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## Ensemble Concerts: Symphony Orchestra, January 15, 1973

Arthur Corra Conductor

Tong-II Han Soloist

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Illinois State University  
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
Arthur Corra, Conductor  
TONG IL HAN, Soloist

Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Opus 92

Beethoven

Poco sostenuto —Vivace

Allegretto

Presto

Allegro con brio

Don Juan, Opus 20

Richard Strauss

INTERMISSION

Concerto No. 5 in E-Flat Major, Opus 73

Beethoven

Allegro

Adagio un poco mosso

Rondo: Allegro

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Capen Auditorium  
Monday Evening  
January 15, 1973  
8:15 p.m.

## PROGRAM NOTES

The *Seventh Symphony* was written during one of Beethoven's more and more frequent periods of travail. His deafness was daily growing worse; a love affair had but recently been broken off; and the political situation, in which he was always interested, was not at all reassuring. These circumstances perhaps helped to solidify certain traits in the character of the composer which had been developing for some time. The *Symphony* reflects them. It is touched with the boisterous, often crude humor of the composer; it is not without a mordant bitterness, yet a bitterness, penetrating as it is, that is never precisely pessimism, and certainly never despair.

The *Seventh Symphony* has suffered more than most from the zealous attention of program analysts and commentators. Beethoven himself, dealing with one such during his own day, intimated rather forcefully that if these expositions were to be indulged in at all they had best be confined to characterizing the composition in general terms, adding with considerable precision of reasoning that that was something which could be done readily enough by any educated musician. However, even those wise and cautionary words have not sufficed to keep the *Seventh* safe from the hands of the annotators. Political revolutions, rustic weddings, knights errant and fair maidens and all the rest of it have been foisted onto this vital, assured and non-programmatic work.

What can be said incontrovertibly and as a general characteristic of the *Seventh Symphony* is that it represents a great outburst of exultation in his own creative powers on the part of Beethoven at the very period in his life when these powers seemed to him most potent and most assured. Wagner called it "the apotheosis of the dance"—a remark which readily becomes understandable if we bear in mind the symbolic and mystical (in a loose sense) implications of the dance in ancient ritual. Certainly there is about the whole symphony something analogous to the passionate exultation of the Dionysian revels. And it may have been, in part at least, deliberately so intended by Beethoven when we recall that once he said to Bettina Brentano "I am the Bacchus who presses out for men this glorious wine and intoxicates their souls." The general characteristic, the irresistible overall impression is of a huge eruption and glorification of the creative power. Beethoven had won through to that confidence in himself and assurance of his art through his own vast labors of the preceding decade.

The work opens with a magnificent slow introduction, the longest in all Beethoven's works. The mighty opening chord played by the full orchestra leaves a solitary oboe outlining a fragment of a theme in the ensuing silence, a device of instrumentation which Berlioz declared to be especially characteristic of Beethoven. The whole of the Introduction, with its rhythmic and harmonic ground-plan, its far-flung modulations and its upward rising scale-passages, prepares for the subsequent development of the entire symphony. At the end of it woodwind and violins begin to make rhythmic play with the note E until with a great upward surge the whole orchestra leads off with the principal theme of the first movement.

The first movement proper is characterized by an overwhelming rhythmic impetus and by a brilliance of orchestration rare in Beethoven. Indeed, each movement of the *Seventh Symphony* is remarkable for a particular rhythmic insistence.

The second movement is not really a slow movement, but an allegretto, in A minor. It consists principally of the main theme and a countertheme presented in a series of variously scored settings. There are two sections sometimes referred to as "intermezzos," and a brief fugato. The overall impression is of music which moves grandly and thoughtfully forward, and which has a consistently serious but in no way tragic aspect. The movement is certainly not a funeral march.

The third movement, a scherzo (though not so-called by Beethoven), is in F major. Again a powerful rhythmic figure predominates. There is rugged gaiety and sustained exuberance, and joy. The Trio, said to be based on an Austrian pilgrim's hymn, contrasts both melodically and rhythmically. Beethoven repeats both sections; and just as he threatens to repeat the "hymn" a third time, the movement comes to an abrupt end.

The finale is perhaps the most energetic, "unbuttoned" and exuberant movement even Beethoven ever composed. Again he is thought to have used a folk song—a Cossack one this time—as the basis of its material; but the tremendous power and exultation of the music go far beyond folk song and dance. The score is liberally scattered with *sforzando* markings on the upbeat, something which gives the movement much of its special character, and for the fourth time a rhythmic motive, more imperative than ever, dominates the music. Towards the end the whole orchestra gathers itself up in a "roaring cataract" of sound and the *Symphony* is propelled to its conclusion in an outburst of vitality and energy.

Beethoven himself, despite his increasing deafness, conducted the first performance of the *Seventh Symphony*, from manuscript, on December 8, 1813, at the concert hall of the University of Vienna.

The legend of Don Juan, the Spanish libertine, first brought into life by Tirso de Molina and his 1630 play *El Burlador de Sevilla* has been the subject of countless literary and musical exploits. These writings cover almost as much ground in a diversified fictional sense as did the Don in his myriad amours. Word pictures from Moliere, de Musset, Dumas, and Shaw onto epic poetry by Byron and operas by Le Tellier, Righini, Tritto, Gardi, and Mozart have given the world an entire mythology as well-known as the deeds of Spain's most illustrious actual personages.

Richard Strauss was only 24 when he decided to attempt orchestral treatment of still another version of the Don Juan legend. This was the poem of Nicolaus Franz Niernbsch von Strehlenau, who wrote under the shorter name of Lenau. This poem, dating from 1844, presented the central figure in a somewhat different light that veered away from settings of pure lust and lechery. To Lenau, Don Juan is not "hot-blooded man eternally pursuing women," but a somewhat pitiful man seeking futilely for the incarnation of all womanhood sick with the hopelessness of his quest, he finds his only way out in virtual suicide. Involving himself in a duel with the son of one of his many victims, he deliberately allows himself to be run-through.

Though the composer has furnished no actual program for his tone poem, it is comparatively safe to allow the Lenau story to stand as the unfolded tale. As a preface to his score, Strauss quoted two passages from the opening scene of the poem and one from the finale.

There is much more than mere description or "atmosphere" in the tone poems of Richard Strauss. They are psychological studies, and it is as such that they can best be understood.

The Piano Concerto No. 5, begun in 1808, is the only one of Beethoven's piano concerti which he did not write for performance by himself as soloist. Not only had his loss of hearing interfered with proper execution, but the absorption with new works of all sorts precluded the sorties into salons, the easy kind of conquest that prevailed earlier. Beethoven played publicly for the last time in 1808. Thus, the E-Flat Concerto was written for an "imaginary" soloist, neither for Beethoven nor on commission from a patron. The work was first performed in Leipzig in 1811.

What is implicit in the work is revealed in the first dozen measures as the piano plays keyboard—spanning figures first on the tonic, then the subdominant, then the dominant, leading back to the tonic. With this elemental sequence, a succession as basic in music as "In the beginning" is in the Bible, Beethoven seems to say, "here is the simplest progression in music; see what a splendid thing it can be." Here are combined the profound attachment to the fundamental things of the art and the vastness of emotional vision which made Beethoven the phenomenon he was.

Once launched by the piano, the orchestra moves forward with a phalanx of ideas, several of them with the martial flourish of fanfares which gives the name "Emperor" more justification than such titles (not given by the composer, of course) usually possess. The ideas themselves are spirited and charged with power, but it is their intensification, through several rounds of solo and tutti interchanges, that makes the first movement one of the most dramatic in the concerto literature. There are such hitherto unexplored things in a concerto as conversations between bassoon and piano, solos for clarinet and bassoon to which the piano provides accompanying figures, and artful groupings of woodwinds and horns to give a new blend of sonority to the whole. The dimensions of the form and the integration of the elements are so carefully planned that even the cadenza is fully written out by the composer, with no option for the performer. Lest there be any doubt, Beethoven wrote in the score: "Do not make a cadenza but attack the following immediately." The coda is remarkably expansive, a suitable capstone for the structure. At no point in the score, incidentally, is the piano part described as a "solo" instrument.

There is a feeling of repose and serenity in the second movement, which is based on a simple, hymnlike tune. *Espressivo, cantabile, molto legato, dolce* are some of the guideposts Beethoven has supplied.

A chordal bridge passage to the third movement contains the seeds of the principal material for the movement. In spirit this rondo is relaxed and confident, even frolicsome, but the musical brain that worked out such digressions of tonal centers as C Major and E Major within the framework of E-flat was laboring mightily. At its best the texture commands the description of piano and orchestra (rather than orchestra with piano, or piano with orchestra) as in an episode which seems, superficially, to be "mere" piano elaboration, but actually masks a fugal treatment of thematic matter in the orchestra. For sheer exuberance, the joy of making a piano and orchestra sound majestically, this movement has few equals, down to the final dialogue of piano and timpani, utilizing a rhythm which pulsates through the Seventh Symphony. As a point of fact, these two towering works reveal Beethoven's quest for a music so organically conceived that an underlying pulse, a throb of movement, beats in it from start to finish.

## TONG-IL HAN

Tong-Il Han, internationally known pianist, joined the Music Department faculty at Illinois State University in September, 1971, coming from Indiana University at Bloomington, Indiana, where he was artist in residence. Mr. Han was born in Korea and at the age of 11 came to the United States to study at the Juilliard School of Music, New York, N.Y., where he earned bachelor and master of science degrees. In 1965 he won the International Leventritt Award when the judges included Leonard Bernstein, Rudolf Serkin and George Szell. Mr. Han has performed with major orchestras and in solo recitals throughout North America, Europe and the Far East. Recently he has completed several European tours.

### I VIOLIN

Kathryn F. Gray,  
Concertmaster  
Jung Min Wooh  
Joung-Sook Noh  
Frank Schwarzwalder  
Deborah Perry  
Terryl Jares  
Ae-Sil Kim  
Joan Svoboda

### II VIOLIN

Ruth Boedecker  
Deborah Metskas  
Martha Barker  
Pamela Combs  
Kathryn Romberg  
Elizabeth Leburkien  
Barbara Fiechtl  
Alison Holste  
Rita Koretke  
Deborah Foote

### VIOLA

Karen Dickelman  
Lynn Hirschauer  
Michael Traver  
Christine Reichert  
Marcia Fauble  
Kim Chao  
Lavon Miller

### CELLO

Jeanne Foster  
Peter Garfield  
Kyung Jin Lee  
Mark Condie  
Nancy Hair  
David Reece

### BASS

James March  
Pamela Burd  
Edna Vogelsang  
Susan Kasanov  
Holly Hertel  
Michael Johannesen  
Scott Kreger  
Steve Hayes  
George Gillman

### FLUTE

Janet MacMillan  
Sue Reiland  
Candice Hildebrandt  
Nancy Widmer

### PICCOLO

Nancy Widmer

### OBOE

Marvin Carlton  
Jan Lohs

### ENGLISH HORN

### CLARINET

Sarkis Halajian  
Margaret Meyer  
Joseph Hesh

### BASSOON

Mary Dalziel  
Gayle Johnson  
Chris Draiss

### CONTRABASSOON

Mary Dalziel

### HORN

William Lawyer  
Cathryn Gorman  
John Foster  
Peter Johnson  
Sue Foster  
Rodger Burnett  
Stan Reimal

### TRUMPET

Rich Louis  
Tom Fatten  
Gregg Neuleib  
John Turnbull

### TROMBONE

Brandon Mason  
Michael Fischer  
David Kotowski

### TUBA

Brian Fredericksen

### TIMPANI

Manuel Cepeda  
Edward Zajac

### PERCUSSION

Philip Henry  
Dennis Smith  
Gina Wolski

### HARP

Mary Jane Rupert

### LIBRARIAN

Jeanne Foster

### SET-UP

Frank Schwarzwalder