last sections. The *Largamente* employs for the first time the full sonorities of the orchestra in a sustained assertion of the principal melody.

Vida Chenoweth, first virtuoso of the ancient marimba, was discovered by Richard Korn and presented last season with the Orchestra of America to the delight and acclaim of critics and audience. Miss Chenoweth's dazzling technique has opened fresh dimension in the realm of serious music for her instrument, in addition to creating a new challenge for the modern composer.

After receiving a grant from the State Department to study the marimba in Guatamala, Miss Chenoweth thrilled the concert-goers of Guatamala and Mexico from village to concert hall, under the auspices of the U.S. Embassy, and returned there last year at the request of those governments. Miss Chenoweth brings musical history to her recital and orchestral performances.

Roman Totenberg, distinguished violinist, well-known in this country and abroad, has appeared with such major symphony orchestras as the National, Boston, Cleveland, New York Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, Concertgebouw and BBC. Mr. Totenberg premiered the Schuman Violin Concerto in its present form at the Aspen Festival in 1959. In addition, the violinist has in the past, premiered the Milhaud Concerto and a Hindemith Sonata. He is equally at home in standard repertoire, as well as contemporary works.

THE ORCHESTRA OF AMERICA — 1961-62 SEASON

Once again we want to thank you for your interest in and support of our 1960-61 series of concerts.

We are pleased to announce that our repertoire next season will be expanded to include the music of our good neighbors of the Western Hemisphere — Canada and the Latin American countries.

Because of the warm reception accorded our first presentation of an American opera in concert form, we plan to include another American opera. In addition, we shall continue to present first performances at each concert of a contemporary work, and second performances of compositions that should have additional hearings, and continued exploration of the music of America's heritage.

Our subscription series of five Wednesday evenings will take place at Carnegie Hall on November 8, December 6, January 10, February 14 and March 14.

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