Notes on the Program by DR. RICHARD E. RODDA

Suite for Strings..Einojuhani Rautavaara
(born in 1928)

Composed for string quartet in 1952; arranged for string orchestra in 1953.

Among the heirs of Sibelius who have given Finland one of today's most dynamic and distinctive musical cultures is Einojuhani Rautavaara. Rautavaara was born in Helsinki on October 9, 1928, and studied composition at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki with Aarre Merikanto and musicology at Helsinki University before being selected in 1955 by Sibelius himself to receive a Koussevitzky Foundation scholarship awarded to a young Finnish musician in honor of that venerable composer's ninetieth birthday. Rautavaara used the grant to study with Vincent Persichetti at the Juilliard School and Roger Sessions and Aaron Copland at Tanglewood during the following two years. After further study in Ascona, Switzerland with Wladimir Vogel and in Cologne with Rudolf Petzold, Rautavaara returned to Finland to compose and to serve as librarian of the Helsinki City Orchestra (1959-1961), director of Helsinki's Käpylä Music School (1965-1966) and faculty member of the Sibelius Academy (1966-1991). Among his many awards are the Finnish Artist Professor of State (an honorific without fixed duties, modeled on the government grant Sibelius received as a young composer to support his creative work), Sibelius Prize, Arnold Bax Society Medal, membership in the Royal Swedish Academy and Commander in the Order of the Finnish Lion. Rautavaara has composed steadily and prolifically throughout his life — several operas (including *Vincent*, based on the life of Van Gogh, and *Thomas*, which tells the story of Finland's first bishop), a ballet, eight symphonies, twelve concertos, much music for orchestra, chamber ensembles and chorus, piano pieces, songs — passing first through the influences of Stravinskyan neo-classicism and then Schoenbergian serialism before arriving at the luminous, timeless, mystical idiom that has characterized much of his creative output since the early 1970s. "It is my belief," Rautavaara explained, "that music is great if, at some moment, the listener catches 'a glimpse of eternity through the window of time.' This, to my mind, is the only true justification for all art. Everything else is of secondary importance."

"Soon after signing up to study at the Sibelius Academy," Rautavaara recalled, "I had my first encounter with folk tunes from Finland's South Ostrobothnian region, which were frequently reckless and impetuous, certainly archaic and primeval. They touched a vein close to aspects of my heritage which were ingrained in me through my Ostrobothnian forefathers." In 1952, while still a student, Rautavaara composed a "suite of free fantasias" titled *The Fiddlers* on several of the tunes he discovered, and later that year also wrote his String Quartet No. 1 under their influence. In the Suite for Strings that he arranged the following year from the Quartet, he wrote, "One can detect a synthesis between the Ostrobothnian ethos and the rhythmic gestures of my great idol Stravinsky." Both influences are apparent in the Suite's quick opening movement, which places smooth melodic phrases whose simple contours and modal scales recall Finnish folksong upon a crisply articulated rhythmic background indebted to Stravinsky's neo-classicism of the 1920s. The *Andante* is a lament based on a poignant melody, sounded above a drone, that becomes more intense in expression before returning to the earlier plaintive mood for the close. The finale is a lusty folk dance (it is marked to be played "in the manner of a gigue") that is balanced by two episodes of more relaxed nature, the second displaying some skillful imitative writing from the 24-year-old Rautavaara.

Concierto de Aranjuez **... Joaquín Rodrigo**
for Guitar and Orchestra (1901-1999)

Composed in 1939.
Premiered on November 9, 1940 in Barcelona, with Regino Sainz de la Maza as soloist.

Though Joaquín Rodrigo, born on November 22, 1901 at Sagunto, Valencia, on Spain's eastern coast, lost his sight when he was three from diphtheria, he early showed a pronounced aptitude for music. His parents enrolled him in a school for blind children in the nearby city of Valencia, and at age eight, he began formal lessons in harmony, piano and violin;

his teachers in composition included Francisco Antich, Enrique Gomá and Eduardo López Chavarri. During the 1920s, Rodrigo established himself as a pianist with performances of challenging recent works by Ravel, Stravinsky and other contemporary composers, and he began composing seriously in 1923 with the *Suite para Piano* and the *Dos Esbozos* ("*Two Sketches*") for Violin and Piano. His first work for orchestra, *Juglares* (written, like all of his scores, on a Braille music typewriter and then dictated to a copyist), was played in both Valencia and Madrid in 1924; his *Cinco Piezas Infantiles*, also for orchestra, won a National Prize the following year. In 1927, he followed the path of his compatriots Albéniz, Granados, Falla and Turina, and moved to Paris, where he enrolled at the Schola Cantorum as a pupil of Paul Dukas. Rodrigo immersed himself in the musical life of the city, befriending Honegger, Milhaud, Ravel and other Parisian luminaries, receiving encouragement from Falla, and enjoying success with a performance of his orchestral *Prelude for a Poem to the Alhambra*, whose subject matter and distinctly Spanish idiom established the style that consistently characterized his creations. In 1933, he married the Turkish pianist Victoria Kamhi. A Conde de Cartegena Grant the following year enabled him to remain in Paris to continue his studies at the Conservatoire and the Sorbonne. The outbreak of civil war in Spain in 1936 prevented Rodrigo from returning home, and he spent the next three years traveling in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, and living in the French capital. He returned to Madrid after the Spanish Civil War ended in 1939, and established his position among the country's leading musicians with the premiere of the *Concierto de Aranjuez* for Guitar and Orchestra the following year. His prominence in Spanish musical life was recognized with many awards, honorary degrees and memberships, and, in 1947, the creation for him of the Manuel de Falla Chair at the University of Madrid. In addition to teaching at the University, Rodrigo also served as Head of Music Broadcasts for Spanish Radio, music critic for several newspapers, and Director of the Artistic Section of the Spanish National Organization for the Blind. Though best known for his series of concertos for one, two and four guitars (*Concierto de Aranjuez*, *Fantasía para un Gentilhombre*, *Concierto para una Fiesta*, *Concierto Madrigal*, *Concierto Andaluz*), flute (*Concierto Pastoral*), cello (*Concierto como un Divertimento*) and harp (*Concierto Serenata*), Rodrigo also composed a ballet, a zarzuela, an opera, numerous orchestral works, music for the cinema, many songs, and solo numbers for piano and guitar. He died in Madrid on July 6, 1999.

The small town of Aranjuez, thirty miles south of Madrid on the River Tagus, is a green oasis in the barren plateau of central Spain. In the mid-18th century, a palace, set amid verdant forests and parks, was built at Aranjuez as a summer retreat for the Spanish court. Generations of Spanish kings thereafter settled into Aranjuez every spring, when the countless nightingales would serenade them from the cedars and laurels, the court ladies would promenade in the cooling shade, and the men would hone their equestrian skills with the famous cream-colored Andalusian horses bred nearby. When Rodrigo sought inspiration for a new concerto in the difficult, war-torn year of 1939, it was to the elegant symbol of by-gone Spain represented by Aranjuez that he turned. "Having conceived the idea of a guitar concerto," he recalled, "it was necessary for me to place it in a certain epoch and, still more, in a definite location — an epoch at the end of which *fandangos* transform themselves into *fandanguillos*, and when the *cante* and the *bulerias* vibrate in the Spanish air." He further stated that he had in mind the early decades of the 19th century when composing this *Concierto de Aranjuez*. Of the work's mood and the character of its solo instrument, the composer wrote, "Throughout the veins of Spanish music, a profound rhythmic beat seems to be diffused by a strange phantasmagoric, colossal and multiform instrument — an instrument idealized in the fiery imagination of Albéniz, Granados, Falla and Turina. It is an imaginary instrument that might be said to possess the wings of the harp, the heart of the grand piano and the soul of the guitar.... It would be unjust to expect strong sonorities from this *Concierto*; they would falsify its essence and distort an instrument made for subtle ambiguities. Its strength is to be found in its very lightness and in the intensity of its contrasts. The *Aranjuez Concierto* is meant to sound like the hidden breeze that stirs the tree tops in the parks, and it should be only as strong as a butterfly, and as dainty as a veronica."

The *Concierto de Aranjuez* has enjoyed a great popularity since it was introduced in 1940, having been recorded many times, made into a ballet, and set in an array of popular, jazz and even commercial arrangements. With few precedents to guide him, Rodrigo created a work that not only embodies the essential qualities of his musical style and the spiritual ethos of Spain, but also solves the difficult technical problems inherent in combining an unamplified solo guitar with a full orchestra. Rodrigo adapted the three traditional movements of the concerto form to reflect different aspects of the soul

of Spanish music — the outer movements are fast in tempo and dance-like, while the middle one is imbued with the bittersweet intensity of classic flamenco *cante hondo* (“*deep song*”). The soloist opens the *Concierto* with an evocative, typically Spanish rhythmic pattern of ambiguous meter that courses throughout the movement. The orchestra, in colorful fiesta garb, soon enters while the guitar’s brilliant, virtuoso display continues. The haunting *Adagio*, among the most beautiful and beloved pieces ever written for guitar, is based on a theme of Middle Eastern ancestry, given in the plangent tones of the English horn, around which the soloist weaves delicate arabesques of sound as the music unfolds. The finale’s lilting simplicity (one commentator noted its similarity to a Spanish children’s song) serves as a foil to the imposing technical demands placed on the soloist, who is required to negotiate almost the entire range of the instrument’s possibilities.

Like all of Rodrigo’s best music, the *Concierto de Aranjuez* bears the unmistakable stamp of his craftsmanship and stylistic personality, of which the noted Spanish composer Tomás Marco wrote, “His aim has been to create a Spanish ambiance, full of color and agreeable tunes, where folklore is a picturesque element and references to art music of the past consist of distilled 17th and 18th-century mannerisms.” This masterful *Concierto* is glowing evidence of Rodrigo’s ability of capture the spirit of his native land in music that is both immediate in appeal and lasting in value.

Symphony No. 104 in D major, “London”......................Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)

Composed in 1795.
Premiered on May 4, 1795 in London.

Haydn had the good fortune to live a long, healthy life: he was in his 78th year when he died in Vienna. Had he been allotted the length of Mozart’s life — 36 years — he would have composed some forty symphonies, numerous piano sonatas and string quartets, and some liturgical music. A sizeable output, but not one that would have raised him to the position of pre-eminence he later attained. If he had lived for 57 years, as did Beethoven, the last twelve symphonies, two dozen quartets, the late Masses, the Trumpet Concerto and the two oratorios would not exist. Throughout his life, Haydn was a wonder of vigor and energy, and he retired from work only in his last three years. Chief among the masterworks he created after 1790 were the magisterial symphonies he composed for his two visits to England.

For three decades Haydn toiled for the Esterházy family in Eisenstadt and at their new palace, Esterháza, just across the Hungarian border from Austria. He managed the extensive musical establishment of the house, composed music continuously, and oversaw the famed resident opera company. (After her visit in 1773, Empress Maria Theresa let it be known that whenever she wanted to see a good opera, she invited herself to the Esterházy palace.) With his many responsibilities, Haydn was grossly overworked for most of his life. It is understandable, therefore, that, though his dedication and love of his job never wavered, it was with some relief that he viewed the death of the music-loving Prince Nicolaus in 1790. Nicolaus’ son, Anton, did not inherit his father’s love of music, and he dispersed the entire musical establishment except for a brass band for ceremonial functions, thereby releasing Haydn from all but titular duties. A comfortable pension was settled upon Haydn as reward for his many years of service, and he moved to Vienna so quickly that he left most of his personal belongings behind.

Johann Peter Salomon, a German violinist and impresario, had initiated a series of concerts in London in 1786, and he was always searching for new attractions to present. He was in Bonn when word came of Prince Nicolaus’ death, and he set off for Vienna immediately to entice Haydn to Britain. He was successful, and Haydn made his first visit to London from January 1791 to June 1792, composing there six symphonies for Salomon’s concerts and leading their premieres. The venture was a triumph. Haydn went home to Vienna, but it was not difficult for Salomon to convince him to return to London. His second visit began in February 1794 and again lasted for a year and a half. The success of the first was repeated, and Haydn received an acclaim from the British public such as he had never known in the close confines of his service to the Esterházy family.

Haydn wrote three symphonies (Nos. 99-101) for Salomon’s concerts of spring 1794. He then spent the summer touring through the British countryside, and returned to London in the early autumn to make preparations for the

following season. Salomon, however, was having difficulties arranging for the performers necessary to ensure the high quality of his concerts because the Reign of Terror then sweeping France made travel and financial dealings risky, and he was forced to cancel his spring performances. However, a rival operation, the so-called "Opera Concerts," was not about to let pass the opportunity of displaying England's most distinguished musical visitor, so their director, Italian violinist and composer Giovan Battista Viotti, arranged for Haydn to compose three more symphonies and direct their premieres on his programs.

The last of the important works that Haydn composed in London, and his final contribution to the genre, is the magnificent Symphony No. 104 in D major; the composer carefully noted in English on the manuscript's title page that this Symphony was "the 12th which I have composed in England." The work has been known since the 19th century as the "London" Symphony, though it deserves the sobriquet no more than any other of the dozen Haydn wrote in the British capital. It was included on the program of Haydn's farewell appearance in London, given in the King's Theatre on May 4, 1795. Of this concert, the proceeds of which were for his own benefit, he noted in his diary, "The hall was filled with a picked audience. The whole company was delighted and so was I. I took in this evening 4,000 gulden. One can make as much as this only in England!" (It is possible that the "London" Symphony may have been first heard some three weeks earlier, on April 13th. Printed programs of the time were frustratingly vague in their musical listings; the Symphony No. 104, for example, was called simply a "New Overture" in the May 4th program.)

The "London" Symphony opens with perhaps the most solemn introduction to be found anywhere in Haydn's instrumental works, with stern, unison, minor-mode proclamations of open intervals alternating with hushed passages of deeply affective harmonies. The movement's sonata form proper, which begins with the arrival of the quick tempo, is largely built from two motives presented in the major-key main theme: the opening long-short-short figure in the violins and the four repeated notes in the third measure. Haydn treats these tiny thematic fragments with seemingly boundless imagination, driving the music forward with a constant sense of freedom and invention while at the same time unifying it through continual reference back to the germinal motives, a superb example of the process of thematic development that he had perfected over the course of forty years of writing symphonies.

The *Andante*, a fascinating formal hybrid of rondo and variations, begins with a genteel theme, but veers into turbulent emotional territory in its episodes. This movement's strong expression has led some commentators to suggest that it was Haydn's musical elegy to his departed friend and colleague, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who died in 1791. The minuet, in Haydn's most robust country manner, encloses a sweetly contrasting trio utilizing the plangent sonorities of double reeds. The finale, Haydn's last realization of the sonata form that was the very heart of Classical instrumental music, is based on a sprightly tune that no less an ethnomusicological authority than Béla Bartók identified as a peasant song from Croatia. Haydn certainly heard the melody, known as "Oh, Jellena," sung in the environs of Esterháza, and may well have had it recalled to him by the surprisingly similar 18th-century vendors' cries for "Hot Cross Buns" and "Live Cod" that echoed through the streets of London every morning. This finale is a splendid and festive valedictory to the genre by the man who earned from some of his followers the accolade, "Father of the Symphony."

In his biography of the composer, J. Cuthbert Hadden noted of the dozen "Salomon" Symphonies, "These, so far as his instrumental music is concerned, are the crowning glory of his life work. They are the ripe fruit of his long experience, and mark to the full all those qualities of natural geniality, humour, vigor and simple good-heartedness which are the leading characteristics of his style."

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