

## **EDMUND HAINES**

### **Concertino for Seven Solo Instruments and Orchestra**

## **OKLAHOMA CITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

### **GUY FRASER HARRISON, conductor**

Concerning the structural conception of the *Concertino* here recorded, Edmund Haines states: "Since Dr. Harrison, who commissioned the work, asked for a piece that featured the first-desk men of the orchestra, I elected to include a group of seven soloists in a full orchestral work. It was not my wish, however, to follow a *concerto grosso* model; rather, I tried to achieve a different type of symphonic texture."

Even a casual acquaintance with the music reveals that Haines, indeed, did create "a different type of symphonic texture." The solo instruments are not "solo" in the sense of a *sinfonia concertante*, but share the thematic and developmental roles in equal measure with the orchestra. A now-chamber, now-orchestral texture alternates with astonishing speed through the entire work, resulting in an original and never-anticipated surface sheen.

The first movement opens with a viola solo that is pastoral and quietly expressive in feeling. Pizzicato strings form a background for more extended statements leading to a brass peroration of weightier sonority. A feeling of recapitulation characterizes the remainder of the movement.

The *scherzo* second movement is packed full of musical "Americana"—driving and irregular accents contrasted with lyrical sections within the basic rhythmic flow. The total tightness of rhythmic structure is further contrasted with a "loose" cadenza-like control of thematic unity, resulting in an improvisatory, unsettled mood.

The third movement, an *intermezzo*, reveals a lonely string *cantilena*. Soon the solo instruments begin to wind their modal comments around the implied long line, in the best *concertante* fashion. Use of the solo instruments is here especially evocative.

After a fanfare in the full brass, the solo violin enters with a perky tune that dominates the fourth movement, described by the composer as "a happy little rondo with a tonal orientation." The prevailing jollity is interrupted by an ominous dissonance, but good humor again prevails at the end.

EDMUND HAINES was born in 1914 in Ottumwa, Iowa. From 1937 to 1941, he attended the Eastman School of Music where he studied with Howard Hanson, earning first a Master of Music and finally a Doctor of Philosophy degree. He later studied with Roy Harris, Aaron Copland and Otto Luening. As an educator, Haines has served on the faculty of the Kansas City Conservatory, held a teaching fellowship at the Eastman School, served as Instructor and later as Assistant Professor at the University of Michigan, retained the latter title at Bard College, and is currently on the faculty of Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York.

Numerous and impressive awards have accelerated Haines' career, including a Pulitzer Prize, a National Award from the American Guild of Organists and a Guggenheim Fellowship. He served as Composer-in-Residence at *La Napoule* Art Foundation in France (1957-58) and received a Miami University Sesquicentennial commission (1958), which resulted in his *String Quartet No. 4*.

Haines' works have been performed by many notable organizations, including the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, the NBC Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Brass Quartet, the Oklahoma City Symphony Orchestra and the Smith College Chorus. He currently resides in Bronxville, New York.

## **BERNARD ROGERS**

**Variations on a Song by Mussorgsky**

## **ROCHESTER PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA** **THEODORE BLOOMFIELD, conductor**

Beginning every mid-September for the past three decades, undergraduate composition students of the Eastman School of Music have expectantly entered a small room on the school's third floor to hear Bernard Rogers talk about the instruments of the orchestra with an almost religious intensity. Beneath twin busts of Debussy and Mussorgsky, the owlish little man with the melancholy, intelligent eyes will slowly begin to examine the work of an earnest young composer. Then, *subito*, the comment: "The trumpet certainly can play this phrase all right, but he is far too noble an instrument to *enjoy* playing it. Drop it an octave and let him play it for you both ways. Then raise the strings up to where the trumpet was—they *like* to play up there!" After a fifty minute Rogers lecture on the arcane subtleties of orchestral technique, accompanied by many personalizations of instrumental characteristics, the curious student is apt to wander over to the Music Library to hear the latest Rogers recording. As he listens, the hoped-for miracle becomes a sonic fact: here is a pedagogue who actually practices what he teaches.

Not only a "young composer's guide to the orchestra," Rogers' long list of works eloquently establishes his teaching philosophy in concrete compositional result. A Rogers phrase for flute could not possibly be played with equal expressive effect on the oboe, nor could his delicate distribution of brass punctuations carry quite the same gentle gravity if appointed to the organ. The initial generating impulse of Rogers' creative thought seems to lie deep in the woody and brassy bones of the instruments themselves; only then does the skill of his organizational craft direct and shape the experience, making these passive, inanimate tubes of metal and fiber leap and dance with mysterious life. Color is wedded to substance in an equilibrium that recalls the Greek ideal, carrying within its unfolding the unmistakable mark of the authentic instrumental creator.

The *Variations on a Song by Mussorgsky* was commissioned by Theodore Bloomfield and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. The composer has offered the following comments:

“Mussorgsky was born in 1829. Wealthy in his youth and a member of a fashionable Guards regiment, his life was drastically changed through the ukase of Alexander II by which serfdom in Russia was abolished. His genius, perceived by few in his lifetime, now stands in music like a fixed star. He is among the great heretics. His influence upon our musical century has been profound. I have always admired Mussorgsky as an untamed, courageous and prophetic artist. He was humane and compassionate in his sympathies for the peasants, the people.”

The *Child's Song*, written in 1869, is the subject for eight variations. It is a naive melody of folk-like character, and from it Rogers has extracted an almost endless ingenuity of intervallic harmonic development, showing all sides of his sensitive gift. First comes a literal statement of the song in oboe and strings. The variations follow.

Variation I. *Larghetto*. Mystical and sustained in mood.

Variation II. *Presto en factico*. Changing meters; vehement.

Variation III. *Allegretto mosso giocoso*. Whimsical. An example of Rogers' dexterity with woodwinds.

Variation V. *Allegro giusto*. The orchestra is suddenly transformed into a Russian *balalaika*.

Variation VI. *Capriccioso; quasi presto*. A spinning figure of elusive color in the strings. Fragmentation of motives.

Variation VII. *Andante moderato*. Horn signals launch a dramatic episode on a constant f-sharp.

Variation VIII. *Allegro risoluto e ritmico*. A brief *Moto* leading to a broad statement (full orchestra) of the song.

A First Coda. *Solenne*. Tolling bells, growing to a powerful sequence of orchestral colors, introduce Rogers' magnificent and touching tribute to the Mussorgsky of *The Great Gate of Kiev*.

A Final Coda. *Giubilante a sostenuto*. Chorale-like canons; entirely new material.

BERNARD ROGERS was born in New York, February 4, 1893. An early and perhaps significant interest in architecture preceded his musical studies with Arthur Farwell and Ernest Bloch. *To the Fallen*, an early composition, was performed by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra on November 13, 1919; on the strength of its reception he was awarded a Pulitzer Traveling Scholarship and went to Europe for further study. In 1927 he received a Guggenheim Fellowship which resulted in studies with Nadia

Boulanger in Fontainebleau. Upon his return to the United States he was engaged as Instructor at the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester (Rochester, N.Y.), where he has remained, teaching orchestration and composition. Rogers' distinguished catalogue includes *The Faithful* (1918), *Adonais* (1927), *Prelude to Hamlet* (1928), *Three Japanese Dances* (1934), *The Supper at Emmaes* (1937), three symphonies and two operas: *The Warrior* (one of the few American operas commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera Association and there first performed on January 11, 1947) and *The Veil* (University of Indiana, 1950). *The Passion*, an oratorio in six scenes for soloists, mixed chorus and orchestra was premiered in Cincinnati (1944) and later performed at a special concert of the Juilliard School honoring the composer.

—Notes by CHARLES WHITTENBERG

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*In 1957 the Ford Foundation began a program in Humanities and the Arts. Among the initial grants was one designed to insure multiple regional performances of new symphonic scores. This grant was administered by the American Music Center, a clearing house for the advancement of serious American music here and abroad. Over a period of three years, each of six participating orchestras, coordinated by a national committee of the Center, commissioned one work annually and subsequently each orchestra performed its own commission as well as several of the others. Provision was also made for the recording of some of these works. The present recording has been produced in connection with that aspect of the grant.*

*(Original liner notes from CRI LP jacket)*