

NEAL'S NOTES

Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, Who's the Greatest of them All? (Part 2)

Last season, Music Director Neal Gittleman explored the great orchestral composers of the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. This season, in a series of essays serialized from the *Classical Connections Listener's Guide*, the subject is the greatest orchestral composers of the 20th century. This time, the two great adversaries of 20th century music: Schoenberg and Stravinsky.

Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951) and Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)

Schoenberg and Stravinsky are the "twin towers" of 20th century music. In fact, many commentators, including Leonard Bernstein, have cast the entire history of 20th century music as a battle between these two composers. Arnold Schoenberg and Igor Stravinsky were certainly two of the most important, most influential composers of the past 100 years. And they did not see eye to eye.

Dating back to the beginning of the 17th century, Western music had been "tonal music" — music derived from major and minor scales and the chords and keys based on those scales. Every composer from Monteverdi to Mozart to Mahler to Mussorgsky wrote tonal music. Tonal music was a common musical language that composers used, all players understood, and that audiences liked. But in the early years of the 20th century — at the same time that Newtonian physics was being challenged by quantum mechanics, at the same time that representational art was being challenged by abstract art, at the same time that liberal democracy was being challenged by socialism — tonal music was being challenged by atonal music, music that deliberately avoided the stability of a home key. It was a new century. And the times they were a-changin'!

The simple way of explaining Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and 20th century music is to say that Schoenberg broke with the tonal system while Stravinsky tried to preserve it and modernize it. While there is a kernel of truth in the simple explanation, it's also a

simplistic explanation. The truth, as always, is more complicated.

Yes, Schoenberg did write the first atonal music (his 1909 *Three Piano Pieces*). Yes, Schoenberg did create the pre-eminent system for composing atonal music, the "twelve-tone" or "serial" method of composition. But Schoenberg was no revolutionary. Charles Rosen, the great musicologist of our time (and a soloist with the DPO a couple of years ago) argues that Schoenberg wrote the way he did not because he was against tonality, but because was trying to save it!

Schoenberg grew up in the great Austro-German musical tradition — the tradition of Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, and Mahler. His earliest compositions, including the string sextet *Transfigured Night* (1899), the oratorio *Gurrelieder* (1900) and the tone poem *Pelleas and Melisande* (1903), were romantic in style and tonal in language. But Schoenberg's tonality was a modern tonality, full of dense harmonies and complicated chromatic melodies. These early works of Schoenberg took the language of Wagner's *Parsifal* (1882) and went the next logical step. With one more step, Schoenberg's music became so complex that the old rules no longer seemed to apply.

As adept as he was in writing atonal music, with such powerful works as the one-act opera *Erwartung* (1909) and the *Five Pieces for Orchestra* (1911), Schoenberg yearned for the logic and order of tonality. Frustrated by the chaos that atonality implied, he developed the twelve-tone method of composition, a system of "atonal tonality," first unveiled in the *Five Piano Pieces* of 1923 and perfected in Schoenberg's later masterpieces: the *Variations for Orchestra* (1926), the opera *Moses and Aaron* (1932), the *Violin Concerto* (1936), and the *Piano Concerto* (1942).

Today's audiences shun Schoenberg's music, so few orchestras play it. But when played well and with conviction, it is great music. (Indeed, Schoenberg once said "My music is

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CASUAL CLASSICS PROGRAM DAYTON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Neal Gittleman, Music Director

Friday, October 22, 1999

10:00 A.M. & 6:30 P.M.
Victoria Theatre

"Czech Mate"

Tomáš Svoboda, Piano

Sponsored by Bank One

Media Hosts:
WONE & WYSO

Antonín Dvořák
(1841-1904)

Notturmo in B major, op. 40

Tomáš Svoboda
(b. 1939)

Piano Concerto No. 1, op. 71

TOMÁŠ SVOBODA

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Symphony No. 38 in D major, K. 504 ("Prague")
Adagio-Allegro
Andante
Finale: *Presto*

This concert will be broadcast on WDPR-FM 88.1 and on WDPG-FM 89.9 on Sunday, December 12, 1999, at 7:00 p.m. hosted by Lloyd Bryant.

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67th Season - 1999-2000

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NEAL GITTLEMAN



The 1999-2000 concert season marks Neal Gittleman's fifth year as Music Director of the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra. Gittleman has led the orchestra to new levels of artistic achievement and increasing renown throughout Ohio. He remains dedicated to ever-higher musical standards, and to building an even stronger relationship between the Orchestra and its audiences.

The Orchestra's performance has been praised by *American Record Guide* magazine as well as by the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, which called the Dayton Philharmonic "a precise, glowing machine." The Orchestra was recently singled out by the American Symphony Orchestra League with an ASCAP Award for its commitment to programming music of our time.

Prior to coming to Dayton, Gittleman served as Music Director of the Marion (IN) Philharmonic, Associate Conductor of the Syracuse Symphony, and Assistant Conductor of the Oregon Symphony Orchestra, a post he held under the Exxon/Arts Endowment Conductors Program. He also served for ten seasons as Associate Conductor and Resident Conductor of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, a position he left at the end of the 1997-98 season in order to devote himself full-time to the Dayton Philharmonic.

Neal Gittleman has appeared as guest conductor with many of the country's leading orchestras, including the Chicago, San Francisco, Minnesota, Phoenix, Indianapolis, San Antonio, Omaha, San Jose, and Jacksonville orchestras and the Buffalo Philharmonic. Internationally, Gittleman has conducted in Germany, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Japan, Canada, and Mexico.

A native of Brooklyn, New York, Gittleman graduated from Yale University in 1975. He studied under Nadia Boulanger and Annette Dieudonné in Paris, Hugh Ross at

the Manhattan School Music, and Charles Bruck at both the Pierre Monteux School and the Hartt School of Music, where he was the recipient of the Karl Böhm Fellowship. His awards include Second Prize in the Ernest Ansermet International Conducting Competition (1984) and Third Prize in the Leopold Stokowski Conducting Competition (1986).

At home in the pit as well as on stage, Gittleman has led productions for Dayton Opera, the Syracuse Opera Company, the Hartt Opera Theater, and for Milwaukee's renowned Skylight Opera Theatre. He will lead Dayton Opera's October 1999 production of Bizet's *Carmen*. He has also conducted for the Milwaukee Ballet, Hartford Ballet, Chicago City Ballet, Ballet Arizona, and Theater Ballet of Canada.

Gittleman is nationally known for his *Classical Connections/Classical Conversations* programs, which give concert audiences a "behind the scenes" look at great works of orchestra's repertoire. These innovative programs began in Milwaukee 11 years ago, and have become a vital part of the Dayton Philharmonic's season. The Phoenix Symphony launched the series last year.

Gittleman's recent recordings include George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* and *Concerto in F* with pianist Norman Krieger and the Czech National Symphony (Artistic 4 label), and two piano concertos of Tomas Svoboda with the Dayton Philharmonic scheduled for release in 2000.

When not on the podium, Neal is an avid player of golf and squash. He continues to practice t'ai chi ch'uan, and hopes that Yo-Yo Ma will come back to Dayton soon to accompany him again!

Gittleman and his wife, Lisa Fry, have made their home in Dayton since 1997.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome...

What a variety of musical treats we have this season. Violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg was tremendous, —but only the beginning of many more unique experiences down the calendar. Neal and his long-time friend, composer/pianist Tomas Svoboda kick-off the Casual Series. Svoboda will perform the Dayton premiere of his Piano Concerto No. 1. He and the Orchestra will then record the work as part of a CD begun last February. Look for it—a first for the Dayton Philharmonic— on the Artisie 4 label next year. The recording is made possible through a bequest from the late Ellen Jane Lorenz Porter, a composer, musician, and life-long supporter of the arts in Dayton.

Grammy Award-winner Lou Rawls is back by popular demand to open the SuperPops season at the Dayton Convention Center. His distinctive voice and familiar hits turn on the magic every time he comes to town.

A significant event in our Orchestra's history—the *Concert for Peace*— is November 13. It will symbolize the partnership of the people of Dayton and Sarajevo in the building of lasting peace in Bosnia. To celebrate the fourth anniversary of the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords, the Sarajevo Philharmonic and the Dayton Philharmonic will present the joint concert at Memorial Hall. Neal, the Sarajevo Philharmonic's Music Director, Emir Nuhanovic, and Principal Guest Conductor, Charles Ansbacher, will share the podium for this special event.



This historic concert is being presented in partnership with the Dayton Peace Accords Project, a local non-profit organization. *Concert for Peace* sponsors include the Miriam Rosenthal Memorial Trust Fund, Trust For Mutual Understanding, Ohio Arts Council, Martha Holden Jennings Foundation, City of Dayton, Montgomery

County, DoubleTree Hotel-Dayton, Dayton Power & Light, Mead, Copeland Corporation, Friendship Force of Dayton, Iddings Foundation, Reynolds & Reynolds, the Dayton Rotary Club Foundation, and the University of Dayton.

On the heels of the *Concert for Peace* comes Mahler's glorious *Resurrection* Symphony featuring the Orchestra and the Chorus directed by Hank Dahlman. This monumental and moving program deserves a spot in everyone's *don't miss* file. Special thanks go to Dayton Power & Light, sponsor of these concerts.

All of this terrific music—and it covers only the next few weeks of the season. The artistic quality of the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra is on an upward trend that *will* continue with our support. Corporate and individual gifts are vital links to the Orchestra's strong future. The best way to ensure that future is through participation in *Crescendo*, the 1999-2000 Annual Fund Drive. The goal for this year is \$762,000. I urge you all to join me in a dedicated effort to make the fund drive a success. Our contributions now will reap rewards in the years ahead.

J. Colby King

TOMÁŠ SVOBODA

Tomáš Svoboda spent the years of WWII in Berlin where he began his musical education on the piano at the age of three. Showing an early talent for composing, he completed his first opus by the age of nine. After his family's return to Prague, he continued his music studies at the Prague Conservatory as its youngest student at the age of 15. In 1962, after graduating from the conservatory with degrees in percussion, composition and conducting, Svoboda entered the Academy of Music in Prague, and by this time, performances and radio broadcasts of his orchestral works brought him national recognition. After emigrating to the U.S., he enrolled at the University of Southern California as a graduate student, studying with Ingolf Dahl and Halsey Stevens. After receiving his Master's Degree, he accepted a position at Portland State University in Oregon where he taught composition and music theory for 27 years until retirement in 1998.

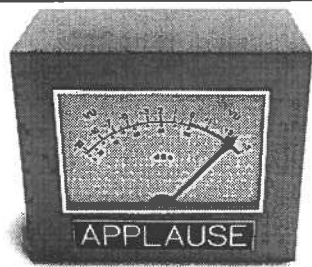


In 1985 he received the ASCAP Foundation/Meet the Composer Award. Today over 1,000 performances of his music have taken place, including performances involving 148 different world orchestras. World premieres of his works have taken place at both Carnegie Hall and John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. During the spring and summer of 1994, Svoboda's music was performed at the Prague Spring International Festival, and with the Philadelphia Orchestra. His Concerto for Marimba & Orchestra was featured in the opening concert of the American Symphony Orchestra League's National Conference. Presently, nine recording projects are underway, including his Concerti Nos. 1 & 2 for Piano & Orchestra with the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra.

Tomáš Svoboda appears in Dayton by arrangement with Thomas C. Stangland Co.

Accommodations for the Dayton Philharmonic's guest artists and conductors are provided by the Crowne Plaza Hotel and the DoubleTree Hotel.

In 1981 the first publication of his music brought forth a front cover tribute to Svoboda by the highly respected *Piano Quarterly*. In



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PROGRAM NOTES

By Dr. Richard Benedum



Antonin Dvořák *Notturmo* in B major, op. 40

Dvořák was born in Mühhausen, Bohemia, near Prague on September 8, 1841, and died in Prague on May 1, 1904. His *Notturmo* for Strings in B major, op. 40, with its first half arranged from the *Andante religioso* from the E minor String Quartet (which Dvořák also used in the String Quintet in G), was probably composed around January 1875, and revised in 1882 or 1883. This is the first performance by the Dayton Philharmonic.

Dvořák was neither a conservative nor a radical composer. He combined a profound admiration for Classical composers with a keen interest in contemporary musical developments, including the increasing trend toward nationalistic influences in the second half of the nineteenth century. He succeeded in writing music that appealed equally to those with strong leanings toward tradition and to those who welcomed change. His music

displays a number of influences: folk music, mainly Czech but also American; earlier composers whom he admired, especially Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven and Schubert; Wagner; and his close friend Brahms.

Dvořák described Mozart as "sunshine" and compared his music to a Raphael madonna he saw in London—both were "so beautifully composed." He venerated Beethoven, so that when a sonata was played in a class he was taking, he shouted to his fellow students, "Why don't you all kneel?"

The *Notturmo* is a good example of Dvořák's early eclectic style. After the opening bars of the *Notturmo*, which show clear part-writing, almost like the Renaissance style of Palestrina, Dvořák's melodic and harmonic style becomes almost Wagnerian.



Strings

Tomáš Svoboda

Piano Concerto No. 1, op. 71



Tomáš Svoboda was born in Paris of Czech parents, December 6, 1939. His Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 71, was commissioned by the Chamber Music Society of Oregon under a partial grant from the Oregon Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts. The work was premiered on November 17, 1974, on the Reed College Commons in Portland, Oregon, by the Oregon String Sinfonietta under Eugene Kaza and the composer as soloist; the performance was so successful that it was repeated as an encore. This is the first performance by the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra.

The commission to compose this concerto greatly inspired Svoboda, for though he had already written 15 orchestral works (including 4 symphonies) as well as nearly 50 compositions involving keyboard instruments, he had yet to write a concerto for piano and orchestra.

Svoboda writes of the musical inspiration of the concerto: "It is as if one embarks on a very long journey traveling to new and exciting places, all the while traveling further and further from the homeland. Then, just as one feels he's at the furthest point from home, he discovers that he has actually returned full circle back to his original starting point."

The orchestral accompaniment is light

in texture, scored for string orchestra, timpani and woodwind sextet. The form of this 18 minute, one movement concerto is uncommon, for it is comprised of 7 different sections which together produce a large ternary form (A,B,C,D,E,F,G,A).

Flute, Oboe,
Clarinet, Bassoon,
French horn,
Trumpet, Timpani
and Strings.

Svoboda's intention was to get further and further away from the principal theme of the piano part. The greatest thematic contrast occurs towards the end of the concerto in an extended piano cadenza, where a quiet and tranquil passage is presented, bringing the whole concerto to its softest point. Following this the piano immediately returns to the very opening theme of the composition and is soon joined by the rest of the orchestra for a rousing, yet natural conclusion to the concerto.

Today, over 1,100 performances of his music have taken place, including 386 orchestral performances involving 156 orchestras. An impressive 30 different orchestral works from Svoboda's 163 opus catalog have been performed, including performances by 16 major North American, European, and Japanese orchestras. World premieres have taken place in both Carnegie Hall and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

(Note by Thomas Stangland and Tomáš Svoboda, used with permission.)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Symphony No. 38 in D major, K. 504

("Prague")



Mozart was born on January 27, 1756, in Salzburg and died in Vienna on December 5, 1791. His Symphony No. 38 in D major, K. 504, was completed on December 6, 1786, just five years before he died. The Symphony was premiered in Prague at a concert that Mozart gave January 19, 1787. The concert also included Mozart's improvisation at the piano on Figaro's aria "Non piu andrai" from *The Marriage of Figaro*. The most recent performance by the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra was on November 18 and 19, 1992, with Isaiah Jackson conducting.

At a time when Vienna seemed to tire of him, Mozart's glowing reputation in Prague was the single greatest success story of his later years. He left Vienna on January 8, 1787, to supervise the Prague production of *Figaro*, arrived about noon on the 11th, and by six o'clock that evening was caught up in the social whirl. He wrote to a friend back in Vienna:

"At six a clock I drove with Count Canal to the so-called Breitfeld Ball, where the cream of the beauties of Prague are wont to assemble. That would have been something for you, my friend. . . . As for me, I didn't dance and I didn't flirt. The first because I was too tired, the second because of my native bashfulness. But with the greatest joy, I watched all the people hopping about around to their heart's content to the music of my *Figaro*... Truly this is a great honor for me."

The Prague schoolmaster Franz Niemetschek, to whom the care of Mozart's son Karl was entrusted after Mozart's death, and an early Mozart biographer, was an eyewitness to the premiere of the Symphony No. 38, and writes of Mozart's relationship with the Prague orchestra:

"In answer to a universal request, [Mozart] gave a piano recital at a grand concert in the

opera house [on January 19]. The theatre had never been so full as on this occasion; never had there been such unanimous enthusiasm as that awakened by his heavenly playing. We did not, in fact, know what to admire most, whether the extraordinary compositions or his extraordinary playing; together they made such an overwhelming impression on us that we felt we had been bewitched."

The symphonies which he composed for this occasion are real masterpieces of instrumental composition, which are played with great élan and fire, so that the very soul is carried to sublime heights. This applied particularly to the grand Symphony in D major, which is still always a favorite in Prague, although it has no doubt been heard a hundred times.

The Symphony is linked to three of Mozart's last operas. It was occasioned by the trip to Prague during which Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* was performed, and for which *Don Giovanni* had been commissioned. The Symphony's first movement resembles the Overture to *Don Giovanni*—both begin with a slow introduction in D minor, after which an Allegro in D major follows. A lively phrase, similar in its persistent use of repeated notes, is strikingly similar to the famous theme of the Overture to *The Magic Flute*.

Only a few months before writing this Symphony, Mozart had won the acclaim of Prague audiences for his comic opera *The Marriage of Figaro*. Perhaps he wrote the opening theme of the Finale in acknowledgement of *Figaro's* success. Prague audiences would surely have recognized the theme, taken from the lively little duet of Susanna and Cherubino, *Aprite presto*, with a smile of recognition. The entire Finale has the hectic momentum of that duet. Of particular note are the prominent roles assigned to the wind instruments, a characteristic also seen in the scoring of Mozart's later operas.

2 Flutes, 2 Oboes,
2 Bassoons, 2 French
horns, 2 Trumpets,
Timpani and Strings