

## **Frederick Stock and the Sound of European Cosmopolitanism in Chicago**

In the early years of the twentieth century the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO), led by German-born conductor Frederick Stock, gave U.S. premieres to a number of works by well-known European composers. In addition to the American premiere of Schoenberg's *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, Op. 16 (31 October 1913), Stock facilitated U.S. premieres of compositions by Elgar, Debussy, Strauss, and Mahler. Through this cultural exchange, Chicagoans became exposed to various strands of European musical modernism. In contrast to the struggle faced by thousands of actual European immigrants, many from Bohemia, Germany, and Austria, this music generally found a warm welcome in the American Midwest. A case study of CSO's programming choices and their reception during Stock's tenure (1905–1942) illuminates the importance of music as a social currency during cultural transfer. The friction between the struggles of émigré Europeans' and the simultaneous wholehearted embrace of their compatriot's music exemplifies the dissonance between cosmopolitanism as a moral doctrine and the realities of human migration.

The desirability of European art music, especially German and Austrian, stands in stark opposition to the experience of the average émigré and introduces several complicating factors to a discussion of Stock's CSO. Until 1991 only European-born conductors led the CSO (founded 1891). These musicians brought old world musical tastes and training to America's – at the time – second-largest metropolis, disseminating a particular sound culture to, potentially, millions of Americans. Those not privileged to the initial concert could still participate in this exchange through the myriad of printed reviews that were circulated in newspapers throughout the country. By providing an historical and cultural context for these musical transfers, including an understanding of discussions of cosmopolitanism by Stock's contemporaries, we approach a methodology that reconciles musical interchange and the real experiences of migration.

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