

Season 2014-2015

Friday, November 28,
at 8:00

Saturday, November 29,
at 8:00

Sunday, November 30,
at 2:00

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Juanjo Mena Conductor

Ricardo Morales Clarinet

Rimsky-Korsakov *Capriccio espagnol*, Op. 34 $40\frac{1}{40}$

I. Alborada—

II. Variations—

III. Alborada—

IV. Scene and Gypsy Song—

V. Asturian Fandango

Debussy Rhapsody No. 1, for clarinet and orchestra $40\frac{1}{40}$

Rossini Introduction, Theme, and Variations for Clarinet
and Orchestra $40\frac{1}{40}$

First Philadelphia Orchestra performances

Intermission

Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36

I. Andante sostenuto—Moderato con anima

II. Andantino in modo di canzona—Più mosso—
Tempo I

III. Scherzo: Pizzicato ostinato (Allegro—
Meno mosso—Tempo I)

IV. Finale: Allegro con fuoco—Andante—
Tempo I

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 50 minutes.

Please join us immediately following the November 30
concert for a Chamber Postlude, featuring members of
The Philadelphia Orchestra.

Ravel String Quartet in F major

I. Allegro moderato

II. Assez vif, très rythmé—Lent—Tempo I

III. Très lent

IV. Vif et agité

Miyo Curnow Violin

Elina Kalendarova Violin

Kerri Ryan Viola

John Koen Cello

$40\frac{1}{40}$ designates a work that
is part of the 40/40 Project,
which features pieces not
performed on subscription
concerts in at least 40 years.

The Philadelphia Orchestra



Jessica Griffin

The Philadelphia Orchestra is one of the preeminent orchestras in the world, renowned for its distinctive sound, desired for its keen ability to capture the hearts and imaginations of audiences, and admired for a legacy of imagination and innovation on and off the concert stage. The Orchestra is transforming its rich tradition of achievement, sustaining the highest level of artistic quality, but also challenging—and exceeding—that level by creating powerful musical experiences for audiences at home and around the world.

Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin's highly collaborative style, deeply-rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm, paired with a fresh approach to orchestral programming, have been heralded by critics and audiences alike since his inaugural season in 2012. Under his leadership the Orchestra returned to recording with a celebrated CD of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* and Leopold Stokowski transcriptions on the Deutsche Grammophon label, continuing its history of recording success. The Orchestra also reaches thousands of listeners on the radio with weekly Sunday afternoon broadcasts on WRTI-FM.

Philadelphia is home, and the Orchestra nurtures an important relationship with patrons who support the main season at the Kimmel Center, and also with those who enjoy the Orchestra's other area performances at the Mann Center, Penn's Landing, and other cultural, civic, and learning venues. The Orchestra maintains a strong commitment to collaborations with cultural and community organizations on a regional and national level.

Through concerts, tours, residencies, presentations, and recordings, the Orchestra is a global ambassador for Philadelphia and for the United States. Having been the first American orchestra to perform in China, in 1973 at the request of President Nixon, today The Philadelphia Orchestra boasts a new partnership with the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing. The ensemble annually performs at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center while also enjoying summer residencies in Saratoga Springs, New York, and Vail, Colorado.

The Philadelphia Orchestra has a decades-long tradition of presenting learning and community engagement opportunities for listeners of all ages. The Orchestra's recent initiative, the Fabulous Philadelphians Offstage, Philly Style!, has taken musicians off the traditional concert stage and into the community, including highly-successful Pop-Up concerts, PlayINs, SingINs, and ConductINs. The Orchestra's musicians, in their own dedicated roles as teachers, coaches, and mentors, serve a key role in growing young musician talent and a love of classical music, nurturing and celebrating the wealth of musicianship in the Philadelphia region. For more information on The Philadelphia Orchestra, please visit www.philorch.org.

Music Director

Chris Lee



Music Director **Yannick Nézet-Séguin** continues his inspired leadership of The Philadelphia Orchestra, which began in the fall of 2012. His highly collaborative style, deeply rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm, paired with a fresh approach to orchestral programming, have been heralded by critics and audiences alike. The *New York Times* has called Nézet-Séguin “phenomenal,” adding that under his baton, “the ensemble, famous for its glowing strings and homogenous richness, has never sounded better.” He has taken the Orchestra to new musical heights. Highlights of his third season as music director include an Art of the Pipe Organ festival; the 40/40 Project, in which 40 great compositions that haven’t been heard on subscription concerts in at least 40 years will be performed; and Bernstein’s *MASS*, the pinnacle of the Orchestra’s five-season requiem cycle.

Yannick has established himself as a musical leader of the highest caliber and one of the most exciting talents of his generation. He has been music director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic since 2008 and artistic director and principal conductor of Montreal’s Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000. He also continues to enjoy a close relationship with the London Philharmonic, of which he was principal guest conductor. He has made wildly successful appearances with the world’s most revered ensembles, and he has conducted critically acclaimed performances at many of the leading opera houses.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin and Deutsche Grammophon (DG) enjoy a long-term collaboration. Under his leadership The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to recording with a CD on that label of Stravinsky’s *The Rite of Spring* and Leopold Stokowski transcriptions. He continues a fruitful recording relationship with the Rotterdam Philharmonic on DG, EMI Classics, and BIS Records; the London Philharmonic and Choir for the LPO label; and the Orchestre Métropolitain for ATMA Classique.

A native of Montreal, Yannick Nézet-Séguin studied at that city’s Conservatory of Music and continued lessons with renowned conductor Carlo Maria Giulini and with Joseph Flummerfelt at Westminster Choir College. Among Yannick’s honors are an appointment as Companion of the Order of Canada, one of the country’s highest civilian honors; a Royal Philharmonic Society Award; Canada’s National Arts Centre Award; the Prix Denise-Pelletier, the highest distinction for the arts in Quebec; and honorary doctorates from the University of Quebec in Montreal and the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia.

To read Yannick’s full bio, please visit www.philorch.org/conductor.

Conductor

Susanne Anhörung



Chief Conductor of the BBC Philharmonic, **Juanjo Mena** is one of Spain's most distinguished conductors. He made his Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 2009 at the Mann Center and his subscription debut the following year. In addition to these current performances, highlights of his 2014-15 season include return visits to the Boston and Pittsburgh symphonies, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He also debuts with the New York Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, and the Montreal Symphony. European highlights this season include debuts with the London Philharmonic and the Nash Ensemble of London, as well as concerts with the Danish National Symphony, the French and Spanish national orchestras, and the Bergen and Oslo philharmonics.

A guest at numerous international festivals, Mr. Mena has appeared at the Stars of the White Nights Festival in St. Petersburg, Russia; the Hollywood Bowl; Grant Park in Chicago; Tanglewood; and La Folle Journée in Nantes, among others. He recently led the BBC Philharmonic on two European tours, including performances in Cologne, Frankfurt, Munich, Vienna, and Madrid; he performs with the ensemble every year at the BBC Proms in London. Mr. Mena has also appeared with the Dresden, La Scala, Netherlands Radio, and Royal Stockholm philharmonics; the Munich Radio Orchestra; and all the major orchestras in Spain.

Mr. Mena's operatic work includes Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*; Strauss's *Salome*, *Elektra*, and *Ariadne auf Naxos*; Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle*; and Schoenberg's *Erwartung*. Recent productions include Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* in Genoa, Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* in Lausanne, and Britten's *Billy Budd* in Bilbao.

Mr. Mena has made several recordings with the BBC Philharmonic, including, on the Chandos label, a disc of works by Manuel de Falla, which was a *BBC Music* magazine Recording of the Month; works by Gabriel Pierné, which was a *Gramophone* Editor's Choice; and recent releases of music by Montsalvatge, Weber, and Turina. Other recordings include a collection of Basque symphonic music with the Bilbao Symphony for Naxos, and a critically acclaimed rendering of Messiaen's *Turangalila Symphony* for Hyperion with the Bergen Philharmonic.

Soloist



Ricardo Morales is one of the most sought after clarinetists today. He joined The Philadelphia Orchestra as principal clarinet in 2003. Prior to this he was principal clarinet of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, a position he assumed at the age of 21, under the direction of James Levine. He has been asked to perform as principal clarinet with the New York Philharmonic and the Chicago Symphony, and at the invitation of Simon Rattle, performed as guest principal clarinet with the Berlin Philharmonic. He also performs as principal clarinet with the Saito Kinen Festival Orchestra, at the invitation of Seiji Ozawa.

A native of San Juan, Puerto Rico, Mr. Morales began his studies at the Escuela Libre de Musica along with his five siblings, who are all distinguished musicians. He continued his studies at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music and Indiana University, where he received his Artist Diploma. He has been a featured soloist with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra; the Chicago, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, and Flemish Radio symphonies; and the Seoul Philharmonic, among others. He made his solo debut with The Philadelphia Orchestra in 2004 and has since performed as soloist on numerous occasions. An active chamber musician, he has performed in the MET Chamber Ensemble series at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall; at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, the Seattle Chamber Music Summer Festival, and the Saratoga Chamber Music Festival; on NBC's *The Today Show*; and with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Mr. Morales is highly sought after for his recitals and master classes, which have taken him throughout North America and Europe. In addition, he currently serves on the faculties of Temple University and the Curtis Institute of Music.

Mr. Morales's debut solo recording, *French Portraits*, is available on the Boston Records label. His recent recordings include performances with the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio and with the Pacifica Quartet, which was nominated for a Latin Grammy Award. Mr. Morales has joined forces with internationally recognized master acoustician and instrument maker Morrie Backun to create MoBa, a company of top-of-the line clarinets and clarinet accessories, including mouthpieces, bells, and barrels.

Framing the Program

Parallel Events

1809

Rossini

Introduction,
Theme, and
Variations

Music

Beethoven
Piano Concerto
No. 5

Literature

Irving
Rip van Winkle

Art

Constable
Malvern Hill

History

Fulton patents
steamboat

1877

Tchaikovsky

Symphony
No. 4

Music

Brahms
Symphony
No. 2

Literature

Ibsen
*The Pillars of
Society*

Art

Rodin
*The Age of
Bronze*

History

First public
telephones
(U.S.)

1910

Debussy

Rhapsody
No. 1

Music

Elgar
Violin Concerto

Literature

Forster
Howard's End

Art

Modigliani
The Cellist

History

Mexican
revolution

Rimsky-Korsakov and Tchaikovsky, whose works frame the program today, are often viewed as opposing figures, one the youngest member of the so-called Mighty Five, Russia's progressive composers, and the other an initial graduate of the first Russian conservatory in St. Petersburg. But, in fact, the two were friends and mutual admirers. Tchaikovsky hailed Rimsky's *Capriccio espagnol* as "a colossal masterpiece of instrumentation" and told his colleague "you may regard yourself as the greatest master of the present day." The *Capriccio* is indeed a brilliantly colorful evocation of Spain, whose music and culture has long proved tremendously alluring for composers.

Tchaikovsky composed his Fourth Symphony at a low point in his personal life, after going through with an ill-advised marriage. It is a piece that deals with issues of fate, symbolized here by a recurring fanfare motif that opens the work. The composer acknowledged the model of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, but further remarked: "There is not a single measure in this Fourth Symphony of mine that I have not truly felt and which is not an echo of my most intimate spiritual life."

In between the works by these Russians are two compositions featuring clarinet and orchestra. Gioachino Rossini wrote primarily for the theater, but at either end of his operatic career he produced pieces for other forces. He composed the Introduction, Theme, and Variations for Clarinet and Orchestra in his late teens while a conservatory student in Bologna. Claude Debussy's Rhapsody No. 1 likewise has a conservatory connection, although it is not a student composition but rather a work Debussy was commissioned to write for clarinet students competing for a prize at the Paris Conservatory.

The Music

Capriccio espagnol



Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov
Born in Tikhvin, Russia,
March 18, 1844
Died in Lyubensk (near St.
Petersburg), June 21, 1908

While it would be most unfair to eminent Spanish composers—figures such as Manuel de Falla, Isaac Albéniz, and Enrique Granados—to say that the greatest Spanish music was written by foreigners, the considerable allures of the country indisputably inspired masterpieces from a broad range of composers from all over Western Europe, Russia, and the Americas, some of whom never set foot on its soil. The melodies, rhythms, timbres, and moods associated with Spanish music were viewed as exotic and enticing.

The Allure of Spain French composers wrote some of the most famous pieces, among them Bizet's *Carmen*, Chabrier's *España*, Ravel's *Rapsodie espagnole*, and Debussy's *Iberia*. The attraction went much farther afield—virtuoso pianists saw the appeal Spanish materials had with audiences, leading to Liszt's *Rhapsodie espagnole* and pieces by American Louis Moreau Gottschalk.

More unexpected was interest in far-off Russia, where concert music was finding its way in the 19th century. The musical scene was divided between a group of cutting-edge “Sunday composers” and an academically trained contingent that sought to bring their country into the European musical mainstream. Anton and Nikolai Rubinstein, brothers who founded the first Russian conservatories, led the latter faction, and counted Tchaikovsky as the first distinguished graduate. As for the rebellious ones, they were dubbed the *Kuchka* or “Mighty Five”: Mily Balakirev led the group, which also numbered Alexander Borodin, Modest Musorgsky, César Cui, and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov.

All parties seemed to agree, however, that the first great Russian master was Mikhail Glinka (1804–57), and he was the one who initiated interest in Spain. After having made prominent use of Russian melodies in enormously influential pieces, he became fascinated with Spanish folk music, all the more so once he lived in Spain for two years. He studied the language, culture, and music, which resulted in various pieces.

From Glinka to Rimsky Despite Rimsky-Korsakov's background as one of the Mighty Five, he ended up having a distinguished academic career. Balakirev had guided Rimsky's initial musical education, pursued while

Capriccio espagnol was composed in 1887.

Carl Pohlig was on the podium for the Orchestra's first performances of the work, in October 1908. The last time the *Capriccio* appeared on subscription concerts was in January 1931, with Ossip Gabrilowitsch conducting. More recently, the piece appeared on the Orchestra's annual Free College Concert last month.

The Orchestra recorded the *Capriccio espagnol* twice, both with Eugene Ormandy and both for CBS: in 1953 and 1965.

The score calls for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes (II doubling English horn), two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, castanets, cymbals, snare drum, tambourine, triangle), harp, and strings.

Performance time is approximately 15 minutes.

he was a naval cadet. This course of study was interrupted by a couple years at sea, during which he continued to compose while visiting England, North and South America, and elsewhere, including a brief port stop in Spain. He was drawn to a range of folk material from Russia, Spain, and elsewhere. Unlike Glinka, Rimsky did not have a formative first-hand experience in Spain, but by the 1880s several collections of Spanish folksongs had been published that furnished him with ideas he used in his *Capriccio espagnol*.

After enjoying success with a *Fantasia on Two Russian Themes*, Op. 33, for violin and orchestra, Rimsky set out to write a similar piece employing Spanish material. While composing it during the summer of 1887, he decided it should rather be a brilliant orchestral showpiece. Like his popular *Sheherazade* that followed the next year, the *Capriccio* contains a prominent part for violin solo, a vestige of its original conception. The piece was premiered in December 1887, when it proved an immediate success, as it did again when Rimsky took it to Paris for the World's Fair in 1889.

Tchaikovsky hailed the work as "a colossal masterpiece of instrumentation" and told Rimsky that "you may regard yourself as the greatest master of the present day." Rimsky was indeed a master of orchestration although with respect to this piece he did not view it as mere colorful dressing but rather its essential conception. "The opinion formed by both critics and the public," he wrote, "that the *Capriccio* is a *magnificently orchestrated piece*—is wrong. The *Capriccio* is a brilliant *composition for the orchestra*.

A Closer Look Rimsky cast the *Capriccio* in five continuous movements. The brief **Alborada** (a morning song) provides a wonderfully vibrant opening that gives the principal clarinetist and then the concertmaster a work out. The slower following movement is a theme and five **Variations** for which four French horns state the initial melody. A return of the opening **Alborada**, with the solo violin now more prominent, gives way to the **Scene and Gypsy Song**. This movement opens with a series of orchestral cadenzas for fanfare-like horns and trumpets, then for solo violin, and followed by a joint one for flute, clarinet, and harp accompanied by percussion; the rest of the movement is a dance leading to the final **Asturian Fandango**, named for a lively dance from a region of northwestern Spain. The glittering conclusion prominently features virtuoso writing for the violin before one last and particularly rousing reprieve of the *Alborada* theme.

—Christopher H. Gibbs

The Music

Rhapsody No. 1



Claude Debussy

**Born in St. Germain-en-Laye, August 22, 1862
Died in Paris, March 25, 1918**

For those young French composers who were lucky enough to win the prestigious Prix de Rome, the rest of their lives were inevitably enmeshed in a web of official obligations, especially those that related to their alma mater, the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris. Founded by Napoléon Bonaparte in 1793, the Paris Conservatory was the most important musical institution in France throughout the 19th century and well into the 20th. As an extension of the French government, the Conservatory administered a number of prizes, including the Prix de Rome; prominent alumni were often invited to adjudicate at vocal and instrumental juries. Such invitations were considered a signal honor. The level of competition at these juries was fierce indeed, as those who won a Premier Prix were virtually assured of professional success.

When Gabriel Fauré was appointed as director of the Conservatory in 1905, he instituted reforms in both the curriculum and the jury system. In a sharp departure from tradition, for example, he required that instrumentalists and vocalists attend classes in music history. Furthermore, he regularized and modernized the Conseil Supérieur, the governing counsel of the Conservatory, by appointing a number of leading composers to its ranks, including the winner of the 1884 Prix de Rome, Claude Debussy.

An Influential Appointment After Fauré's appointment of Debussy in 1909, there were protests from the scandalized old guard who saw Debussy as a dangerous radical. (Given that Fauré had been enamored enough of Emma Bardac, a gifted singer who became the second Madame Debussy, to write his passionate song cycle *La Bonne Chanson* for her, it is a testament to his objectivity and probity that Fauré nevertheless appointed Debussy, the man who had supplanted him in her affections, to an influential post within the organization of which he was director.) Often strapped for ready cash, Debussy was glad to accept the stipend that came with this position, and, although he coyly declared himself "dumbfounded" by the appointment, he performed his duties with an admirable punctiliousness. Early in his tenure, Debussy made it absolutely clear that he preferred hearing instrumental juries to those for vocalists. In July 1909 he wrote to his

Debussy composed his Rhapsody No. 1 from 1909 to 1910 and orchestrated it in 1911.

The first Orchestra performance was on December 28, 1933, on a Youth Concert with Robert McGinnis as soloist and Leopold Stokowski on the podium. Most recently it was heard at the Mann Center in July 1996, with clarinetist Anthony Gigliotti and Charles Dutoit. The piece has never been heard on subscription concerts until these current performances.

Debussy scored the work for solo clarinet, three flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, three bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, percussion (cymbals, triangle), two harps, and strings.

The Rhapsody runs approximately seven minutes in performance.

publisher Jacques Durand, "I have just been sitting on the jury for the woodwind competitions ... and I can give you the good news of the high standards of the flutes, oboes, and clarinets."

As a new member of the Conseil Supérieur, Debussy was commissioned to compose two pieces for the 1910 clarinet juries: the first was a brief "morceau" designed to test the student clarinetists' sight-reading ability, while the second was an extended "solo de concours" that would be studied and performed by all of the players. Debussy seems to have left the composition of the sight-reading test, entitled *Petite Pièce* for clarinet and piano, perilously to the end, but the "solo de concours," which was published as his Rhapsody No. 1 for clarinet and piano—there is no Rhapsody No. 2—was written from December 1909 to January 1910. Often self-critical, Debussy was uncharacteristically ebullient in expressing his pleasure with this score, writing happily to Durand the day after the jury that "to judge by the expressions on the faces of my colleagues, the Rhapsody was a success. ... One of the candidates, Vandercruyssen, played it by heart and very musically." Even more astonishingly, this most reticent of composers exclaimed that his Rhapsody, which he orchestrated in 1911, was "one of the most charming that I have ever written."

A Closer Look For the form of the Rhapsody, Debussy adopted the customary binary structure of such *concours* pieces in which a lyrical opening section was succeeded by overtly virtuosic music. But while he may have called this "solo de concours" a "rhapsodie," there is nothing loosely rhapsodic about this cunningly wrought score. The languid opening contains all of the musical motifs from which Debussy will construct his piece. This first section consists of two distinct themes, the first marked *Reveusement lent* (Slowly dreaming) while the second is a voluptuously swaying melody that the clarinetist is directed to play *doux et penetrant* (sweet and penetrating). The cheerfully brusque scherzando section that follows is marked *Modérément animé* (Moderately fast). This lively music then proceeds to chase the sensuous opening themes about like a playfully amorous feline. The music becomes progressively more animated as it hurtles towards a joyous and extroverted conclusion.

—Byron Adams

The Music

Introduction, Theme, and Variations for Clarinet and Orchestra



Gioachino Rossini
Born in Pesaro,
February 29, 1792
Died in Paris,
November 13, 1868

In the heart of Italy sits Bologna, a gritty, orange-hued city, famous for meat sauce and attracting musical prodigies. Ancient porticos ring its streets; giant wooden doors hide its riches, trapping, mollifying, and amplifying diverse street sounds. Stendhal dubbed it “the headquarters of music in Italy,” and Charles Dickens wrote that it had a “grave and learned air” and a “pleasant gloom.” Mozart visited Bologna to study counterpoint with the renowned Padre Martini, who owned the largest collection of musical manuscripts in Europe.

A Child Prodigy Gioachino Rossini moved to Bologna in 1804 when he was 12—like Mozart, a genius by all early accounts. His friends at Bologna’s Liceo Musicale (conservatory) called him *il tedesco* (the little German) because he embraced the style of Viennese Classicism. Born into a musical family in Pesaro in 1792, to a horn-playing father and opera-singing mother, Rossini showed prowess on many instruments, and while his father, Giuseppe, spent several stints in prison for espousing liberal-leaning views, he and his mother, Anna, performed for their supper. Gioachino tagged along with her in and out of local theatrical companies. Already in the town of Ravenna, he was hired for the carnival season. In 1804 he composed a duet to sing with his mother and his most famous juvenile work, the six *Sonate a Quattro* for two violins, viola, and bass.

In Bologna Rossini studied music with Father Stanislao Matteo, a kind and demanding figure, who instilled in him the basics of harmony and part-writing without harpooning his enthusiasm. Between Martini’s library that contained over 17,000 manuscripts and the many brilliant opera singers who visited the city, Rossini was exposed to a variety of music. Like Mozart, legend has it that he heard music once and to everyone’s astonishment wrote it down from memory. He accompanied opera companies on the keyboard, and his cantata for tenor, chorus, and orchestra, *Il pianto d’Armonia sulla morte d’Orfeo*, was performed at his school’s convocation in 1808. Perhaps because of his ribald nature and unrivaled sense of humor, Rossini quickly became a school darling, composing and conducting opera

The Introduction, Theme, and Variations was probably composed in 1809.

These are the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the piece.

The score calls for solo clarinet, flute, two oboes, bassoon, two horns, two trumpets, and strings.

The running time is approximately 14 minutes.

overtures, one whose second theme began with a solo cello in a distant key.

Rossini composed the Introduction, Theme, and Variations for Clarinet during his heady student years, probably in 1809. It was customary for the best conservatory students to have their pieces performed during the school year, and he most likely conducted this work. During the last year of his studies in 1810, he met Giovanni Morandi, a travelling composer and impresario with Venetian connections. Soon after, Rossini moved to Venice where he found great success with his opera *La cambiale di matrimonio*. Unlike Mozart, Rossini quickly achieved financial security in Italy and then in Paris, eventually completing nearly 40 operas. He abandoned composing opera after *William Tell* in 1829 and died in 1868.

A Closer Look A staple for virtuoso clarinetists, Rossini's Introduction, Theme, and Variations requires operatic chops. The solo part vaunts a succession of haphazard acrobat notes, sewn together by the player's brazen musicality. Clarinet pieces with orchestral accompaniment were popular in the early Romantic period—Mozart setting the bar with his late Clarinet Concerto. Other opera composers wrote for clarinet, including Carl Maria von Weber and Giacomo Meyerbeer. The instrument's versatile registers, known as chalumeau, clarion, and altissimo, suggest different vocal timbres.

A slow introduction marks the beginning of the piece, consisting of a loud orchestral call to attention followed by the clarinet's sweet response. The clarinet part is challenging from the start, with eager quick notes spanning the instrument's range. Except for the opening notes, occasional cadences, and cheerful rejoinders, the orchestra remains in the background, like a straight man to a talk show host. Rossini places a brief cadenza, a difficult solo passage, at the end of the theme, leaving the listeners no doubt about the soloist's moxie. Five variations follow: the first with punchy staccatos and Rossini's characteristic orchestral rejoinders. The clarinetist bounces from low to high notes. The second is a rollercoaster of fast pitches—the third flaunts speedy ascending arpeggios and breathless descending scales. Contrast marks the fourth variation: a slow, pensive minor mode pervades, showing the clarinetist's sensitive side. A Mozartian chord progression sets up the last variation, which is punctured by a second cadenza. The orchestra's final cadence puts a lid on this rip-roaring affair.

—Eleonora M. Beck

The Music

Symphony No. 4



Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Born in Kamsko-Votkinsk,
Russia, May 7, 1840
Died in St. Petersburg,
November 6, 1893

The genesis of Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony is intimately linked to the composer's relationships with two infatuated women, one of whom he never met, but became deeply attached, the other whom he precipitously married but never loved and lived with only briefly.

A Patroness and a Wife In December 1876 Nadezhda von Meck, recently widowed, began an extensive correspondence with the composer that would last for nearly 14 years; during that time she offered him friendship, emotional support, and considerable financial assistance. An important piece of information that Tchaikovsky did not immediately confide to her was his intention to marry Antonina Milyukova, a former student of his at the Moscow Conservatory.

There are no simple answers, only simplistic ones, as to why Tchaikovsky decided to make the ill-considered engagement in May 1877, just as he was sketching the Fourth Symphony, and then go through with the ill-fated marriage itself in July. He generally did little to hide his homosexuality and commented in a letter to his brother Modest that he was "guilty of nothing!" He was nonetheless sensitive to public perceptions and to any embarrassment he might cause his family and friends; in the same letter to Modest he said that he felt marrying would "shut the mouths of various contemptible creatures whose opinion I do not value in the least but who can cause pain to the people close to me." In any case, the marriage lasted just a few weeks before Tchaikovsky fled Moscow for the rest of the summer.

He immersed himself in completing two great compositional projects: the Fourth Symphony and his new opera, *Eugene Onegin*. Upon returning to Moscow in September to teach, Tchaikovsky joined Antonina and realized once again that their marriage would not work. Severely depressed, he was later rumored to have thrown himself into the Moskva River, although suicide does not really seem to have been a serious option. Instead, he decided to leave Russia. He never divorced Milyukova, and helped to support her for the rest of his life. Tchaikovsky retreated to Switzerland, France, and Italy, barely working

on the Symphony again before arriving in Venice in December. He put the finishing touches on the work in San Remo around the turn of the new year. Nikolai Rubinstein conducted the premiere in February 1878 in Moscow to rather tepid response, although Tchaikovsky declared that “in my inner soul I am still certain that this is the best of all that I have written.” A performance in St. Petersburg later that year proved a great success.

The Story behind the Work Tchaikovsky secretly dedicated the Symphony to Madame von Meck, hiding her identity with the words: “To my best friend.” In their many letters about this work—what they both called “our symphony”—Tchaikovsky kept her apprised of its progress, completion, performance, and ultimately, at her request, of its supposed meaning. In one of the most famous letters the composer ever wrote, he laid out for her a story behind the work. After making the usual artistic disclaimers about how it is impossible to express in words what music means, he said that the symphony “was the musical confession of a soul in which many things have welled up and which by its very nature is poured out in the form of sounds.” The analysis that followed was quite specific and even included written-out musical examples of the principal themes:

The introduction is the *kernel* of the whole symphony, without question its main idea: [opening brass fanfare example]. This is *Fate*, the force of destiny, which ever prevents our pursuit of happiness from reaching its goal, which jealously stands watch lest our peace and well-being be full and cloudless, which hangs like the sword of Damocles over our heads and constantly, ceaselessly poisons our souls. It is invincible, inescapable. One can only resign oneself and lament fruitlessly [another example].

This disconsolate and despairing feeling grows ever stronger and more intense. Would it not be better to turn away from reality and immerse oneself in dreams? [second theme example.] O joy! A sweet tender dream has appeared. A bright, beneficent human form flits by and beckons us on: [another example]. How wonderful! How distant now is the sound of the implacable introductory theme! Dreams little by little have taken over the soul. All that is dark and bleak is forgotten. There it is, there it is—happiness!

But no! These are only dreams, and *Fate* awakens us from them: [opening fanfare example again]. And thus, all life is the ceaseless alternation of

bitter reality with evanescent visions and dreams of happiness. ... There is no refuge. We are buffeted about by this sea until it seizes us and pulls us down to the bottom. There you have roughly the program of the first movement.

Tchaikovsky goes on at great length about the Symphony and concludes by saying that before sending the letter he reread it and was "horrified at the obscurity and inadequacy of the program. For the first time in my life I have had to put into words and phrases musical thoughts and musical images." Those words and images, in fact, are familiar—other composers had expressed similar thoughts before, especially in relation to the theme of "Fate."

Although we can never know whether Tchaikovsky really had this all in mind while he was writing the Symphony or made it up afterwards to please his dear friend and patron, he did express similar comments to an esteemed colleague. The composer and teacher Sergei Taneyev, who eventually wrote a piano reduction of the Symphony, criticized the "disproportionate length of the first movement," which he felt was more like a symphonic poem. He also noted the striking opening brass fanfare that returns at crucial moments in the first and last movement, and the frequent changes in tempo, all of which led him to think the work must have some kind of program. Tchaikovsky responded:

Of course, my Symphony is program music, but it would be impossible to give the program in words; it would be ludicrous and only raise a smile. ... I must tell you that in my simplicity I imagined my plan for the Symphony to be so obvious that everyone would understand its meaning, or at least its leading ideas, without any definite program. ... In reality my work is a reflection of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony; I have not copied his musical contents, only borrowed the central idea. ... Let me add that there is not a single measure in this Fourth Symphony of mine that I have not truly felt and which is not an echo of my most intimate spiritual life.

A Closer Look Tchaikovsky opens the first movement (*Andante sostenuto–Moderato con anima*) with the "Fate" fanfare that leads directly into one of the many dance-like themes in the work. Taneyev had complained that "in every movement there are phrases that sound like ballet music" and indeed the spirit of dance dominates the entire Symphony. Music historian Richard Taruskin

Tchaikovsky composed his Symphony No. 4 in 1877.

The Fourth Symphony has been a staple of The Philadelphia Orchestra's repertoire since Fritz Scheel conducted the first Orchestra performances of the work in November of 1905. Most recently on subscription, the Philadelphians played the piece in January 2014, with Robin Ticciati. Some of the conductors who have led the work with the Orchestra include Leopold Stokowski, Artur Rodzinski, Pierre Monteux, Eugene Ormandy, Seiji Ozawa, Daniel Barenboim, James Levine, Leonard Bernstein, Yuri Temirkanov, Leonard Slatkin, Riccardo Muti, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Charles Dutoit, and Christoph Eschenbach.

The Orchestra has recorded the work six times: in 1928 with Stokowski for RCA; in 1953 and 1963 with Ormandy for CBS; in 1973 with Ormandy for RCA; in 1990 with Muti for EMI; and in 2006 with Eschenbach for Ondine.

Tchaikovsky's score calls for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, triangle), and strings.

The Fourth Symphony runs approximately 45 minutes in performance.

has observed that even the rhythm of the opening fanfare alludes to the polonaise, the majestic Polish dance, and has pointed to its "operatic behavior" in this most dramatic symphony.

The second movement (**Andantino in modo di canzona**) begins with a plaintive oboe solo. In his letter to von Meck he tells her it "shows another aspect of sadness. Here is the melancholy feeling that overcomes us when we sit weary and alone at the end of the day. The book we pick up slips from our fingers, and a procession of memories passes by in review. We remember happy times of youth as well as moments of sorrow. We regret what is past, but have neither the courage nor the will to begin a new life. ... There is a bittersweet comfort in losing oneself in the past."

The **Scherzo (Pizzicato ostinato: Allegro)** is a tour-de-force for the strings, plucked rather than bowed, that contrasts with woodwinds in a folk-like middle section. Von Meck asked Tchaikovsky at what point he had decided to have the strings play in this manner—was it simultaneous with or after writing the melodic material? He answered that he never composed in the abstract—musical ideas and orchestration were bound together: The scherzo "is unthinkable playing any other way than pizzicato. If you bowed it, it would lose absolutely everything. It would be a soul without a body; its music would lose all its attraction."

The **Finale (Allegro con fuoco)** is based on a folk tune, "In the Field a Birch Tree Stood." The Fate theme returns once again, but as in Beethoven's Fifth Symphony struggles and challenges are eventually overcome and lead to triumph. Trying to find the right words to describe what his music does so much better, Tchaikovsky's explanation to von Meck may in fact offer a more poignant commentary on his life in general at this time than it does specifically on the final movement of their symphony: "If you find no joy in yourself, look around you. Go out among the people: see how they can enjoy life and give themselves up to festivity. But hardly have we had a moment to enjoy this when Fate, relentless and untiring, makes his presence known. In their revelry, the others take no notice. ... There is still happiness, simple and naïve. Delight in the happiness of others. Life is still possible."

—Christopher H. Gibbs

Musical Terms

GENERAL TERMS

Arpeggio: A broken chord (with notes played in succession instead of together)

Binary: A musical structure consisting of two mutually dependent sections of roughly equal duration

Cadence: The conclusion to a phrase, movement, or piece based on a recognizable melodic formula, harmonic progression, or dissonance resolution

Cadenza: A passage or section in a style of brilliant improvisation, usually inserted near the end of a movement or composition

Cantata: A multi-movement vocal piece consisting of arias, recitatives, ensembles, and choruses and based on a continuous narrative text

Capriccio: A short piece of a humorous or capricious character

Cembalo: A harpsichord

Chord: The simultaneous sounding of three or more tones

Counterpoint: A term that describes the combination of simultaneously sounding musical lines

Dissonance: A combination of two or more tones requiring resolution

Fandango: A Spanish traditional couple-dance in triple meter and lively

tempo, accompanied by a guitar and castanets or hand-clapping

Fantasia: A composition free in form and more or less fantastic in character

Harmonic: Pertaining to chords and to the theory and practice of harmony

Harmony: The combination of simultaneously sounded musical notes to produce chords and chord progressions

Op.: Abbreviation for opus, a term used to indicate the chronological position of a composition within a composer's output

Ostinato: A steady bass accompaniment, repeated over and over

Pizzicato: Plucked

Polonaise: A Polish national dance in moderate triple meter

Recitative: Declamatory singing, free in tempo and rhythm. Recitative has also sometimes been used to refer to parts of purely instrumental works that resemble vocal recitatives.

Rhapsody: Generally an instrumental fantasia on folksongs or on motifs taken from primitive national music

Scale: The series of tones which form (a) any major or minor key or (b) the chromatic scale of successive semi-tonic steps

Scherzo: Literally "a joke." Usually the third movement of symphonies and quartets that was introduced by Beethoven to replace the minuet. The scherzo is followed by a gentler section called a trio, after which the scherzo is repeated. Its characteristics are a rapid tempo in triple time, vigorous rhythm, and humorous contrasts.

Staccato: Detached, with each note separated from the next and quickly released

Symphonic poem:

A type of 19th-century symphonic piece in one movement, which is based upon an extramusical idea, either poetic or descriptive

Timbre: Tone color or tone quality

THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

Allegro: Bright, fast

Andante: Walking speed

Andantino: Slightly quicker than walking speed

Con anima: With feeling

Con fuoco: With fire, passionately, excited

In modo di canzona: In the style of a song

Moderato: A moderate tempo

Scherzando: Playfully

Sostenuto: Sustained