

Lalo

SYMPHONIE ESPAGNOLE

for

VOLIN AND ORCHESTRA

Performed by

YEHUDI MENUHIN

and

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF PARIS

Conducted by

GEORGES ENESCO



Musical Masterpiece Series

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Lalo

VICTOR ANTOINE EDOUARD LALO, a famous composer of Spanish origin, was born at Lille, France, January 27th, 1823, and died in Paris in April, 1892. His early musical education was received at the Lille Conservatoire, where he studied violin under Muller; and violoncello with the German, Baumann, who had played under Beethoven's conductorship at Vienna.

In 1839, Lalo came to Paris to continue his violin study at the Conservatoire, and to round out his musical education with private lessons in harmony and composition. His first works date from the year 1845, and include songs published three years later.

In a competition at the Théâtre Lyrique, his opera, *Fiesque*, won third prize. Later a violin concerto in F, and the *Symphonie Espagnole* for violin and orchestra dedicated to and introduced by the eminent violinist, Sarasate, firmly established Lalo as a front rank composer.

His talent was individual and was influenced not so much by the discipline of the Conservatoire or his professors as by the direct and concentrated study of such masters as Beethoven, Schubert and Schumann, for whom he had a special liking. Among his chief characteristics are an unusual grace in the expression of ideas . . . a piquancy in the treatment of themes . . . and above all a dexterity and skill in orchestration. These traits have distinguished him as a French composer, and have merited the decoration of the Legion of Honor which was conferred upon him in 1880.

. . . SYMPHONIE ESPAGNOLE . . .

Hans von Bülow and Tschaiowsky admired the *Symphonie Espagnole* greatly. Von Bülow, in comparing Bruch's Second Violin Concerto with it, gave preference to the Lalo work. Tschaiowsky wrote to Mme. von Meck as follows: "Do you know the *Symphonie Espagnole* by the French composer Lalo? This piece has recently been brought out by the very modern violinist Sarasate. . . . The work has given me the greatest pleasure. It is so delightfully fresh and light, with piquant rhythms and beautifully harmonized melo-

dies. It resembles closely other works of the French school to which Lalo belongs, works with which I am acquainted. Like Leo Delibes and Bizet he shuns carefully all that is *routinier*, seeks new forms without wishing to be profound, and cares more for musical beauty than for the old traditions as the Germans care. The young generation of French composers is truly very promising."

The orchestral portion of the score of this work calls for two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, kettle drums, side drum, triangle, harp, and strings. The composition is in five movements. It was produced for the first time at a Châtelet Concert in Paris, February 7th, 1875.

THE ARTIST

Since his phenomenal appearance, before his tenth year, with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, Yehudi Menuhin's career has been a succession of triumphs . . . and he has played with leading orchestras in Europe and America. His first teacher was Louis Persinger, who laid the foundation of his training. Others who have guided his genius are Adolf Busch and Georges Enesco, both artists of renown.

The orchestral accompaniment of the *Symphonie Espagnole* is conducted by Georges Enesco.

FIRST MOVEMENT

Allegro ma non troppo, D Minor

The main theme of this movement has two divisions. The first is a vigorous phrase given alternately to the orchestra and the solo instrument. The second is a melody begun with an ascending scale in the solo instrument (a little more than one inch from the beginning of Record One), which continues partly in triplets with *pizzicato* accompaniment in the strings. Passage work developing this material leads to a short *tutti*, which ushers in a second theme in B Flat Major, played by the solo instrument (near end of Record One). The development here consists primarily of *bravura* passages for the violin. There is a return of the two themes, the second now appearing in D Major (over half way through Record Two). A short Coda, beginning with the first theme played by the violin with elaborate flute figuration, and growing in brilliant animation, ends the movement.

SECOND MOVEMENT

Scherzando

Allegro molto, G Major

This charming movement is like a graceful serenade sung by a daring troubadour to the lady of his choice. The gay, lilting rhythm is set forth at once by a *pizzicato* introduction in the strings. The solo instrument then enters with a song-like theme which becomes more florid as the music progresses. Toward the middle

of Record Three, a second theme is heard. This is a tender, dark melody that casts a shadow of reverie over the sparkling lightness of the first theme . . . a poignant beauty against which woodwinds chatter consolingly while the strings keep up a persistent *pizzicato*, as though attempting to coax back the gaiety of the first mood. Presently a whirling figure in the solo instrument followed by an ascending scale leads to a return of the first melody. Triplet figures previously heard, and a sustained trill for the violin against the *pizzicato* comments of the other instruments, sink into silence as the Scherzando is completed.

THIRD MOVEMENT

Intermezzo

Allegretto non troppo, A Minor

This movement, often omitted in performance, begins with an emphatic orchestral introduction into which the solo violin projects a theme that seems at first sinister and foreboding—but which gradually lifts itself into a brighter mood (about one inch from the beginning of Record Four). Ornate passage work follows, and over horn chords the solo violin returns—first to a variant and then to the theme as originally stated—while the syncopated beat of the accompaniment and a softly played phrase in Oriental flavor bring the Intermezzo to a close.

FOURTH MOVEMENT

Andante, D Minor

Wind instruments introduce this movement with a sustained melody which is taken up by the strings. One inch from the beginning of Record Five the solo instrument enters with a new subject. This is a slow pensive theme . . . a beautiful utterance of great longing expressed in the sharply accented rhythm long associated with music of gypsies. As it progresses (end of Record Five and beginning of Six) it becomes animated for a period, and then, after long chromatic scales, lapses into the meditative phrases with which it began.

FIFTH MOVEMENT

Rondo, Allegro, D Major

The finale is pervaded with the spirit of light-hearted happiness. It is built upon the orchestral figure with which the movement begins, and a saltarello-like theme given to the solo violin accompanied by the aforementioned orchestral figure. One-half inch from the end of Record Seven, a secondary subject is introduced in the solo instrument. This is a rich, mellow, rhythmic theme . . . a luscious melody that is light and graceful. There is sudden picking up of tempo . . . with rushing scales and trills, and then a return of the saltarello-like melody heard at the beginning. A development of brilliance and velocity which exploits the artistry of the soloist closes this entertaining and tuneful composition.

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