

# **Classical Series**

Thursday, June 17, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
Friday, June 18, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.
Saturday, June 19, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, June 20, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.
Helzberg Hall, Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

Michael Stern, conductor

CLAUDE DEBUSSY (arr. Paolo Fradiani)

Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune

**SAMUEL BARBER** 

*Medea,* op. 23 (Cave of the Heart)

I. Maestoso

II. Allegretto

III. Half-note = 60

IV. Allegro ma non troppo, giocoso

V. Andante sostenuto

VI. Moderato

VII. Sombre, with dignity

VIII. Minaccioso (with foreboding)

IX. Allegro molto

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN

Symphony No. 64 in A Major, "Tempora mutantur"

I. Allegro con spirito

II. Largo

III. Menuet: Allegretto

IV. Presto

The 2020/21 Season is generously sponsored by

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# **Orchestra Roster**

MICHAEL STERN, Music Director

JASON SEBER, David T. Beals III Associate Conductor

#### FIRST VIOLINS

Sunho Kim, Acting Concertmaster

Miller Nichols Chair

Stirling Trent,

Acting Associate Concertmaster

Chiafei Lin,

Acting Assistant Concertmaster

Gregory Sandomirsky ‡,

Associate Concertmaster Emeritus

Anne-Marie Brown

**Betty Chen** 

**Anthony DeMarco** 

Susan Goldenberg\*

Tomoko Iguchi

Dorris Dai Janssen

Vladimir Rykov

Alex Shum\*

#### SECOND VIOLINS

Tamamo Someya Gibbs, Principal

Kristin Velicer, Acting Associate Principal

Minhye Helena Choi,

Acting Assistant Principal

Nancy Beckmann

**Mary Garcia Grant** 

Kevin Hao ‡

Kazato Inouye

Rena Ishii

Stephanie Larsen

Francesca Manheim

#### **VIOLAS**

Matthew Sinno, Acting Principal

Jessica Nance, Acting Associate Principal

Duke Lee, Acting Assistant Principal

**Kent Brauninger** 

Sean Brumble

**Marvin Gruenbaum** 

Jenifer Houck

Jesse Yukimura

#### **CELLOS**

Mark Gibbs, Principal

Robert A. Kipp Chair

Susie Yang, Associate Principal

Richard Hill Chair

Alexander East, Assistant Principal

Maria Crosby

John Eadie

Lawrence Figg

Rung Lee\*

Meredith McCook

Allen Probus

#### **DOUBLE BASSES**

Jeffrey Kail, Principal

Evan Halloin, Associate Principal

Brandon Mason ‡

Caleb Quillen

Richard Ryan

**Nash Tomey** 

#### **FLUTES**

Michael Gordon, Principal

Marylou and John Dodds Turner Chair

Shannon Finney, Associate Principal

Kayla Burggraf

#### **PICCOLO**

Kayla Burggraf

#### **OBOES**

Kristina Fulton, Principal

Shirley Bush Helzberg Chair

Alison Chung, Associate Principal

#### **CLARINETS**

Raymond Santos, Principal

Bill and Peggy Lyons Chair

Silvio Guitian, Associate Principal

John Klinghammer

#### E-FLAT CLARINET

Silvio Guitian

## BASS CLARINET

John Klinghammer

#### **BASSOONS**

Ann Bilderback, Principal

Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Chair

Thomas DeWitt, Associate Principal

**Maxwell Pipinich** 

#### CONTRABASSOON

**Thomas DeWitt** 

#### **HORNS**

Alberto Suarez, Principal

Landon and Sarah Rowland Chair

David Sullivan, Associate Principal

Elizabeth Gray

**David Gamble** 

Stephen Multer,

Associate Principal Emeritus

#### **TRUMPETS**

Julian Kaplan, Principal

James B. and Annabel Nutter Chair

Steven Franklin, Associate Principal

Brian Rood ‡

#### **TROMBONES**

Roger Oyster, Principal

Porter Wyatt Henderson,

Associate Principal

**Adam Rainey** 

#### **BASS TROMBONE**

**Adam Rainey** 

#### **TUBA**

Joe LeFevre, Principal

Frank Byrne Chair

#### **TIMPANI**

Timothy Jepson, Principal

Michael and Susan Newburger Chair

### **PERCUSSION**

Josh Jones<sup>^</sup>, Principal

David Yoon, Associate Principal

#### HARP

Katherine Siochi, Principal

#### **LIBRARIANS**

Elena Lence Talley, Principal

Fabrice Curtis

‡ On Leave of Absence

<sup>\*</sup> Non-Rotating Musician

<sup>^</sup> New Member



#### CLAUDE DEBUSSY / arr. PAOLO FRADIANI

Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune (Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun) (1892-1894) 10 minutes

Flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, crotales (antique cymbals), harp, strings

The creative spark often leaps from one art form to another, and in no instance more evocatively than the inspiration Stéphane Mallarmé's poem "Afternoon of a Faun" provided Claude Debussy for his *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*. Debussy initially considered composing two other movements to follow the enigmatically titled *Prelude* but discarded the notion. He described his composition thusly:

The music of this prelude is a very free illustration of Mallarmé's beautiful poem. By no means does it claim to be a synthesis of it. Rather there is a succession of scenes through which pass the desires and dreams of the faun in the heat of the afternoon. Then, tired of pursuing the timorous flight of nymphs and naiads, he succumbs to intoxicating sleep, in which he can finally realize his dreams of possession in universal Nature.

Mallarmé was skeptical about the juxtaposition of music and poetry. Hoping to dispel those concerns, Debussy invited him to the premiere by the Société nationale de musique in Paris on December 22, 1894. Georges Barrère, then an 18-year-old student at the Paris Conservatoire, played the flute solo. Mallarmé was enchanted and immediately wrote to Debussy:

I have just come out of the concert, deeply moved. The marvel! Your illustration of the "Afternoon of a Faun," which presents no dissonance with my text, but goes much further, really, into nostalgia and into light, with finesse, with sensuality, with richness. I press your hand admiringly, Debussy. Yours,

Mallarmé

The music's sheer beauty sometimes obscures its revolutionary nature. Rhythmic fluidity coupled with chromaticism and extensive use of the whole-tone scale comes close to unmooring the piece from tonality, setting the stage for avant-garde works that proliferated in the 20th century.

The Prelude has been transcribed for various instruments and ensembles; Debussy himself made a two-piano arrangement in 1895. These performances use a 2014 orchestration by Italian composer Paolo Fradiani, featuring a reduced complement of winds. *ETW* 

We must agree that the beauty of a work of art will always remain a mystery [...] we can never be absolutely sure "how it's made." We must at all costs preserve this magic which is peculiar to music and to which music, by its nature, is of all the arts the most receptive.

Claude Debussy



# CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862-1918)

Claude Debussy was the eldest of five children born to Victorine and Manuel-Achille Debussy. His mother was a seamstress and his father worked in a printing factory following an unsuccessful venture running a china shop. Victorine took the children to Cannes in 1870 to escape the depredations Paris suffered as it was besieged during the Franco-Prussian war. It was in Cannes that the 7-year-old Debussy had his first piano lessons. He made exceptional progress and was admitted to the Conservatoire de Paris in 1872 where he would study for the next 11 years. Extremely talented, Debussy was a casual student, prone to skip classes and rather careless about his responsibilities. He was an excellent pianist but not inclined to pursue a career as a



performer. Disqualified from further piano studies, he continued classes in harmony and composition.

In 1880, Debussy obtained a job as pianist in the retinue of Nadezhda von Meck, Tchaikovsky's patroness. He travelled with her family across France, Switzerland and Italy, and to her home in Moscow, another aspect of his less-than-conventional education. His compositions also began to flaunt orthodoxy for which he incurred disapproval from the Conservatoire's faculty. Despite this censure, Debussy won the prestigious Prix de Rome and spent two years in Rome. He was not enamored with Italian music and found the Roman sojourn more stifling than inspiring. He composed the works required by the prize but his unique style began to emerge and the academicians reproached him for writing music that was "bizarre, incomprehensible, and unperformable."

Upon returning to Paris in 1887, Debussy heard a portion of Richard Wagner's opera *Tristan und Isolde* and he found inspiration in its brilliant harmonies. The Paris Exposition of 1889 offered another discovery for the composer: Javanese gamelan music. Its scales and textural possibilities appealed to Debussy and he began incorporating its sensibilities in his music. His String Quartet debuted in 1893 and his revolutionary *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun) premiered in 1894. At the time, he was working on his operatic masterpiece, *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Its premiere in 1902 brought Debussy great acclaim in France and internationally. He was appointed a Chevalier of the Légion d'honneur in 1903 and eventually became a member of the governing council of the Conservatoire.

Paris was a heady place for the arts and Debussy's circle of friends and acquaintances included Erik Satie, Ernest Chausson, Maurice Ravel, Igor Stravinsky, Manuel de Falla, Serge Diaghilev and Paul Dukas. Over the years, many of these would disown Debussy for his cavalier treatment of spouses and lovers. He had one child, a beloved daughter nicknamed "Chouchou," to whom the *Children's Corner* Suite is dedicated. She died in the diphtheria epidemic of 1919, 16 months after her father's death.





Debussy had largely abandoned chamber music following the success of his String Quartet in 1893. His publisher, Jacques Durand, encouraged Debussy to return to the genre in 1914 and a set of six sonatas for various instruments was envisioned, paying homage to 18th century French composers. Debussy completed three sonatas before succumbing to colorectal cancer in 1918 while World War I was still raging.

The name Claude Debussy is invariably coupled with the term "Impressionism," a facile borrowing of the description used for late 19th-century painting (typically French) in which the emphasis is on an overall impression rather than pictorial fidelity. Debussy objected to that description of his music but its evocative nature has inspired widespread use of the term for Debussy as well as many other composers of the era. Regardless of terminology, Debussy's music is vivid, enchanting, imaginative, and filled with delicious ambiguities. *ETW* 



# SAMUEL BARBER Medea, op. 23 (Cave of the Heart) (1947) 23 minutes

Piccolo, flute, oboe, English horn, clarinet, bassoon, horn, piano, strings

Not long after her 1944 triumph with Aaron Copland in *Appalachian Spring*, dancer and choreographer Martha Graham was the creative nexus for another American masterpiece: Samuel Barber's *Medea*. Premiering on May 10, 1946 in New York City, the ballet was initially called *Serpent Heart*, drawing on the ancient Greek tragedy of Medea and Jason by Euripides.

Medea, a sorceress, helps Jason and the Argonauts as they seek the Golden Fleece. Later, she and Jason marry and settle in Corinth with their two sons. Euripides' play, which premiered in 431 BCE, opens with Jason abandoning Medea to marry the Corinthian king's daughter as he cruelly seeks to advance his station in life. Medea and their sons are to be banished from Corinth. Thus spurned, Medea secures asylum in Athens (where she plans to marry King Aegeus) and, unhinged by jealousy, plots frenzied revenge. She murders Jason's new wife and her father, King Creon, with a poisoned garment and crown. Her vengeance knows no bounds as she murders her own sons to inflict agony on the faithless Jason. She then leaves Corinth in a golden chariot drawn by dragons and sent by her grandfather, the sun god Helios.

Barber's music for the ballet was deemed "brilliant" but critical reviews of the dance and its drama prompted revision. The updated version, now titled *Cave of the Heart*, was first performed on February 27, 1947 in New York City. The ballet has remained in the Martha Graham Dance Company's repertory ever since and was one of Graham's favored works.





Barber extracted a concert suite from the ballet, which premiered on December 5, 1947, performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. While Graham preferred *Cave of the Heart* as a title, Barber opted to name his concert suite after the tale's central protagonist, Medea. A few years later, he reworked and condensed the music to a single movement called *Medea's Dance of Vengeance*. These performances use the ballet score with its more modest woodwind and brass forces compared to the concert versions of the music.

The titles of the ballet score movements are more practical than descriptive, offering tempo indications instead of the character names and stage actions used in the orchestral suite. The work was not intended as a literal depiction of the story, thus giving both Barber and Graham tremendous flexibility in their creative choices. In the score, Barber noted:

These mythical figures served rather to project psychological states of jealousy and vengeance which are timeless.

The choreography and music were conceived, as it were, on two time levels, the ancient mythical and the contemporary. Medea and Jason first appear as godlike, super-human figures of the Greek tragedy. As the tension and conflict between them increases, they step out of their legendary roles from time to time and become the modern man and woman, caught in the nets of jealousy and destructive love; and at the end reassume their mythical quality. In both the dancing and music, archaic and contemporary idioms are used. Medea, in her final scene after the denouement, becomes once more the descendant of the sun.

Beside Medea and Jason there are two other characters in the ballet, the Young Princess whom Jason marries out of ambition and for whom he betrays Medea, and an attendant who assumes the part of the onlooking chorus of the Greek tragedy, sympathizing, consoling and interpreting the actions of the major characters.

Searing drama calls for equally compelling music and Barber delivered a score well suited to the task. Whether conveying the rabid viciousness of Medea's bleak mental state or the pained helplessness of the Greek chorus as they observe the unfolding tragedy, the music is by turns filled with rage, coolly calculated, agonizing, tender, ferocious and disconsolate. *ETW* 

#### **SAMUEL BARBER (1910-1981)**

One of America's most eminent composers, Samuel Osborne Barber II knew his destiny at an early age. The 9-year-old Barber wrote his mother a letter saying, "I was not meant to be an athlet [sic]. I was meant to be a composer, and will be I'm sure." A year later, he wrote a brief opera called *The Rose Tree*, launching his life's work.

Barber grew up surrounded by music. His pianist mother encouraged his musical endeavors. His aunt Louise Beatty Homer, who sang at the Metropolitan Opera, and his uncle Sidney Homer, a



composer, offered crucial mentorship. Early piano studies enabled young Samuel to serve as organist at a Presbyterian church in his hometown of West Chester, Pennsylvania.

At 14, Barber became one of the first students at a new conservatory — the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia — studying piano, voice and composition. His teachers included renowned conductor Fritz Reiner and composer Rosario Scalero. At Curtis, he met fellow student Gian Carlo Menotti, who would become his lifelong companion.

Early successes included prizes from Columbia University, winning the American Prix de Rome, and receiving a Pulitzer scholarship. His Overture to *The School for Scandal* was premiered by the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1933 and helped establish Barber's reputation as a talented young composer. His String Quartet followed in 1936 and he arranged its second movement for string orchestra at the behest of NBC Symphony conductor Arturo Toscanini. The *Adagio for Strings* rapidly became his most famous work and secured his status as a composer of lyrical music.



The 1940s and 50s marked the height of Barber's fame when he received three Guggenheim Fellowships, a Pulitzer Prize and an honorary doctorate from Harvard University. While many composers embraced the experimental approaches favored by academics in the 1960s, Barber stayed true to his own expressive style, resulting in waning popularity. As he remarked in a 1971 interview, "When I write an abstract piano sonata or concerto, I write what I feel. I believe this takes a certain courage."

The shifting winds of artistic taste contributed to Barber's sense of isolation and rejection toward the end of his life. He struggled with depression and alcoholism, composing virtually nothing for several years. A solo piano work and his Third Essay for Orchestra finally emerged in the late 1970s. He succumbed to cancer in 1981, leaving a catalog of more than 40 published works and over 100 still unpublished. *ETW* 







## FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN Symphony No. 64 in A Major, "Tempora mutantur" (c. 1775) 20 minutes

2 oboes, bassoon, 2 horns and strings

Many of the nicknames we know for music of the Classical period — for example, Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" — were not chosen by the composer, but added later by a publisher or an imaginative biographer. But Haydn's nickname for his 64th symphony, "Tempora mutantur," is an exception. At the top of the orchestral parts prepared for this symphony, Haydn wrote "Tempora mutantur, et[c].", referring to this Latin proverb:

Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis. Quomodo? Fit semper tempore peior homo.

The times change, and we change with them. How? Time passing makes mankind worse.

While we do not have an explanation of the connection between the proverb and the music from Haydn, most scholars believe it is a reference to the slow second movement, marked "Largo." Elaine Sisman has posited that the music in this movement was originally written as incidental music for a production of "Hamlet," and views the adage in connection with Hamlet's line that "time is out of joint." In the Largo movement, the cadences, or endings of musical phrases, are often delayed or missing altogether. This subverts both the "grammar" of tonality and the expectations of the symphony's listeners, leading, perhaps, to an altered sense of musical time. (Subverting expectations was something Haydn enjoyed, evidenced in a number of his pieces, most famously in the "Surprise Symphony" — another example of a nickname added later by someone other than the composer.)

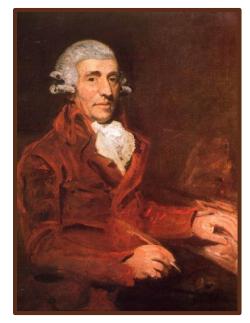
The remainder of the symphony also subverts expectations, in more subtle ways. The opening Allegro movement begins with two lyrical pianissimo measures before four chords played forte by the orchestra, a reversal of the typical beginning of a work. The movement also contains some unusual harmonic sequences for the early Classical period. The strings play alone for much of the Largo movement, making the entrance of the oboes and horns toward the end somewhat surprising. The third movement, a minuet and trio, follows some of the patterns the first two movements do not — a forte statement of the theme first, followed by a piano version, with cadences in all the proper places. The finale, marked "Presto," again reverses the dynamic order at the beginning, and sounds at first like sonata form. But as the movement progresses, a rondo form emerges, ending with a soft restatement of the movement's main theme followed by a fortissimo flourish. *AJH* 



# FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN (1732–1809)

Franz Joseph Haydn, always a jokester, probably would have enjoyed these facts: He is known today as the "Father of the Symphony" and the "Father of the String Quartet," although he did not invent either genre; and he was affectionately known in his own lifetime (and thereafter) as "Papa Haydn," although he did not father any children of his own. All joking aside, though, Haydn was undeniably one of the most important composers of the Classical era, both as an innovator in form and a mentor to many other musicians and composers.

Haydn was born in a small town in Austria in 1732. Neither of his parents could read music, but both were enthusiastic amateur musicians, and he later recalled that his family



often sang with their neighbors. His early musical training consisted of harpsichord and violin lessons with a relative in Hainburg as well as singing in the church choir. His singing attracted the attention of the director of music of St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, and when Haydn was 8 years old he moved there to work as a chorister. It was a leading center of music in Europe, and while Haydn's formal training was scant he learned a great deal from the musical environment.

Haydn's voice changed in 1749, famously prompting the Habsburg Empress Maria Theresa to complain, "That boy doesn't sing, he crows!" This, along with Haydn's practical joke of snipping off the pigtail of one of the other choirboys, led to him being publicly caned and tossed out into the street. He was taken in by a friend and set out to earn a living teaching, performing and serving as an assistant to the Italian composer Nicola Porpora. He taught himself counterpoint and composition, and was eventually engaged by several aristocratic patrons, the most common career path for composers at that time.

He wrote his first string quartets in 1756. The instrumentation had evolved from Baroque trio sonatas for two soloists plus continuo (cello and keyboard), with a third soloist added and the keyboard eventually omitted, but had not been solidified as a genre on its own. Haydn tried his hand at writing for two violins, viola and cello because one of his employers had a group of friends who played those instruments and asked him to compose music they could play together. Haydn also wrote his first symphonies during this time; the genre had more of an established provenance than the string quartet, but often did not specify its instrumentation as it was expected that a performance would use whatever musicians were available. Working with the musicians of a court orchestra, Haydn began noting in his scores which instruments were to play which parts.

In 1761, Haydn was offered the job of Vice-Kapellmeister (assistant music director) to Prince Paul Anton of the Esterházy family. The head music director died in 1766 and Haydn was



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elevated to the position, where he was to work (in both full-time and part-time capacities) for most of his life. For the next three decades, he composed, directed the orchestra, played chamber music for and with his patrons, and eventually produced operas. In 1779, he renegotiated his contract with the Esterházy family to allow him to sell his work to publishers, and began writing fewer operas and more quartets and symphonies. This led to international popularity, as well as the paradoxical position, according to one scholar, of being "Europe's leading composer, but someone who spent his time as a duty-bound Kapellmeister in a remote palace in the Hungarian countryside." He took occasional trips to Vienna to visit friends, and sometime around 1784 met Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who was 28 years old. The two composers played in string quartets together, and Haydn promoted Mozart to his connections with generous praise. Mozart in turn dedicated a set of string quartets to him; in the dedication, Mozart wrote of the works as "children" and said, addressing Haydn, "May it therefore please you to receive them kindly and to be their Father, Guide and Friend!" When Haydn first heard a performance of the quartets, he remarked to Mozart's father, "Before God, and as an honest man, I tell you that your son is the greatest composer known to me either in person or by name."

In 1790, Prince Nicholas Esterházy died and was succeeded by his son Anton, who was disinterested in music. Anton retained Haydn in a nominal position, but the composer's part-time status allowed him to travel and to spend most of his time in Vienna. His music was enormously popular in London, and his multiple visits there were critical, box-office and financial successes. Several of his best-known symphonies were written during his trips to England, as well as his six final ones (Nos. 99 through 104). Haydn's biographer wrote that "the days spent in England [were] the happiest of his life. He was everywhere appreciated there; it opened a new world to him."

On the way to England in 1790, Haydn met the 20-year-old Ludwig van Beethoven, who studied with him upon the older composer's return to Vienna. One of Beethoven's patrons wrote to him, "With the help of assiduous labour you shall receive Mozart's spirit from Haydn's hands." Beethoven studied counterpoint and composition with Haydn, but was dissatisfied with his extremely busy composing and performing schedule and a second trip to London. Haydn criticized Beethoven's third piano trio (op. 1 No. 3) after a performance; Beethoven was horrified, and later declared, "I never learned anything from Haydn." But the relationship was soon mended, as Beethoven dedicated his first three piano sonatas, opus 2, to him.

In 1795, Anton Esterházy died and his successor, Nicholas II, asked Haydn to return to the estate as music director again. Haydn accepted, on a part-time basis. His two great oratorios, *The Creation* and *The Seasons*, were composed during this time. Nicholas II was a lover of church music, and asked Haydn to compose a new mass setting each year to celebrate his wife's name day. The final mass of the six he wrote, nicknamed "Harmoniemesse" (Wind Band Mass) and completed in 1802, was to be his last large-scale composition.

Haydn retired from his position with the Esterházys in 1803, as his health declined and he became unable to compose due to weakness, dizziness and an inability to concentrate. It was difficult for him because musical ideas continued to flow, even though he was unable to write them out and develop them into full works. He told his biographer in 1806, "Musical ideas are pursuing me, to the point of torture, I cannot escape them, they stand like walls before me. If it's



an allegro that pursues me, my pulse keeps beating faster, I can get no sleep. If it's an adagio, then I notice my pulse beating slowly. My imagination plays on me as if I were a clavier ... I am really just a living clavier."

In March 1808, a performance of *The Creation* was held in his honor. He was carried in an armchair into the auditorium to fanfares played by trumpets and drums, and was greeted by Beethoven, Antonio Salieri (who conducted the performance) and other musicians and patrons of the arts. Haydn was deeply moved by the experience, though it was exhausting as well for the frail composer.

When the French army under Napoleon occupied Vienna in May 1809, a French cavalry officer came to pay his respects to Haydn and sang an aria from *The Creation*. Napoleon placed a guard of honor outside his house. On the 31st of May, Haydn died peacefully; two weeks later, Mozart's Requiem was performed at his funeral. *AJH* 

Program notes written by AJ Harbison (AJH) and Eric T. Williams (ETW).



