

*SHEPHERD SCHOOL
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA*

LARRY RACHLEFF, music director

Saturday, October 4, 2008

8:00 p.m.

Stude Concert Hall

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

PROGRAM

Le Corsaire, Op. 21

Hector Berlioz
(1803-1869)

Prelude and Liebestod
from Tristan and Isolde

Richard Wagner
(1813-1883)

INTERMISSION

The Moldau
from Má Vlast

Bedřich Smetana
(1824-1884)

Sinfonietta
Allegretto
Andante
Moderato
Allegretto
Allegro

Leoš Janáček
(1854-1928)

The reverberative acoustics of Stude Concert Hall magnify the slightest sound made by the audience. Your care and courtesy will be appreciated. The taking of photographs and use of recording equipment are prohibited.

SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Violin I

Joseph Maile,
concertmaster
ANNE AND CHARLES
DUNCAN CHAIR
Christina Wilke
Ying Fu
Amanda Chamberlain
Sonja Harasim
Eric Siu
Kaoru Suzuki
Mae Bariff
Heidi Amundson
Luke Hsu
Andrew Ling
Horng-Ann Liang
Yennifer Correia
Jun Hyun Kim
Genevieve Micheletti
Hyi-Youn Lee

Violin II

Sarah Ludwig,
principal
Analise Kukulhan
Tudor Dornescu
Hannah Dremann
Mary Jeppson
Creston Herron
Sol Jin
Emil Ivanov
Lijia Phang
Rachel Sandman
Benjamin Brookstone
Joanna Park
Bo Xun
Meredith Peacock

Viola

Pei Ling Lin,
principal
Emily Grossruck
Marissa Winship
Jordan Warmath
Nicholas Mauro
Katherine Curatolo
Hillary Schoap
Rainey Weber
Jules Sulpico
Katherine Larson
Whitney Bullock
Jonathan Stewart

Cello

Meta Weiss, principal
ANNETTE AND HUGH
GRAGG CHAIR
Jacob Fowler
Gabriel Beistline

Cello (cont.)

Sophie Benn
Rosanna Butterfield
Cherry Kim
Cara Cheung
Meredith Bates
Keith Thomas
Melody Yenn

Double Bass

Edward Botsford,
principal
Kevin Brown
Annabella Leslie
Nicholas Cathcart
Emily Honeyman
Harish Kumar
Amalia Bandy
Charles Nilles

Flute

Henrik Heide
Izumi Miyahara
Matthew Roitstein
Henry Williford
Natalie Zeldin
Heather Zinninger

Piccolo

Henrik Heide
Izumi Miyahara
Matthew Roitstein

Oboe

Clara Blood
Stanley Chyi
Jayne Drummond
Kristin Kall
Jeffrey Stephenson
Shane Wedel

English Horn

Clara Blood
Stanley Chyi

Clarinet

Ellen Breakfield
Jared Hawkins
Eric Jacobs
James Johnson
Matthew Nelson
Cayce Vega

E-flat Clarinet

James Johnson

Bass Clarinet

Benjamin Mitchell

Bassoon

Thomas DeWitt
Tracy Jacobson
Miles Maner
Jeffrey Nesrsta
David Richmond
Robert Trussell

Horn

Katharine Caliendo
MARGARET C. PACK CHAIR
Erik Finley
Nicholas Hartman
Matthew Muehl-Miller
Roman Ponomariov
Scott Strong
Julie Thayer

Trumpet

Joseph Brown
Joseph Cooper
Patrick Corvington
Ryan Darke
Larry Hernandez
Brian Hess
Kevin Lynch
Thomas Siders
Robert Zider

Bass Trumpet

Benjamin Zilber

Trombone

Jeremy Buckler
Caitlin Hickey
Samuel Jackson
Benjamin Zilber

Bass Trombone

John Stanley

Tenor Tuba

Michael Selover
Andrew Welborn

Tuba

Benjamin Ammon
Sarah Herald
Andrew Welborn

Harp

Emily Klein

Harp (cont.)

Megan Levin
Mason Morton
Sadie Turner

Keyboard

Kimi Kawashima
CHARLOTTE A. ROTHWELL
CHAIR

Timpani and Percussion

Robert Garza
Craig Hauschildt
Rebecca Hook
Heidi Law
Brian Manchen
Christian Slagle
Gregory Tsalikis

Orchestra Manager and Librarian

Kaaren Fleisher

Production Manager

Megan Manning

Assistant Production Manager

Mandy Billings
Francis Schmidt

Library Assistants

Gabriel Beistline
Yennifer Correia
Emily Grossruck
Creston Herron
Julia Immel
Cherry Kim
Annabella Leslie
Sarah Ludwig
Reenat Pinchas
Jessica Robinson
Jing Wang
Marissa Winship

Stage Assistants

Benjamin Ammon
Jeremy Buckler
Casey Cangelosi
Stanley Chyi
Thomas DeWitt
André Dyachenko
Jacob Fowler
Evan Halloin
Adam Matthes
Charles Nilles
John Stanley
Andrew Welborn

STRING SEATING CHANGES WITH EACH CONCERT.

WINDS, BRASS, PERCUSSION AND HARP LISTED ALPHABETICALLY.

PROGRAM NOTES

Le Corsaire, Op. 21 Hector Berlioz

Louis Hector Berlioz is one of the most celebrated French composers of the nineteenth century, but unlike his contemporaries, Berlioz was not a child prodigy. Born to a physician at La Côte-Saint-André in the vicinity of Lyon, the young Berlioz only started studying music at the age of twelve. Initially discouraged by his father from playing the piano, the young Berlioz could only learn about harmony from a book. In 1821 at the age of eighteen, Berlioz went to Paris to study medicine, only to abandon this pursuit in 1824 in favor of a career in music. He enrolled in the Paris Conservatoire in 1826 to study composition, and by 1830 he had completed his famous *Symphonie Fantastique*. With this and other works he introduced his concept of the *idée fixe*, in which a central unifying theme reappears in different form throughout the piece. Detailed programs, rich orchestration, and thematic unity would develop into key qualities of Berlioz's romantic style.

Less well known than the *Symphonie Fantastique*, although equally brilliant, is Berlioz's overture *Le Corsaire*. Originally entitled *La Tour de Nice*, Berlioz made his first sketches for the work in 1831 while staying in a tower in Nice with a view to the sea. Following subsequent revisions and title changes, Berlioz completed this present version with the final title *Le Corsaire* in 1855. Although many believe the work to be inspired by a Lord Byron poem of the same name that depicts the life of a pirate, Berlioz did not indicate this connection explicitly in the score. Nevertheless, the adventurous spirit of Byron's poem and Berlioz's overture creates an interesting parallel. The piece opens intensely with quick runs in the violins, which dissipate in favor of a peaceful slow section with lush strings and plaintive woodwinds. After a brief interlude, the opening violin runs return, followed shortly thereafter by a gaily swaying theme in the brass. The strings reinforce this swaying theme, which resurfaces throughout the remainder of the work. This strong sense of thematic unity, coupled with the composer's brilliant orchestration, exemplifies Berlioz's descriptive and picturesque musical style, and one can not help but wonder if the composer secretly intended to portray the swashbuckling exploits of a pirate at sea in this exhilarating work.

Prelude and Liebestod from Tristan and Isolde Richard Wagner

Born in Leipzig, Germany, Richard Wagner first began studying composition there in 1828 under Christian Gottlieb Müller. In 1831 he enrolled at the University of Leipzig, and he continued his composition studies under the cantor of Leipzig's Saint Thomas church, Christian Theodor Weinlig. Today, Wagner is chiefly remembered for his operas, or music dramas, as he referred to them, which were revolutionary for their time. With these works, Wagner sought to create what he termed the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or "complete artwork." In this complete artwork, all forms of art would be represented equally and simultaneously, with music, theatre, literature, and visual art all blending into one harmonious whole. Indeed, Wagner's operas, with their daring harmonies, stunning orchestration, and intricate portrayals of medieval German legends, explore the entire gamut of musical and artistic expression, and exemplify the height of romanticism in nineteenth-century music.

In terms of harmonic innovation, Wagner's opera *Tristan und Isolde* is one of his most influential works. He based the opera on the medieval romance of the same name by Gottfried von Straßburg, and it premiered on June 10, 1865. Its unusual harmonies – including a dissonant opening chord popularly known as the Tristan chord, which resolves to another equally dissonant chord – have been as fascinating to subsequent generations as they were troubling to Wagner's. The *Prelude and Liebestod* is an orchestral arrangement written by the composer that fuses the music of the opera's opening *Prelude*, containing the introductory Tristan chord, with Isolde's Act 3 aria, "Mild und leise," which concludes the entire staged work. Interestingly, Wagner completed this orchestral arrangement before

finishing the opera, giving the **Prelude and Liebestod** its premiere in 1862, three years before the first performance of the opera. The **Liebestod** section in this arrangement may be performed with or without a soprano, although the mystical beauty and power of the music certainly shines through with the force of the orchestra alone. Listeners initially hear the sense of unresolved yearning that pervades this passionate love story, while the closing **Liebestod** reveals Isolde's ecstasy in her desire to unite eternally with her lover, Tristan, in death. With mesmerizing orchestration, rapturous melodies, and gripping harmonies, **Prelude and Liebestod** propels the listener through the complex emotions that characterize this unique and timeless opera.

The Moldau from *Má Vlast* Bedřich Smetana

Bedřich Smetana is one of the most important Czech composers and one of the first composers from his region to write specifically "Czech" music. Born to a brewer in Litomyšl, Bohemia, then part of the Austrian Empire, Smetana met with initial resistance from his father when he decided to study music in Prague. Nevertheless, he finished his schooling and then moved to Göteborg, Sweden, in 1856, to work as a conductor for five years. On his return to Bohemia in 1861, he became interested in a musical movement designed to build a sense of Czech national identity, in which composers incorporated into their compositions songs and legends evoking the Czech landscape and history. He engaged himself in this movement wholeheartedly, and in 1863 he opened a music school in Prague designed specifically to promote Czech music. Tragically, after suffering from hearing problems early in 1874, he became almost completely deaf in the summer of 1875. However, drawing inspiration from Beethoven's similar situation, he continued to compose up until his death in 1884.

It is fortunate that Smetana decided to continue composing despite his hearing problems, for the same year that he started to lose his hearing he began composing one of his most celebrated and cherished works, his symphonic poem **The Moldau**. This work and five others comprise a tone poem cycle bearing the overarching title **Má Vlast**, or **My Fatherland**. By imbuing each poem in the cycle with Czech folk themes, and by basing the programs of his symphonic poems on historical Czech epics or aspects of the Czech countryside, Smetana provides a powerful testament to his personal patriotism and love for his native land through this work. Equally as powerful was the reception in Prague after this cycle's first complete performance on November 2, 1882. Even today, this cycle is seen in the Czech Republic as a symbol of national identity and pride. **The Moldau**, the second poem in the cycle and the most renowned of the six, is based on the river of the same name that flows through the Czech Republic. Smetana was initially inspired to write a tone poem after taking a country trip along the Moldau in 1870. The music comprises several sections that depict various scenes that could be observed while traveling down the river. The opening depicts two small springs that join to form the single current of the river, which flows through woods and meadows, past the celebration of a country wedding, past magical water nymphs and legendary castles, exploding through the St. John Rapids, and finally making its way through Prague before it disappears into the distance.

Sinfonietta Leoš Janáček

Another Czech composer who was inspired by the nationalist movement in music was Leoš Janáček. Janáček was the son of a schoolmaster, born in Hudeč, Moravia, which was then part of the Austrian Empire. He studied composition at the Leipzig Conservatory from 1879 to 1880, and at the Vienna Conservatory in 1880, but later settled in the Czech city of Brno. After meeting and befriending Antonín Dvořák in 1874, Janáček began composing in a traditionally romantic style. But shortly thereafter, he became interested in the study of folk music, and he began personally compiling and arranging Czech, Moravian, and

Slavic folk songs. By creating his own unique musical style based on these folk songs, Janáček exemplified the study and employment of folk music that characterized the nineteenth-century romantic nationalist movement.

Janáček's *Sinfonietta* for orchestra certainly demonstrates the composer's interest in folk music as well as his personal zeal for his native land. Upon receiving the request to write a short piece for the Sokol Gymnastic Festival, the composer wrote a brass fanfare, inspired by a military band he had heard perform at a garden party. This fanfare then became the germ for his *Sinfonietta*, which he composed in only three weeks in March 1926. According to Janáček, he wrote the work to express "contemporary free man, his spiritual beauty and joy, his courage, strength, and determination to fight for victory." Comprising five movements, each with its own programmatic title of *Fanfares*, *The Castle*, *The Queen's Monastery*, *The Street*, and *The Town Hall*, this composition for large orchestra evokes the composer's sense of pride in the growing strength of his city and country following Czechoslovakia's independence in 1918. The first movement, marked *Allegretto* and scored for brass and kettledrum, reveals the powerful *Fanfare* from which all other musical material in the piece derives. The second movement, *Andante*, opens with a frenetic energy in the woodwinds that is then taken up with equal intensity by the strings, to be replaced later by a grand and lyrical theme in the brass. In contrast, the *Moderato* third movement opens and ends contemplatively among mellow strings, surrounding a central section for boisterous brass that hearkens to the feverish intensity of the second movement. The fourth movement, *Allegretto*, seems to waver between frenzy and calm, all the while reinforcing a folkloristic-sounding melody that is introduced by the trumpets. Plaintive woodwinds and quavering strings open the final movement, *Allegro*, which later bursts into a recapitulation of the first movement. This recapitulation, now with the glorious sounds of the full orchestra, completes a large circle that unifies all of the work's musical material with the original seed of the brass fanfare. With such powerful melodies and overall strength of design, one cannot help but marvel at the work's bold spirit—a true reflection of Janáček's feelings for his native land.

— Notes by Michael S. Richardson

UPCOMING ORCHESTRA EVENTS

Sunday, October 5, 8:00 p.m. — SHEPHERD SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Larry Rachleff, conductor PROGRAM: Varèse - *Ionisation*; Tchaikovsky - *Suite No. 4 in G Major, Op. 61 "Mozartiana"*; and Mendelssohn - *Symphony No. 3 in A Minor, Op. 56 "Scottish."* Stude Concert Hall. Free admission.

November 5, 7, 9 and 10 — SHEPHERD SCHOOL OPERA and the SHEPHERD SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA present two one-act operas: *Savitri* by Gustav Holst and *Gianni Schicchi* by Giacomo Puccini. Richard Bado, conductor; Cristian Măcelaru, conductor (Nov. 10); Debra Dickinson, director. Sunday's performance (Nov. 9) at 2:00 p.m.; all other performances at 7:30 p.m. Wortham Opera Theatre at the Shepherd School. Admission (general seating): \$12; students and senior citizens \$10. For tickets call 713-348-8000.

Saturday, November 8, 8:00 p.m. — SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Larry Rachleff, conductor PROGRAM: Adams - *The Chairman Dances: Foxtrot for Orchestra* (Cristian Măcelaru, conductor); Berg - *Violin Concerto* (Kathleen Winkler, soloist); and Beethoven - *Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, Op. 55*. Stude Concert Hall. Free admission.



RICE