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DATS # 14,096-14,097
CDS # 14,098-14,099

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2002
2-26

University of Washington
THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

*Celebrates Maestro Peter Erös' 50 years of
conducting with a performance by the*

THE UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY
Peter Erös, conductor

and Faculty Guest Artist

Robin McCabe, piano

February 26, 2002

7:30 PM

Meany Theater

PROGRAM

CD # 14,098

HUNGARIAN DANCES (9:31) JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)

Nos. 1, 5, and 6

1 2 3

CONCERTO NO. 2 IN C MINOR, OP. 18.... SERGEI RACHMANINOFF (1873-1943)

4 Moderato

5 Adagio Sostenuto

6 Allegro Scherzando

(35:53)

Robin McCabe, piano

INTERMISSION

CD # 14,099

SYMPHONY NO. 7 IN A MAJOR, OP. 92

..... LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

1 Poco Sostenuto-Vivace

2 Allegretto

3 Presto

4 Allegro con brio

(39:41)

PROGRAM NOTES

A product of the rigorous Russian conservatory system, SERGEI RACHMANINOFF was trained as a pianist, conductor and composer. Although he began his career as a conductor, he became better known as a pianist after fleeing the Russian Revolution in 1917, and is still considered to have been one of the greatest pianists of the twentieth century. Critics and scholars meanwhile dismissed Rachmaninoff's compositions as anachronistic and irrelevant because of their accessibility, inherent lyricism, and brooding, passionate melodies. However, in the last decade Russian music scholars have come to recognize these elements as being among the hallmark traits of music by Russian composers. The *SECOND CONCERTO* was written in 1901 when Rachmaninoff was 28 years old. Its composition marked the end of a three-year period in which he reportedly had lost confidence in his abilities as a composer. Ironically, this concerto has now been part of the standard orchestral and piano literature for over fifty years and is perhaps the most enduring and best-loved of all Rachmaninoff's works.

Beginning with the *Eroica* Symphony, LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN planned his symphonies in pairs: the odd-numbered symphonies were more experimental in nature while the even-numbered symphonies followed more traditional construction. The *SEVENTH SYMPHONY*, composed between the fall of 1811 and the spring of 1812, is the first of Beethoven's last-completed symphonic pair. A tenth symphony was planned to follow the Ninth, but the composer died before it could be written. Like the Third and Fifth Symphonies, the Seventh Symphony achieves the Beethovenian "symphonic ideal" of creating the impression of a psychological journey in which one arrives, transcends, or triumphs over an unnamed foe. The heroic posture of the Allegretto (second movement) was said to have haunted Schubert throughout most of his life. The Viennese audience was in fact so taken with the Allegretto at the symphony's premiere that the movement was encoored before the Presto and Finale were played. In this symphony Beethoven expands eighteenth-century symphonic form by adding a long introduction to the first movement, repeating the trio section of the scherzo (third movement), and adding a long coda to the Finale. He also employs key relationships throughout the work based on thirds rather than the traditional tonic-dominant association—a trait that foreshadows nineteenth-century practices. Although this symphony has been overshadowed by the Fifth and Ninth symphonies in many historical writings, it still stands as titan—well-deserving of its place as one of the best-loved works in symphonic literature.

—Notes by Sue Neimoyer,
Ph.D. Candidate in Historical Musicology

Celebrated American pianist ROBIN MCCABE has electrified audiences on four continents with her virtuosic performances, and has established herself as one of America's most communicative and persuasive artists. McCabe's involvement and musical sensibilities have delighted audiences across the United States, Europe, Canada, South America, and the Far East. She has made four concert tours of Asia, performing as guest soloist with orchestras and in solo recitals, as well as lecturing and teaching at conservatories. The United States Department of State sponsored her two South American tours, which were triumphs both artistically and diplomatically.

Critics respond both to McCabe's prowess and to her expressive intensity. As noted by Allen Hughes of the *New York Times*, "What Ms. McCabe has that raises her playing to such a special level is a strong lyric instinct and confidence in its ability to reach and touch the listener." The Japanese press declared her "a pianist powerhouse" and a Prague critic claimed her to be "a musical magnet for the listener." The *Boston Globe* said "Brilliant, natural piano playing that shows as much independence of mind as of fingers."

McCabe's recordings have earned unanimous international praise. Her debut album featured the Agosti transcription of Stravinsky's "Firebird Suite," a premiere recording of that piece. Critics praised it as "mightily impressive." *Stereo Review* described her disc of Bartok as "all that we have come to expect from this artist, a first-rate performance!"

The winner of numerous prizes and awards, including the International Concert Artists Guild Competition and a Rockefeller Foundation Grant, McCabe was the subject of a lengthy *New Yorker* profile, "Pianist's Progress," which was later expanded into a book of the same title.

McCabe, a Puyallup native, earned her bachelor of music degree summa cum laude at the University of Washington School of Music, where she studied with Bela Siki, and her master's and doctorate degrees at the Juilliard School of Music, where she studied with Rudolph Firkusny. She joined the faculty there in 1978, then returned to the Northwest in 1987 to accept a position on the piano faculty at the University of Washington. In 1994 she was appointed Director of the School of Music. In addition to her responsibilities in that post, she continues to teach as professor of piano and head of the School's keyboard division.

A persuasive arts ambassador and advocate for arts audience development, McCabe has been the subject of frequent television and radio features and has addressed numerous arts organizations throughout the United States. In 1995, she was invited to present the annual UW faculty lecture, the first professor of music in the history of the University to be awarded this lectureship. Her recitals and commentaries at the UW Summer Arts Festivals have drawn overflow audiences. She was among those featured in *UW Showcase: A Century of Excellence in the Arts, Humanities, and Professional Schools*.

McCabe was honored in 1993 at Seattle's Association for Women in Communications annual Matrix Table dinner, at which outstanding women of achievement in business, the arts and community service are recognized. The November 1997 issue of *Seattle* magazine selected her as one of the 17 current

and past University of Washington professors who have had an impact on life in the Pacific Northwest.

PETER ERÖS was born in Budapest, Hungary, and is a graduate of the Franz Liszt Music Academy, where his teachers included Zoltan Kodaly and Leo Weiner. In 1956, during the Hungarian Revolution, he immigrated to Holland. At age 27, he was named associate conductor of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, a post he held for five years. In the summers of 1960 and 1961 he was a coach for the Bayreuth Wagner Festival, and in 1961 Erös was assistant conductor of the Salzburg Mozart Festival's production of Mozart's *Idomeneo*.

He then held the positions of music director and conductor of the Malmo Symphony Orchestra (1966-1969 Sweden), the Australian Broadcasting Commission Orchestras (1967-1968, Sydney and Melbourne), the San Diego Symphony Orchestra and La Jolla Chamber Orchestra (1971-1982), and the Aalborg Symphony Orchestra (1982-1989, Denmark).

As a guest conductor, Erös has appeared with numerous major symphony orchestras and opera companies on five continents, such as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony, the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra, and others, including nine tours of South Africa. He received ASCAP awards in 1983 and 1985 for playing music by American composers.

Erös came to the UW School of Music in 1989 as conductor of the University Symphony Orchestra. He has also taught at the Amsterdam Conservatory and at the Peabody Conservatory of Music.

Robin McCabe, Peter Erös, and the students of the University Symphony dedicate tonight's performance of the Rachmaninoff Concerto in honor of our much-loved School of Music Advisor, Karin Stromberg. We hope that the music's beauty and power will encourage Karin's healing and recovery, and that she will be back with us very soon.

CLASSICAL

KING FM 98.1

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Jeremy Briggs-Roberts, *assistant conductor*

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