The Cleveland Orchestra
GEORGE SZELL, Conductor

WEDNESDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 20, 1965, AT 8:30
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

Four Essays for Orchestra . . . . . . . TADEUSZ BAIRD
  Molto adagio
  Allegretto grazioso
  Allegro
  Molto adagio

Symphony No. 28 in C major, K. 200 . . . . . . MOZART
  Allegro spiritoso
  Andante
  Menuetto: allegretto, trio
  Finale: presto

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36 . . . . . . TCHAIKOVSKY
  Andante sostenuto; moderato con anima
  Andantino in modo di canzona
  Scherzo: pizzicato ostinato
  Finale: allegro con fuoco

Epic and Columbia Records

NOTE—This is the twenty-second appearance of The Cleveland Orchestra under the auspices of the University Musical Society.

The Steinway is the official piano of the University Musical Society, and of The Cleveland Orchestra.
PROGRAM NOTES
by Klaus G. Roy

Four Essays for Orchestra . . . . . . Tadeusz Baird

In 1950, Virgil Thomson predicted that the major preoccupation of composers in the second half of this century would be a blending of twelve-tone with tonal elements. In other words, the serial or row method of composing, which had journeyed for thirty years in atonal (or at least non-tonal) waters, would find itself enriched and expanded by the use of key centers, and would at the same time be able to breathe new life into the tonal system considered worn-out if not already buried.

As it has turned out, much influence has been exerted in the last fifteen years also by new-found potentialities of electronic sound production, and by the concept of "aleatory" or "chance" creation of musical structures. While these latter are still largely in their experimental stages, the kind of music prophesied by Mr. Thomson has already been represented by a considerable and impressive literature. The process of "loosening up" the strictly atonal twelve-tone procedure by infusing it with tonal elements began quite early—in the music of Alban Berg, and even in some of the later works of the method's founder, Arnold Schönberg. But it is only recently that this blending of devices has become widely practiced in many countries, allied to an unmistakable rebirth of musical romanticism. A representative work of this persuasion (one cannot call it a "school") is the Four Essays on this evening's program.

Composed in 1958, when its author was only thirty, it may be merely a "stage" in his productivity that since given way to other directions; we do not know. Or it may have set or solidified an idiom in which he still speaks. In either case, the "Four Essays" is music solidly in the mainstream of "neoromantic" musical speech. It builds on the tradition of musical expressivity proposed more than fifty years ago by Gustav Mahler, moves through the expansion of this language by Schönberg and Berg, and offers a mature and deeply personal experience in musical terms. In no way "far-out," it is in fact a "conservative" work in the sense that it conserves traditional and comprehensible means of musical rhetoric in the areas of melody, form, rhythm, and even harmony. Yet it does so without direct imitation of existing models, and without falling prey to well-worn conventions.

Symphony No. 28 in C major, K. 200 . Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Symphony No. 28 seems to begin as a typical "trumpet symphony," in the bright and festive key of C major. Yet it juxtaposes, with almost comical effect, the blustery alarum of the tutti with a graceful line for the strings in which the trill is prominent. The second subject also bases itself on a trill-like idea. The design of this opening Allegro spiritoso in 3/4 time is that of a concise sonata form, with a very brief development section, and a short coda after the recapitulation.

The second movement, an Andante in F major, 2/4 time, is highly ornamented, and its sustained character "on the way to the adagio," as Einstein puts it. Again the design is that of a sonata form, with at least a fantasy section if not a real development. More important than the return of the trill idea is this new and memorable section, beginning in D minor. Oboes and horns play an A in octaves below which the muted violins begin a descent; and the horns alone reply two measures later with the note F that changes its harmonic meaning as the violins continue.

The Menuetto, an Allegretto in C major, 3/4, may have recalled its parallel in Haydn's "Farewell" Symphony, No. 45, written the year before (1772), and certain to
have impressed Mozart. The echoes played by the first horn are quite "romantic," and lend a new note to this dance form so recently incorporated into the symphonic structure. The Trio, in F, surprises with a rough unison phrase in its center.

The finale is a vivacious Presto in C major, cut time. Again in sonata form, with several contrasted themes, and this time with a more sizeable development, it makes much of the trill idea; the oboe converts it into an outright chirp. Einstein sees this movement as "a milestone in Mozart's development. He could have used this presto, with its dialogue between soli (the two violins) and tutti, and with its furious orchestral crescendo at the end, as the overture for his Entführung ("The Abduction from the Seraglio"), if the quality of its invention had not still been of the Italian buffo type." But the key word here is surely "quality," for of that there is an abundance and a consistency in this symphony that has probably no match among Mozart's earlier works in the medium.

Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36 . . . PETER ILLICH TCHAIKOVSKY

This Symphony may be heard in two distinct ways; some may prefer to draw no clear division, but to fuse the approaches or gravitate from one to the other. In one, the hearer receives the work as a piece of serious music, an "absolute" construction of musical materials, with its emotional effects unexplainable by words yet deeply and individually felt. The other way takes its starting point from Tchaikovsky's own remark about this symphony: "I should be sorry," he wrote, "if symphonies that mean nothing should flow from my pen, consisting solely of a progression of harmonies, rhythms, and modulations. Most assuredly my symphony has a program, but one that cannot be expressed in words; the very attempt would be ludicrous . . . Should not a symphony reveal those wordless urges that hide in the heart, asking earnestly for expression?"

The fact is that there is no such thing as a good piece of "absolute" (i.e. non-programmatic) music which "means nothing." Musical meaning is not opposed to verbal meaning, but it is not at all synonymous with it. "Music is articulate," wrote Santayana, "but articulate in a language which avoids, or at least veils, the articulation of the world we live in." Mendelssohn went even further: "What any music I like expresses for me is not thoughs too indefinite to clothe in words, but too definite."

Tchaikovsky, it appears, was not at all sure of his stand on the issue and his inconsistency is revealing. He did produce an analysis in words, and a very detailed one, for his patroness and friend, Mme N. von Meck. In a postscript the composer added: "Just as I was putting my letter into the envelope I began to read it again, and to feel misgivings as to the confused and incomplete program which I am sending you. For the first time in my life I have attempted to put my musical thoughts and forms into words and phrases. I have not been very successful. I was horribly out of spirits all the time I was composing this symphony last winter, and this is a true echo of my feelings at the time. But only an echo. How is it possible to reproduce it in clear and definite language? I do not know. I have already forgotten a good deal. Only the general impression of my passionate and sorrowful experiences has remained . . ."

Tchaikovsky's verbal description of his Symphony is certainly not ludicrous. It might help to focus many a vague sensation on the listener's part. If Tchaikovsky saw fit to divulge the story in his mind, we have no right to withhold or censor-censure it. Yet any different conception, even a purely musical one with its own set of meanings, remains equally justified. Had the letter to Mme von Meck been lost, would the Symphony not have survived just as sturdily?

Whatever the composer's story, the Fourth is not a problem symphony. Its emotions are at no time enigmatic, and its musical materials are unequivocally clear. Everything sounds, everything sings, everything is long remembered.
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All presentations are at 8:30 P.M. unless otherwise noted.

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