Critics Preview Next Week's Symphony Nights

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The seventh of the series of Houston Symphony concerts will take place on the evenings of December 11 and 12.

On the program are three works: the “Water Music” of Handel, Concerto No. 2 in D minor of Bruch, and Symphony No. of Prokofieff. Izler Solomon will be conducting; Joseph Silverstein will be guest violinist.

The “Water Music” is divided into three suites: a long one in F and two shorter ones in D and G. It was first performed on Wednesday evening, July 17, 1717, on a commission by George I of England.

FIFTY MUSICIANS were engaged in this performance, which lasted about an hour. There are a great number of different arrangements of this work; the complete edition, printed in 1740, contained a total of twenty different pieces, varying from chamber to theatrical music.

In general the Suite I has ten movements, Suite II has five, and Suite III also five. The final suite ends with an air and a coro, in Handel's most dramatic style.

Bruch’s Concerto No. 2 in D minor for violin and orchestra is written in three movements. The opening movement gives the solo violin the principal theme, the strings in accompaniment.

THROUGHOUT this movement statements are made by the violin and are taken up by the orchestra. The movement is signed adagio ma non troppo. The strings open the second movement, allegro moderato; their passage is followed by the solo violin. The opening chords of the movement are restated and a cadenza is given the solo violin.

Another introduction of the chords, and the movement proceeds, without interruption, into the finale. The final movement, allegro molto, begins with a statement by the solo violin.

The full orchestra takes up the principal subject in D major. The solo violin assumes the principal theme, and is given the second subject. Much work is given the solo violin in the coda, ending the movement.

SYMPHONY NO. 5, Opus 100, by Serge Prokofieff was written in one month in the summer of 1944. Its premier was in Moscow on January 13, 1945, with the composer himself conducting.

The work falls into three movements. The opening movement, Andante, is mostly in the key of B-flat. It serves to introduce the main theme and set the exalted mood of the work.

The second movement, Allegro Marcato, is written in the scherzo A-B-A form, where the A-section

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SYMPHONY

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has two themes and the B-section three themes. The second A-section is merely a more violent repetition of the first.

With the Adagio third movements, the exalted mood is recaptured. It moves from a meditative theme to a violent crescendo, followed by a dirge, then returning once more to the meditative theme.

THE FINAL movement, Allegro Giocoso, recapitulates the first theme. It moves through a series of solos and ends in a new, heroic theme, followed by the explosive final bars of the symphony.

This work marked Prokofieff's return to symphony composing after an absence of 16 years. He said of this symphony, "I conceived of it as a symphony on the greatness of the human spirit."