



LA VALSE with COPLAND'S APPALACHIAN SPRING

Friday and Saturday, April 12-13, 2019 at 8 p.m.
Sunday, April 14, 2019 at 2 p.m.
Helzberg Hall, Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

MICHAEL STERN, *conductor*
JEAN-GUIHEN QUEYRAS, *cello*

MILHAUD

Le bœuf sur le toit, op. 58

LALO

Concerto in D Minor for Cello and Orchestra
I. Prélude: Lento — Allegro maestoso
II. Intermezzo: Andantino con moto — Allegro presto
III. Andante — Allegro vivace

JEAN-GUIHEN QUEYRAS, *cello*

INTERMISSION

COPLAND

Suite from *Appalachian Spring* (1945 orchestration)

RAVEL

La valse, poème chorégraphique

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The Ox on the Roof is a surrealist ballet that depicts comings and goings in a “Nothing-Doing Bar.”

For the score, Milhaud called on enticing Brazilian melodies he heard while serving as a diplomatic secretary during World War I.

DARIUS MILHAUD (1892-1974)

Le bœuf sur le toit, op. 58 (1919) 15 minutes

Piccolo, 2 flutes, oboe, 2 clarinets, bassoon, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, trombone, bass drum, cymbals, guiro, tambourine and strings.

French composer Darius Milhaud first conceived of *Le bœuf sur le toit* (The Ox on the Roof) as music to accompany a silent film. When that project fell through, Milhaud worked with Jean Cocteau to create a ballet from the score. *Le bœuf sur le toit* premiered at the Paris Théâtre des Champs Elysées on February 21, 1920. Cocteau authored the scenario for the ballet with costumes by Guy-Pierre Fauconnet and stage designs by Raoul Dufy. The ballet takes place at a “Nothing-Doing Bar” in Manhattan (Prohibition went into effect in the United States in 1920). The “plot” involves the surrealistic comings and goings of various characters, portrayed at the premiere by the

Fratellini clowns.

For the score, Milhaud called on melodies he heard while serving as Paul Claudel’s secretary when the writer was a French diplomat in Brazil. “Le bœuf sur le toit” was the title of a Brazilian hit song. Milhaud explained he “assembled a few popular melodies, tangoes, maxixes, sambas, and even a Portuguese fado, and transcribed them with a rondo-like theme recurring between each successive pair.” During the course of the brief piece, Milhaud explores all 12 major keys and most of the minor ones as well. But there is nothing academic about this score teeming with melody, humor and seductive rhythmic energy.

RECOMMENDED RECORDING

MILHAUD *Le bœuf sur le toit*

ORTF National Orchestra / Leonard Bernstein, *conductor*

Label: EMI Great Recordings of the Century Catalog # 45809



Edouard Lalo composed his Cello Concerto for the Belgian musician, Adolphe Fischer. The concerto, in three movements, offers a beguiling synthesis of captivating melodies and rhythms as well as numerous virtuosic opportunities for the soloist.

EDOUARD LALO (1823-1892)

Concerto in D minor for Cello and Orchestra (1877) 24 minutes

Solo cello, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani and strings.

In the span of two years, French composer Edouard Lalo created a pair of works for solo violin and orchestra, the Violin Concerto, op. 20 (1873) and *Symphonie espagnole*, op. 21 (1874). He composed both works for the brilliant Spanish virtuoso Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1908). The premiere of Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole* took place in Paris on February 7, 1875, the same year as the first performance of another Spanish-inspired masterpiece by a French composer, Georges Bizet's opera *Carmen*. *Symphonie espagnole* remains one of Lalo's best-known works.

In the two years after the premiere of *Symphonie espagnole*, Lalo composed his Cello Concerto in D Minor. Lalo wrote the work for, and in consultation with, the Belgian cellist and composer Adolphe Fischer (1850-1891). Fischer, the concerto's dedicatee, was the soloist in the Paris world premiere on December 9, 1877. Similar to *Symphonie espagnole*, the Cello Concerto's captivating melodies and rhythms as well as numerous virtuosic opportunities for the soloist have made the work a favorite for cellists and audiences alike.

The concerto is in three movements. The first opens with a dramatic slow-tempo introduction that develops into an intense dialogue between soloist and orchestra. That dynamic continues at the start of the principal quick-tempo section also featuring a contrasting lyrical melody. The orchestra has the final say in the

terse closing measures. The succeeding Intermezzo serves the dual function of a slow-tempo movement and scherzo. The soloist leads the finale's slow-tempo introduction, resolving to the playful Allegro vivace, set in 6/8 meter.

RECOMMENDED RECORDING

LALO Cello Concerto

Yo-Yo Ma, cello

Pittsburgh Symphony / Lorin Maazel, conductor

Label: Sony Catalog # 88697714332



Copland composed this ballet, depicting a wedding in rural Pennsylvania, for Martha Graham. The score includes Copland's variations on the Shaker hymn "Simple Gifts."

AARON COPLAND (1900-1990)

Suite from *Appalachian Spring* (1944)

24 minutes

Piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 trombones, timpani, bass drum, orchestra bells, snare drum, claves, cymbals, suspended cymbals, tabor, triangle, wood block, xylophone, harp, piano and strings.

Copland composed his ballet *Appalachian Spring* for dancer and choreographer Martha Graham. Graham chose the title from the heading of a Hart Crane poem. While Copland began working on the score in June 1943, the premiere didn't occur until October 30, 1944, due to various delays. Graham and Eric Hawkins danced the principal roles.

Copland scored the original ballet for a chamber group of 13 instruments. He later arranged a suite from *Appalachian Spring* for a larger ensemble, which received its premiere in 1945.

Appalachian Spring takes place in the early part of the 19th century in the hills of Pennsylvania. The piece tells the story of a wedding between a young farmer and his bride. The Suite is

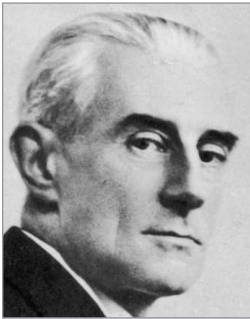
divided into eight sections, but they are performed without pause. In the next-to-last section (“Calm and flowing”), Copland features his variations on the Shaker hymn, “Simple Gifts” (“’Tis the gift to be simple, ’tis the gift to be free”), which has become one of his most treasured creations. The young couple begin life in their new home in the final section.

RECOMMENDED RECORDING

COPLAND *Appalachian Spring*

Boston Symphony / Aaron Copland, *conductor*

Label: RCA Victor Living Stereo Catalog # 61505



Ravel described the music as “an increasingly passionate and exhausting whirlwind of dancers, who are overcome and exhilarated by nothing but ‘the waltz.’”

MAURICE RAVEL (1875-1937)

La valse, poème chorégraphique (1920)

13 minutes

Piccolo, 3 flutes, 3 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, castanets, crotales, cymbals, glockenspiel, snare drum, tam-tam, tambourine, triangle, 2 harps and strings.

Maurice Ravel completed *La valse* in early 1920. Sergei Diaghilev, director of the Ballets Russes, agreed to stage *La valse* as part of the upcoming summer season. Previously, Diaghilev’s company had presented the world premiere of the composer’s *Daphnis et Chloé* (1912).

In the spring of 1920, Ravel and Marcelle Mayer performed the composer’s two-piano version of the score for an audience that included Diaghilev, Francis Poulenc, Igor Stravinsky and

choreographer Léonide Massine. According to Poulenc, once the performance concluded, Diaghilev commented: “Ravel, it’s a masterpiece ... but it’s not a ballet ... It’s the portrait of a ballet ... the painting of a ballet.” Ravel calmly gathered his manuscript and left the room. He and Diaghilev never again worked together.

In his score, Ravel provided a brief choreographic argument for *La valse*:

Through whirling clouds, waltzing couples may be faintly distinguished. The clouds gradually scatter: one sees an immense hall filled with a swirling throng.

The stage is gradually illuminated. The light of the chandeliers reaches its peak at the fortissimo.

An imperial court, about 1855.

RECOMMENDED RECORDING

RAVEL *La valse*

Boston Symphony / Charles Munch, *conductor*

Label: RCA Victor Living Stereo Catalog # 66374

CURIOSITY, DIVERSITY AND A FIRM FOCUS ON THE MUSIC ITSELF

characterize the artistic work of Jean-Guihen Queyras. One experiences an artist dedicated completely and passionately to the music, whose humble and quite unpretentious treatment of the score reflects its clear, undistorted essence. The inner motivations of composer, performer and audience must all be in tune with one another in order to bring about an outstanding concert experience. Queyras learned this interpretative approach from Pierre Boulez, with whom he established a long artistic partnership. This philosophy, alongside a flawless technique and a clear, engaging tone, shapes Queyras' approach to every performance.



His approaches to early music and to contemporary music are equally thorough. He has given world premieres of works by Ivan Fedele, Gilbert Amy, Bruno Mantovani and Michael Jarrell, among others. He recorded Peter Eötvös' Cello Concerto to mark the composer's 70th birthday in November 2014.

The versatility in Queyras' music-making has led to artist-in-residence positions with many concert halls, festivals and orchestras, including the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Vredenburg Utrecht, De Bijloke Ghent and Wigmore Hall London.

Queyras often appears with renowned orchestras such as the Philadelphia Orchestra, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Orchestre de Paris, NHK Symphony Orchestra, Gewandhausorchester and Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, working with conductors such as Iván Fischer, Oliver Knussen and Roger Norrington.

Queyras' recordings of cello concertos by Edward Elgar, Antonín Dvořák, Philippe Schoeller and Gilbert Amy have received critical acclaim. *THRACE: Sunday Morning Sessions* is a collaboration with the Chemirani brothers and Sokratis Sinopoulos that explores the intersections of contemporary music, improvisation and Mediterranean traditions.

His 2018/19 season includes a North American tour, performances of *Mitten wir im Leben sind* with Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker and engagements with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Atlas Ensemble, Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century and Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

Queyras holds a professorship at the University of Music Freiburg and is artistic director of the Rencontres Musicales de Haute-Provence festival in Forcalquier. He plays a 1696 instrument by Gioffredo Cappa, made available to him by the Mécénat Musical Société Générale. ■