THE PIERRE MONTEUX SCHOOL

FOR CONDUCTORS AND ORCHESTRA MUSICIANS

Founded 1943

2011 CONCERT SEASON

SYMPHONY CONCERTS

Sundays at 5:00pm: June 26, July 3, July 10, July 17, July 24, July 31

CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERTS

Wednesdays at 7:30pm: June 29, July 6, July 13, July 20, July 27

CHILDREN'S CONCERT

Monday, July 11 at 10:00am

Sponsored by The Pierre Monteux Memorial Foundation, Inc.,
with the generous support of alumni, friends and local businesses

A DISTINGUISHED HISTORY

French-born conductor Pierre Monteux (1875-1964) premiered many masterworks of the last century, including Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*, Debussy's *Jeux*, and Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* and *Petrushka*. He enjoyed a long life, spanning a remarkable period in history. Originally trained as a violist, he performed for both Edvard Grieg and Johannes Brahms as a member of the Quatuor Geloso. Over the course of his conducting career, he held directorships of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, the Metropolitan Opera, the Boston Symphony, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Orchestre Symphonique de Paris (which he formed), the San Francisco Symphony, and the London Symphony, among others. Monteux became an American citizen in 1942, and made his permanent residence in Hancock, Maine, the childhood home of his wife Doris Hodgkins Monteux (1894-1984). In 1943, Pierre and Doris Monteux founded a summer school for conductors and orchestra musicians in Hancock, inspired in part by Monteux's earlier conducting classes in France. Musicians came from all over the world to Hancock to study with their beloved "Maître." Monteux once said: *Conducting is not enough. I must create something. I am not a composer, so I will create fine young musicians.*

A few years after Pierre Monteux's death, Doris Monteux named Charles Bruck (1911-1995) the second music director of the school. Monteux's pupil in Paris, Bruck had enjoyed a close friendship with Monteux throughout the years and was uniquely qualified to carry on the traditions of the school. He served as the school's music director and master teacher for over a quarter century, becoming one of the great conducting teachers of his generation. In 1995, Charles Bruck's long-time student and associate Michael Jinbo was named the school's third music director. Jinbo's teaching, consistently praised by colleagues and students, continues the tradition established by Monteux and Bruck, and exemplifies the musical integrity and high standards of excellence of his distinguished predecessors.

MICHAEL JINBO, Music Director

Michael Jinbo is in his 16th season as Music Director of The Pierre Monteux School and has enjoyed an affiliation with the school since 1983. Jinbo is the third music director in the school's 68-year history, following his mentor Charles Bruck and the school's founder, Pierre Monteux. He is also the Music Director of the Nittany Valley Symphony and for four seasons served as the Assistant Conductor of the North Carolina Symphony, with whom he performed some 60-75 concerts each season, including classical, ballet, pops and educational programs. He has performed with a wide range of artists, including pianist Garrick Ohlsson, violinist Kyoko Takezawa, *prima ballerina assoluta* Galina Mezentseva and the St. Petersburg Ballet of Russia, and Cab Calloway.

Michael Jinbo received a B.A. in Music from The University of Chicago and an M.M. in Conducting from the Northwestern University School of Music. He received further conducting training at the Monteux School, the Herbert Blomstedt Institute, the Scotia Festival of Music, and at workshops of the American Symphony Orchestra League and Conductors Guild. Jinbo made his European debut in Switzerland and Germany with the Basel Symphony Orchestra, appeared as guest conductor with the Orquesta Sinfónica Carlos Chávez in Mexico City, and has performed with orchestras across the United States, including the Bangor Symphony Orchestra. He served for two years on the instrumental music panel of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and was an invited speaker at the Conductors Guild's 25th anniversary conference, in a session entitled "The Education of Conductors." Born in Honolulu, Hawaii, Jinbo is also a violinist. He has appeared as soloist with the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra, among others.

THE PIERRE MONTEUX SCHOOL ORCHESTRA

Sunday, June 26, 2011

PROGRAM

Overture to *La gazza ladra* — Gioacchino Rossini
[The Thieving Magpie] (1792-1868)

Conductor: Stefano Sarzani

Suite from *Le coq d'or* — Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov
[The Golden Cockerel] (1844-1908)

1. King Dodon in His Palace
2. King Dodon on the Battlefield
3. King Dodon with the Queen of Shemakha
4. The Wedding and Lamentable End of King Dodon

Conductors: John Norine, Jr. (1-2) and Matthew Wardell (3-4)

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 8 in G major, Op. 88 — Antonín Dvořák
(1841-1904)

1. Allegro con brio
2. Adagio
3. Allegretto grazioso
4. Allegro, ma non troppo

Conductors: Edward Leonard (1), Kensho Watanabe (2), Anna Edwards (3) and Scott Dunn (4)

PLEASE... Turn off watch alarms, pagers, cell phones, etc.
Remain silent while the orchestra tunes.
No applause between parts of a multi-section work.
Recording prohibited. Flash photography only allowed between pieces.

PROGRAM NOTES BY THE CONDUCTORS

Gioacchino Rossini (1792-1868)
Overture to *La gazza ladra*

La gazza ladra [The Thieving Magpie], one of the most famous works by Gioacchino Rossini, premiered in 1817 at the Teatro alla Scala, Milan. A typical example of *opera semiseria*, it combines elements of tragedy and comedy.

A servant, Ninetta, is unjustly accused of stealing silverware and harboring her father, who is wanted for military desertion. After a complicated series of events, Ninetta is saved from the scaffold by the discovery that it was a magpie that stole the silverware, and Ninetta's father is granted a royal pardon. Amid great jubilation, Ninetta is allowed to marry her beloved Giannetto. The opera was based on a true story, in which a young woman was actually put to death for a bird's "crime," a story that Rossini's audience would have known well.

Unlike many other overtures of the period, this overture presents musical material that is used later in the opera, showing the great care that Rossini took in creating a unified musical work. A curious feature of this overture is the opening drum roll, which would have caused Rossini's audience to stand for a playing of the national anthem. When the overture ensues, instead of the anthem, we experience the opera's first musical joke.

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908)
Suite from *Le coq d'or*

Fresh off the success of his penultimate opera *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh* in 1905, Rimsky-Korsakov did not intend to compose another opera. When protesting students and workers were massacred at Tsar Nicholas II's winter palace in Odessa, an infuriated Rimsky-Korsakov penned his *Le coq d'or* [The Golden Cockerel], an allegorical opera critical of the Tsar. Banned by the royal palace, the opera would not receive its first performance until after Rimsky-Korsakov's death.

The story is introduced by the character of the Sorcerer, who states that, while the piece is a work of fiction, there are morals to be found within. The curtain rises on King Dodon, who is uneasy about territorial neighbors invading his lands. The King calls upon his Sorcerer, who creates a Golden Cockerel to advise and look after the King, on the condition that the King grant a wish to the Sorcerer once his trials are passed. Dodon seeks the Golden Cockerel's advice, whereupon he learns that the Queen of Shemakha is planning to invade. Dodon sends his army on a preemptive strike, led by his two sons. Sadly, Dodon's sons are not the brightest of men and end up killing each other instead of the enemy. Dodon goes to Shemakha to take control and is bewitched by the Cockerel to fall in love with the enemy queen, in an apparent ploy to save him. Sensing an opportunity, the Queen seduces Dodon and lures him into marriage, thus winning Dodon's lands without shedding a drop of blood.

The newlyweds return to Dodon's land, accompanied by an odd assortment of dog-headed women, gnomes and dwarfs. They encounter the Sorcerer, who claims the Queen as his reward for providing the Golden Cockerel. The enraged Dodon bashes the head of the Sorcerer and is himself killed by the Golden Cockerel. All goes dark and when the light returns, the Queen and the Cockerel have disappeared.

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)
Symphony No. 8 in G major, Op. 88

Antonin Dvořák wrote his *Eighth Symphony* in a mere two-and-a-half months, from August 26 to November 8, 1889, while in Bohemia. The symphony was dedicated "To the Bohemian Academy of Emperor Franz Joseph for the Encouragement of Arts and Literature, in thanks for my election." Dvořák conducted the symphony's premiere in Prague on February 2, 1890. Though the *Eighth Symphony* enjoys acclaim similar to the composer's dark, stormy *Seventh Symphony*, the *Eighth* is a cheery work that draws inspiration from the Bohemian folk music that Dvořák loved.

The first movement opens with a lyrical and restless G minor theme that gives way to a "bird call" flute melody. Both ideas are developed extensively and the general cheery nature of the second theme is contrasted more and more sharply with the ominous sections related to the first theme.

The beautiful clarinet duet near the beginning of the second movement harkens back to the first movement's opening theme. There is a change in mood and character in this songlike movement, from brooding to surprisingly cheerful and light. After much drama, the movement comes to a graceful, quiet and contented close.

The third movement is like a melancholy Bohemian waltz in 3/8 time. It may even remind one of the composer's wistful *Slavonic Dances*. Dvořák ends the movement with a charming surprise: a festive coda in 2/4 time.

Formally a set of variations, the finale begins with a fanfare for the trumpets then progresses to a beautiful melody introduced by the cellos (reminiscent of the opening of the first movement). The tension builds, finally releasing with a cascade of instruments triumphantly playing the theme. After a return to the slow, lyrical cello melody, the movement ends with a jubilant coda.

THE PIERRE MONTEUX SCHOOL ORCHESTRA

Sunday, July 3, 2011

PROGRAM

Second Essay for Orchestra, Op. 17 — Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Conductor: John Devlin

Made in America — Joan Tower (1938-)

Conductor: Nell Flanders

New England Triptych — William Schuman (1910-1992)

1. Be Glad Then, America
2. When Jesus Wept
3. Chester

Conductors: Kyle Ritenauer (1) and Jason Ethridge (2-3)

INTERMISSION

Evening Prayer and Dream Pantomime from *Hänsel und Gretel* — Engelbert Humperdinck (1854-1921)

Conductor: Aaron Breid

Suite No. 1 from *Cinderella*, Op. 107 — Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

1. Introduction
2. Dance of the Shawl
3. The Quarrel
4. Fairy Godmother and Fairy Winter
5. Mazurka
6. Cinderella Goes to the Ball
7. Cinderella's Waltz —
8. Midnight

Conductors: Matthew Kasper (1-3), Gabriel Lefkowitz (4-5) and Kornel Thomas (6-8)

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PROGRAM NOTES BY THE CONDUCTORS

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)
Second Essay for Orchestra, op. 17 (1942)

Second Essay for Orchestra is one of three such works by Samuel Barber. Essentially a symphony in one movement, the work is divided into a clear A-B-A structure. The A sections are filled with weight and power while the B section is a frenzied semi-fugue. Barber's use of shifting duple and triple meters creates an unsettled feeling that reflects the work's wartime origin. There are three main motivic elements, all of which are based on the primary theme of the work, first heard in the solo flute. As in a literary essay, this theme—or "thesis"—is expanded and explained by its three motivic elements. Special attention is given to the percussion section, with the timpani playing a large structural role in the piece. As the final section is approached, timpani and side drum play a duet that forms the ultimate transition from compound to simple meter.

Second Essay for Orchestra received its premiere in 1942 at Carnegie Hall, by Bruno Walter and the New York Philharmonic. The work achieved immediate critical acclaim and was championed by such conductors as Koussevitzky, Szell and Ormandy.

Joan Tower (1938-)
Made in America (2004)

Made in America resulted from a remarkable collaboration between 65 American orchestras, representing all 50 states. With the support of the American Symphony Orchestra League, the Ford Foundation and the NEA, among others, this consortium of orchestras collectively commissioned a new work by nationally recognized composer Joan Tower. In its first year and a half, *Made in America* was performed by all 65 orchestras of the consortium, providing an astonishing amount of exposure for a new orchestral work. The first commercially available recording, by Leonard Slatkin and the Nashville Symphony, received the 2008 Grammy Award for Best Classical Contemporary Composition. Tower described her inspiration for the work as follows:

> *When they asked me to do this, they called the project Made in America, and with the fact that it was going across the U.S., this word 'America' kept popping up in my brain. Also, the tune 'America the Beautiful' started to come in, and I thought, "I really love this tune. It's a beautiful tune, and I think I'll start with this." The famous melody keeps resurfacing throughout the work, "challenged by other aggressive and dissonant ideas that keep interrupting, interjecting, and unsettling it."*

William Schuman (1910-1992)
New England Triptych (1956)

A major figure in American music, William Schuman won the first Pulitzer Prize awarded in music, served as President of the Juilliard School, and later as President of New York's Lincoln Center. *New England Triptych* is Schuman's homage to revolutionary era composer William Billings (1746-1800). Each movement is based on one of Billings' hymns or anthems.

Be Glad Then, America: A timpani solo begins the short introduction which is developed predominantly in the strings. The music is suggestive of the "Hallelujah" heard at the end. Trombones and trumpets begin the main section, a free and varied setting of the words, "Be glad then, America, shout and rejoice." A timpani solo leads to a middle fugal section based on the words "And ye shall be satisfied." The music gains momentum and the combined themes lead to a climax. There follows a free adaptation of the "Hallelujah" music with which Billings concluded his original choral setting and a final reference to the "shout and rejoice" music. **When Jesus Wept:** The setting of the original text is in the form of a round. Here Billings' music is used in its original form, as well as in new settings with contrapuntal embellishments and melodic extensions. **Chester:** Originally composed as a church hymn and subsequently adopted by the Continental Army as a marching song, it enjoyed great popularity. Schuman's setting derives from the spirit of both the hymn and the marching song.

Engelbert Humperdinck (1854-1921)
Evening Prayer and Dream Pantomime from *Hänsel und Gretel* (1890)

Hänsel und Gretel was based on the fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm. Following successful premieres in Weimar and Hamburg—conducted by Richard Strauss and Gustav Mahler, respectively—Humperdinck's opera became a hit and was subsequently produced in Switzerland, England, Australia and the United States.

Evening Prayer and Dream Pantomime is taken directly from the final scenes of the opera's second act. We join the story as Hänsel and Gretel are gathering strawberries in the woods. When dusk approaches, they realize they are lost and will be forced to spend the night in the forest. Before sleeping, they kneel to say their evening prayers (depicted by a 4-note ascending motif in the orchestral melody). As the children drift off to sleep, a great light appears and a cloud gathers overhead. Fourteen angels descend to the forest floor in pairs of two, arranging themselves in a protective circle around the children. Their glorious light, illustrated by a magnificent orchestral climax, brings the curtain down on Act 2.

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)
Suite No. 1 from *Cinderella*, op. 107 (1940-44)

In 1941, Prokofiev started work on *Cinderella*, a new ballet for the Kirov (now Mariinsky) Theater, following his hugely successful production of *Romeo and Juliet* the year before. Beginning in the summer, he promptly sketched the first two of three acts before war interrupted his work. Following the Nazi invasion of Russia in late June, Prokofiev decided that *Cinderella* was too frivolous a project and focused his efforts instead on *War and Peace*, which he considered more relevant. Prokofiev resumed work on *Cinderella* in 1943. With a libretto by Nikolai Volkov and choreography by Konstantin Sergeyev, the ballet premiered to great success on November 21, 1945 at the Bolshoi Theater.

"The main thing I wanted to convey in the music of *Cinderella*," wrote Prokofiev, "was the poetic love of Cinderella and the Prince—the inception and flowering of the emotion, the obstacles in its way, the realization of a dream." In 1946, Prokofiev extracted three orchestral suites from the ballet. According to the composer, the suites "are not a simple mechanical collection of numbers; much of them were rewritten and displayed in a new symphonic guise."

THE PIERRE MONTEUX SCHOOL ORCHESTRA

Sunday, July 10, 2011

PROGRAM

Scène d'amour [Love Scene] — Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)
from *Roméo et Juliette*, Op. 17 (H.79)

Conductor: William C. White

Piano Concerto in G major — Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

1. Allegramente
2. Adagio assai
3. Presto

Piano Soloist: Cecilia Dunoyer
Guest Artist in Residence

Conductors: Kyle Hanson (1) and John Norine, Jr. (2-3)

INTERMISSION

Concerto for Orchestra — Béla Bartók (1881-1945)

1. Introduzione
2. Giuoco delle coppie [Game of the couples]
3. Elegia
4. Intermezzo interrotto [Interrupted intermezzo]
5. Finale

Conductors: Edward Leonard (1), William Tackett (2), Andres Lopera (3), Joseph Stepec (4) and Kensho Watanabe (5)

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PROGRAM NOTES BY THE CONDUCTORS

Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)
Scène d'amour from *Roméo et Juliette*, Op. 17 (H.79) (1839)

In 1838, French composer Hector Berlioz received a surprise gift from his colleague, Italian composer and virtuoso violinist Nicolò Paganini: a check for the sum of 20,000 francs. According to Berlioz, as recounted in his *Memoirs*, Paganini gave him the money because he had been so moved by the composer's music. "I must leave off all other work," wrote Berlioz, "and write a masterpiece on a grand new plan; a splendid work, full of passion and imagination, and worthy to be dedicated to this illustrious artist to whom I owe so much."

It is hardly surprising that Berlioz chose *Romeo and Juliet* as the subject for such a work. Berlioz met his first wife, English actress Harriet Smithson, when she appeared in the role of Juliet in a Paris performance of Shakespeare's tragedy. Though he could not speak English at the time, he immediately became obsessed with her.

Scène d'amour [Love Scene] takes place after the grand festivities of a masked ball at the home of the Capulets. The music begins with a gentle progression of chords, setting the scene in the garden below Juliet's balcony. Violas and cellos enter with a tender theme, reminiscent of a cool breeze on a warm Veronese night. The two young lovers share a dialogue, portrayed by a coquettish oboe (Juliet) and plaintive cellos (Romeo). The music swells repeatedly in passionate fits of adolescent ardor.

At the end of his life, Berlioz named *Scène d'amour* as his personal favorite among his own compositions.

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)
Piano Concerto in G major (1929-1931)

Ravel began composition of his *Piano Concerto in G major* shortly after returning from a several month engagement in the United States, where he toured the country and directed performances of many of his orchestral works. Exhausted, he worked simultaneously on both the G major concerto and a *Concerto for the Left Hand Alone*, the latter a commission from pianist Paul Wittgenstein, who had lost his right arm in the First World War. Both works received premieres within weeks of each other—the *Concerto in G major* on January 14, 1932; the *Concerto for the Left Hand* on January 5, 1932. Ravel conducted the Orchestra Lamoureux in the premiere of the *Concerto in G major*. The soloist was the composer's friend and colleague Marguerite Long, to whom the work is dedicated.

Greatly influenced by his trip to America, Ravel incorporated jazz rhythms and harmonies in this concerto. As in his earlier works, there are also allusions to the composer's Basque heritage, especially in the opening theme of the first movement. The second movement is in a Mozartian style, with a subtle nod to Chopin in its opening bars for piano alone. The piano's right-hand melody in 3/4 meter is superimposed over a left-hand accompaniment in 6/8. The final movement is pure Ravel, with woodwinds and brass evoking both militaristic and scherzo-like

textures. The movement ends definitively with the same percussive chords with which it began.

Béla Bartók (1881-1945)
Concerto for Orchestra (1943)

After fleeing his native Hungary at the onset of World War II, Béla Bartók settled in New York City in 1940 and, with some difficulty, managed to secure a faculty position at Columbia University as an ethnomusicology researcher. These turbulent life changes left Bartók shaken and in debilitating health, and he would not compose for three years.

When Serge Koussevitsky, Music Director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, approached Bartók about composing a major orchestral work, it was an offer that the ailing composer could not refuse. If not for this commission, Bartók also might never have composed other notable works that followed, such as his *Sonata for Solo Violin* and *Third Piano Concerto.* The 1944 premiere of *Concerto for Orchestra,* by Koussevitsky and the Boston Symphony, was an unqualified critical and popular success, a rare occurrence among the premieres of Bartok's compositions.

The work consists of five movements that demand virtuosic playing from all sections of the orchestra, living up to its title. The brass instruments are particularly highlighted in the first and fifth movements. The second movement, *Giuoco delle coppie* [Game of the couples], begins and ends with side drum alone (played without snares) and showcases pairs of instruments (bassoons, oboes, clarinets, flutes and muted trumpets). The third movement, *Elegia,* typifies Bartók's "night music" style, with slowly moving dissonances and insect-like sounds that evoke an eerie atmosphere. In the fourth movement, *Intermezzo interrotto,* a clarinet solo irreverently quotes a theme from Shostakovich's *Leningrad Symphony* (No. 7), which Bartók burlesques mercilessly. Shostakovich's symphony enjoyed great popularity at the time, which Bartók resented. The concerto ends with a brilliant *Finale.* After the first few performances of the work, Bartók concluded that the ending of the *Finale* was too abrupt. He provided a longer alternate ending, which is the one usually performed and which will be played in today's performance.

CECILIA DUNOYER, PIANO
Guest Artist in Residence

Cecilia Dunoyer's 1997 New York debut in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall was performed to a sold-out audience and garnered rave reviews. Harris Goldsmith praised her "accomplished pianism... her elegantly assured prestidigitation... her firm, richly bronzen tone and an unmistakable ear for orchestral textures and colors. If Fauré was well served by Ms. Dunoyer, her Debussy proved even more impressive..." An invitation to perform again in New York followed in May 1998, resulting in a program of 20th-century French and Japanese music at Merkin Hall that was most favorably reviewed by *The New York Times*.

Cecilia Dunoyer has concertized extensively in the United States and her native Europe, including recitals in Paris, New York, Washington, Vienna and Weimar, as well as a tour of the Baltic Sea to Russia, Finland and the Scandinavian countries. Critics have noted "perfect complicity" and a "remarkable alchemy between rigor and freedom" in her chamber music collaborations. She also performs regularly as a soloist with orchestra in concertos ranging from Mozart to Ravel, Poulenc, Prokofiev and Gershwin.

Dunoyer's expertise in French music has led to regular appearances at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC. A series of eight concerts and lectures entitled "A Century of French Music" was so enthusiastically received that she returned for lecture-recital series on "Claude Debussy" in 2003, "1920's Paris" in 2004, and "Maurice Ravel" in 2008.

Cecilia Dunoyer is the author of *Marguerite Long, A Life in French Music*. Published by Indiana University Press in 1993 and simultaneously translated into French and released in Paris the same year, the book has received critical acclaim. An interview with Dunoyer was featured on National Public Radio's *Performance Today* and she was the guest for a series of ten radio shows for CBC/Radio-Canada in Montreal. February 2000 marked the publication of *Debussy in Performance* (Yale University Press), for which Dunoyer was invited to write about early performances of Debussy's piano music. The book includes contributions from such eminent music personalities as Pierre Boulez and Désiré-Emile Inghelbrecht, and was acclaimed by the *London Literary Times*.

Cecilia Dunoyer grew up in Libya, Italy, Austria, Switzerland and France. Following studies in Paris, she worked with the eminent Hungarian pianist György Sándor, earning both Bachelor's and Master's degrees in piano with High Distinction from the University of Michigan. Dunoyer received a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Maryland in 1990. An Associate Fellow of Yale University's Silliman College since 1984, she has served on the piano faculty at Penn State University. She also teaches a full studio of private students, many of whom have won prizes and gone on to prestigious colleges. State College is now her home with husband Taylor Greer and their three children, François, Emile and Juliette.

THE PIERRE MONTEUX SCHOOL ORCHESTRA

Sunday, July 17, 2011

PROGRAM

Dawn and Siegfried's Rhine Journey — Richard Wagner (1813-1883)
from *Götterdämmerung*

Conductor: Matthew Wardell

Symphony No. 8 in F major, Op. 93 — Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

1. Allegro vivace e con brio
2. Allegretto scherzando
3. Tempo di Menuetto
4. Allegro vivace

Conductors: Aaron Breid (1), Kyle Ritenauer (2-3) and Nell Flanders (4)

INTERMISSION

Nocturnes — Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

1. Nuages [Clouds]
2. Fêtes [Festivals]

Conductors: Kornel Thomas (1) and Stephen Mulligan (2)

Symphony No. 1 in F minor, Op. 10 — Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

1. Allegretto – Allegro non troppo
2. Allegro – Meno mosso
3. Lento —
4. Allegro molto

Conductors: Matthew Kasper (1), Stefano Sarzani (2), Scott Dunn (3) and Andres Lopera (4)

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PROGRAM NOTES BY THE CONDUCTORS

Richard Wagner (1813-1883)
Dawn and Siegfried's Rhine Journey from *Götterdämmerung* (1876)

The excerpt Dawn and Siegfried's Rhine Journey comes from the opening of *Götterdämmerung* [Twilight of the Gods], the final installment of Wagner's "Ring Cycle." This epic, four-opera cycle centers around a ring that grants its owner the power to rule the world.

As the scene opens, we find Siegfried, a mortal hero who knows no fear, and Brünnhilde, his beloved Valkyrie. They emerge from a cave at dawn, greeted by a glorious sunrise. Wagner's inventive use of *Leitmotiv*—pieces of melody and harmony representing an object, person or idea—is in full force. We first hear a Fate motif in the trombones; a reminder that, despite the passion and triumph depicted in this scene, Fate will rule in the end. Next, we hear the horns sound Siegfried's heroic motif, followed by the clarinet playing music representing Brünnhilde's femininity and love for Siegfried. One can also hear the famous Valkyrie motif, played by trumpet and trombones, in the grand entrance music.

Wagner then plays out the plot of the opera in music: Siegfried's horn call sounds from afar; Siegfried and Brünnhilde's love themes are resolved; Siegfried passes through the magic fire surrounding his beloved's home; and finally, Siegfried travels on the mighty Rhine itself, not knowing that he will meet his death. In the closing bars of the excerpt, the Rhine Gold motif is played by the woodwinds and trumpets; a reminder of the greed surrounding the ring and the power of nature that, in the end, will set things right.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)
Symphony No. 8 in F major, op. 93 (1812)

Ludwig van Beethoven's *Symphony No. 8 in F major* was composed during the summer of 1812 and premiered in Vienna on February 27, 1814. Alongside the premiere of this "little symphony in F," as Beethoven liked to call it, was a performance of the composer's highly praised *Seventh Symphony*. Compared to the overwhelming enthusiasm the *Seventh Symphony* received, the *Eighth* left the Viennese public puzzled. When asked why he thought the *Eighth* was less of a success than his *Seventh*, Beethoven responded, "That's because [the *Eighth Symphony*] is so much better."

The symphony begins without introduction or hesitation, catapulting us straight into the action. The first movement features a witty touch: it begins with a loud, bold presentation of the main theme and ends with the exact same theme played softly and modestly. The second movement was composed in honor of the chronometer, an early version of the metronome that had just been invented by German engineer Johann Mältzel. The repeated *staccato* notes in the winds are reminiscent of the "tick tock" of a metronome. The third movement is a nostalgic tribute to the minuet, a form that had largely been replaced by the *scherzo* by the time of this symphony. Interestingly, there is no slow movement, which is one of

the features contributing to the symphony's overall light charm and grace. Beethoven maintains this light touch in the last movement, which concludes with a long, spirited coda.

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
Nocturnes (1899)

Debussy's *Nocturnes* for orchestra were inspired by the paintings of American artist James McNeill Whistler. Perhaps to discourage association with Chopin's popular piano nocturnes, Debussy wrote that his title "is not meant to designate the usual form of the Nocturne, but rather all the various impressions and special effects of light that the word suggests." The first in the set, *Nuages* [Clouds], evokes slow-moving clouds tinted by various shades of moonlight, as observed in the silence of the countryside. The second, *Fêtes* [Festivals], depicts dazzling atmospheric light, followed by a triumphant procession approaching from the distance.

As early as 1892, Debussy began sketching a work for violin and orchestra titled *Three Twilight Scenes*. When the work's intended soloist, violinist Eugène Ysaÿe refused to play it, Debussy used the sketch material for his orchestral *Nocturnes*. The first two movements, *Nuages* and *Fêtes*, were premiered in Paris in 1900; the third and final movement, *Sirènes* (not performed in today's concert), was completed in 1901 and includes women's chorus. Debussy's *Nocturnes* are among the first of the composer's orchestral masterpieces, followed later by *La Mer (1905)* and *Images (1913)*.

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)
Symphony No. 1 in F minor, op. 10 (1925)

Shostakovich finished his *First Symphony* in 1925, after approximately ten months of work, and submitted it as his graduation thesis at the Leningrad Conservatory. The symphony was given its official premiere by the Leningrad Philharmonic on May 12, 1926, with Nikolai Malko conducting. The performance was a huge success for Shostakovich:

> *My symphony went magnificently yesterday... It was an enormous success. The hall was packed to overflowing... I came out to bow five times. Everything was just wonderful... My head is still spinning, from the symphony, from the performance, from the success, and from everything put together. It was wonderful. So wonderful that I can't find the words to express it.*

The symphony is both playful and sincere in character, and infused with the driving militaristic rhythms so often heard in the composer's music. As in his other orchestral works, Shostakovich features solos for many different instruments of the orchestra. The symphony encompasses a broad emotional range, including the sarcastic treatment of themes in the first movement, the whirlwind *scherzo* of the second movement, the poignant elegy of the third movement, and a bravura finale. It is remarkable that Shostakovich was only 19 when he completed this symphony.

THE PIERRE MONTEUX SCHOOL ORCHESTRA

Sunday, July 24, 2011

MEMORIAL CONCERT

Pierre Monteux (1875-1964)
Doris Hodgkins Monteux (1894-1984)
Charles Bruck (1911-1995)

PROGRAM

Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98 — Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

1. Allegro non troppo
2. Andante moderato
3. Allegro giocoso
4. Allegro energico e passionato

Conductors: Matthew Wardell (1), Edward Leonard (2), John Norine, Jr. (3) and Kensho Watanabe (4)

INTERMISSION

Sensemayá — Silvestre Revueltas (1899-1940)

Conductor: William C. White

Symphonic Dances, Op. 45 — Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

1. Non allegro
2. Andante con moto (Tempo di valse)
3. Lento assai – Allegro vivace

Conductor: Michael Jinbo

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No applause between parts of a multi-section work.
Recording prohibited. Flash photography only allowed between pieces.

PROGRAM NOTES BY THE CONDUCTORS

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)
Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98 (1885)

Brahms bade farewell to the symphonic form after completing his *Fourth Symphony* in 1885, only a year after his *Third Symphony*. At first, Brahms was a reluctant symphonist—the shadow of Beethoven's works loomed large over the beginning of his career—but he eventually became a master of the form. The austere and tragic nature of the *Fourth Symphony* left even the composer's most ardent followers hesitant to praise it. It wasn't until a performance in Vienna in 1897, just a month before the composer's death, that the work received the recognition it so richly deserved.

The first movement combines feelings of nostalgia and defiance. Though the movement's primary theme is deceptively simple, the mood is rarely at ease. The second movement continues the uncertainty and ambivalence of the first, exuding an air of mystery, with hints of a funeral march and even a lullaby. In sharp contrast, the third movement is a hearty and boisterous *scherzo*, sparkling with energy from start to finish. Brahms adds an extra touch of brightness by including triangle in the orchestration.

Returning to the symphony's overall somber mood, the last movement is based upon the Baroque musical form known as *passacaglia*: a set of continuous variations over an unchanging bass line. Brahms even goes so far as to quote a melody from Bach's *Cantata No. 150 ('Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich')*, but uses it to construct a far starker and weightier theme. Tragic momentum builds through each variation, reaching an uncompromisingly stern conclusion.

Silvestre Revueltas (1899-1940)
Sensemayá (1938)

The life story of Mexican composer Silvestre Revueltas is one all too common in the annals of classical music: despite his immense talents as composer and conductor, he died a penniless alcoholic at the age of 41. Though Revueltas spent most of his life in Mexico City, he received musical training in Austin, Texas, and Chicago, Illinois. He worked as an assistant to the "father of Mexican classical music," Carlos Chávez, but Revueltas' own works were far more daring and imaginative than his master's, earning him the sobriquet: "the Mexican Stravinsky."

Sensemayá is based on a poem of the same name by Afro-Cuban poet Nicolás Guillén. The opening line of the poem reads, "canto para matar una culebra," or "chant to kill a snake." Indeed, the poem is in the form of a ritual incantation to a *voodoo*-esque deity.

Revueltas opens the piece with a depiction of the sacrificial snake: a slithering line in the bass clarinet. The tuba intones the work's primary melody, which will be repeated several times, adding new instruments to each repetition. The music is imbued with Latin American rhythms, purportedly derived from authentic Aztec music of the composer's native Mexico. One of the piece's most distinctive features is that its basic rhythmic pattern contains seven beats—not four, six or eight, as in most Western music—making it delightfully tricky to try to tap one's toes to.

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)
Symphonic Dances, Op. 45 (1940)

Sergei Rachmaninoff suffered a lifelong battle with depression, including recurring crises of confidence regarding his ability as a composer. During the years following the First World War and the Russian Revolution, Rachmaninoff was forced to abandon composition almost entirely, in order to earn a living as a piano soloist. He found more time to compose by the mid-1920s, but was crippled by bouts of homesickness for his native Russia. This depression deepened over the years, most notably when the onset of World War II forced the composer to live abroad for the remainder of his life. Rachmaninoff's life circumstances are clearly reflected in his music, a fact not lost upon the composer:

> *A composer's music should express the country of his birth, his love affairs, his religion... it should be the sum total of the composer's experiences. I compose music because I must give expression to my feelings, just as I talk because I must give utterance to my thoughts... I am a Russian composer, and the land of my birth has inevitably influenced my temperament and outlook...*

Symphonic Dances, Op. 45, Rachmaninoff's final work, was composed in 1940 during an especially fruitful summer when he was able to both compose and practice the piano for upcoming winter concerts. Following a four-year compositional silence, the quality of the work surprised the composer himself, who had feared that he had lost the "strength and fire" of his younger years. A few months before his death, Rachmaninoff told a friend: "Yes, I don't know how it happened. It must have been my last spark." The work was dedicated to conductor Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra, who premiered it on January 3, 1941. Originally conceived with the title *Fantastic Dances,* its three movements were to be called *Noon, Twilight* and *Midnight,* representing three stages of life. Rachmaninoff had hoped that the work could be mounted as a ballet by Mikhail Fokine, whose *Paganini* ballet—based on Rachmaninoff's earlier *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*—had greatly pleased the composer, but Fokine died before the project could be realized. Rachmaninoff renamed the work *Symphonic Dances* and removed the individual movement titles. Rachmaninoff said that it "should have been called just *Dances,* but I was afraid people would think I had written dance music for jazz orchestra." In truth, *Symphonic Dances* is more like a three-movement symphony than a dance suite.

The *Symphonic Dances* are filled with intense rhythmic vitality, characteristic of the composer's late works. Rachmaninoff's awareness of his own mortality is palpable throughout. At the end of the first movement, Rachmaninoff quotes a theme from his *First Symphony (1895), a work representing his first big failure. Recast in a major key* and totally transformed, it serves as a warm apotheosis in an otherwise melancholy movement. The movement also features a haunting solo for alto saxophone. As it was the first and only time Rachmaninoff wrote for the instrument, he sought the advice of noted Broadway orchestrator Robert Russell Bennett. The nocturnal second movement is dominated by the triple rhythms of a waltz. The rhythmic last movement quotes the requiem plainsong chant *Dies Irae* [Day of Wrath]. Used by many composers, the tune particularly obsessed Rachmaninoff. It appears in all three of his numbered symphonies, choral symphony *The Bells,* tone poem *The Isle of the Dead,* and *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini.* The movement also quotes a theme from the composer's choral *All-Night Vigil* (aka *Vespers*), which in turn quotes the Russian Orthodox chant *Blagosloven esi, Gospodi* [Blessed Be the Lord]. Marked "Alliluya" in the score, it conveys a sense of victory over the death represented by *Dies Irae.* At the end of the manuscript, Rachmaninoff inscribed the words, "I thank thee, Lord."

THE PIERRE MONTEUX SCHOOL ORCHESTRA

Sunday, July 31, 2011

SYMPHONIC POPS CONCERT

PROGRAM

Overture to *Orpheus in the Underworld* — Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880)

Conductor: Kyle Hanson

Overture to *The Bartered Bride* — Bedřich Smetana (1824-1884)

Conductor: Jason Ethridge

Roses from the South, Op. 388 — Johann Strauss, Jr. (1825-1899)

Conductor: Gabriel Lefkowitz

Triumphal March and Ballet from *Aïda* — Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

Conductor: Joseph Stepec

Marche Slave, Op. 31 — Piotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

Conductor: William Tackett

INTERMISSION

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Remain silent while the orchestra tunes.
No applause between parts of a multi-section work.
Recording prohibited. Flash photography only allowed between pieces.

INTERMISSION

Selections from *Porgy and Bess* — George Gershwin (1898-1937)
[arr. Robert Russell Bennett]
Conductor: Stefano Sarzani

Carousel Waltz from *Carousel* — Richard Rodgers (1902-1979)
[arr. Don Walker]
Conductor: Anna Edwards

Selections from *Camelot* — Frederick Loewe (1901-1988)
[arr. Robert Russell Bennett]
Conductor: John Devlin

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