Sunday, September 22, 2019 | 3:00 PM

Visions & Virtuosity

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

Carnival Overture Op. 92 ...........................................................................................................Antonin Dvořák
(1841-1904)

Concerto Da Camera for Alto Saxophone and 11 Instruments ........................................ Jacques Ibert
(1890-1962)

Allegro con moto
Larghetto, animato molto

Intermission

Scheherazade ...............................................................................................................Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov
(1844-1908)

The Sea and Sinbad’s Ship
Largo e maestoso - Lento – Allegro non troppo – Tranquillo

The Kalander Prince
Lento – Andantino – Allegro molto – Vivace scherzando – Moderato assai – Allegro molto ed
animato

The Young Prince and The Young Princess
Andantino quasi allegretto – Pochissimo più mosso – Come prima – Pochissimo più animato

Festival at Baghdad. The Sea. The Ship Breaks Against a Cliff Surmounted by a Bronze Horseman
Allegro molto – Lento – Vivo – Allegro non troppo e maestoso – Tempo come

This concert is supported in part by

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Program Notes

Dvorák - Carnival Overture

Antonín Dvořák enjoyed moderate success as a composer in his native Czechoslovakia but was little known elsewhere until he came to the attention of Johannes Brahms in 1877. With the support of Brahms, his publisher, and a circle of influential friends, the career of the man who would be known as the quintessential Bohemian composer was launched. Honors and recognition were now his: he was soon invited to conduct in London in what would prove to be the first of nine visits to England; he was awarded an honorary doctorate from Cambridge University; appointed professor at the Prague Conservatory; and in 1891, he was enticed to visit the United States to serve as the first director of the newly founded National Conservatory of Music in New York City.

It is from this extremely busy and fruitful period that the popular Carnival Overture emerged. The piece was initially conceived as the second of a triptych of concert overtures intended to portray different aspects of “...Nature, and her powers for good and evil." Nature, Life and Love was the original name for the set, and it was under that title that the pieces were presented at their premier in 1892, just before Dvořák sailed for America. Soon however, Dvořák decided to publish the overtures separately and with new names to reflect their distinct identities: In Nature's Realm, Carnival, and Othello. The opening overture of the trilogy showed the composer's delight in the natural world and is filled with bird songs and other sounds of nature. Dvořák stated that the second work, the Carnival Overture, was meant to depict “a lonely, contemplative wanderer reaching a city at twilight where a festival is in full swing. On every side is heard the clangor of instruments, mingled with shouts of joy and the unrestrained hilarity of the people giving vent to their feelings in songs and dances." The final overture deals with love as experienced in the tragedy of Othello: he who “loved not wisely but too well.”

When heard by itself, the Carnival Overture exudes high spirits. The vigorous opening theme forms the first portion of a large-scale ternary form (ABA). Subsidiary themes are introduced, each one seeming to grow naturally from its predecessor. The B section is introduced as the energy of the opening begins to fade away. Here, it seems that the participant in the carnival gaiety has withdrawn momentarily to a tranquil retreat. The rustic sound of the English horn provides a simple accompaniment to a gentle melody in the flute. After further elaboration, the peaceful interlude ends much as it began. The recapitulation of the jovial A theme brings the piece to a rousing conclusion.

Ibert - Concertino da Camera

A native of Paris, Jaques Ibert first studied music with his mother before entering the Paris Conservatory in 1910 where he focused on composition. Shortly thereafter, the Great War interrupted his musical studies. Ibert became a naval officer and saw action at Dunkirk. With the war's end he returned to the Conservatory and won the 1919 Prix de Rome, enabling three years of study in Italy. So enchanted was Ibert with Rome, that he remained there for years, serving as the Director of the French Academy at the Villa Medici from 1937 to 1960. He was known as a fine administrator and a mentor to the next generation of French composers who studied in the Italian capital. During the German occupation of France, Ibert's patriotism and past military service caused the pro-Nazi Vichy government to ban his music and exile him. He was readmitted to the country when General de Gaulle recalled him to Paris in 1944. In 1955 he was named director of the French National Lyric Theaters, which ran both the Paris Opera and the Opera-Comique. Shortly afterwards he was elected to the Academie des Beaux-Arts.

As a composer, Ibert refused to ally himself to any particular musical trend or school, maintaining that “all systems are valid, provided we use them to make music," a position that caused him to be categorized as an “eclectic." He blended aspects of several musical styles, including Impressionism, the more austere modern idiom practiced by his French colleagues Les Six, and Stravinsky’s neoclassicism. His biographer, Alexandra Laederich, writes, “His music can be festive and gay...lyric and inspired, or descriptive and evocative. It is often tinged with gentle humor. All the elements of his musical language, except that of harmony, relate closely to the Classical tradition.” His work was elegantly crafted, and at its core was emotional integrity: “What matters in art is what moves, rather than what surprises. Emotion cannot be faked; she marks her own time. Shock is limited; it is a mere transitory effect of fashion.” He lent his unique voice to operettas, ballets, and more than 60 film and theater scores, including Orson Welles' Macbeth. Among his most distinctive contributions are those works for soloists and orchestra, such as the Concertino da Camera.
Written in 1935, the *Concertino da Camera* was dedicated to saxophone pioneer Sigurd Rascher. Rascher was instrumental in helping to bring the saxophone out of the jazz club and into the concert hall, partnering with numerous contemporary composers (including Henry Cowell, Alexander Glazunov, Paul Hindemith, Eric Coates, and Alan Hovhaness) to establish a concert repertoire. As if paying homage to the instrument’s jazz roots, Ibert used a small chamber orchestra of eleven instruments, resembling a jazz ensemble, to accompany the soloist. (Common performance practice employs a full string section, along with individual flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, French horn, and trumpet.) Abundant syncopation, interesting instrumental timbres, and the use of a diminished (blues) scale also suggest the *Concertino’s* jazz connections.

Although written in two movements, the work actually emulates the tripartite fast-slow-fast structure of the classical concerto. The rapidly paced opening movement requires technical wizardry on the part of the soloist. A short orchestral introduction sets the stage for the saxophone, which enters with a breathlessly energetic melody. Though the accompanying material is uniquely interesting and complex in its own right, it is effectively overshadowed by the fiendishly difficult solo part, made even more so by its perpetual motion and rapid scale passages that transit the entire register of the instrument. The second movement opens with a lyrical, slow interlude; a bluesy saxophone ballad. Without warning, Ibert returns suddenly to the spiky, energetic mode of the first movement, climaxing in a virtuosic cadenza before a collective dash to the finish.

**Rimsky-Korsakov -- *Scheherazade***

Like many composers of the late 19th century, particularly his Russian counterparts, Rimsky-Korsakov was fascinated by the mysterious and exotic cultures of the Far East, India, and Arabia. In the winter of 1888, he was at work completing the unfinished opera *Prince Igor* by his recently deceased friend Alexander Borodin. While immersed in this story and music, with its distinctly Eastern flavor, he conceived the idea of composing his own orchestral suite full of exotic melodies: *Scheherazade*. The source material for this musical tale would be *The Thousand and One Nights* (or more colloquially, *The Arabian Nights*), a famous collection of stories featuring the likes of Sinbad, Aladdin, and Ali Baba.

The earliest surviving manuscript for *The Thousand and One Nights* comes from 14th century Syria, though references in Indian, Persian, and Arabic documents date back to the 10th century. The stories were introduced to Europe for the first time in the 18th century, in a freely adapted translation by Antoine Galland. It was likely a Russian translation of Galland’s version that inspired Rimsky-Korsakov.

The individual stories of *The Thousand and One Nights* are unified by a frame story: the cruel Sultan Shahryar, convinced of the faithlessness of all women, takes a new bride every night only to have her executed at dawn, until one, Scheherazade, saves herself by recounting to the Sultan a succession of tales over a period of one thousand and one nights. Overcome by curiosity, the monarch postponed the execution of his new wife from day to day until finally, she won his heart. Rimsky-Korsakov would name his suite after her. He recalled composing it in his memoirs:

“The program I had been guided by in composing *Scheherazade* consisted of separate, unconnected episodes and pictures from *The Thousand and One Nights*, scattered through all four movements of my suite: The Sea and Sinbad’s Ship, the fantastic narrative of the Prince Kalandar, the Prince and the Princess, the Baghdad Festival and the Ship Dashing Against the Rock. I meant these hints to only slightly direct the hearer’s fancy. All I had desired was that the hearer should carry away the impression that it is beyond doubt an oriental narrative of some numerous and varied fairy tale wonders and not merely four pieces played one after the other.”

Although the stories are essentially unrelated, the four episodes are connected musically by thematic material such as the thunderous motif of the Sultan, and the delicate solo violin theme delineating the heroine as she “tells her wondrous tales to the stern Sultan.” The work begins with a brief prelude as we are immediately introduced to the Sultan by a unison *fortissimo* proclamation that represents the brutal ruler. Fairy-tale chords for woodwinds lead to the seductive and flattering violin solo that portrays Scheherazade herself. These themes dissolve into the majestically broad first movement, “The Sea and Sinbad’s Ship.” The Sultan’s motif is the main one, though the Scheherazade theme also
returns, and in a manner that suggests she is doing more than just telling stories. The movement ends dreamily. Scheherazade’s violin solo introduces the next movement, “The Fantastic Tale of the Prince Kalandar.” In the medieval Islamic world, a Kalandar was a wandering mystic who led an ascetic lifestyle, relying on charity for his survival. In the Nights there are three Kalandar Princes, each of whom began life as a prince, but through a series of misfortunes, was blinded in one eye and reduced to the beggary of a Kalandar. We cannot be sure which of the three Kalandar Princes Rimsky-Korsakov had in mind when composing this movement, but the music has a sense of adventure that fits them all. It is difficult to identify a specific story to go with the third movement, “The Prince and the Princess,” and it is likely it simply represents love, a common theme throughout the Nights. In this movement, Scheherazade’s theme returns in the middle, as if she has paused for a moment to comment on the story. Her violin solo then blends with the music of the prince and princess. The passionate climax likely represents not only the young lovers, but Scheherazade and the Sultan, as well. The finale bears the title “Festival at Baghdad. The Sea. Ship Breaks upon a Cliff.” After an introduction from Scheherazade’s violin, the festival begins. Again, it is difficult to identify a specific story to match the festival, though there are several possibilities in the Nights. Melodies from the second and third movements return during the course of the celebration, which help to bring musical coherence and symmetry to the work. As the spectacle reaches its climax, the sea music from the first movement is heard as the precursor to a shipwreck (a reference to the tale of the Kalandar Prince). As the waves subside, Scheherazade’s violin solo rises high above that of the Sultan before the music fades to nothing, thus bringing Scheherazade’s magical tales to an end.
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🎆 Denotes member of the orchestra
SALVADOR FLORES is an emerging young artist and classical saxophonist from Houston, Texas. His performances have taken him to the stages of the Lila Cockrell Theatre, Hill Auditorium, Kresge Auditorium, the New World Center, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Over the course of his career, Flores has compiled many prestigious awards. In 2017, he was named a National Young Arts Winner, and was shortly thereafter named a 2017 U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts. He has gone on to win the 2017 Interlochen Arts Camp Concerto Competition and the 2017 Ann Arbor Camerata Collegiate Division Concerto Competition, for which he was given the opportunity to perform a concerto with both the Interlochen Philharmonic and the Ann Arbor Camerata Orchestra. He has also been named the First Prize Winner of the 2018 MTNA Senior Woodwind Division National Competition, the Second Prize Winner in the 2018 North American Saxophone Alliance Collegiate Solo Competition, a Prize Winner in the Vandoren Emerging Artist 2019 National Collegiate Competition, and the First Prize Winner of the 59th Annual Lima Symphony Orchestra Young Artists Competition Senior Winds Division 2019. Flores has also advanced to the live rounds of the 2019 Adolphe Sax International Competition, which is among the most selective and prestigious competitions for saxophonists around the world.

Flores has been featured and invited to perform at a wide variety of events, such as the 2017 MusicDoingGood Scholarship Fundraising Concert entitled Reflections, the 2017 Houston Symphony League President’s Luncheon at the River Oaks Country Club, countless Houston Symphony Orchestra pre-concert performances at the Jesse H. Jones Hall for the Performing Arts, and Houston Symphony Orchestra Educational Outreach Concerts around the Houston area with the Houston Symphony Orchestra Community Embedded Musicians. Flores has also appeared as a solo performer as an opener to a Houston Symphony Orchestra Concert featuring saxophonist Dr. Timothy McAllister. He has also performed with the University of Michigan Saxophone Ensemble as part of an opener for the University Musical Society event featuring famed pianist, Yuja Wang.

As the Soprano Chair of the Cerulean Quartet, Flores has performed at many events, including the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre and Dance Chamber Music Forum, a master class with the esteemed Donald Sinta Quartet, SMTD Freshman Convocation, and the Saxophone Studio Meet and Greet for incoming prospective students. In 2019, the Cerulean Quartet was named the Third Prize Winner of the 6th Annual University of Michigan Briggs Chamber Music Competition, as well as being named the recipient of the Michigan Composer Prize for their performance of Jules Pegram’s Saxophone Quartet entitled Hell or High Water.

An avid and active ensemble performer, Flores has performed with the University of Michigan Symphony Band, the University of Michigan Symphony Orchestra, the World Youth Wind Symphony, the World Youth Symphony Orchestra, and the Interlochen Philharmonic. Flores was a part of the 2018 University of Michigan Symphony Band album project entitled Bolcom and Friends, in which he was a featured Alto Saxophone soloist in Paul Dooley’s Coast of Dreams. Through these ensembles, Flores has had the opportunity to perform under the baton of many famed Wind and Orchestral conductors, including JoAnn Falletta, Michael Haithcock, Jerry Junkin, Kenneth Kiesler, Steven Davis, Kevin Sedatole, H. Robert Reynolds, and Octavio Más-Arocas. He has also had the opportunity to work with several notable composers, including William Bolcom, Frank Ticheli, Steven Bryant, Michael Daugherty, and Paul Dooley.

Flores is currently pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in Saxophone Performance at the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor under the direction of Dr. Timothy McAllister.
**ROBERT G. HASTY, MUSIC DIRECTOR, SKOKIE VALLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

**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 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 of two publications delivered at the 7th International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition in Sydney, Australia. He has published a book on his research entitled: “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 also has a 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.

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