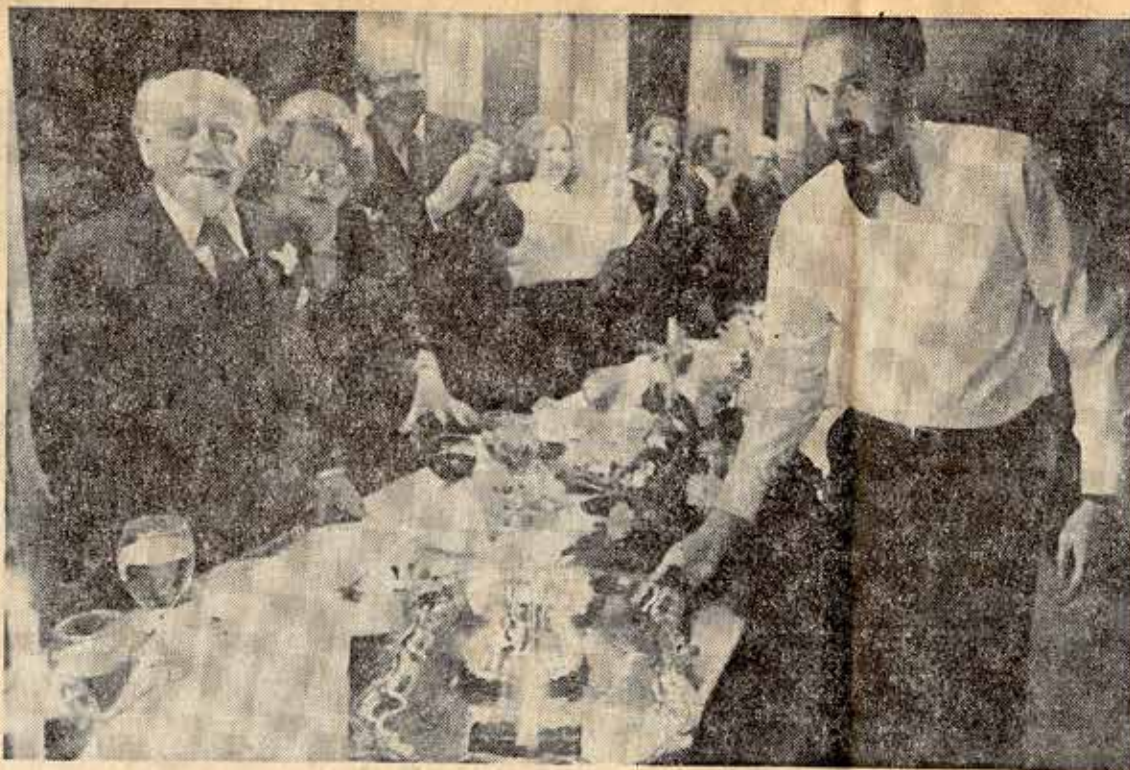


# Symphony in D light dedicated to Ormandy



Philadelphia Inquirer / GERARD C. BENENE

Don Falconio (right), Frog's general manager, presents an Ormandy Sweet to the maestro at celebration of Ormandy's 80th birthday.

By Bill Collins  
Inquirer Food Columnist

Maestro Steve Poses and his ensemble of Commissary caterers presented a symphonic supper in two movements Sunday as the members of the Philadelphia Orchestra said happy 80th birthday to their retiring leader, Eugene Ormandy.

The processional of catering, served as the guest of honor, and about 300 musicians, administrators and guests gathered on the observation deck of the Penn Mutual Tower at 1510 Walnut St., was a collage of hors

d'oeuvres named for seven composers whose works span two centuries. It was a mix of dramatic presentations and a rich chorus of flavors.

Poses, proprietor of both the Commissary and Frog midtown restaurants, opened with Stravinsky's Firebird en Brochette, a spicy innovation on the classic roast duck theme. In it he provided a harmony of sweet and sour Chinese barbecue sauce that floated lyrically over the dark undertones of cooked fowl. This was followed by Chopin's Cauliflower Polonaise, a lively adagio of may-

onnaise, capers and chopped egg playing lightly over the deep-fried *cole florye*.

An elemental harkening of land and sea came with Ives' Variation on the American Scallop, in which each sea mollusk was entwined in duet with a softly done strip of bacon before broiling. In counterpoint, Ravel's Rhapsodie of Crudites Espagnole was a saucy blend of garlic, pimento and mayonnaise into which the audience was invited to dip a quartet of raw vegetables (carrots, celery, cauliflower and radishes).

Perhaps the mellowest passage was Britten's Mushrooms With Mousse of Stilton, a soft, savory duet of raw fungi and blue cheese softened with cream. This was followed by Sibelius' Profiteroles Finlandia, an agile obligato of minced potatoes, apples, beets, pickles and herring swirled in mayonnaise and musically spooned into savory little cream-puff shells. The movement ended with Respighi's Pinenuts of Rome, a light-hearted finale featuring thin drums of zucchini on which the shy, subtle flavor of the nuts was swallowed up in a

brassy chorus of mustard fruit, prosciutto and creamed cheese.

This was all light fare, really made for fiddling with over preprandial lubrications. It properly set the stage for the larger, heavier renditions that were to come.

For the second movement the audience shifted to the hall on the floor below and settled down for a culinary concert that opened with Debussy's Sauce la Mer over poached turban of sole, a lyric work of French culinary art. By comparison, (See SYMPHONY on 4-C)



Hors d'oeuvres were named for (from left) Sibelius, Britten, Ives, Stravinsky and Respighi

# Symphony in D light dedicated to Ormandy on 80th birthday

## SYMPHONY, from 1-C

Beethoven's Loin of Veal with Sauce Pastorale was a composition of deep, winy textures and tones, with a murky Madeira sauce running sweet and dominant over the pale flesh. A most effective *largo*.

Above all this came the tinkling of crystal and the melodic gurgling of California claret and chablis. This added a fluid note to a program that without these augmentations might have been dry as dust, although tasteful.

The interlude was Vivaldi's Salad of the Four Seasons, the times of year being represented by sprightly Boston lettuce (spring), firm, round tomatoes (summer), crisp toasted hazelnuts (autumn) and fresh fennel, which the composer of the meal, Poses, insists is a prominent winter herb. While there was some dissonance in the hazelnut-fennel-tomato triad, and some critics might call the salad a contrived piece of work (in Vivaldi's hometown, Venice, the composer is most frequently memorialized with a cocktail named for him and made with peaches, rum and Champagne), it cleared palates for the surprise climax: The Ormandy Sweet.

Contrary to expectations, this was not something served on a pun. What it was might best be described as a Stradivarius Sacher Torte — Poses' interpretation of the famous Viennese chocolate cake shaped in the form of a violin. A full-sized cake

violin was presented to Ormandy and his party at the head table, and individual fiddles were served around the rest of the hall, followed by coffee and tea.

Poses' version of this cake, it should be noted, is much better than the original one sold on the sidewalk terrace and in the bakery shop at the venerable Sacher Hotel in Vienna. It may be that over the decades the hotel's cake became such a tourist item that the recipe was changed to produce a sturdier product that can withstand travel. At any rate, many cake fanciers find it more durable than delectable. While the official recipe for Sacher Torte, provided by the Vienna Tourism Office, appeared in these pages two years ago, we are happy to pass along this recipe for The Ormandy Sweet.

## The Ormandy Sweet (Sacher Torte)

- 9 ounces sweet chocolate
- 9 ounces (2¼ sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup flour
- 9 ounces finely ground walnuts
- 9 eggs, separated
- ½ cup apricot jam

### ICING:

- ½ cup heavy cream
- 2 teaspoons instant coffee
- 6 ounces sweet chocolate, chopped

Melt nine ounces of chocolate in the top of a double boiler. While it melts, cream butter with salt, vanilla and sugar. In another bowl, toss together the flour and walnuts. Add the egg yolks to the butter mixture one at a time, beating well after each addition. Stir in the chocolate and nuts. Beat the egg whites until stiff and fold into batter. Spread the batter in a nine-inch springform or cheesecake pan. Bake in oven preheated to 350 degrees for one hour, or until a wooden toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.

Let cake cool 20 minutes and remove from pan. Set on a cake rack over waxed paper.

Push the apricot jam through a sieve into a small pan and cook over medium heat until it starts to bubble. Spread jam over top of cake.

For the icing, scald the cream and whisk in the instant coffee. Sift in the chopped chocolate (the more finely chopped, the better). Stir for one minute and remove from stove. Continue stirring until mixture is smooth. Pour warm icing over cake, rotating pan to distribute the icing evenly. Use a spatula to smooth icing over the sides of the cake, letting excess icing drip onto the waxed paper. Put clean paper under rack and chill cake on rack until icing is set — about an hour. With two wooden spatulas or a quiche pan bottom, transfer cake to a serving platter. Decorate top as desired and serve with whipped cream. Makes one nine-inch cake.



