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THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC
at the
University of Washington

presents the

UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY
Robert Feist, *Conductor*

with guest artist

Neal O'Doan, *Piano*

January 28, 1987

8:00 PM, Meany Theater

PROGRAM

Tape 11129

BORODIN
(1887-1933)

Overture to Prince Igor

10:30

RACHMANINOV
(1873-1943)

Concerto No. 1 for Piano
and Orchestra in f sharp
minor, Op. 1*

Vivace

Andante

Finale: Allegro vivace

26:57

Neal O'Doan, piano

INTERMISSION

Tape 11130

SIBELIUS
(1865-1957)

Symphony No. 1 in e minor
Op. 39

*Andante ma non troppo;
allegro energico*

*Andante ma non troppo
lento*

Andante; allegro molto

40:53

*First performance by the University Symphony.

All three works on this program stem from the last decade of the 19th century, and reflect strongly the fertile, romantic tendencies of that era. Almost as frequently performed as the popular *Polovtsian Dances* from Borodin's only opera, *Prince Igor*, is its famous Overture.

Ironically, Borodin did not complete *Prince Igor* himself, though he had devoted years of research into the history, customs, and vagaries of the Polovtsians, a people of Central Asia around whom the dramatic subject evolves. It was completed by Rimsky-Korsakoff and Glazounoff, both of whom labored long and lovingly on the remaining unorchestrated portions, as well as on the development of certain sketches made by Borodin.

The idea for the piece was suggested to Borodin by the Russian critic Vladimir Stasoff. That was in 1869. Twenty-one years later, on November 4, 1890, *Prince Igor* was given its premiere performance at St. Petersburg.

Borodin and Stasoff collaborated on the libretto, which is mostly derived from the *Epic of the Army of Igor*, an apocryphal early Russian poem which appeared in 1800 and was regarded by many Russian scholars as a literary fraud.

It is more than appropriate that the Rachmaninov *First Piano Concerto* finally appears on a program by the University Symphony, considering its academic origins when the composer was a student in Moscow. He was only 18 when he wrote it, a phenomenal achievement from any viewpoint. During my own student days in conservatory in Cincinnati, at least three pianists learned it. I myself began to work on it, then instead with the Conservatory Orchestra, introduced the composer's Fourth Concerto to the city. However, the neglected First concerto has always remained my favorite, for its dazzling piano writing, superb orchestration and soulful Slavic melodies, particularly the opening theme of the first movement; but then the arching cantabile melody of the second movement, with filagree piano decorations, is perhaps

unequaled in his entire output. Why it is so infrequently performed remains a mystery, though we cannot forget the composer's initial dissatisfaction and subsequent revision. As Louis Biancolli states: "Safonoff, then director of the Moscow Conservatory, where Rachmaninoff was awarded the highest honors as pianist in 1891, conducted its premiere that year. The response was far from encouraging. Rachmaninoff himself at first thought so little of the Concerto he decided not to take it with him when the London Philharmonic invited him over for a series of appearances. However, before leaving Russia in 1917, he subjected the score to drastic revision. Though no fresh material was employed, structure and instrumentation were thoroughly modified. By then Rachmaninoff had composed his phenomenally successful Second Concerto. What mature technic and style were now his, reflected back on the earlier work."

Rachmaninoff was soloist in the First Concerto when the new version was introduced to New York by the Russian Symphony Orchestra on January 28, 1919. On December 26 of that year the New Symphony Orchestra--later to become the National Symphony Orchestra--played the work in Carnegie Hall with the composer as soloist and Artur Bodanzky as conductor. Rachmaninoff was again the soloist when the Philharmonic-Symphony brought the Concerto into its repertory at the concerts of December 29 and 30, 1938. The work is dedicated to Alexander Glotki, with whom he had studied piano at the Moscow Conservatory.

Robert Feist

Few will deny that Sibelius' seven symphonies are among the most distinguished contributions to symphonic literature by a 20th-century composer. The first two symphonies are entrenched in the German Romantic traditions and reveal the influence of Tchaikovsky. These two works are still popular, and it is easy to see why: they have the ardor, passion, and vitality of youth; they over-

flow with sensual lyricism and Slavic sentimentality; they are dramatized by compelling climaxes and irresistible rhythmic drive.

The *Symphony No. 1 in E minor*, op. 39 (1899) was first performed in Helsinki on April 26, 1899, the composer conducting. A slow introduction, dominated by a melody for clarinet, leads to the main Allegro section, whose first theme is a dramatic subject for strings. A subsidiary idea in woodwinds precedes a thunderous climax in which the first theme is exultantly proclaimed by the full orchestra; only then does the second main theme of the movement appear, a sensitive, lyric thought for two flutes. The second movement spotlights a spacious melody with the character of a Finnish folksong, first presented by muted violins and cellos. The serenity is shattered by a passionate outburst by the orchestra, but a solo cello soon restores calm. There is a kind of barbaric ferocity in the Scherzo that follows, but a flute melody in the trio provides an emotional respite. The finale opens with the clarinet theme of the first-movement introduction, but a new subject is soon heard in the woodwind. Following a powerful surge of the orchestra, a second melody unfolds in the strings against a rhythmic background of percussion. A fugato passage based on the first new theme leads to a climax at whose peak this theme receives exultant expression. The second theme is now taken over by different sections of the orchestra, and an agitated coda brings the symphony to its conclusion.

D. Ewen

UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY

Robert Feist, *Conductor*

Violin I

Michelle Davis,

Concertmistress

Jennifer Adams

Shaun McBride

Susanne Vetter

Myung Hee Yang

Behrad Rahbin

Danielle Foucaultt

Violin II

Edward Davis

Shelby Eaton

Paul Elliott

Margaret Thomas

Beatrice Schmidtke

Ewan Magie

Viola

Michelle Sayles

April Acevez

Linda Chang

Marianne Lacrosse

Matthew Underwood

Jubilee Cooke

Donna Fogle

Cello

Joseph Bichsel

Megan Lynch

Ying Wang

Tim Janof

Bret Smith

Michael Center

Kyeong Chung

Bass

Brian Kennedy

Robert Beerman

Diane Rhoades

Veronika Rudolph

Flute

Maya Johnson

Kathy Woodard

Michael Rodick

Oboe

Tad Margelli

Chiun-Mei Huang

Clarinet

Karlin Love

Beverly Setzer

Bassoon

Krista Lake

Jeff Eldridge

Horn

Jennie Knezovich

Margaret Berry

Tony Miller

Pete Hodges

Trumpet

Andrew Hillaker

Craig Ball

Sam Mann

Trombone

Billy Blaze

Shelley Greer

Andrew Hillaker

Tuba

Bix Lively

Harp

Melissa Brennick

Timpani

Bruce Monroe

Percussion

Chris Monroe

Brian Caldwell

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UPCOMING CONCERTS:

February 2, UNIVERSITY JAZZ ENSEMBLE, 8:00 PM, Meany Theater.

February 3, FAITHFULLY MOZART, a concert of Mozart's music for the antique basset horn, 8:00 PM, Meany Theater.

February 10, UNIVERSITY WIND ENSEMBLE, 8:00 PM, Meany Theater.

February 17, FACULTY RECITAL: Montserrat Alavedra, *soprano*; George Barth, *piano*; Paul Coletti, *viola*. 8:00 PM, Meany Theater.

February 20, FACULTY RECITAL: Carole Terry, *organ*. 8:00 PM, St. Alphonsus Church.

February 23, FACULTY RECITAL: Soni Ventorum Wind Quintet, 8:00 PM, Meany Theater.

February 24-March 11: THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE, 8:00 PM, Studio Theater (Sunday matinees at 2:00 PM).

February 25, UNIVERSITY CHORALE INVITATIONAL CONCERT, 7:30 PM, Meany Theater.