

# THE MIRACULOUS MANDARIN WITH RACHMANINOFF'S FOURTH PIANO CONCERTO

*Friday and Saturday, April 22-23, 2022 at 8:00 p.m.  
Sunday, April 24, 2022 at 2:00 p.m.*

HELZBERG HALL, KAUFFMAN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

PAOLO BORTOLAMEOLLI, *guest conductor*

CONRAD TAO, *piano*

**AARON COPLAND**

*El Salón México*

**SERGEI RACHMANINOFF**

Concerto No. 4 in G Minor for Piano and Orchestra, op. 40  
(1941 revision)

I. Allegro vivace

II. Largo

III. Allegro vivace

Conrad Tao, *piano*

— INTERMISSION —

**ZOLTÁN KODÁLY**

*Dances of Galánta*

**BÉLA BARTÓK**

Suite from *The Miraculous Mandarin*, op. 19

*The 2021/22 season is generously sponsored by  
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Vladimir Rykov

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Duke Lee, *Acting Associate Principal*

Jesse Yukimura, *Acting Assistant Principal*

Matthew Sinno‡, *Associate Principal*

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Kayla Burggraf Michal

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Matthew LengasΔ

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**E-FLAT CLARINET**

Silvio Guitian

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John Klinghammer

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David Sullivan, *Associate Principal*

Elizabeth Gray

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*Associate Principal Emeritus*

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James B. and Annabel Nutter *Chair*

Steven Franklin, *Associate Principal*

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Porter Wyatt Henderson,

*Associate Principal*

Adam Rainey

**BASS TROMBONE**

Adam Rainey

**TUBA**

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Frank Byrne *Chair*

**TIMPANI**

Timothy Jepson, *Principal*

Michael and Susan Newburger *Chair*

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## AARON COPLAND

### *El Salón México* (1933-1936)

11 minutes

Piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbal, güiro, snare drum, temple blocks, tambourine, wood block, xylophone, piano and strings.

## THE STORY

Aaron Copland's friend, the composer and conductor Carlos Chávez, issued him an invitation to visit Mexico, so in 1932, Copland and his boyfriend, violinist/photographer Victor Kraft, headed south and stayed for four months, taking in the country's scenic grandeur and vibrant culture. Enchanted, Copland returned numerous times over the years.

The pivotal moment during this initial visit came when Chávez took Copland to a popular dance hall called El Salón México. A guidebook of the era described it as a "Harlem type night-club" with "three halls: one for people dressed in your way, one for people dressed in overalls but shod, and one for the barefoot." The place was open until 5 a.m. and a guard frisked patrons to assure that guns were checked at the door. Copland later commented:

It wasn't the music that I heard there, or the dances that attracted me, so much as the spirit of the place. In some inexplicable way, while milling about in those crowded halls, one felt a really live contact with the Mexican people — the electric sense one sometimes gets in far-off places, of suddenly knowing the essence of a people — their humanity, their separate shyness, their dignity and unique charm. I remember quite well that it was at just such a moment that I conceived the idea of composing a piece about Mexico and naming it *El Salón México*.

He launched into the task and completed the music in 1934 while summering in Bemidji, Minnesota. He completed the orchestration in 1936 and Carlos Chávez conducted the premiere with the Orquesta Sinfónica de México at the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City on August 27, 1937.

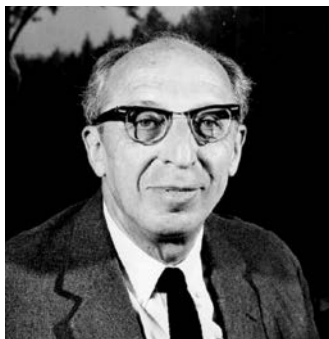
## THE MUSIC

In 1939, Copland wrote an article about *El Salón México* in which he described his compositional process.

To have an idea for a piece of music is not the same as to have the piece itself ... Sooner or later, you must begin to collect musical themes or tunes out of which a composition will eventually emerge. It was only natural that I should have thought of using popular Mexican melodies for my thematic material ... It's an easy method composers have for translating the flavour of a foreign people into musical terms ... In the end I adopted a form which is a kind of modified potpourri, in which the Mexican themes and their extension are sometimes inextricably mixed for the sake of conciseness and coherence.

The Mexican folk tunes found in *El Salón México* include "El Palo Verde," La Jesuita" and "El Mosco." The only traditional Mexican percussion instrument Copland employs is the güiro, a gourd with incised grooves that is scraped with a stick.

Copland noted, "*El Salón México* is not an easy work to perform. It presents rhythmic problems of the most intricate kind to both conductor and orchestra." Indeed, near constant alternation between duple and triple arrays of notes in shifting meters coupled with syncopations and irregular patterns creates a glittering polyrhythmic mélange. **ETW**



## AARON COPLAND (1900-1990)

### Known for:

- *Appalachian Spring* (1944)
- *Fanfare for the Common Man* (1942)
- *Rodeo* (1942)

- A multi-faceted musician, Aaron Copland was a composer, teacher, writer and conductor, earning the informal title “Dean of American Composers”. Born to immigrant parents in Brooklyn, New York, Copland and his four siblings helped out in the family shop, H.M. Copland’s, where they lived above the store. His mother arranged for music lessons and Copland began writing songs when he was 8 years old. He studied extensively and decided to become a composer at age 15.
- Copland went to Paris in 1921 and studied with Nadia Boulanger, a brilliant teacher whose students included Leonard Bernstein, Quincy Jones, Astor Piazzolla, Philip Glass and Darius Milhaud. He worked with Boulanger for three years amidst the heady milieu of 1920s Paris. Copland avidly sought out the latest music and soaked up the many influences, including jazz.
- An early advocate of Copland’s music was longtime Boston Symphony Music Director Serge Koussevitzky. In 1924, he commissioned Copland to write an organ concerto featuring Boulanger as soloist. The resultant Symphony for Organ and Orchestra helped launch his professional career.
- Copland began teaching classes at The New School in New York City in the late 1920s and also wrote articles for the New York Times as well as several journals. He travelled extensively in Europe, Africa and Mexico. Notable successes from these years included *El Salón México* (1936) and the ballet *Billy the Kid* (1938).
- Hollywood beckoned and he completed film scores for “Of Mice and Men” and “Our Town” in 1939.
- Copland’s works from the 1940s are among his most famous and beloved today. They include ballet scores for *Rodeo* (1942) and *Appalachian Spring* (1944), *Lincoln Portrait* (1942), *Fanfare for the Common Man* (1942), his Third Symphony (1946) and his film score for “The Red Pony” (1949).
- Following a 1949 trip to Europe, Copland became interested in the twelve-tone technique developed by Arnold Schoenberg and the even more radical serialism of Pierre Boulez, who was among the most avant-garde of post-war composers. He began applying the technique, filtered through his own sensibilities and voice. The result was still Coplandesque but rather gnarled and thorny.
- Copland was caught up in the anti-communist fervor of the 1950s due to his leftist views. Many members of the musical community came to his defense and the investigation did not seriously impede his career or damage his reputation even though it posed a significant danger.
- Beginning in the 1960s, Copland began conducting more frequently. He programmed works by many contemporary composers as well as his own compositions, advocating strongly for new music. He died shortly after his 90th birthday, leaving a rich legacy of compositions, recordings, books and encouragement for new music, particularly American music. **ETW**

## SERGEI RACHMANINOFF

### Concerto No. 4 in G Minor for Piano and Orchestra, op. 40 (1926, rev. 1928, rev. 1941)

25 minutes

*Solo piano, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, piccolo, bass drum, cymbals, snare drum, tambourine, triangle and strings.*

## THE STORY

Sergei Rachmaninoff was notoriously self-critical (to the point where at times during his career he found it impossible to compose). The composition of his Fourth Piano Concerto was no different; a year before he finished it, he complained to a fellow composer that it was too long and would “have to be performed like [Wagner’s] Ring: on several evenings in succession.” His friend replied, “Actually, your concerto amazed me by the fewness of its pages, considering its importance ... Naturally, there are limitations to the lengths of musical works, just as there are dimensions for canvasses. But within these human limitations, it is not the length of musical compositions that creates an impression of boredom, but it is rather the boredom that creates the impression of length.”

The concerto was premiered in March 1927 by the Philadelphia Orchestra, with the composer at the piano and Leopold Stokowski conducting. It was a disaster. The piece was universally panned by critics, with one writing it was “long-winded, tiresome, unimportant, [and] in places tawdry.” Another quipped, “Mme. Cécile Chaminade [a French composer] might safely have perpetrated it on her third glass of vodka.” Rachmaninoff made extensive cuts totaling more than 100 measures across the concerto’s three movements. This version was performed several times between 1928 and 1930 but was no better received. Finally, in 1941, Rachmaninoff returned to the work once more and made further revisions, removing another 80 measures, discarding some subsidiary themes and making the structure more compact. He performed this final version in Philadelphia, this time with Eugene Ormandy conducting, to better reviews. It was to be the last original composition he worked on before his death in 1943.

## THE MUSIC

By the time Rachmaninoff finished the first version of the concerto, he had been living in the United States for eight years. He was enamored of Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* (the famous premiere of which he attended), jazz pianist Art Tatum and the bands of Paul Whiteman and Duke Ellington. He had also spent time studying Alexander Scriabin’s highly complex and chromatic music prior to leaving Russia. The concerto exhibits hallmarks of both styles.

The first movement begins with a quick orchestral crescendo, followed by the piano’s heroic entrance with the movement’s main theme. The rising forte theme soon gives way to a falling theme that diminuendos down to piano, and this contrast of rising and falling plays an important role throughout the concerto. The second movement features long passages of piano playing, solo or lightly accompanied, that are highly chromatic, modulate to far-distant keys frequently and sound a lot like blues. A long trill leads directly into the third movement with a cymbal crash. In the finale the piano plays almost constantly, much faster and in much more demanding ways than the first two movements. Close to the end of the movement the chordal opening and climax of the first movement make brief and startling reappearances, before the final thunderous G major chords. *AJH*



## SERGEI RACHMANINOFF (1873-1943)

### Known for:

- **Piano Concerto No. 2 (1901)**
- ***The Bells* (1913)**
- ***Symphonic Dances* (1940)**

- Sergei Rachmaninoff was born into an aristocratic family and exhibited musical talent from an early age. His mother arranged for him to take piano lessons when he was 4, and realized that he could perfectly repeat passages by ear that his teacher played.
- Rachmaninoff's father left the family in 1883 and his maternal grandmother moved in to help raise the children. She was a member of the Russian Orthodox Church, and regularly took Sergei to services where he first encountered liturgical chant and church bells, both of which were to influence compositions throughout his life.
- After graduating from the Moscow Conservatory in 1892, he signed a lucrative publishing contract for several of his compositions. There were delays in the payment, however, and Rachmaninoff turned to piano performances to support himself. This would become a recurrent theme in his life; he never had as much time as he wanted for composition, because performance always paid more and he was frequently in need of money.
- Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 1 was given its premiere in March 1897, with Russian composer Alexander Glazunov conducting. The performance (like that of the premiere of the Fourth Piano Concerto) was a disaster. One critic wrote "This music leaves an evil impression with its broken rhythms, obscurity and vagueness of form, meaningless repetition of the same short tricks ... and above all its sickly perverse harmonization." Another stated the symphony could only be admired by the "inmates" of a conservatory in Hell. Rachmaninoff's wife, among other attendees, suspected that Glazunov may have been drunk. The composer himself wrote that he was not affected "at all" by the critical response but he was "deeply distressed and heavily depressed by

the fact that my Symphony ... did not please *me* at all after its first rehearsal."

- This experience plunged Rachmaninoff into a deep depression, in which he composed almost nothing for three years. In 1900 he sought the help of Nikolai Dahl, a physician who gave the composer a course of hypnosis, psychotherapy and positive suggestion therapy. Rachmaninoff regained his self-confidence and completed his Second Piano Concerto, which he dedicated to Dahl, and its premiere in 1901 was a smashing success.
- Following the February 1917 Revolution in St. Petersburg, Rachmaninoff returned from a concert tour to his home estate to find it had been confiscated by revolutionaries. Seeking a way out of Russia for himself and his family, he seized on an offer to perform concerts in Scandinavia. He would never return to his native country.
- Shortly after the Scandinavian tour Rachmaninoff emigrated with his family to the United States, where he lived for the rest of his life, earning a living through a combination of composing, performing and recording for the RCA label. He completed only six major compositions between 1918 and his death in 1943, and only one (the *Symphonic Dances*) was composed entirely while he was living in the U.S. He later stated, "I left behind my desire to compose: losing my country, I lost myself also."
- Rachmaninoff was six feet six inches tall, and legend has it that his hands could each span a twelfth (an octave plus a fifth) on the piano. Some have speculated that Rachmaninoff had Marfan's syndrome, a disorder of the body's connective tissues that contributed to his height and allowed him to spread his fingers especially wide but also led to persistent health problems throughout his life. **AJH**



Photo by Shervin Lainez

## CONRAD TAO, PIANO

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Conrad Tao has appeared worldwide as a pianist and composer and has been dubbed “the kind of musician who is shaping the future of classical music” by New York Magazine, and an artist of “probing intellect and open-hearted vision” by the New York Times. He is the recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant and was named a Gilmore Young Artist — an honor awarded every two years highlighting the most promising American pianists of the new generation. As a composer, he was also the recipient of a 2019 New York Dance and Performance “Bessie” Award, for Outstanding Sound Design / Music Composition, for his work on *More Forever*, his collaboration with dancer and choreographer Caleb Teicher.

Tao has recently appeared as soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic and Boston Symphony. His compositions have been performed by orchestras throughout the United States. His first large scale orchestral work, *Everything Must Go*, was premiered by the New York Philharmonic in 2018/19, and will be premiered in Europe by the Antwerp Symphony in 2021/22. In the same season, his violin concerto, written for Stefan Jackiw, will be premiered by the Atlanta Symphony under Robert Spano and the Baltimore Symphony under Kirill Karabits. In the 2021/22 season, he will make his London solo recital debut at Wigmore Hall and also will appear in recital throughout North America.

In the 2020/21 season, Tao was the focus of a series of concerts and interviews with the Finnish Radio Symphony, performing Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 4 with Hannu Lintu and Andrew Norman’s *Suspend* with Sakari Oramo, live on television. While most performances in the 2020/21 season were canceled due to the COVID epidemic, he appeared with the Cincinnati Symphony and Louis Langrée, returned to the Seattle Symphony to perform Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 4, returned to Blossom Music Center with the Cleveland Orchestra, and appeared at Bravo! Vail with the New York Philharmonic and Jaap van Zweden. Further invitations included performances with the National Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, New Jersey Symphony and St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.

In 2019/20, Tao was presented in recital by Carnegie Hall and made his recital debut at Walt Disney Concert Hall. Following his debut at Blossom Music Center, the Cleveland Orchestra invited Tao to perform at Severance Hall in a special program featuring music by Mary Lou Williams and Ligeti, and improvisation alongside pianist Aaron Diehl.

A Warner Classics recording artist, Tao’s debut disc “Voyages” was declared a “spiky debut” by the New Yorker’s Alex Ross. His next album, “Pictures,” was hailed by the New York Times as “a fascinating album [by] a thoughtful artist and dynamic performer ... played with enormous imagination, color and command.” His third album, “American Rage,” featuring works by Julia Wolfe, Frederic Rzewski and Aaron Copland, was released in the fall of 2019.

Tao was born in Urbana, Illinois in 1994. He has studied piano with Emilio del Rosario in Chicago and Yoheved Kaplinsky in New York, and composition with Christopher Theofanidis.

## ZOLTÁN KODÁLY

### *Dances of Galánta* (1933)

15 minutes

2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, glockenspiel, snare drum, triangle and strings.

## THE STORY

Today Zoltán Kodály is probably best known as the close friend and colleague of composer Béla Bartók. Beginning in 1905 and continuing throughout their lives, the two composers traveled the Hungarian countryside collecting folk melodies from native singers. However, the folk songs Kodály used in *Dances of Galánta* had a much earlier origin for him. He wrote, “[I] spent the most beautiful seven years of [my] childhood in Galánta. The town band, led by the fiddler Mihók, was famous. But it must have been even more famous a hundred years earlier. Several volumes of Hungarian dances were published in Vienna around the year 1800. One of them lists its source this way: ‘from several [Roma] in Galánta.’”

In 1933, the Budapest Philharmonic Society commissioned Kodály to compose a work commemorating its 80th anniversary. He took several melodies from the Viennese publications and wrote *Dances of Galánta*. In a preface to the score, he wrote, “In order to keep it alive, the composer has taken his principal themes from these old publications ... May this modest composition serve to continue the old tradition.”

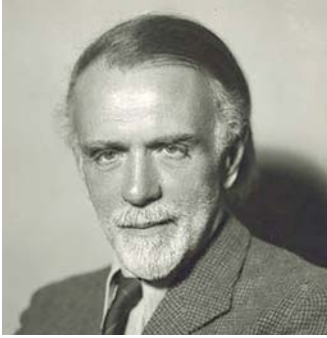
The *Dances* take the form of an expanded “verbunkos.” In 18th- and 19th-century Hungary, the verbunkos was a show performed by a recruiting sergeant and some of his soldiers to encourage young men to enlist. They would literally dance, accompanied by Roma musicians, beginning slowly and then getting faster and faster, leaping and clicking their spurs, touting the endless fun of a soldier’s life.

## THE MUSIC

Unlike a Baroque dance suite, *Dances of Galánta* is not a set of separate dances but a single continuous work with five sections. Verbunkos typically were cast in two large parts, the lassú (“slow”) and the friss (“fresh”). Kodály’s work follows this structure, with its orchestral introduction, clarinet cadenza and andante maestoso sections constituting the lassú, and its four fast dances comprising the friss. The andante maestoso theme makes brief returns like a refrain between the fast sections.

The entire piece makes use of frequent accelerandos and ritardandos, gradually speeding up and slowing down, lending it a spontaneous and folk-like quality even beyond its melodies. The clarinet is prominent throughout, nowhere more so than in the cadenza following the slow introduction and the beginning of the andante maestoso. Kodály uses the instrument to represent a traditional single-reed Hungarian instrument called the tárogató. The clarinet reprises its cadenza right before the final frenetic dash to the end. *AJH*





## ZOLTÁN KODÁLY (1882-1967)

### Known for:

- *Háry János Suite*  
suite of music from opera, 1926)
- *Missa brevis* (1942/1948)
- “Kodály Method” for music education

- Zoltán Kodály was born into a musical family in Kecskemét, Hungary in 1882. He lived in Galánta from age 2 to age 9, when his family moved to Nagyszombat (now Trnava, Slovakia). There he learned violin and piano and sang in the cathedral choir. He studied scores in the cathedral’s music library and taught himself to play the cello to fill out a string quartet his father would host in their home in the evenings.
- Kodály enrolled at the University of Sciences in Budapest in 1900 to study modern languages, but the pull of a musical life proved too strong. He transferred to the Hungarian Royal Music Academy, where he met Béla Bartók, who was to become a lifelong friend, colleague and champion of his music.
- Together Kodály and Bartók traveled the Hungarian countryside with music notebooks and wax cylinder recorders, recording and notating folk songs. They published a collection of music in 1906, and in all cataloged more than 10,000 melodies.
- Kodály’s first major public success came in 1923, when his choral work *Psalmus Hungaricus* was premiered to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the unification of the cities of Buda and Pest. Bartók’s Dance Suite was performed at the same concert. Several years later, the concert suite from Kodály’s opera *Háry János*, as well as *Dances of Marossek* and *Dances of Galánta*, brought him to international attention.
- Kodály is known today for his work in music education almost as much as for his compositions. Beginning in 1935 he embarked on a long-term project focused on music education reforms in Hungarian elementary and middle schools. His principles focus on encouraging children to explore their natural musicality through performance. He composed a great number of choral exercises intended to encourage amateur singers to extend their techniques, as well as music specifically for children to perform. The term “Kodály Method,” while widely used, is somewhat of a misnomer as Kodály developed a set of principles but not a comprehensive method.
- The day Kodály died, March 6, 1967, he had been scheduled to make one of his many school visits. He was widely regarded as one of the most well-known and respected figures in the Hungarian arts. *AJH*

## BÉLA BARTÓK

### Suite from *The Miraculous Mandarin* (1924)

20 minutes

3 flutes, 3 oboes, 3 clarinets, 3 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, large snare drum, soprano snare drum, tam-tam, triangle, xylophone, harp piano, celesta, organ, 2 piccolos, English horn, E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, contrabassoon and strings.

## THE STORY

Igor Stravinsky's ballet *The Rite of Spring* probably holds the claim of causing the most notorious scandal in the history of the performing arts, but Béla Bartók's ballet *The Miraculous Mandarin* may be a close second. The ballet was based on a play written by Hungarian playwright Melchior Lengyel (who went on to become a Hollywood screenwriter). Bartók's imagination was sparked by the violent and salacious story. The premiere was given at the Cologne Opera in November 1926. The Hungarian conductor Eugen Szenkár relates the story in his memoirs:

At the end of the performance there was a concert of whistling and catcalls! Bartók was present, sitting in the auditorium as he had at all the rehearsals. The uproar was so deafening and lengthy that the fire curtain had to be brought down. Nevertheless, we endured it and weren't afraid to appear in front of the curtain, at which point the whistles resumed with a vengeance. It could have been that there were isolated "Bravos," but everything was lost beneath the tumult!

A German musical journal published a breathless review, stating, "Cologne, a city of churches, monasteries and chapels ... has lived to see its first true [musical] scandal. Catcalls, whistling, stamping, and booing ... which did not subside even after the composer's personal appearance, nor even after the safety curtain went down ... Waves of moral outrage engulf the city."

Bartók's response the next day was to go calmly to the opera house to make a small correction to the clarinet part. But Szenkár was called into the mayor's office, where he was upbraided for performing "such a work of filth." He wrote, "I tried to convince him that he was wrong; Bartók was our greatest contemporary composer; we should not make ourselves the laughingstock of the musical world. But he wouldn't budge from insisting that the piece disappear from the schedule." It was banned on the spot.

After the premiere, Bartók arranged about two thirds of the music into a concert suite that ends after the chase scene. This version, which was performed much more frequently in Bartók's lifetime than the full ballet, is the version on our concert today.

## THE MUSIC

Bartók described the opening of the piece to his wife in a letter: "It will be hellish music. The prelude before the curtain goes up will be very short and sound like pandemonium ... the audience will be introduced to the [thieves'] den at the height of the hurly-burly of the metropolis." The piece begins with violins running up and down a scale that outlines the unusual interval of an augmented octave (an octave plus a minor second), accompanied by dissonant chords in the piano and woodwinds. A timpani roll marks the raising of the curtain. The clarinet plays a seductive melody starting with an open fifth to represent the woman at the window. The Mandarin's appearance in the street is heralded by a pentatonic melody in the first trombone, harmonized in parallel tritones by the other trombones and tuba. The woman dances to a grotesque waltz, leading to a wild chase and the end of the suite. *AJH*

## THE MIRACULOUS MANDARIN SYNOPSIS

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Three thugs coerce a beautiful young woman to lure men to a room where the thugs beat and rob them. The woman dances provocatively in the window and an old man falls victim to her wiles. He is penniless, though, and the thugs disgustedly cast him from the room. Returning to the window, the woman attracts a shy young man to the trap. He dances with the woman but has no money so the ruffians throw him out as well. The woman returns yet again to the window and is confronted by the unnerving gaze of a Chinese man, a Mandarin or affluent official. As the Mandarin stands in the doorway, the thugs encourage the girl to dance for him despite her fright. She dances seductively as the Mandarin's piercing eyes follow her. He embraces her and she attempts to flee his advances. A chase ensues and the thugs pounce on the Mandarin, robbing him. The suite concludes at this point, but the ballet continues with the thugs attempting to kill the Mandarin. First, they try smothering him with a pillow but he doesn't die, his eyes fixed longingly on the woman. Next, they stab him three times with a sword but he remains alive and again pursues the woman. In desperation, they hang him from a chandelier but it crashes to the floor and his body begins to glow weirdly. The woman then submits to his passionate embrace. His longing fulfilled, the Mandarin dies.

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





## BÉLA BARTÓK (1881-1945)

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- Béla Bartók, one of Hungary's most famous composers, was born in 1881 in present-day Romania. His mother noticed his musical talents very early, recalling that he could distinguish different rhythms she played on the piano before he could speak in complete sentences. He began formal lessons with her at the age of 5, and gave his first public recital at 11, including one of his own compositions titled *The Course of the Danube*.
- Bartók opted to study at the Hungarian Royal Music Academy rather than leave his country for the musical capital of Vienna. At the academy he met Zoltán Kodály, who became a lifelong friend and colleague.
- In 1904, while vacationing at a resort, he heard a Transylvanian nanny singing folk songs to the children she was watching, and an interest in folk music was sparked. In 1905 Bartók and Kodály began traveling the Hungarian countryside, collecting folk songs and recording them on phonograph cylinders. They found that the melodies Brahms and Liszt had drawn on for their dances and rhapsodies were not in fact Magyar (Hungarian) folk songs but songs of the Roma people. The pair of researchers published a collection of folk songs in 1906, and continued the work throughout their lives. In all, they collected over 10,000 songs from Eastern Europe and beyond, laying the groundwork for the field we know today as ethnomusicology.
- Bartók's study of folk music deeply influenced his own compositions. While his early works drew inspiration from Liszt, Brahms, Strauss and Debussy, as he studied more Magyar music his compositions became tighter and more focused, incorporating more chromaticism and dissonance. He never advocated for true atonality, however, commenting at one point that he "wanted to show Schoenberg that one can use all twelve tones and still remain tonal."
- In the 1920s and 30s, Bartók toured widely as both a pianist and composer, and wrote some of his most famous works, including *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* and *Divertimento* for String Orchestra. A strong opponent of Nazism and Hungary's alliance with Germany and the Axis powers, Bartók fled Hungary in 1940 and settled in New York City. He was well known in the United States as a pianist, teacher and ethnomusicologist, but not as a composer. He gave concerts and continued research on folk songs but composed very little.
- In the last three years of his life, as his body was ravaged by leukemia (which was not diagnosed until five months before his death), he wrote three final masterworks. His *Piano Concerto No. 3* was a surprise birthday present for his wife, a pianist. Yehudi Menuhin commissioned a sonata for solo violin. And Serge Koussevitsky, music director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, commissioned the *Concerto for Orchestra*. He passed away in September 1945, his funeral drawing only ten people. He was buried in Hartsdale, New York, but in 1988 the Hungarian government and his two sons requested that his remains be returned to Hungary. He was re-interred in a place of honor in Budapest's Farkasrétí Cemetery beside the remains of his wife, following a funeral accompanied by full state honors.

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## **PAOLO BORTOLAMEOLLI, GUEST CONDUCTOR**

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Currently associate conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chilean-Italian conductor Paolo Bortolameolli has a bustling concert schedule across the Americas, Asia and Europe. In addition to his post in Los Angeles, he is music director of Mexico's Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional Esperanza Azteca and principal guest conductor of Chile's Filarmónica de Santiago.

Having conducted every significant orchestra in his Chilean homeland, Bortolameolli has regular conducting relationships across Latin and North America, Europe and Asia, including with the Houston Symphony, Cincinnati Symphony, Detroit

Symphony, Hong Kong Sinfonietta, Orchestra della Toscana (Italy), Gulbenkian Orchestra (Portugal), Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica Simón Bolívar (Venezuela), Orquesta de las Américas, Orquesta Clásica Santa Cecilia (Spain), Orquesta Filarmónica de Buenos Aires (Argentina), Orquesta Sinfónica del SODRE (Uruguay), Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería (Mexico) and Orquesta Filarmónica Joven de Colombia in addition to the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Bortolameolli's relationship with the LA Phil continues through the 2021/22 season, as he conducts subscription concerts and increases his engagement with the Judith and Thomas L. Beckmen YOLA Center. He has conducted concerts at both the Hollywood Bowl and Walt Disney Concert Hall every season since his arrival in LA, including a landmark new production of Meredith Monk's inventive opera *ATLAS*. Also in 2021/22, Bortolameolli will work with other top orchestras in North America: Kansas City Symphony, San Antonio Symphony and Charlotte Symphony, as well as orchestras and opera houses across Europe.

Bortolameolli is passionately committed to new music and audiences. He is currently artistic director of the Esperanza Azteca National Symphony Orchestra as part of an educational residency run by the Fundación Azteca de Grupo Salinas in Mexico. He has also developed innovative projects such as "Ponle Pausa," a project that seeks to rethink the concept of music education through the implementation of short videos and concerts targeting social network users.

In 2018, he was a guest lecturer for a TED Talk in New York, and in 2020, he released his first book, titled "Rubato: procesos musicales y una playlist personal."

Bortolameolli holds a Master of Music degree from the Yale School of Music, a Graduate Performance Diploma from the Peabody Institute, a Piano Performance Diploma from the Universidad Católica de Chile and a Conducting Diploma from the Universidad de Chile. In 2020, he was elected as Corresponding Member of the Chilean Academy of Fine Arts.