Sunday, April 28, 2019 | 3:00 PM

**Inspiration**

Dr. Robert G. Hasty, Music Director
North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in Skokie

Pastorale d’été, H. 31 ......................................................... Arthur Honegger (1892–1955)

Tableaux de Provence .................................................. Paule Maurice (1910–1967)

- Farandole des jeunes filles (Farandole of the young girls)
- Chanson pour ma mie (Song for my love)
- La bohémienne (The Bohemian woman, or The Gypsy)
- Des alyscamps l’âme soupire (A Sigh on the soul for the Alyscamps)
- Le cabridan (The Bumblebee)

Matthew Dardick, alto saxophone

2018 Winner Bonnie and Dr. Lee Malmed Young Artists Competition

Intermission

Crisantemi ................................................................. Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924)

- Prélude (quasi adagio)
- Fileuse (andantino quasi allegretto)
- Sicilienne (allegro molto moderato)
- Mort de Mélisande (molto adagio)

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Arthur Honegger—Pastorale d’été

Born in France to Swiss parents, Arthur Honegger showed early promise as a musician. By the age of 19 he was enrolled as a student at the Paris Conservatoire where he befriended Darius Milhaud, Germaine Tailleferre, Jacques Ibert, and came under the influence of prominent French musicians such as Debussy, Ravel, Dukas, and Faure. Several years later Honegger, along with fellow composers Milhaud, Tailleferre, Francis Poulenc, Louis Durey, and Georges Auric formed a group known as Les Six. Though each member of the assemblage was decidedly unique in musical temperament, together they embraced a refined musical language characterized by dry sonorities, sophisticated moods, and references to everyday life and vernacular entertainments such as jazz and the music hall. Shortly after the formation of Les Six, Honegger defined his own musical aesthetic: “I do not worship the fair, or the music-hall, but chamber music and symphony music for its essence of solemnness and austerity. I place such importance in the architecture of music that I would never want to see it sacrificed for reasons of literary or pictorial order.” Indeed, Honegger cultivated a style that was weightier and somewhat more serious than that of his colleagues.

Whereas other members of Les Six struggled to find success with either critics or the concert-going public, Honegger was a relatively celebrated composer, renowned for such popular works as the symphonic poem Pacific 231 and the dramatic oratorios King David and Joan of Arc. He was quite prolific and made notable contributions to opera, ballet, choral music, chamber music, and orchestral music. In all genres his music was written in a bold, uninhibited musical idiom that combines interesting harmonies, a coloristic approach to orchestration, a love of Bachian counterpoint, and the careful use of large architectural structures.

In 1920, not long after the formation of Les Six, Honegger visited Switzerland, his ancestral homeland, where the picturesque Alpine surroundings inspired his first significant orchestral piece, Pastorale d’été (Summer Pastorale). Prefaced by a quotation from the poet Arthur Rimbaud—“J’ai embrassé l’aube d’été” (I have embraced the summer dawn)—the work paints an evocative picture of a tranquil summer morning. Scored for a small chamber orchestra, the work begins quietly, as a languorous horn melody emerges from rustling strings. Birdcalls from the clarinet and flute punctuate the sonorous fabric and contribute to the bucolic atmosphere. As the sun rises higher in the sky, activity increases. The clarinet and bassoon introduce a lively middle section that calls to mind the folk dances of Switzerland’s rustic mountain peasants. As the dance runs its course, the opening music returns to end the piece in the same placid manner of the opening.

Paule Maurice—Tableaux de Provence

Little is known of French composer Paule Maurice outside of the few compositions that remain in the repertory. She is omitted from nearly every book or encyclopedia of composers, and when she is mentioned, it is in a short entry that gives virtually no information about her life or compositions. According to her own writings she completed over fifty works yet, only seven are documented.

Maurice studied at the Paris Conservatoire and went on to teach there and at the Ecole Normale de Musique for over twenty-five years. Several of her students won major awards, including the Prix de Rome, for composition. Along with a colleague she authored an important treatise on harmony, which became a standard reference work in France.
At an unknown date, Maurice and her husband became close friends with saxophonist Marcel Mule when Mule asked her to teach composition to his young son. This friendship gave Maurice the initial interest in writing a piece for saxophone, the *Tableaux de Provence*.

*Tableaux de Provence* is undoubtedly Maurice’s most well known work. It was written around 1955 and dedicated to Mule, who became the first performer to record the work in 1957. It was premiered in public a year later by Jean-Marie Londeix who wrote: “Tableaux is a series of musical postcards depicting picturesque and attractive images. The piece conveys a particular setting or mood musically, while avoiding any uncharacteristic elements that could hinder this clear musical communication and enchantment.” Provence, a rural area in Southern France, was special to Paule Maurice because of the vacations she spent there with her husband Pierre and the Mule family. Each movement of *Tableaux* presents a different image of the area from Maurice’s memories.

The first movement, “Farandole des jeunes filles” (Dance of the Young Girls), is a light and fast-moving piece that imitates the farandole, a Provencal dance done outdoors, in which a group of dancers hold hands to form a chain. The saxophone is given rapidly moving melodic lines that require quick finger dexterity and light articulations. The slow second movement, “Chanson pour ma mie” (Song for my Lover), calls to mind an improvised serenade, the singer perhaps accompanying himself on the guitar. The melody is warm and smooth, with an ending that is particularly soft and delicate. “La Bohémienne” (The Gypsy Girl) uses strongly accented rhythms to express the fiery temperament of the Gypsy people. The swift dance-like melody is marked by a feeling of wild abandon that calls for great virtuosity from the saxophonist.

The intimate fourth movement, “Des alyscamps l’ame soupire” (From the Graveyard of Les Alyscamps, a Soul Sighs), describes a Roman burial site in Provence that has been depicted in works by both Van Gogh and Gauguin. The movement is slow and hauntingly lyrical. According to Maurice herself:

“...The movement was written during a very emotional period when I learned of the death of my husband’s cousin, whom we considered a brother. He was living in Provence in a vineyard with peach trees and olive trees in the country. I still remember the hours we shared reading poetry together. Thanks to him, I learned to experience the true charm of Provence, to appreciate the cricket’s song and the sound of the waterfall. I cannot express in words how devastating it was to lose him. This movement was written within two days at that period.”

The final movement of the Tableaux, entitled “La cabridan,” is named for a large insect similar to a cicada that is native to Provence. Constant motion, representative of the insect’s aerial acrobatics characterizes the saxophone writing. Londeix states: “The saxophonist must be technically proficient and able to move quickly through the range of the instrument without hesitation or interruption.” Near the movement’s end, the frantic perpetual motion suddenly halts, as if the bug is momentarily hovering in place. A brief saxophone cadenza interjects a moment of calm. The hurried pace resumes, seemingly “to depict the rapid escape of the insect, which disappears in a general diminuendo.”
Giacomo Puccini—*Crisantemi*

Giacomo Puccini is generally regarded as one of the most important and successful opera composers of all time, with masterpieces such as *La Bohème, Turandot, Madama Butterfly,* and *Tosca* having earned a revered place in the standard repertoire. So popular are these works and so renowned is Puccini's reputation in the operatic genre, that many people are surprised to learn that he composed several non-operatic works. Puccini himself acknowledged that his true talent lay “only in the theatre,” and so works outside of that orbit are relatively few. However, the string quartet was a medium for which he had a certain affinity. As a conservatory student he composed a number of movements for string quartet. Several years later, in 1890, he composed another piece for strings, *I Crisantemi* (The Chrysanthemums). The work was reportedly finished in a single evening in response to the sudden death of his friend, Amedeo di Savoia, Duke of Aosta. The young Duke had been selected to assume the throne of Spain after the Glorious Revolution of 1868. However, the task of unifying the warring nation and restoring order while under the constant threat of assassination and civil war proved too great, and Savoia abdicated in 1873. Returning home humiliated, he lived a quiet life in Turin until his death at the age of 44. Exactly how a friendship between the Duke and Puccini came about is not known, but it must have been significant enough to inspire *I Crisantemi*—an elegiac piece named after the flower of mourning and heroism in Italian tradition.

The brief work is crafted as a single movement and is comprised of two main themes. The first violins play the role of operatic lead throughout the piece and begin the quartet with a restless and passionate rising and falling aria. The first section ends with a dramatic outburst and a final restatement of its opening notes. After a short pause, the second section begins; its mournful melody accompanied by nervous pulsations in the violas is even more melancholy than the first. Without pause, the first section returns to complete the lament.

Puccini was apparently fond enough of this music that he reused it liberally in his third opera *Manon Lescaut.* The soaring main theme that opens the quartet serves as the orchestral backdrop for much of the action of Act IV, when Manon and her paramour are wandering to their deaths in the desert, while the quartet’s soloistic second theme underscores the Act III prison duet between the ill-fated lovers.

**Gabriel Fauré—*Pelléas et Mélisande***

Though he is often viewed as a marginal figure of the late 19th century, Gabriel Fauré was highly regarded in his native France, and made important contributions to the emerging musical idiom of the early modern period. At the centenary of his birth, the eminent musicologist Leslie Orrey wrote: “More profound than Saint-Saëns, more varied than Lalo, more spontaneous than d’Indy, more classic than Debussy, Gabriel Fauré is the master par excellence of French music, the perfect mirror of our musical genius.” As a composer, Fauré linked the last years of Romanticism with the 20th century. He worked during a time when the evolution of musical language was particularly rapid; when experimental avant-garde techniques pushed music in shocking new directions. As a result, his style developed and changed over the course of his long career, exhibiting a unique blend of the traditional with emerging new trends. Fauré’s music was boldly expressive, free of
bombast, rich in harmony, and lyrically delicate yet profound. Though his compositional brilliance was, perhaps, more suited to smaller forms such as art songs and chamber music, several of his larger works, such as the Requiem, Pavana and Suite to Pelléas et Mélisande stand as exquisite masterpieces.

In 1892, the celebrated English actress Mrs. Patrick Campbell commissioned Fauré to provide incidental music for Maurice Maeterlinck’s drama Pelléas et Mélisande, in which she was to appear. Pelléas was representative of a daring new literary movement known as Symbolism, which favored spirituality, imagination, and dreams to the more reality-based naturalism of Romanticism. Though Mrs. Campbell had initially wanted Debussy to pen the score, he was unavailable, and in a happy coincidence, she was introduced to Fauré, whose musical style turned out to be particularly well suited to the play’s timbre.

Perpetually overworked, and with a deadline looming, Fauré composed quickly. He wrote to his wife: “I will have to grind away hard for Mélisande when I get back. I hardly have a month and a half to write all that music. True, some of it is already in my thick head!” To save time, he reused music from several incomplete projects and/or unsuccessful works. He also enlisted the help of a student, Charles Koechlin, to complete the task of orchestration, which the composer himself always found tedious. Finishing the commission on time, Fauré conducted the orchestra for the premiere, at London’s Prince of Wales Theater on 21 June 1898. Mrs. Campbell was enchanted by his music, in which, she wrote, “he has grasped with most tender inspiration the poetic purity that pervades and envelops M. Maeterlinck’s lovely play.” So pleased was the actress with his work that she asked him to compose further theatre music for her, but to his regret, his workload as director of the Paris Conservatoire made it impossible.

Fauré composed 19 separate pieces to accompany the initial production of the play. Shortly thereafter he decided to organize this music into an orchestral suite, which he orchestrated himself, drawing on Koechlin’s score as a starting point. He expanded the orchestral forces, rewrote several passages, and added additional music. In 1909 he further revised this suite into the version that we hear today.

The slow Prélude sets the stage for the entire suite, creating a dream-like atmosphere as Mélisande wanders despondently through a forest. A soaring, lushly-scored string melody dominates this section, which suggests both intimacy and longing. Fileuse (Spinning Song) draws on a scene from Act III in which Mélisande is seated at a spinning wheel. A gentle oboe melody is accompanied by the strings, whose undulating figurations imitate spinning. The old-fashioned dance known as Sicilienne represents the one moment of happiness shared by the two lovers, though their pleasure is short-lived when Pelléas accidentally drops her wedding ring into a fountain. The Mort de Mélisande (Death of Mélisande) brings the suite to a slow and somber conclusion. The music begins with a fragile march from flutes and clarinets above the discreet tread of the cellos and double basses—a funeral cortège for a fairytale.
Matt Dardick, from Elmhurst, Illinois, is currently pursuing degrees in saxophone performance as well as history at Northwestern University. At Northwestern, Matt studies with Taimur Sullivan, plays baritone saxophone in a saxophone quartet, and has had the opportunity to work under the direction of Dr. Mallory Thompson of the Northwestern Symphonic Wind Ensemble during his freshman year. Matt also was chosen to play master classes for Dr. Fred Hemke, Dr. Kenneth Tse, and Joe Lulloff during the current school year.

In high school, Matt studied with Roger Birkeland and Mark Colby—applied faculty members at Elmhurst College. Before coming to Northwestern, Matt won York Community High School’s concerto competition in his junior and senior years and won second place in the Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra Robert Stanger Young Artists Competition in his senior year. During that same year, Matt also played with the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra’s Philharmonic Orchestra and Symphony Orchestra.

In 2017, Matt placed as first chair alto saxophone in the Illinois Music Educators Association All State Honors Band; and in 2018, Matt was selected to play with the All State Honors Jazz Combo.

After his graduation from high school, Matt studied with Kenneth Radnofsky and Dr. Jennifer Bill at Boston University’s Tanglewood Institute.

As a student of the jazz idiom as well as classical music, Matt played lead alto saxophone in numerous youth honors jazz bands during high school, including the Youth Jazz Ensemble of DuPage, Midwest Young Artists Conservatory Big Band, and Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra’s Jazz Orchestra. Matt also played in combos organized by both Midwest Young Artists Conservatory and Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras. In both 2017 and 2018, Matt performed at the Chicago Jazz Festival. In 2017, Matt attended Birch Creek Performance Center’s Jazz Session, where he received the Best Wind Instrument Player Award; and in 2016, Matt went on tour in France and Italy with the Blue Lake Fine Arts Jazz Orchestra. Throughout his jazz studies, Matt has worked with Scott Burns, Mike Lee, Geof Bradfield, Quentin Coaxum, Chris Madsen, Pharez Whitted, and longtime mentor Mark Colby.

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Dr. Robert G. Hasty is the Music Director of the Kenosha Symphony Orchestra, Principal Conductor of the Highland Park Strings, and the conductor of the Chamber Orchestra and the Philharmonia at the Henry and Leigh Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University where he also serves as the Associate Director of Orchestras. He is also Artistic Director of the International Schools Choral Music Society.

Dr. Hasty began his career teaching music in the public schools in Southern California. This included service as the District Music Coordinator of the Capistrano Unified School District where he supervised the K-12 music education program and its staff of 39 teachers. He also served an elected term as Vice President in charge of String Education for the Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association.

A noted researcher in music cognition, Dr. Hasty has been an author for two publications delivered at the 7th International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition in Sydney, Australia. A book on his research on conducting has recently been published: “Critical Listening While Conducting”. The European Society for Cognitive Sciences of Music invited him to speak at their conference in Portugal on these studies.

As a conductor, Dr. Hasty has appeared with the All-American College Orchestra at Walt Disney World, Beijing Youth Orchestra, Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra, Grant Park Symphony Orchestra, Irvine Youth Symphony, La Primavera Orchestra, Merit Symphony Orchestra, Metropolis Youth Symphony, National High School Music Institute Orchestra, Northwestern University Symphony Orchestra, NU Opera Theater, NU Contemporary Music Ensemble, and the Skokie Valley Symphony Orchestra. His performances have been broadcast on WFMT radio in Chicago and on the Big Ten Network. Dr. Hasty’s international engagements include the National Concert Hall of Taipei, Taiwan, the Forbidden City Concert Hall in Beijing, China, the Shanghai Oriental Arts Center Concert Hall in Shanghai, China, the Busan Cultural Center Main Theater in Busan, South Korea, and the Suzhou Culture and Arts Center Grand Theater in Suzhou, China. He is sought-after as an honor orchestra conductor, conducting honor groups across the United States. He is a member of the conducting and music education faculties at the Bienen School of Music.

Dr. Hasty has also spent his career as a freelance violinist and violist, having been a student of Alice Schoenfeld at the USC Thornton School of Music. Dr. Hasty was the violist on the world premiere of Kathy Henkel’s Moorland Sketches, which was broadcast on KUSC-FM Los Angeles. These days, you will find him fiddling in several Chicago clubs and venues with various local bands, most notably performing and recording with singer-songwriter Christina Trulio (ASCAP).
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