

Concerto resembles its near predecessor, the “Classical” Symphony, more than Prokofieff’s later works. The second of Edward MacDowell’s two piano concertos is one of the most praised and most popular of his compositions. After study with the famed Venezuelan pianist Teresa Carreno and further training in Paris, MacDowell spent eight years in Germany, then the musical center of western Europe. His D Minor Concerto has the virtues of this school of musical thought. It is a big, bold, solidly-wrought work, imaginatively conceived on a large scale and unashamedly romantic. It is effective in performance; MacDowell, like Prokofiev, was a concert artist who understood pianistically quite well what he was about. The concerto is still heard and perhaps deserves to be heard even oftener. MacDowell wrote the concerto in Germany during the winter of 1884-85. It was a remarkable accomplishment for this twenty-four-year-old American composer. The first performance was given in New York on March 5, 1889 by the Theodore Thomas Orchestra with the composer at the piano.

Van Cliburn

**Prokofiev
Concerto No. 3**

**MacDowell
Concerto No. 2**

**Chicago
Symphony
Orchestra**

**Walter Hendl
Conducting**



For the Prokofiev Third Piano Concerto to be performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra seems particularly appropriate, since it was this orchestra which presented the world premiere of the work in 1921.

Prokofiev, after studying with Rimsky-Korsakoff, Liadoff and Teherepnin at the St. Petersburg conservatory, had graduated there in 1914 with three diplomas and the Anton Rubinstein Prize in piano. His music for a ballet, Chout, commissioned by Diaghileff established him as a young composer of promise.

Immediately following World War I and the Russian Revolution, Prokofiev barnstormed about Europe as a concert pianist and eventually made his way to the United States.

New York, then as always bursting at the seams with musical talent, was not overly impressed by the young Russian visitor. Chicago proved more hospitable, and for several years Prokofiev made that city his base of operations in this country. His opera *The Love of Three Oranges* was commissioned and first performed by the Chicago Opera Company. During his industrious lifetime, Prokofiev wrote eight concertos - one for cello, two for violin and five for piano, one of the

latter for left hand alone. By the time he arrived in Chicago, the first and second piano concertos were already written. Prokofiev, then at the peak of his powers as a concert performer, received numerous invitations to appear with orchestras. He was a little tired of his two concertos and feared audiences might be too. Moreover, he had been accumulating fresh ideas for years. The musical subject which became the principal theme of the second movement of the C Major Concerto had been in the back of his mind since 1913 when he was still a student at the conservatory. In the summer of 1921 Prokofiev, then in France, set to work in earnest on the Third Concerto, finishing it that October. The world premiere took place December 16, 1921, with the composer as a soloist and Frederick Stock conducting the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

The concerto has never really been out of the repertoire since. It is a bold, sweeping work which achieves exactly what the composer set out to do to write an effective display piece for piano and orchestra. The first and last movements afford ample opportunity for bravura display, and the beauties of the Theme and Variations second movement have charmed listeners in many countries. Stylistically, the Third

Van Cliburn

Chicago
Symphony
Orchestra

Walter Hendl
Conducting

Prokofiev
Concerto No. 3

MacDowell
Concerto No. 2

Prokofiev Concerto No. 3 In C, Op. 26

1 Andante 9:49

2 Theme And Variation: Andantino 10:10

3 Allegro Ma Non Troppo 10:14

Total Time: 30:13

MacDowell Concerto No. 2 In D Minor, Op. 23

4 Larghetto Calmato 14:38

5 Presto Giocosa 4:52

6 Largo 7:49

Total Time: 27:19

Recorded at Chicago Symphony Hall in 1961 by RCA records
Recording Engineer - Lewis Layton