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2030

U N C G
School of Music

presents the

**UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA**

Robert Gutter, Conductor
Charles Gambetta, Guest conductor

featuring

Kirstin Greenlaw, Violin Soloist

Tuesday, February 24, 1998

7:30 p.m.

Aycock Auditorium

Program

Manfred Overture, Op. 115

Robert Schumann
(1810-1856)

**Violin Concerto No. 5
in A Major, K. 219**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Allegro aperto-Adagio-Allegro aperto
Adagio
Tempo di Menuetto-Allegro-Tempo di Menuetto

Kirstin Greenlaw, violin soloist

Intermission

Symphony No. 1 in F minor, Op.10

Dimitri Shostakovich
(1906-1975)

Allegretto
Allegro
Lento
Allegro molto-Lento-Allegro molto

Mr. Gambetta, conductor

Program Notes I

Manfred Overture, Op. 115 **Robert Schumann**

Schumann's physical health improved in 1848 and 1849 but the sudden death of Mendelssohn had an adverse affect on his mental state. He seemed to identify himself with the character of Byron's melancholy hero Manfred. Once, in reading the poem to friends, he was moved to tears. In 1849 he wrote incidental music to the melodrama *Manfred* with spoken rather than sung words. The overture was actually written a year earlier. Manfred is actually Byron. He bears an unmentionable guilt that connects in some way with the death of Astarte, his sister. But unlike other men, he cannot escape his guilt; he is not allowed to die, commit suicide or go mad. The tragedy has nothing to do with reality, but Schumann, fighting to stay sane, understood Manfred's conflict only too well. Unfortunately, the madness Manfred may have sought soon found Schumann.

The Overture reflects the broodiness and melancholy of the drama. From the opening three syncopated chords the listener has trouble understanding the meter. The following introduction contains the thematic material of the entire overture. The introduction propels itself into the main body of the overture in which the two themes of Manfred and his sister are juxtaposed and presented in a sonata form. The development is marked by the entrance of the brass which suggests the solemnity of Manfred's dilemma. The coda resolves the musical conflict inherent in sonata form by merging the three syncopated chords with the two main ideas that originally followed them.

Violin Concerto No. 5 in A Major, K. 219 **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

Mozart returned to Salzburg from Munich in March, 1775, still feeling stifled by the lack of musical opportunities for a young composer like himself and still subject to the rule of his domineering and over-protective father, Leopold Mozart. The Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, Hieronymus, Count Colloredo, while not an adversary, was neither a vigorous supporter. Sharing the belief held by German snobbery of the day, he was of the opinion that only the Italians composed music of taste and refinement. Mozart's father, was meanwhile anxious to secure a position for Wolfgang in a well-respected court, and was exerting great pressure on him to channel his energies toward that end. In spite of this pushing and pulling and Mozart's restless spirit, his years in Salzburg are regarded as among the happiest of his life.

Mozart composed not one, but all five of his violin concerti between April and December, 1775. No. 5, K. 219 is by far the most advanced both in terms of what he asks of the soloist and the perfect balance achieved

Program Notes II

between the violin and the orchestra. The first movement opens with the orchestra stating the Allegro theme. The soloist enters alone in a brief Adagio interlude, after which the thematic material is stated again by soloist and orchestra together. Following a characteristically short development section, the main theme returns a final time, leading to the solo cadenza. The violin calls the orchestra back with a trill, and the ensemble closes with a short coda.

The Adagio, a true work of genius and evidence of greatness yet to come for Mozart as an orchestral master, rests like a delicate orchid supported between the two stout outer movements of the concerto. After a tutti statement of the theme echoed by the soloist, Mozart takes listeners on an ethereal journey through a series of chromatic harmonies, momentarily suspending any sense of tonal center until the orchestra restates a familiar transitional cadence. The final section leads the soloist to a cadenza followed only by the closing cadence. (One interesting note-- A substitute Adagio, K. 261, was supposedly composed for Brunetti, Mozart's successor at Salzburg, because he found the original too difficult.)

The Finale is a highly developed rondo in three, marked Tempo di Menuetto. The two sections of the rondo are separated by a "Turkish" two-step, creating an A-B-A structure. Much is demanded of the soloist in this movement from the light, airy minuet-style to an almost gypsy-like quality later in the rondo and the two-step. The "Turkish" section comes to an end with a violin cadenza which carries the orchestra back to the minuet. Orchestra and soloist complete the work together in a final rendition of the menuetto theme.

—Charles Gambetta

Symphony No. 1 in F Minor, Op. 10 **Dimitri Shostakovich**

Russia was caught in the throes of enormous social upheaval, and St. Petersburg had become a maelstrom of political unrest when Sofiya Shostakovich gave birth to a son, Dimitri Dimitrievich, on September 25, 1906, in St. Petersburg. Eighteen months earlier, on January 9, 1905, the senseless slaughter by Imperial troops of an unarmed group of demonstrators gathered at St. Petersburg Palace Square ('Bloody Sunday') signaled the final decline of the Russian monarchy and began a chain of events which would culminate with the Bolshevik Revolution in November, 1917. Young Dimitri was reared with his older sister, Mariya, and his younger sister, Zoya, in the midst of this chaos by parents who managed to provide a comfortable and relatively secure environment for their children. His mother was a professional pianist, trained at St. Petersburg Conservatoire, who gave Dimitri his first piano instruction at age nine. Dimitri Boleslavovich Shostakovich, his father, was a biologist who worked as an engineer. Following the Revolution, shortages of every