

*SHEPHERD SCHOOL  
CHAMBER ORCHESTRA*

*LARRY RACHLEFF, music director*

*SAMUEL JONES, guest conductor*

*Wednesday, April 23, 1997*

*8:00 p.m.*

*Stude Concert Hall*

RICE UNIVERSITY

the  
Shepherd  
School  
of Music

## PROGRAM

### ***Petite Suite***

*En Bateau (Andantino)*

*Cortège (Moderato)*

*Menuet (Moderato)*

*Ballet (Allegro giusto)*

*Claude Debussy*

(1862-1918)

(orchestrated by

*Henri-Paul Busser*)

*Scott O'Neil, conductor*

### ***Siegfried Idyll***

*Richard Wagner*

(1813-1883)

## INTERMISSION

### ***“Ma Mère l’Oye” Ballet***

*Prélude (Très lent)*

*I. Danse du Rouet et Scène (Allegro)*

*II. Pavane de la Belle au Bois dormant  
(Lent – Allegro)*

*III. Les entretiens de la Belle et de la Bête  
(Mouvement de Valse modéré)*

*IV. Petit Poucet (Très modéré)*

*V. Laideronnette, Impératrice des Pagodes  
(Mouvement de Marche)*

*VI. Apotheose. Le jardin féerique (Lent et grave)*

*Maurice Ravel*

(1875-1937)

*In consideration of the performers and members of the audience, please check audible paging devices with the ushers and silence audible timepieces. The taking of photographs and use of recording equipment are prohibited.*

## SHEPHERD SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

### **Violin I**

*David Brubaker,*  
*concertmaster*  
*Cory Balzer*  
*Colleen Jennings*  
*Samuel Thompson*  
*Larisa Struble*  
*Abigail Karr*  
*Jana Vander Schaaf*  
*Marie-André Chevrette*

### **Violin II**

*Rita Lammers,*  
*principal*  
*Lise Nadon*  
*David Fuller*  
*Missy Graves*  
*Caroline Pliszka*  
*Malgorzata Leska*

### **Viola**

*Alice Rosen,*  
*principal*  
*Ellen Craig*  
*Matthew Dane*  
*Chloë Kline*

### **Cello**

*Nisse Nøstbakken,*  
*principal*  
*Heath Marlow*  
*Alison Bazala*  
*Clement Chow*

### **Double Bass**

*Eyal Ganor, principal*  
*Alain Malo*  
*Donald Howey*

### **Flute**

*Kris Guthrie*  
*Elana Hoffman*  
*Wendy Lin*

### **Piccolo**

*Kris Guthrie*  
*Wendy Lin*

### **Oboe**

*Margo Carlson*  
*Jason Sudduth*

### **English Horn**

*Margo Carlson*  
*Jason Sudduth*

### **Clarinet**

*Dawn Dale*  
*Rochelle Oddo*  
*Abigail Raymond*

### **Bassoon**

*Jennifer Gunter*  
*Shawn Jones*  
*Amy Yeou-Mei Yang*

### **Contrabassoon**

*Jennifer Gunter*

### **Horn**

*Wade Butin*  
*Elizabeth Matchett*  
*Martina Snell*

### **Trumpet**

*Michael Myers*  
*Brian Seitz*

### **Harp**

*Ayren Huslig*  
*Naoko Nakamura*

### **Celeste**

*Beth Winterfeldt*

### **Timpani and Percussion**

*John Andress*  
*Elizabeth Muncaster*  
*Trent Petrunia*  
*Philip Rothman*  
*Douglas Smith*  
*Che-Ming Tsai*

### **Orchestra Manager**

*Martin Merritt*

### **Orchestra Librarian**

*Lisa Vosdoganes*

WINDS, BRASS, AND PERCUSSION LISTED ALPHABETICALLY.

STRING SEATING CHANGES WITH EACH CONCERT.

## PROGRAM NOTES

### *Petite Suite* . . . . . Claude Debussy

Long considered one of the most innovative and influential composers of the early twentieth century, Claude Debussy is most famous for his distinctly French "impressionistic" style, marked by a free use of harmony, exotic orchestration, and a noticeable influence of the Orient. His charming **Petite Suite** is unusual in that here we catch a glimpse of the composer early in his career, before he had fully developed his mature compositional language.

Debussy composed the **Petite Suite**, originally for piano four-hands, from 1886 to 1889, shortly after graduating from the Paris Conservatory and winning the prestigious Prix de Rome. Instead of choosing the traditional four-movement sonata cycle for one of his earliest piano works, the composer chose instead the French suite, consisting of a series of stylized dance movements. Even though his famous harmonic innovations do not yet appear in this work, Debussy already shows himself to be a superb composer, from the elegant opening barcarolle to the syncopated Cortège, the graceful minuet, and the sprightly, witty Ballet. Debussy did not orchestrate the work himself, but he did approve of this orchestration by Henri-Paul Busser (1872-1973), a prominent French composer, conductor, organist, teacher, and writer who, at the composer's request, was one of the first conductors of Debussy's opera, **Pelléas et Mélisande**.

### *Siegfried Idyll* . . . . . Richard Wagner

Richard Wagner's **Siegfried Idyll** reflects a remarkably tender moment in the life of this titanic figure in German music history. This piece was composed in 1870, well into the composer's successful career. His essays about music, such as *Art and Revolution* and *The Artwork of the Future* were already well-known, and he was excelling in the composition of his momentous music dramas. In fact, the first two operas of the four-part **Ring of the Niebelung** had already been written, with the financial support of the "mad" king of Bavaria, Ludwig II.

Wagner composed the **Siegfried Idyll** as a thirty-third birthday present for his second wife, Cosima, the daughter of Franz Liszt and the former wife of Hans von Bülow, a famous conductor of Wagner's works. Wagner and Cosima had recently been married, in August 1870, but they already had three children together, two daughters and a son. It was in gratitude for the birth of their son Siegfried in June that Wagner wrote the Idyll. The composer planned the perfect romantic situation: on Christmas morning, the day Cosima's birthday was traditionally celebrated, he arranged musicians on the stairs of their house to awaken his wife with the newly-composed piece. She relates, "As I awoke, my ear caught a sound which swelled fuller and fuller; no longer could I imagine myself to be dreaming, music was sounding, and what music! ... I have spent the whole day as though in a dream, my spirit is still listening to the vanished sounds, as it recalls them, my heart, oppressed by emotion, seeks release in music." This work truly marks a very personal moment between husband and wife, and it was only very reluctantly (and because of financial problems) that they permitted publication of the piece years later.

The work's title stems not only from the name of Wagner's son, but also from the fact that it is based almost entirely on themes taken from Act III of the composer's opera *Siegfried*. The Idyll is in modified sonata form, with the development expanded into a large central section. This middle section introduces a new theme that combines with those from the exposition, and the expanded nature of this section almost gives the feeling of several movements combined into one. The piece as a whole is characterized by a calm, tranquil mood and lushly beautiful orchestration, surely a wonderful, romantic birthday gift to commemorate a very special occasion.

**"Ma Mère l'Oye" Ballet . . . . . Maurice Ravel**

The French composer Maurice Ravel has long and undeservedly fallen behind the shadow of his older contemporary Claude Debussy. Throughout his career he was always attacking critics who insisted on placing him in Debussy's "impressionistic" school and comparing the two composers' works. In fact, there was no literal school of impressionism in music (Debussy even disliked the term), and there is too much individuality in Ravel's music to simply label him a follower of Debussy. Though Ravel's music was not always favored by the experts (he had trouble in the conservatory, and he never won the Prix de Rome), the general public greatly admired the composer, who was best known for his ballets, his piano music, and as an expert orchestrator.

*Ma Mère l'Oye* (*Mother Goose*) displays all three of these aspects, for it was originally written as a set of five pieces for piano four-hands. Ravel wrote the work in 1908-1910 for the children of his friends Ida and Cyprien ("Cipa") Godebski, and he originally intended for them to premiere the work. Unfortunately, the completed piece proved too difficult for the children to perform, and its first performance went to other young musicians. The composer later orchestrated the work, and at the request of Jacques Rouché, director of the Théâtre des Arts, Paris, he revised the pieces into a complete ballet in 1911. Ravel added two movements, the *Prélude* and the *Danse du rouet*, rearranged the remaining movements, and added musically-related interludes between every movement to transform the work into a complete, uninterrupted ballet.

Ravel based the movements on fairy tales by Charles Perrault, Madame d'Aulnoy, and Madame Leprince de Beaumont, though he wrote the scenario for the complete ballet himself. After the magical *Prélude*, Ravel introduces Princess Florine (the *Sleeping Beauty*) in the *Danse du rouet* (*Spinning Wheel Dance*), during which she pricks her finger and falls into a deep sleep. This provides a framework for the other tableaux, which appear as dreams during her slumber. In the following *Pavane*, an old woman who had been spinning in the same chamber as Florine is transformed into the Good Fairy and proceeds to watch over the Princess. This scene is followed by the dialogue of Beauty and the Beast, at the end of which the Beast is freed from his spell and transformed into a handsome prince. The next story concerns the seven children of a woodcutter who are lost in a forest at night. One of them, Tom Thumb, is proud that he had strewn bread crumbs on the path so they could find their way, but unfortunately the birds arrive and eat all the crumbs. Ravel's orchestration of this scene contains distinctive birdcalls in the solo violin and woodwinds. The next tableau tells no particular story; rather, it is a *pas de deux* and general dance in a Chinese style (what story there is concerns simply a young Empress bathing under the Pagodas). It contains what is perhaps the

most memorable music in the ballet and is exotically orchestrated, featuring instruments such as the celesta and xylophone. This scene is followed by the beautiful Apotheose, in which Prince Charming appears and awakens Florine accompanied by the most luxuriant orchestration in the work. Ravel said of these pieces that his purpose was to "evoke the poetry of childhood," and to this end he was wonderfully successful without sacrificing any of the genius or marvelous complexity of his musical style.

— Notes by Andrew Weaver

## BIOGRAPHIES

*SAMUEL JONES* has enjoyed a distinguished career as a composer, conductor, and educator. His numerous works for orchestra, as well as his chamber, choral, vocal, and operatic compositions, have had frequent performances by many of America's greatest ensembles and musicians. He received his undergraduate degree at Millsaps College and his professional training at the Eastman School of Music, where he earned his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in composition under Howard Hanson, Bernard Rogers, and Wayne Barlow. A former conducting student of Richard Lert and William Steinberg, he served for eight years as a conductor of the Rochester Philharmonic, after completing earlier tenures as conductor of the Saginaw Symphony, music advisor of the Flint Symphony, and founder of the Alma Symphony. In 1973 Jones established The Shepherd School of Music and served as its dean for six years. A guest conductor of many major orchestras and universities both in this country and abroad, he is a past president of the National Conductors' Guild and a frequent master teacher at conducting workshops throughout the country. Jones is the recipient of a Ford Foundation Recording/Publication Grant, a Martha Baird Rockefeller fellowship, a Woodrow Wilson National fellowship, the Tribbett Award, two Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Music Awards, NEA grants, and numerous ASCAP awards.

*SCOTT O'NEIL* is in his second year as a graduate conducting student of Larry Rachleff at The Shepherd School of Music. He previously attended the Oberlin Conservatory and the Eastman School of Music where he was the Assistant Conductor and Program Coordinator of Ensembles. He has also served as Assistant Conductor of the Northern Ohio Youth Orchestra, the Oberlin Community Singers, and the Candlewood Theater (Danbury, Connecticut).

## UPCOMING ORCHESTRA CONCERT

Friday, April 25, 8:00 p.m. - SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
Larry Rachleff, conductor PROGRAM: Mahler **Symphony No. 6**.  
Stude Concert Hall. Free Admission.

