

Maurice Abravanel The state of Utah became a flourishing classical music scene thanks to the efforts of Maurice Abravanel, who served as music director of the Utah Symphony for 32 years starting in 1947. Although his peers might have looked at a posting in Utah as death in the boondocks, to Abravanel it was an opportunity to accomplish his dream of building up a permanent symphony orchestra of his own in a part of the world that was sorely lacking such a resource. Doing this meant turning down a lucrative contract with Radio City Music Hall, and even working without pay during the orchestra's most extreme periods of financial struggle.

Other Abravanel activities outside of Mormon territory included directing the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, CA, from 1956 through 1979. In 1981 he was appointed an artist-in-residence for life at Tanglewood. He served on the National Council of the Arts from 1970 through 1976, and received the American Symphony Orchestra League's Golden Baton Award in 1981. In 1970, he became a member of the first music panel of the National Endowment for the Arts. He received a Tony Award for Regina and Grammy nominations for some of the more than 100 recordings with the Utah Symphony, many of which are considered classics.

Jerome Lowenthal (born February 11, 1932 in Philadelphia) is an American classical pianist. He is chair of the piano department at the Juilliard School in New York. Additionally, Lowenthal is on the faculty at Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, California.

He made his debut at 13 with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Returning to the United States from Jerusalem in 1963, he made his debut with the New York Philharmonic, playing Bartók's Piano Concerto No. 2. Since then, he has performed with famous conductors such as Daniel Barenboim, Seiji Ozawa, Michael Tilson Thomas, Yuri Temirkanov, Leonard Slatkin, Leonard Bernstein, Eugene Ormandy, Pierre Monteux, and Leopold Stokowski. He has played sonatas with Itzhak Perlman, piano duos with Ronit Amir, his late wife and Ursula Oppens, as well as quintets with the Lark Quartet, Avalon Quartet, and Shanghai Quartet.

His studies included lessons with Olga Samaroff in Philadelphia, William Kapell and Eduard Steuermann at the Juilliard School in New York, and Alfred Cortot at the École Normale de Musique de Paris in Paris, France. A prizewinner at Queen Elisabeth Music Competition in Brussels (1960) and Busoni Competition, he is a frequent judge in international piano competitions.

He is recognized as a specialist of Franz Liszt, Pyotr Tchaikovsky, Béla Bartók, and more generally of virtuoso and late romantic music. His recordings include piano concertos by Liszt with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and the complete Tchaikovsky concerto cycle with the London Symphony Orchestra. He has an extensive repertoire, including 59 performed piano concerti. He is the dedicatee of many new works, such as Ned Rorem's Piano Concerto (No. 3) in Six Movements, and has unearthed some rare romantic piano works, such as the Liszt Third Piano Concerto edited by his former student Jay Rosenblatt.

# RACHMANINOFF

## Symphony No. 3 In A Minor

### Chanson Géorgienne

Netania Davrath, Soprano

Maurice Abravnel

Utah Symphony Orchestra



Rachmaninov composed his Third Symphony at his summer house on Lake Lucerne during the summers of 1935 and 1936, after the triumph of his Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini had restored him to favor as a composer. After the symphony's 1937 premiere at the hands of Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra (which Rachmaninov himself would conduct in the work's first recording two years later), the composer wrote, "It was played wonderfully. Both audience and critics responded sourly. Personally, I'm firmly convinced that this is a good work."

The first movement opens Lento as the saxophone introduces a motif that will take new forms throughout the work. Then the strings rise to usher in the main Allegro moderato in straightforward sonata form. A plaintive Russian folklike theme, introduced by oboes and bassoons, is juxtaposed with a great flowing melody in the strings. The development is so agitated that this melody seems even more sweetly nostalgic on

its return in the recapitulation; the movement ends with the opening motif echoing unquietly in the lower strings. The second movement (Adagio ma non troppo -- Allegro vivace) combines the usual slow movement and scherzo. A solo horn over the harp states the motif in a new form, which mutates into an aching, yearning theme introduced by the solo violin. This violin theme is developed at length, alternating legato strings and soulful passages for the solo instruments. The brisk, even angry middle section recalls Mussorgsky, or even Stravinsky, as much as Tchaikovsky; the Adagio theme on its return reaches a great climax before sinking into repose. The finale (Allegro) opens with a confident and energetic theme. This is alternated with episodes that are variously nostalgic, fantastic, or downright grotesque, with increasingly aggressive and acerbic harmonies -- and yes, the Dies Irae turns up. But in the end the main theme emerges triumphantly, its forward momentum sweeping all before it.

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## **Symphony No. 3 In A Minor**

**Chanson Géorgienne**  
**Netania Davrath, Soprano**

**Maurice Abravnel**  
**Utah Symphony Orchestra**

Symphony No. 3 In A Minor Op. 44

1. Lento - Allegro Moderato 12:48

2. Adagio Ma Non Troppo - Allegro Vivace 11:56

3. Allegro 12:44

4. Chanson Géorgienne, Op. 4 No.4 4:44

Total Time: 42:12

Recorded by Vanguard Records

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