

Showcase Concert – February 6th 2010

Copley Symphony Hall – 1:00pm

Program Notes

Concert Winds

Inferno

David Shaffer

As a musical expression, *Inferno* was written to capture the fury and power of a raging inferno. It builds in intensity with a thematic climax that brings all 5 motifs together. The ending features a subito *P* (*piano*) in all instruments followed by a forceful crescendo providing an exciting close to this powerful band composition. David Shaffer has over 250 compositions and arrangements published. Mr. Shaffer has been the recipient of the ASCAP Standard Award in Music Composition for 15 consecutive years. Shaffer is in demand as a conductor for new music reading clinics, music festivals and music education seminars.



Lost Mountain

Jay Bocook

For centuries, fiction writers have told various tales of a mysterious mountain island, protected by a continual fog bank that has kept its location undetected by modern man. *Lost Mountain* is a musical fantasy depicting the fictional discovery and exploration of this unknown massif. Composed in two stylistically contrasting sections, here is a unique and dynamic work that is definitely something out of the ordinary. The first section opens with dark sonorities and mysterious effects. The faster (*Allegro*) second section is propelled by a driving, yet easy percussion undercurrent and features strong themes scored to sound full. Sit back and enjoy the dramatic effects and musical depth of this exciting work. Jay Bocook is a professional composer and arranger, and also the Director of Athletic Bands at Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina. Mr. Bocook began his composing and arranging career in graduate school, and began to write for Jenson publications while serving as the band director at a small high school in Travelers Rest, South Carolina. He served as the Director of Bands at Furman University from 1982 until 1989, where he continued his rise to fame as an arranger. His arrangements were featured at the 1984 Olympic Games. He writes for a wide range of ensembles, from elementary bands to the United States Marine Band.



Wind Symphony

Celebrations

John Zdechlik

Celebrations was commissioned by Earl C. Benson, conductor of the Medalist Concert Band of Bloomington, Minnesota. It was written to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the Medalist Concert Band. The work is very spirited and consists of two themes. The first is very fluid and is stated by the woodwinds. The brass and percussion add punctuation to this theme. The second theme (while maintaining the same tempo) is very sostenuto (sustained in a smooth manner) and lyric in sound. John Zdechlik is a native of Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he is an active composer, performer, conductor, and clinician. He earned his Ph.D. in Theory and Composition from the University of Minnesota, where he studied with Paul Fetler and Frank Bencriscutto. Since 1970, Dr. Zdechlik has written numerous commissioned and published works for high school and college concert bands.



Satiric Dances for a Comedy by Aristophanes

Norman Dello Joio

Norman Dello Joio (1913 – 2008) was born in New York City to Italian immigrants and began his musical career as organist and choir director at the Star of the Sea Church on City Island in New York at age 14. In his teens, Norman began studying organ with his godfather, Pietro Yon, who was the organist at Saint Patrick's Cathedral. In 1939, he received a scholarship to the Juilliard School of Music, where he studied composition with Bernard Wagenaar. As a graduate student at Juilliard he arrived at the conclusion that he did not want to spend his life in a church choir loft, and composition began to become his primary musical interest. In 1941, he began studies with Paul Hindemith, the man who profoundly influenced his compositional style. It was Hindemith who told Dello Joio, "Your music is lyrical by nature, don't ever forget that." Dello Joio states that, although he did not completely understand at the time, he now knows what he meant. He won the 1957 Pulitzer Prize for Music for his *Meditations on Ecclesiastes*; first performed at the Juilliard School on April 20, 1956. His *Variations, Chaconne and Finale* won the New York Critics Circle Award in 1948. In 1965, Dello Joio received the Emmy Award for the "most outstanding music written for television in the 1964-1965 Season" for his score to the 1964 NBC television special, "The Louvre." *Satiric Dances for a Comedy by Aristophanes* was commissioned by the Concord Band, Concord, Massachusetts, to commemorate the Bicentennial of April 19, 1775, the day that launched the American War for Independence. At the North Bridge, in what is now Minute Man National Historical Park, the first ordered firing upon British Regulars by Colonial militiamen resulted in "the shot heard 'round the world." Dello Joio, then Dean of Boston University's School for the Arts, agreed to do the commission, but stipulated it would be based on a piece he had used as background music for a comedy by Aristophanes. The most famous comic dramatist of ancient Greece, Aristophanes was born an Athenian citizen about 445 BC. His plays commented on the political and social issues of fifth century Athens and frequently employed satire.



Concert Orchestra

Danse Bacchanale, Act III from *Samson et Dalila*

Camille Saint-Saens



Charles Camille Saint-Saëns (1835 - 1921) was a French composer, organist, conductor, and pianist, known especially for his compositions, *The Carnival of the Animals*, *Danse Macabre*, *Symphony No. 3 (Organ Symphony)* and *Samson et Dalila*. Saint-Saëns began his musical career as a musical pioneer, introducing to France the symphonic poem and championing the radical works of Liszt and Wagner at a time when Bach and Mozart were the norms. By the dawn of the 20th century, Saint-Saëns was an ultra-conservative, fighting the influence of Debussy and Richard Strauss. This is hardly surprising—Saint-Saëns' career began while Chopin and Mendelssohn were in their prime, and ended at the commencement of the Jazz Age; but his image endured for years after his death. *Samson et Dalila* is a grand opera in three acts. *Danse Bacchanale* is from Act III. It was first performed at the Grand Ducal Theater in Weimar on December 2, 1877 in a German translation. Saint-Saëns began composing the work as an oratorio in 1868, but his librettist, Ferdinand Lemaire, convinced him of its theatrical potential, and Liszt offered to produce it at Weimar, where he was musical director. A *bacchanale* is a dramatic musical composition, often depicting a “bacchanalia”, which were wild and mystic festivals of the Roman and Greek god Bacchus.

Procession of the Sardar

Mikhail Ippolotov-Ivanov

Arr. Isaac



Mikhail Ippolotov-Ivanov (1859-1935) was a Russian composer and director of the Moscow Conservatory from 1905-1922. Ippolotov-Ivanov had studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatory under the composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, a master of orchestration, whose style of beats and chimes is reflected in the songs of the *Caucasian Sketches*. The ethnic folk music of Georgia was a key ingredient in Ippolotov-Ivanov's crowning achievement, *Caucasian Sketches*. Comprised of two suites, completed in 1894 and 1896 respectively, Suite No. 1 would become the work he would forever be remembered for. Incorporating the region's indigenous music in an orchestral setting, the piece also borrows from Rimsky-Korsakov's use of chimes and rhythmic qualities. Brilliant melodies weave through the opening section accompanied by an unrelenting beat to create the sensation of one's ascension toward a majestic summit. Professionally, Ippolotov-Ivanov continued teaching, as well as taking on several conducting duties. In 1905, twelve years after becoming an instructor at the Moscow Conservatory, he was promoted to director; a position he would maintain for 19 years. After retiring as an educator, Ippolotov-Ivanov spent two years reorganizing the Georgia State Conservatory, followed by a stint as principal conductor of the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow. Though Ippolotov-Ivanov wrote a number of operas and orchestral works they were seldom performed after his death in 1935.

Sinfonia

Capriccio Espagnol Op. 34

Nicolai Rimsky Korsakov

Nikolai Andreyevich Rimsky-Korsakov (1844 – 1908) was a Russian composer, one of the Russian composers known as "The Five", and was later a teacher of harmony and orchestration. He is particularly noted for a predilection for folk and fairy-tale subjects, and for his extraordinary skill in orchestration. *Capriccio Espagnol*, Op. 34, is the common Western title for an orchestral work based on Spanish melodies and written by Rimsky-Korsakov in 1887. Originally intended for a solo violin against an orchestra, Rimsky-Korsakov later decided that a purely orchestral work would do better justice to the lively melodies. The *Capriccio* consists of five movements, although Sinfonia will only be performing three movements tonight. It is often praised for its orchestration, which features a large percussion section and many special techniques and articulations, such as in the fourth movement when the violin, viola, and cello are asked to imitate Spanish guitars. Despite the critical praise, Rimsky-Korsakov was annoyed that other aspects of the piece were being ignored. In his autobiography, he humbly wrote: "The opinion formed by both critics and the public, that the *Capriccio* is a *magnificently orchestrated piece* — is wrong. The *Capriccio* is a brilliant *composition for the orchestra*. The change of timbres, the felicitous choice of melodic designs and figuration patterns, exactly suiting each kind of instrument, brief virtuoso cadenzas for instruments solo, the rhythm of the percussion instruments, etc., constitute here the very *essence* of the composition and not its garb or orchestration".



L'Arlésienne Suite No. 2 - Menuet & Farandole

Georges Bizet

In 1872 Georges Bizet (1838-1875) composed incidental music for a production in Paris of Alphonse Daudet's melodrama *L'Arlésienne*. Bizet was strongly attracted by the story of young Frederi's fatal passion for a woman who remains unseen throughout the play, and for the production he wrote twenty-seven pieces to introduce or accompany the action. The play was a failure at its premier on September 21, 1872. The audience did not know what to make of either the music or Daudet's play and talked throughout. Daudet was stunned by the failure but Bizet, however, decided to extract a suite of four pieces. At the premier of that suite on November 10th 1872, the music was a triumph, one of the few successes Bizet enjoyed. Bizet died only knowing of one suite of music from *L'Arlésienne*. *Suite No.2*, heard tonight, was arranged and published in 1879, four years after Bizet's death, by Ernest Guiraud, using Bizet's original themes (although not all of them were from the *L'Arlésienne* incidental music). The second suite is generally credited to Bizet since he wrote the themes and the basic orchestration. The menuet, which is not from *L'Arlésienne*, but from Bizet's 1866 opera *The Fair Maid of Perth*, features solos by harp, flute, and, later, clarinet; it is the most subdued and emotional movement. The finale, the farandole, incorporates the theme of the *March of the King*. A farandole is an old Provençal dance in which a procession of dancers parades through the streets, holding hands or hand-kerchiefs while the musicians lead, waving flags or ribbons to signal the dancers. Bizet takes that old dance and turns it into a symphonic explosion. Over the sound of steadily beating drums, he introduces the simple dance tune, and gradually this accelerates to a knock out close.



Ovation Concert – February 6th 2010

Copley Symphony Hall – 7:00pm

Philharmonia:

Overture to “The Marriage of Figaro”

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart



The Marriage of Figaro, based on the Beaumarchais play that had been banned for its theme of social justice and its portrayal of servants outsmarting their masters, had its premier on May 1 1786. Although the play by Beaumarchais was at first banned in Vienna because of its satire of the aristocracy, considered dangerous in the decade before the French revolution, the opera became one of Mozart's most successful works. The overture is especially famous and is often played as a concert piece. From the first note, when this music stirs to life, to its sudden explosions of energy, the overture has delighted all who hear it and is the perfect lead-in to the comic escapades that will follow. Mozart usually composed his overtures in Sonata form, but he abandoned that form here. This overture is very brief (barely four minutes) and Mozart drops the development section altogether. He simply presents his sparkling themes, recapitulates and then dives into the opera. Evidence suggests that he had originally begun to compose a D minor Andante as an interlude at the center of the overture, but saw that it would be out of place and crossed it out. Faced with having to choose a performance marking for his players, Mozart dispensed with any description of the emotion character he wanted from a performance. He simply chose one word and it is perfect: *Presto*.

Adagio for Strings,

Samuel Barber



Adagio for Strings, by American composer, Samuel Barber (1910-1981) originated as the second movement in his String Quartet No. 1, Op. 11, composed in 1936. In the original it follows a violently contrasting first movement, and is succeeded by a brief reprise of this music. In January 1938 Barber sent the piece to Arturo Toscanini. The conductor returned the score without comment, and Barber was annoyed and avoided the conductor. Subsequently Toscanini sent word through a friend that he was planning to perform the piece and had returned it simply because he had already memorized it. It was reported that Toscanini did not look at the music again until the day before the premiere. The work was given its first performance in a radio broadcast by Arturo Toscanini with the NBC Symphony Orchestra on November 5, 1938 in New York. The long, flowing melodic line moves freely between the voices in the string choir creating a sad but majestic setting. The piece was played at the funeral of Princess Grace of Monaco and at the funeral of Albert Einstein. Contrary to popular belief, it was not played at the funeral of Franklin D. Roosevelt, but was broadcast over the radio at the announcement of his death. It was performed in 2001 at Last Night of the Proms in the Royal Albert Hall to commemorate the victims of the September 11 attacks, replacing the traditional upbeat patriotic songs. In 2004, listeners of the BBC's *Today* program voted *Adagio* the "saddest classical" work ever.

Symphony Orchestra Concerto Ensemble

Fantasia de Concierto – on themes from *Rigoletto*

Luigi Bassi

Ju-Hwan (Jay) Shin – clarinet

09/10 Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition Winner



Luigi Bassi (1833–1871) was an Italian composer and clarinetist. Bassi was born in Cremona and studied at the Milan Conservatory under Benedetto Carulli from 1846 to 1853. He was the principal clarinetist of La Scala in Milan. He composed a total of 27 works for clarinet. He wrote 15 operatic fantasies for clarinet, most notably *Fantasia de Concierto on Verdi's 'Rigoletto'*. Juhwan "Jay" Shin is a senior at Rancho Bernardo High School. He is the Assistant Principal clarinetist of the San Diego Youth Symphony Philharmonia and Symphony Orchestra. Jay has been accepted to the College of Engineering at Cornell University, where he also plans to continue his music journey by being part of Cornell Symphony Orchestra.

Symphony Orchestra

Prince Igor: Polovtsian Dances

Alexander Borodin

Arr. Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov



Alexander Borodin (1833-1887) was a Russian composer as well as a professor of chemistry. He was a member of the group of composers called "The Mighty Handful", who were dedicated to producing a specifically Russian kind of art music. The individual fingers of the hand were Mily Balakirev (1837-1910), who was the originator of the group; Cesar Cui (1835-1918); Modest Mussorgsky (1839-1881), Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908) and Alexander Borodin. All of them were decent musicians, but only one (Balakirev) had originally entered music as a profession. Borodin was a chemist, Mussorgsky was a civil servant and Rimsky-Korsakov was a naval officer. You might say that they were the original Village People. Borodin is a wonderful example of the connection between music and higher education. In his chemical profession Borodin gained great respect, being particularly noted for his work on aldehydes (an organic compound). Between 1859 – 1862 Borodin held a post doctorate in Heidelberg. He worked in a laboratory, working on benzene derivatives. He also spent time in Pisa, working on organic halogens. One experiment published in 1862 described the first nucleophilic displacement of chlorine by fluorine in benzoyl chloride. A related reaction known to the west as the Hunsdiecker reaction published in 1939 by the Hunsdieckers was promoted by the Soviet Union as the *Borodin reaction*. Borodin published his last full article in 1875 on reactions of amides and his last publication concerned a method for the identification of urea in animal urine. Life wasn't all about work for Borodin. The *Polovtsian Dances* are perhaps the best known selections from Alexander Borodin's opera *Prince Igor* (1890). They are often played as a stand-alone concert piece as one of the best known works in the classical repertoire. In the opera the dances are performed with chorus, but concert performances often omit the choral parts, such as tonight. The first dance is No. 8 entitled *Dance of the Polovtsian Maidens*. The second dance is No. 17 simply called *Polovtsian Dances*. As an orchestral showpiece by an important nineteenth-century Russian composer, this work makes a spectacular impression. Notable instrumental solos include the clarinet, oboe and English horn. The opera, *Prince Igor*, was left unfinished upon Borodin's death in 1887 and was edited and completed by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Alexander Glazunov. It was first performed in St.Petersburg, Russia, in 1890 at the Mariinsky Theatre.

The Firebird Suite (1919)

Igor Stravinsky

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) was unknown as a composer outside of Russia. Even at home in St. Petersburg, he was only known as a talented student of the famous composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. Things changed in the winter of 1909, when the Russian producer, Serge Diaghilev, invited Stravinsky to join his new ballet company. Diaghilev had hired another composer to write the music for a ballet based on a Russian legend, The Firebird. When that didn't work out, Diaghilev asked Stravinsky to take over at the end of the summer in 1909.



Stravinsky completed the work in April of the following year. He made a few changes to the final score, dated May 18, 1910, and dedicated it to his former teacher, Rimsky-Korsakov. The Firebird ballet premiered at the Paris Opera on June 25, 1910, and is considered one of his most popular works. Stravinsky later took excerpts from The Firebird and turned them into different suites. The first, published in 1911, uses the large orchestra and brilliant colors of the original score. The second suite, published in 1919, uses a much smaller orchestra. Berceuse and Finale are taken from the 1919 version of orchestral work known as The Firebird Suite. Stravinsky's ballet centers on the journey of its hero, Prince Ivan. Ivan enters the magical realm of Kashchei the Immortal; all of the magical objects and creatures of Kashchei are herein represented by a chromatic descending motif, usually in the strings. While wandering in the gardens, he sees and chases the Firebird. The Firebird, once caught by Ivan, begs for its life and ultimately agrees to assist Ivan in exchange for eventual freedom. Next, Prince Ivan sees thirteen princesses, with one of whom he falls in love. The next day, Ivan chooses to confront Kashchei to ask to marry one of the princesses; the two talk and eventually begin quarreling. When Kashchei sends his magical creatures after Ivan, the Firebird, true to its pledge, intervenes; bewitching the creatures and making them dance an elaborate, energetic dance (the "Infernal Dance"). The creatures and Kashchei then fall asleep; however, Kashchei awakens and is then sent into another dance by the Firebird. While Kashchei is bewitched by the Firebird she tells Ivan the secret to Kashchei's immortality and Ivan destroys it killing Kashchei. With Kashchei gone and his magic broken, the magical creatures and the palace all disappear, and all of the "real" beings (including the princesses) awaken and, with one final fleeting appearance from the Firebird, celebrate their victory.