BRAVO, MAESTRO

A FAREWELL CELEBRATION CONCERT
SALUTING
MAESTRO SERGIU COMISSIONA

APRIL 7, 1988   8:00 P.M.   JONES HALL

Underwritten by Tenneco Inc. and the Woodlands Corporation
BRAVO, MAESTRO

Underwritten by Tenneco Inc. and The Woodlands Corporation

Thursday, April 7, 1988

RICHARD STRAUSS
Suite from *Der Rosenkavalier*, Op. 59
SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
SAMUEL JONES, Conducting

The Shepherd School Symphony Orchestra appearance this evening was made possible by a generous and deeply appreciated gift from Mr. and Mrs. David M. Bridges.

LUTOSLAWSKI
Chain 3
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
NIKLAUS WYSS, Conducting

The appearance of the University of Houston Symphony Orchestra has been made possible by generous support from the Friends of the School of Music.

INTERMISSION

BERLIOZ
Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14
HOUSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
SHEPHERD SCHOOL OF MUSIC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
SERGIU COMISSIONA, Conducting

The Houston Symphony Orchestra extends appreciation to the students and faculty of the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University and the music department of the University of Houston, and to the concert sponsors, Tenneco Inc. and The Woodlands Corporation. It has long been Maestro Comissiona's dream to bring these three Orchestras together for a joint performance. Tonight that dream has been realized.

The performance will conclude at approximately 10:15 P.M.
SUITE FROM DER ROSENKAVALIER, OP. 59

RICHARD STRAUSS

Born June 11, 1864, in Munich
Died September 9, 1949, in Garmisch-Partenkirchen

Around the turn of the century, Richard Strauss gradually abandoned the symphonic poem as his principal vehicle of musical expression and turned toward the opera. His first two works for the musical theater are now almost forgotten, but the second two, Salome (1905) and Elektra (1909), are dramatic masterpieces whose durable success has not been diminished by their shocking, gory subjects.

In 1911, Strauss shocked the musical world again—this time because his fifth opera turned away from tragedy and disaster. It was a brilliant comedy, set to music in a spirit that came as near to Mozart's as a 20th-century master could possibly achieve. The work was Der Rosenkaivalier ("The Knight of the Rose").

Set in the 18th century Vienna of Empress Maria-Theresa, it tells a frothy tale of love and intrigue, in which a silver rose is a symbol of betrothal. The libretto and music are brilliantly witty and colorful, and no opportunity to enliven the work is overlooked—even the anachronistic introduction of 19th-century Vienna's musical favorite, the waltz.

The Suite is a musical summary of the opera, in one long, continuous movement—very much like one of Strauss's own symphonic poems. It is in seven sections: introduction, entrance of the Cavalier and presentation of the rose, duet of the young lovers, waltz, love-triangle trio of the young couple with the older grande-dame, another love duet and a closing waltz.

CHAIN 3

WITOLD LUTOSLAWSKI

Born January 25, 1913, in Warsaw

Witold Lutoslawski has found a way to create musical forms combining unrelated strands of music whose short, discrete sections overlap one another like the links of a chain. Elements of this method can be found in many of his earlier works, but the first to emphasize it was Chain 1 (1983), for fourteen instruments, written for the London Sinfonietta. Chain 2, subtitled "Dialogue for Violin and Orchestra," followed in 1985.

The latest work to adopt this approach is Chain 3 for large orchestra. Broadly speaking, the composition's ten-minute span falls into three large sections, of which the first provides a particularly clear, readily audible example of the chain technique. After a quick opening flourish, Lutoslawski presents a sequence of twelve overlapping ideas, each characterized by a particular mode of expression and each vividly colored by a few instruments playing as a unit. For example, chimes, violas, and flutes together form the first "link"; this is overlapped by a quartet of double basses, which in turn overlap a xylophone and three violins, and so on. The last of the twelve links in this musical chain thickens into a kind of general babble among the winds, marking the conclusion of the first stage in the work's larger form.

In the second and main part of the work, the chain technique grows much more complex, its details quickly submerged in a developing tutti. More striking than any such details, though, are the depth of feeling and mounting sense of urgency communicated by an emerging violin melody. Both this long-spun melody and its grandly conceived orchestral setting unfold in three broad, accelerating waves, and both melody and setting grow increasingly elaborate until ultimately they merge to culminate in an expansive, singing climax for all the brasses.

As if spent by the intensity of this development and climax, the orchestra subsides in the final section into a colorless, expressionless mass of string sound. Still, there is momentum enough left for a last surprising fling, an attempt at a big, affirmative final gesture. Spurred on by little fanfares on brasses and woodwinds, the whole orchestra rushes to assert a major-like, pseudo-tonic chord. But the reassurance this ordinary, "symphonic" ending seems to offer rings hollow, falsifying the very real passion and originality of what has gone before. The would-be cadence chord cannot prevail: It is abruptly swept away, and Chain 3 ends as enigmatically as it began.

Program notes for Lutoslawski's Chain 3 first appeared in the program of the San Francisco Symphony, and are reprinted here by permission.
SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE, OP. 14

HECTOR BERLIOZ
Born December 11, 1803, in La Cote-St.-Andre, Isere
Died March 8, 1869, in Paris

Berlioz wrote his Symphonie fantastique in 1835, the year usually considered the beginning of French romantic literature. It is the first symphony to have a specific storyline, or program, supplied by the composer, who was consciously creating a dramatic poem in music. Berlioz was a bold and innovative master at orchestration, and in this work dramatically expanded both the types of instruments used in a symphony and the manner in which they are used. The five-movement form is unusual, following Beethoven’s “Pastorale” Symphony.

In the composer’s own words, somewhat abridged, the Symphonie fantastique tells of a young musician who has poisoned himself with opium in a paroxysm of lovesick despair. The narcotic has thrown him into a long sleep accompanied by the most extraordinary visions. His sensations, feelings, and memories find utterance in his brain in the form of musical imagery. Even the Beloved One takes the form of a melody in his mind, like a fixed idea which is ever returning and which he hears everywhere.

In the first movement, he thinks of the uneasy and nervous condition of his mind, of sombre longings, of depression and joyful elation without any recognizable cause, which he experienced before the Beloved One had appeared to him. Then he remembers the ardent love she suddenly inspired in him; he thinks of his almost insane anxiety of mind, of his raging jealousy, of his reawakening love, of his religious consolation.

In the second movement, the young musician finds himself in a ballroom, amidst the confusion of a brilliant festival, where he finds the Beloved One again.

The third movement is a musical depiction of a meadow on a summer evening. Our hero is in the country, musing, when he hears two shepherd lads who play, in alternation, the rang des vaches (the tune used by the Swiss shepherds to call their flocks). This pastoral duet, the quiet scene, the soft whisperings of the trees, unite to impart a long unknown repose to his heart. And then She appears once more. His heart stops beating, painful forebodings fill his soul. “Should she prove false to him!” One of the shepherds resumes the melody, but the other answers him no more...sunset...distant roll of thunder...loneliness...silence.

In the fourth movement, the young man dreams that he has murdered his Beloved, that he has been condemned to death and is being led to execution. A march that is alternately somber and wild, brilliant and solemn, accompanies the procession...The tumultuous outbursts are followed without modulation by measured steps. At last the fixed idea returns, for a moment a last thought of love is revived—which is cut short by the death blow.

In the fifth movement, he dreams that he is present at a witches’ revel, surrounded by horrible spirits, amidst sorcerers and monsters in many fearful forms, who have come together for his funeral. Strange sounds, groans, shrill laughter, distant yells, which other cries seem to answer. The Beloved melody is heard again, but it has lost its shy and noble character; it has become a vulgar, trivial, grotesque dance tune. She it is who comes to attend the witches’ meeting. Riotous howls and shouts greet her arrival...She joins the infernal orgy...bells toll for the dead...a burlesque parody of the Dies irae...the witches’ round dance... The dance and the Dies irae are heard together.

JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL BRAVO MAESTRO! CELEBRATION

Meet Maestro Sergiu Comissiona, the members of the Houston Symphony Orchestra, the Shepherd School Symphony Orchestra, and the University of Houston Symphony Orchestra after this performance for a brief, informal party. Join us for coffee, soda, cake and conversation on the orchestra level of the lobby [by the round bar].
SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Uri Mayer, Music Director

First Violins
Deirdre Ward, Concertmaster
Justine Watts
Rodica Oancea
William Chandler
Stephen Rowe
Denise Couch
Miaelia Oancea
Fiona Louthouse
Enri McGiania
Second Violins
Jennifer Leishner
Kristina LaCombe
Jerry Wang
Teodor Tetel
Tanya Schreiber
Amy Chang
Ming-Feng Hsin
Violists
Rifat Qureshi
Timothy Young
Monisa Phillips
Patricia Ploemson
Anastasia Efthimion
Beverly Harnish
Erika Lawson
John Randolph
Cellists
Peter Kampfer

Cao Min
Ho Ahn
Brett Neisen
Lawrence Stemberg
Lisa Hollibaugh
Teresa Hernandez
Alicia Barrett
Coent-Basun
Jose Deschenes
Kenneth Harper
Jonathan Imconde
Rebecca Selton
Debra Stahr
Anna Cone
Flutes
LaVelle McDowall
September Payne
Nancy White
Piccoloists
Nancy White
Oboes
Denise Roy
Adam Shapiro
Grace Tice
English Horns
Denise Roy
Clarinetists
Margaret Beard
Rachel Geesaman

Marcia McNiel
Jefferson Smith
Eth Clarinetts
Margaret Beard
Bass Clarinets
Marcia McNiel
Bassoon
John DeGruchy
Jan Harper
Peter Herstey
Contra Bassoons
Jan Harper
Horns
Hans Clebach
Paul Hopkins
Martha Thompson
James Wilson
Trumpets
Jana Borchardt
Michael Cox
Diane Hibert
Reynaldo Ochoa
Mary Thornton
Trumpet Duet
Kenneth Clark
Patrick Corbett
Brent Phillips
Tuba
Philip Burke

Timpans & Percussion:
Gabriel Dionne
J. Riely Francis
Sharon Hickox
Matthew McCarthy
David Murray
Guillio Rodriguez
Christopher Rose
Richard Skains
Harps
Jaemin Bey-Elee
Constance Slaughter
Celeste
Nancy Deittorns
Assistant Conductors
Luke Douglas Seliers
Orchestra Manager
Martin Merritt
Library Assistants
William Chandler
Monisa Phillips
Stage Technicians:
Hans Clebach
Kenneth Harper
Erika Lawson
James Wilson

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Niklaus Wyss, Associate Conductor, Houston Symphony Orchestra
Professor of Music, University of Houston

First Violins
Kristin Brinkman, Concertmistress
Yu Yuan
Julie Kurtzman
Biao Xue
Shen Yen
Alan Austin
Lorra Albridge
Yong-Chun Li
Da Sang Chen
Second Violins
Maribeth Frank
William Pa
Magdalena Villegas
Wei-Kang Zhou
Sheryl Ballard
Cathy Cuellar
Augusto Diemecke
Jiang Ying
Viola
Hou Gang
Tom McBilley
Ming Pak
Bonnie Rhinesmith
Rebecca Tompkins
He-Yue Wang
Cellists
Cathy Chang
Kim Hatton
Deborah Nikka
Joe Young Song
Sally Upson
Corina-Bassoon
Steven Brown
Gricelita Hernandez
Timothy Jenkins
Derrick Lewis
Flutes
Emi Armacost
Leila Lawson
Karen Robey
Kimberly Walter
Oboes
Michael A. Brueker
Wei-Ling Zhou
Moira Jones
Clarinetists
Daniel C. Baca
Norgenia Kelley
Nancy Mclemore
Bassoon
Greg Henegar
Horns
Kevin Borgfeldt
Erik Dietsch
Susan Piegas
David Westmoreland
Kevin Williams
Trumpets
Chris Englehardt
Lisa Jepsenn
Jeff Loud
Angie Mason
Trombones
Mike Clarke
Rich Maher
Bass Trombones:
Scott Thornton
Tubes

Roderick Mathews
Steven K. Walton
Timpanists
Bill Rosse
Percussion
Jack Westmoreland
Harp
Theresa Hone
James Williams
Pianos
Hsia-Jung Chang
Celeste
Jian Guang Shi
Orchestra Manager
Timothy Jenkins
HOUSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

SERGIU COMISONIA, Music Director

First Violas
- Thomas Bay, Assoc. Principal
- Robert Deutsch
- Christopher French
- Mary Wilson
- Kevin Dowork
- Jeffrey Butler
- Myung Soon Lee
- Michael Dudley
- Contra-Bassoon
- Gregg Henegar
- Horns
- William Caballero, Acting Principal
- Eric Rauke*, Acting Assoc. Principal
- James Horrocks
- Nancy Goodheart
- Jay Andrus
- Philip Stomie
- Thomas Bacon, Principal, on leave of absence
- Trumpets
- John DeWitt, Principal
- Robert Walp, Asst. Principal
- Dick Schaffer
- Michael Sachs
- Trombones
- Allen Barnhill, Principal
- John McCroskey, Co-Principal
- David Waters
- Bass Trombones
- David Waters
- Tubas
- David Kirk, Principal
- Timpani
- Ronald Holdman, Principal
- Brian Del Signore, Assoc. Principal
- Percussion
- Brian Del Signore, Principal
- Prasa Bhanberg
- George Womack
- Harps
- Paula Page, Principal
- Keyboards
- Scott Holthouser
- Personnel Manager
- Larry Thompson
- Assistant Personnel Manager
- Christine Pastorek
- Librarians
- E. Lyna Barney
- Asst. Librarians
- Michael McMurray
- Stage Manager
- Don Jackson
- Stage Technician
- Noel Crenshaw

** On Leave

* Contracted Substitute
A Farewell Salute to the Maestro

SERGIU COMISSIONA,
Music Director of the Houston Symphony, made his Houston Symphony debut as a guest conductor in October 1973. Chosen in the summer of 1979 to serve as Artistic Advisor of the Houston Symphony, he began such innovations as open rehearsals and the Orchestra's first outdoor Summer Festival, now the highly successful Mostly Mozart Festival.

Beginning with the 1983-84 season, Maestro Comissiona became Music Director of the Houston Symphony. Under his leadership, the Orchestra renewed its recording activities with four discs on the Vanguard label followed by an exclusive five-year recording contract with Pro Arte. The Pro Arte recordings have been extremely successful, and some have reached the top ten listing of Billboard magazine's Classical compact disc charts.

Maestro Comissiona took the Orchestra on tour to the Festival Casals in Puerto Rico, and led three American tours, including performances at Carnegie Hall in New York and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., all to critical acclaim.

Music-making at the highest artistic level has resounded through Jones Hall throughout Maestro Comissiona's tenure. He provided leadership in recruiting fine musicians for the Orchestra and, in particular, was responsible for the appointment of Concertmaster Uri Patikra. He was also responsible for the appointments of numerous principals and other titled players of the Orchestra, for polishing its overall quality, and for developing its repertoire plans. Artistic accomplishments of the HSO during the Comissiona Era include a Berlioz cycle: world premieres of new music: concerts of contemporary music by composers such as Penderecki, Lutoslawski, and Schuller that were conducted by the composer, semi-staged performances of operatic works, and programming of less frequently performed works by great composers of the past and present.

During the Comissiona years, Composer-in-Residence Tobias Picker joined the HSO as part of a nationwide program involving several major American orchestras. The two originated and coordinated the Houston Symphony Civicom Fantasia Project, for which leading composers created short works to open the Orchestra's concerts during the Texas Sesquicentennial year. The Fantaze Project has received national attention, and the fantasies, including Elliott Carter's, are being performed by numerous other orchestras across the country.

Guest artists of the highest distinction graced the Jones Hall stage during the Comissiona Era, joining the Orchestra and Chorus under the Maestro's baton in creating truly memorable musical events: Soprano Irene Montero and mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade: violinists Isaac Stern, Ishash Perlman, Shlomo Mintz and Pinchas Zukerman; pianists Bella Davidovich, Alicia de Larrocha and Radio Lupa; cellists Yo-Yo Ma and James Starkey; and fluteists Jean-Pierre Rampal and James Galway are only a few of these.

During his years in Houston, Maestro Comissiona conducted the Orchestra in 130 different concerts on 158 dates. Among these were 47 HSO subscription series premieres and 22 world premieres.

New Music Director of the New York City Opera as well as Chief Conductor of the Radio Philharmonic Orchestra. Hilversum in Holland, Sergiu Comissiona's superb conducting skills and fine musical performances make him one of the conductors most in demand today.

Concluding the present Classical Season, Maestro Comissiona will lead the Houston Symphony in three performances of Verdi's Requiem this weekend, April 9-11, in Jones Hall. The concerts, the last Maestro Comissiona will conduct in his official capacity as Music Director of the Houston Symphony, are also the grand finale of the Comissiona Era.

NIKLASS WYSS
is Associate Conductor of the Houston Symphony Orchestra and Professor of Music at the University of Houston. He was born in Zurich, Switzerland, where he earned diplomas in piano, harmony and counterpoint from the Konservatorium und Musikakademie. He began his studies with conducting with Paul Mueller and in a special course under Hans Swarowski. Two master courses with Maestro Franco Ferrara in Hilversum, The Netherlands, brought an invitation by Ferrara (and a scholarship by the Italian government) for three years study at the Conservatorio di St. Cecilia in Rome. During summer breaks, studies continued under Mr. Ferrara in Venice (scholarships by the City of Venice). Conducting engagements followed in Zurich, Palermo, Catania, Trieste and Milano.

In 1964, Mr. Wyss won first prize at the International Dimitri Mitropoulos Competition in New York and in 1965 was appointed as assistant conductor of the Toronto Symphony (Seiji Ozawa, music director). In 1966, he went to Japan for special study with Hideo Sato, Mr. Ozawa's teacher. On returning to Europe, Mr. Wyss added opera and ballet to his conducting engagements and in 1970 was appointed assistant conductor of the San Francisco Symphony, again with Ozawa as music director. While with that orchestra, his responsibilities included symphony concerts, a series of youth and community concerts, new music and general programming.

Since 1975, Mr. Wyss has conducted extensively in Europe, the U.S., and Japan (including three seasons as principal conductor of the Kyoto Symphony). For six consecutive years, he conducted regularly all the ABC (Australian Broadcasting Co.) orchestras in Australia, in particular the Sidney, Melbourne and Brisbane orchestras, which he took on extended tours.

For several years he held the post of special advisor to Maestro Ozawa for the Boston Symphony and was the principal teacher of the conducting program at the Berkshire Music Center (Tanglewood) for two summers. In 1980, he was invited by Mr. Ozawa to conduct the first performance for the Boston Symphony of the complete Symphony No. 10 by Mahler, both in Boston and at Tanglewood.

In addition to his fulfilling guest conducting assignments, Mr. Wyss studies at the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics at Stanford University, where he is currently working on a new piece for computer-generated sounds.

SAMUEL JONES
is Professor of Conducting and Composition at The Shepherd School of Music and, in addition to his educational activities, enjoys an active career as a composer and teacher of conducting. His conducting credits include guest engagements with the Detroit Symphony, the Houston Symphony, the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Buffalo Philharmonic, the Prague Symphony, the Iceland Symphony, as well as tenures as Conductor of the Rochester Philharmonic, Music Advisor of the Flint Symphony, and Music Director of the Sagamaw Symphony. He has also conducted in the Naumburg Memorial Concert Series in New York and the Shenandoah Valley Music Festival at Orkney Springs, Virginia.

Dr. Jones was the founder and first Dean of The Shepherd School of Music. After establishing the Shepherd School as one of the nation's outstanding music schools, attracting gifted students from all over the country, he relinquished his administrative duties after six years as Dean to concentrate once again on compositional and conducting activities.

His works have been commissioned by, among others, the Houston Symphony Orchestra, the American Symphony Orchestra League, and the Shenandoah Valley Music Festival. His compositions have been performed by such orchestras as the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Detroit Symphony, the New Orleans Philharmonic, the Rochester Philharmonic, the Tulsa Philharmonic, the Flint Symphony, and scores of others. He has recorded with the Houston Symphony Orchestra for CRI and made numerous television programs with the Rochester Philharmonic on grants from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Dr. Jones served for ten years as a teacher of conducting at Orkney Springs with Richard Lert (with whom he studied conducting) for the American Symphony Orchestra League. He has also taught conducting for the Conductors Guild and served on juries for the Exxon Affiliate Artist and the Fulbright Competitions. He is the recipient of a Fellowship from the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund for Music and a Publication/Recording grant from the Ford Foundation, as well as numerous ASCAP Awards and a Distinguished Service Award from the Houston Symphony Orchestra.