12-8-1929

Concert: Ithaca Military Band School, Tschaikowsky Program

Ithaca Military Band School

Ernest Williams

Carleton Stewart

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ITHACA CONSERVATORY AND AFFILIATED SCHOOLS

CONCERT

given by the

Ithaca Military Band School

ERNEST WILLIAMS, Conductor

TSCHAIKOWSKY PROGRAM

CARLETON STEWART, Soloist

LITTLE THEATRE

SUNDAY AFTERNOON

December Eighth, at Three-thirty o’Clock
Band Concert

TSCHAIKOWSKY PROGRAM

PETER ILYITCH TSCHAIKOWSKY

Born in Votkinsk, Russia, May 7, 1840
Died at Petrograd, November 6, 1893

I. 1812: Overture Solennelle, Opus 49

The 1812 Overture is one of the most spirited compositions in the line of program music in all musical literature. Tschaikowsky composed it for Orchestra on a commission from the then Imperial Russian Government, for out-of-doors performance with real bells, Brass Band and cannon, and it was first performed in the public square in front of the Moscow Cathedral with this formidable extra equipment. In this present performance, Dean Williams will add his second Band to supplement the concert Band in the passages where extra equipment is required.

Tschaikowsky had no great liking for the overture himself, and referred to it in his diary as having "only a patriotic and local significance". True, the intellectual appeal of this composition is small, as might be expected from a work which attempts to portray physical events of the magnitude of a battle, and the rejoicings of a whole nation, but the emotional and patriotic appeal and the spirit with which it is carried out will keep the work alive for many years to come.

The event which the overture Commemorates was the repulse in 1812 of the Napoleonic invasion of Russia, and its symbolism is quite simple. It opens with a solemn and terrible hymn, founded on an old Byzantine ecclesiastical tune. The Marseillaise is heard, first fragmentarily but with increasing power as the exercising of the full force of the French invaders is typified musically. But it is overwhelmed, there is a stupendous return of the old Byzantine tune and the overture closes with a tremendous proclamation of the Russian National Hymn.

II. Cornet solo

"None But A Lonely Heart"

CARLETON STEWART
III. From the "Nut Cracker" Suite

1. Miniature Overture
2. March
3. Russian Trepak Dance
4. The Dance of the Flutes

A daintiness and grace is in the "Miniature Overture", that makes us think of Mozart, who was the favorite composer with Tchaikowsky, and who seems to be a kind of tutelary genius with the modern Russian school. The whole design of the beginning is in high notes; there is not a note of the Overture below middle C.

The first of the Characteristic Dances is a lively March, mainly in higher brass. The answer is in tripping phrase of woodwinds to a melodic call of the bassoons or higher reed. Later a variant of the march motif sounds in the low brass, answered by a playful phrase of chirruping wood. In the middle is a brief episode of rapid runs. Later the returning march is blended brilliantly with the quicker phrases.

The Russian Trepak Dance is in exceedingly lively pace, with all the intense vehemence and full musical quality of Russian Song. It never loses the playful charm of the fairy-story.

The dainty, leisurely Dance of the Flutes is both delicate and airy. In the middle the Trumpets, in the midst of a choir of brass, blow a dance of primitive swing and rude tune, that is taken up by all the chorus but the Flutes. The latter return to their delicate airy dance.

IV. Two Excerpts from The Pathetique Symphony

1. Andante from the First Movement
2. March from the Third Movement

The celebrated Russian composer's sixth and last Symphony was written in 1893—the year of his death. The title "Pathetic" was given it by the composer after the first performance on account of the feeling he had that the meaning of the work was not altogether understood. The excerpts here presented are arrangements of two of the best known portions of the work. The beautiful Andante melody appears in the original after a gloomy and restless opening, and seems to breathe a message of consolation. The fiery March is based on a little theme of two bars, which is worked up into a stirring and brilliant movement, worthy of being regarded as one of Tchaikowsky's finest achievements.

V. Andante Cantabile from The Fifth Symphony

The Andante Cantabile is one of the most beautiful Symphonic movements ever written. Opening with eight bars of solemn harmony, the horn introduces an appealing theme and the clarinets take up a continuation which emerges eventually into a serene harmonic poem entrancing in effect. The episode which follows is worked up to an impassioned climax and is suddenly interrupted by the "menacing phrase" of the Symphony. The first theme is again introduced and the movement ends pianissimo with a passage of tranquil happiness.
VI. Finale from The Fourth Symphony

In the case of the Fourth Symphony, Tschaikowsky had the grace and wisdom to bequeath to us a detailed account of the significance of the music. Describing the finale, he says, "If you can find no pleasures in yourself, look about you. Mix with people. Observe that the multitude understands how to be merry, how to surrender itself to gayety. A popular festival is depicted. Scarcely have you forgotten yourself, scarcely have you had time to lose yourself in contemplation of the joy of others, when unwearying Fate again announces its presence. But the multitude pays no heed to you. It does not even spare you a glance, nor note that you are lonely and sad. How merry they all are! And do you still say that the world is steeped in grief? Nay, there is such a thing as joy—simple, vigorous, primitive joy. Rejoice in the happiness of others, and it will still be possible for you to live."

This movement is said to depict a rustic holiday, and a tremendous explosive chord lets loose a fiery rush of scale passages which are a distinct feature of the movement. Its main subject is a Russian folk-song with a rhythmically plaintive theme, upon which is built a set of free variations. Later appears a bold and vigorous march theme, and the whole is brought to a brilliant and strepitant climax.

LITTLE THEATRE EVENTS FOR DECEMBER

Monday, Dec. 9—Faculty Recital given by Marjorie Beeby, Contralto.

Tuesday, Dec. 10—Recital given by music students.

Thursday, Dec. 12 at 4:00 P.M.—Saturday's Children, read by R. A. Tallcott.

Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Dec. 12, 13, 14—Religious Drama, "The Rock".

Monday, Dec. 16—Concert by Conservatory Orchestra under the direction of William Coad.

Tuesday, Dec. 17—Program of Readings.

Thursday, Dec. 19 at 8:15 P.M.—A special Christmas program consisting of orchestral, choral and dramatic features.