

PROGRAM

ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIRST SEASON

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Riccardo Muti Music Director

Pierre Boulez Helen Regenstein Conductor Emeritus

Yo-Yo Ma Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant

Bank of America 
Global Sponsor of the CSO

Thursday, May 31, 2012, at 8:00

Friday, June 1, 2012, at 1:30

Saturday, June 2, 2012, at 8:00

Tuesday, June 5, 2012, at 7:30



Ludovic Morlot Conductor

Stewart Goodyear Piano

Daniel Schlosberg Piano

Cynthia Millar Ondes Martenot

Women of the Chicago Symphony Chorus

Duain Wolfe Director

Messiaen

Trois petites liturgies de la Présence Divine

Anthem of the Inward Conversation (God present in us . . .)

Sequence of the Word, Divine Canticle (God present in Himself . . .)

Psalmody of Ubiquity through Love (God present in all things . . .)

DANIEL SCHLOSBERG

CYNTHIA MILLAR

WOMEN OF THE CHICAGO SYMPHONY CHORUS

First Chicago Symphony Orchestra performances

INTERMISSION

Falla

Nights in the Gardens of Spain

In the Generalife

Distant Dance—

In the Gardens of the Sierra de Córdoba

STEWART GOODYEAR

Ravel

Rapsodie espagnole

Prélude a la nuit

Malagueña

Habanera

Feria

These performances are a part of the ComEd Dynamic Artists Series.

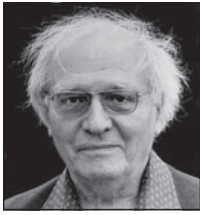
The appearance of Stewart Goodyear is endowed in part by the Nuveen Investments Emerging Artist Fund.

CSO Tuesday series concerts are sponsored by United Airlines.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra is most grateful to Judy Istock, CSO Life Trustee, for her generous support as lead sponsor of the *Keys to the City* Piano Festival. The festival receives additional generous support from The Chicago Community Trust, Dan J. Epstein Family Foundation, Mr. & Mrs. Paul G. Gignilliat, Joe and Madeleine Glossberg, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Media support for the *Keys to the City* Piano Festival is provided by *Chicago Tribune* and WFMT.

This program is partially supported by grants from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.



Olivier Messiaen

Born December 10, 1908, Avignon, France.

Died April 27, 1992, Paris, France.

Trois petites liturgies de la Présence Divine

Pierre Boulez was in the audience at the premiere of these *Trois petites liturgies* in liberated Paris in April 1945, along with composers Arthur Honegger and Francis Poulenc, the writer Jean Cocteau, and the painter Georges Braque. Honegger applauded wildly at the end of the performance; Cocteau said “It’s genius.” Boulez was less enthusiastic, although he later wrote admiringly of the work’s importance. The press was brutal. Within days, as the writer Claude Rostand recalled, “the whole musical world in Paris suddenly went mad, a madness for which, possibly, the end of the occupation was partly responsible and which had not been seen since the great days of Stravinsky.” Some of the critics were put off by the new work’s florid religious poetry, others by its exotic sounds (many of them unexpected in the concert hall), its

voluptuous tonal colors (it is centered in A major, for Messiaen a key of joy), or its sheer size (Stravinsky would later say, of Messiaen’s most celebrated work, “All you need in order to write *Turangalila* is enough manuscript paper”).

Boulez, for whom Messiaen the teacher was “the determining influence of my student days,” and several of his classmates attended the rehearsal, as well as the premiere of the new Messiaen work. “As far as I know,” Boulez later wrote, “Olivier Messiaen was the first composer to give the vibraphone an independent place in the orchestra; and I shall never forget our amazement as his students when we first heard this instrument taking its place among those of the traditional orchestra. This was in 1945 at the performance of his *Trois petites liturgies*.” For Boulez, Messiaen’s score immediately took its place alongside

COMPOSED

November 15, 1943–
March 15, 1944

FIRST PERFORMANCE

April 21, 1945, Paris, France

These are the first
Chicago Symphony
Orchestra performances

INSTRUMENTATION

women’s chorus, solo
piano, solo ondes martenot,
celesta, vibraphone,
maracas, Chinese cymbal,
tam-tam, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

37 minutes

works such as Bartók's Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta as a piece that "normalized" instruments that had previously been viewed simply as "picturesque."

The *Trois petites liturgies* is one of the few important cultural products of wartime France. Messiaen had joined the French army at the outbreak of World War II. Because of his poor eyesight, he was found unfit for active service. He was stationed at a medical auxiliary in Verdun when the German invasion took place in May 1940. In June, he was captured by the Germans while trying to escape on an old bicycle with no tires, and he was taken to a prison camp in Silesia (now Poland), carrying a bag filled with his "treasures": Bach's *Brandenburg* Concertos and scores by Beethoven, Ravel, Stravinsky, and Berg. While still in prison, he wrote the first of his wartime scores, the landmark *Quartet for the End of Time*, for himself and three fellow inmates to play together. After he was released in the spring of 1941, he took a job teaching harmony at the conservatory in occupied Paris, began his important composition treatise, and started to build a circle of gifted students (Boulez became an early member of Messiaen's harmony class after he moved to Paris in 1942). But he wrote virtually no music for two years. His silence was broken with two major scores—the *Visions de l'amen* for two pianos of 1943, and the solo piano work, *Vingt regards sur l'enfant-Jésus*, composed the next year. Those were followed by the *Trois petites liturgies*, the last of his wartime works and

his first orchestral piece in more than a decade.

Messiaen began the *Trois petites liturgies* in November 1943. His original idea was to write another work for two pianos, but that evolved into a large-scale orchestral work with female voices. He wrote the poetry himself piecemeal, as the work progressed: "simultaneously with the music—and for the music," as he put it. "And despite its surrealist appearance, it expresses only theological truths, using phrases humbly borrowed from the Holy Scriptures." This is one of the earliest scores to synthesize many of Messiaen's ideas, obsessions, and innovations. It is the first of his works to evoke the glittering percussive sounds of the Javanese gamelan, which Messiaen had first heard in 1931 at the Exposition Coloniale in Paris. As with Debussy's discovery of Javanese music at the 1889 Exposition, the encounter opened Messiaen's ears to a new world of exotic sonorities and changed the direction of his own career. The *Trois petites liturgies* also is Messiaen's first orchestral score to include the ondes martenot, the novel instrument with the wailing, siren-like voice that Maurice Martenot had introduced in 1928. Although the work was finished in March 1944, the premiere had to be postponed because of the conditions in Paris in the last months of the occupation. It finally took place in April 1945 in a liberated Paris. Maurice Martenot's sister Ginette played the ondes martenot solo; the equally prominent piano part was performed by Yvonne Loriod, who

would become Messiaen's second wife in 1961.

The music, Messiaen wrote, "is, above all, music of colors." The first of the three liturgies is a rapturous adoration of Christ; the second, a song of praise with a dancing refrain. The much longer, more

complex third liturgy incorporates ritualistic spoken interludes with vast blocks of lavishly colored, ecstatic music. Messiaen later explained that his intent was "to bring a kind of Office, a kind of organized act of praise, into the concert room." ■

**ANTINENNE DE LA
CONVERSATION INTÉRIEURE
(DIEU PRÉSENT EN NOUS . . .)**

Mon Jésus, mon silence,
restez en moi.
Mon Jésus, mon royaume de silence,
parlez en moi.
Mon Jésus, nuit d'arc-en-ciel et
de silence,
priez en moi.
Soleil de sang, d'oiseaux,
mon arc-en-ciel d'amour,
désert d'amour.
Chantez, lancez l'auréole d'amour,
mon amour,
mon Dieu.

Ce oui qui chante comme un écho
de lumière,
mélodie rouge et mauve en louange
du père,
d'un baiser votre main dépasse
le tableau,
paysage divin, renverse-toi dans l'eau.

Louange de la gloire à mes ailes
de terre,
mon dimanche, ma paix, mon toujours
de lumière,
que le ciel parle en moi, rire,
ange nouveau,
ne me réveillez pas: c'est le temps de
l'oiseau!

Mon Jésus, mon silence, *etc.*

**ANTIPHON FOR THE
INTERIOR CONVERSATION
(GOD'S PRESENCE IN US . . .)**

My Jesus, my silence,
remain in me.
My Jesus, my kingdom of silence,
speak in me.
My Jesus, night of rainbow and silence,
pray in me.
Sun of blood, of birds,
my rainbow of love,
wilderness of love.
Sing, cast love's aureole,
my love,
my God.

This "yes" that sings like an echo
of light,
a red and mauve melody in praise of
the Father,
by a kiss's breadth your hand
overreaches the painting.
Heavenly landscape, spill over into
the water.

Praise of glory to my wings of earth,
My Sunday, my peace, my always
of light.
May heaven speak within me, smile,
new angel,
do not wake me: it's the time of
the bird!

My Jesus, my silence, *etc.*

**SÉQUENCE DU VERBE,
CANTIQUE DIVIN
(DIEU PRÉSENT EN LUI-MÊME . . .)**

Il est parti le Bien-Aimé,
c'est pour nous!
Il est monté le Bien-Aimé,
c'est pour nous!
Il a prié le Bien-Aimé,
c'est pour nous!

Il a parlé, il a chanté,
le verbe était en Dieu!
Il a parlé, il a chanté,
et le verbe était Dieu!
Louange du père,
substance du père,
empreinte et rejaillissement toujours,
dans l'amour, verbe d'amour!

Il est parti le Bien-Aimé, *etc.*

Par lui le père dit: c'est moi,
parole de mon sein!
Par lui le père dit: c'est moi,
le verbe est dans mon sein!
Le verbe est la louange,
modèle en bleu pour anges,
trompette bleue qui prolonge le jour,
par amour,
chant de l'amour!

Il est parti le Bien-Aimé, *etc.*

Il était riche et bienheureux,
il a donné son ciel!
Il était riche et bienheureux,
pour compléter son ciel!
Le fils, c'est la présence,
l'esprit, c'est la présence!
Les adoptés dans la grâce toujours,
pour l'amour,
enfants d'amour!

**SEQUENCE OF THE WORD,
DIVINE CANTICLE
(GOD'S PRESENCE IN HIMSELF . . .)**

The Beloved has gone,
it is for us!
The Beloved has ascended,
it is for us!
The Beloved has prayed,
it is for us!

He has spoken, he has sung,
the Word was in God!
He has spoken, he has sung,
and the Word was God!
Praise of the Father,
substance of the Father,
imprint and reflection always,
in love, Word of love!

The Beloved has gone, *etc.*

Through the Word, the Father said: it
is I,
the Word of my breast!
Through it, the Father said: it is I,
the Word is in my breast!
The Word is praise,
a model in blue for angels,
a blue trumpet that prolongs the day,
through love,
song of love!

The Beloved has gone, *etc.*

He was rich and happy,
he gave his heaven!
He was rich and happy,
to complete his heaven!
The Son is the presence,
the Spirit is the presence!
Those who have received grace always,
for love,
children of love!

Il est parti le Bien-Aimé, *etc.*

Il a parlé, il a chanté,
le verbe était en Dieu!
Il a parlé, il a chanté,
et le verbe était Dieu!
Louange du père,
substance du père,
empreinte et rejaillissement toujours,
dans l'amour, verbe d'amour!

Il est parti le Bien-Aimé, *etc.*

Il est vivant, il est présent,
et lui se dit en lui!
Il est vivant, il est présent,
et lui se voit en lui!
Présent au sang de l'âme,
etoile aspirant l'âme,
présent partout, miroir ailé des jours,

par amour,
le Dieu d'amour!

Il est parti le Bien-Aimé, *etc.*

**PSALMODIE DE L'UBIQUITÉ
PAR AMOUR
(DIEU PRÉSENT EN TOUTES
CHOSSES . . .)**

Tout entier en tous lieux,
tout entier en chaque lieu,
donnant l'être à chaque lieu,
à tout ce qui occupe un lieu,
le successif vous est simultanément,
dans ces espaces et ces temps que vous
avez créés,
satellites de votre douceur.
Posez-vous comme un sceau sur
mon cœur.

Temps de l'homme et de la planète,
temps de la montagne et de l'insecte,

The Beloved has gone, *etc.*

He has spoken, he has sung,
the Word was in God!
He has spoken, he has sung,
and the Word was God!
Praise of the Father,
substance of the Father,
imprint and reflection always,
in love, Word of love!

The Beloved has gone, *etc.*

He lives, he is present,
and he speaks to himself in himself!
He lives, he is present,
and he sees himself in himself!
Present in the blood of the soul,
soul-breathing star,
everywhere present, winged mirror
of days,
through love,
the God of love!

The Beloved has gone, *etc.*

**PSALMODY OF UBIQUITY
THROUGH LOVE
(GOD'S PRESENCE IN ALL
THINGS . . .)**

Whole in all places,
whole in each place,
bestowing being upon each place,
on all that occupies a place,
the successive you is omnipresent,
in these spaces and times that
you created,
these satellites of your gentleness.
Place yourself, like a seal, on my heart.

Time of man and of the planet,
time of the mountain and of the insect,

bouquet de rire pour le merle et
l'alouette,
eventail de lune au fuchsia,
à la balsamine, au bégonia;
de la profondeur une ride surgit,
la montagne saute comme une brebis
et devient un grand océan.
Présent,
vous êtes présent.
Imprimez votre nom dans mon sang.

Dans le mouvement d'Arcturus, présent,
dans l'arc-en-ciel d'une aile après l'autre

(écharpe aveugle autour de Saturne),
dans la race cachée de mes cellules,
présent,
dans le sang qui répare ses rives,
dans vos saints par la grâce,
présent
(Interprétations de votre verbe,
pierres précieuses au mur de
la fraîcheur.)

Posez-vous comme un sceau sur
mon cœur.

Un cœur pur est votre repos,
lis en arc-en-ciel du troupeau,
vous vous cachez sous votre hostie,
frère silencieux dans la Fleur-
Eucharistie,
pour que je demeure en vous comme
une aile dans le soleil,
vers la résurrection du dernier jour.

Il est plus fort que la mort, votre amour.
Mettez votre caresse tout autour.

Violet-jaune, vision,
voile blanc, subtilité,
orangé-bleu, force et joie,
flèche-azur, agilité,
donnez-moi le rouge et le vert de
votre amour,
feuille flamme or, clarté,

garland of laughter for the blackbird
and lark,
wedge of moon to the fuchsia,
balsam and begonia;
from the depths a ripple rises,
the mountain leaps like a ewe
and becomes a great ocean,
present,
you to be present.
Imprint your name in my blood.

Present in the movement of Arcturus,
in the rainbow, with one wing after
the other,

(blind sash around Saturn),
present in the hidden race of my cells,
in the blood that repairs its banks,
present,
through grace, in your saints.
(Interpretations of your Word,
precious stones in the wall of freshness.)

Place yourself, like a seal, on my heart.

A pure heart is your repose,
rainbow-colored lily of the flock,
you hide beneath your host,
silent brother in the Eucharist
of flowers,
so I may dwell within you like a wing
within the sun,
awaiting the resurrection of the
final day.

Your love is stronger than death.
Enfold us all within your embrace.

Violet-yellow, vision,
white-out, subtlety,
orange-blue, strength and joy,
azure spire, agility,
give me the red and green of your love,
leaf-flame-gold, clarity,
no more language, no more words,

plus de langage, plus de mots,
plus de prophètes ni de science
(C'est l'amen de l'espérance,
silence mélodieux de l'éternité.)

Mais la robe lavée dans le sang de
l'agneau,
mais la pierre de neige avec un
nom nouveau,
les éventails, la cloche et l'ordre
des clartés,
et l'échelle en arc-en-ciel de la vérité,
mais la porte qui parle et le soleil qui
s'ouvre,
l'auréole tête de rechange qui délivre,

et l'encre d'or ineffaçable sur le livre;
mais le face-à-face et l'amour.

Vous qui parlez en nous,
vous qui vous taisez en nous,
et gardez le silence dans votre amour,
vous êtes près,
vous êtes loin,
vous êtes la lumière et les ténèbres,
vous êtes si compliqué et si simple,
vous êtes infiniment simple.
L'arc-en-ciel de l'amour, c'est vous,
l'unique oiseau de l'éternité, c'est vous!
Elles s'alignent lentement, les cloches
de la profondeur.
Posez-vous comme un sceau sur
mon coeur.

Tout entier en tous lieux, *etc.*

Temps de l'homme et de la planète, *etc.*

Dans le mouvement d'Arcturus, présent,
etc.

Un coeur pur est votre repos, *etc.*

no more prophets or science,

(It is hope's amen,
the melodious silence of eternity.)

But the raiment washed in the blood of
the Lamb,
but the stone of snow with
another name,
the fans, the clock, and the order
of light,
and the rainbow ladder of truth,
but the gate that speaks and the sun
that opens,
the halo a change of head that
redeems us,
and the indelible gold ink on the book;
but to see you face to face, and love.

You speak in us,
you who keep silent in us,
and maintain your silence in your love.
You are close,
you are distant,
you are the light and the darkness,
you are so complex and so simple,
you are infinitely simple,
the rainbow of love, that is you,
the only bird of eternity, that is you!
Slowly they fall into line, the bells
of profundity.
Place yourself, like a seal, on my heart.

Whole in all places, *etc.*

Time of man and of the planet, *etc.*

Present in the movement of Arcturus,
etc.

A pure heart is your repose, *etc.*

Violet-jaune, vision, *etc.*

Mais la robe lavée dans le sang de
l'agneau, *etc.*

Vous qui parlez en nous,
vous qui vous taisez en nous,
et gardez le silence dans votre amour,
enfoncez votre image dans la durée de
mes jours.

Violet-yellow, vision, *etc.*

But the raiment washed in the blood of
the Lamb, *etc.*

You speak in us,
you who keep silent in us,
and maintain your silence in your love,
impress your image throughout the
length of my days.

Translation by Stewart Spencer

Symphony Center Information



The use of still or video cameras and recording devices is prohibited in Orchestra Hall.



Latecomers will be seated during designated program pauses.
PLEASE NOTE: Some programs do not allow for latecomers to be seated in the hall.



Please use perfume, cologne, and all other scented products sparingly, as many patrons are sensitive to fragrance.



Please turn off or silence all personal electronic devices (pagers, watches, telephones, digital assistants).

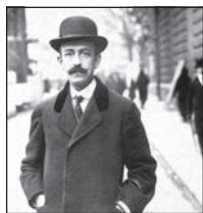


Please note that Symphony Center is a smoke-free environment.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Note: Fire exits are located on all levels and are for emergency use only. The lighted Exit sign nearest your seat is the shortest route outdoors. Please walk—do not run—to your exit and do not use elevators for emergency exit.

Volunteer ushers provided by The Saints—Volunteers for the Performing Arts (www.saintschicago.org)



Manuel de Falla

Born November 23, 1876, Cádiz, Spain.

Died November 14, 1946, Alta Gracia, Argentina.

Nights in the Gardens of Spain

In 1921, when he was the most celebrated Spanish composer alive, Falla settled in Granada, in a cottage surrounded by roses, honeysuckle, and jasmine, with an arbor and a small fountain. At the top of a nearby hill sat the great Alhambra—the fortress of the Moorish kings that Falla had famously drawn in music in his *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*. At the time he began the score, more than a decade earlier, Falla was living in Paris and had never even been to Granada; he knew about the Alhambra only from an inexpensive book he bought at a bookstall on the rue Richelieu. (He was so captivated that he stayed up all night reading it.)

Nights in the Gardens of Spain began as a set of nocturnes for solo piano. Falla started sketching in 1909, the year his colleague Isaac Albéniz died, depriving Spain of one of its best-known composers. (When Enrique Granados died in 1916, less than a month before the premiere of *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*, Falla was thrust into his new role as the country's preeminent composer.) Ricardo Viñes, the great Catalan pianist who introduced many of Debussy's and Ravel's works, suggested that Falla turn the nocturnes into a piece for piano with orchestra. Falla took his recommendation to heart, but this change in direction further delayed completion of the score. As Falla

COMPOSED

1909–1915

FIRST PERFORMANCE

April 9, 1916, Madrid, Spain

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCE

December 11, 1925, Orchestra Hall. Rudolph Reuter, piano; Frederick Stock conducting

MOST RECENT

CSO PERFORMANCE

September 27, 2005, Orchestra Hall. Daniel Barenboim conducting from the piano

INSTRUMENTATION

solo piano, and three flutes and piccolo, two oboes and english horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones and tuba, timpani, cymbals, triangle, celesta, harp, strings

APPROXIMATE

PERFORMANCE TIME

23 minutes

CSO RECORDINGS

1997. Daniel Barenboim, piano; Plácido Domingo conducting. Teldec

1997. Daniel Barenboim, piano; Plácido Domingo conducting. Arthaus Musik

became better known in Paris, particularly after the success of his opera *La vida breve* in 1913, the long-awaited work became legendary in the city's music circles.

When Falla fled to Spain as war broke out in August 1914 (he was in such a hurry to catch a train that he lost his toupee en route) the nocturnes, now called *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*, were still unfinished. Shortly after returning to his homeland, Falla visited the Alhambra for the first time, in the company of his friend Maria Martínez Sierra, who noticed his "satisfaction at having guessed, with the help of some book, the charm which he had never seen before."

After settling briefly in Madrid, Falla lived for several months in the beach town of Sitges, near Barcelona, where he put the finishing touches on *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*. He worked on an old, out-of-tune piano in El Cau Ferrat, the home of the popular painter Santiago Rusiñol, fine-tuning his sense of orchestral color in a house filled with his host's evocative canvases of Spanish gardens. (It was once believed, erroneously, that these paintings were the inspiration for the score.)

N*ights in the Gardens of Spain* is neither a concerto, although it's scored for a solo piano with orchestra, nor a tone poem, even though it vividly portrays the spirit of a place. Falla referred to it simply as "symphonic impressions." The piano role, prominent but rarely dominant, is characterized by elaborate,

brilliant, and eloquent writing. (Falla's piano teacher studied with a pupil of Chopin.) The score is dedicated to Viñes, who didn't play the first performance, but, like the composer himself, often performed the work in public in later years. The orchestral writing is lush but never excessive; it's Falla's most "impressionistic" (and arguably his most "French") score, and, as an evocation of atmosphere and setting, it ranks with Debussy's and Ravel's greatest symphonic works.

Falla depicts three gardens. The first is the celebrated Generalife, the jasmine-scented gardens surrounding the summer palace of the king's harem at the Alhambra. (The word "Generalife" comes from the Moorish "Jennat al Arif"—the builder's garden.) "Nowhere," wrote Alexander Dumas, "were so many orange trees, so many roses, so many jasmines gathered in so small a place . . . Nowhere will you see so many springs, so many leaping waterfalls, so many rushing torrents." And they're all gathered here in Falla's wondrously evocative and fragrant music.

The second movement, set in an unidentified distant garden, is an exotic dance. The piano, with its arabesques, trills, arpeggios, and stomping octaves, suggests a guitar, then a dancer, later a singer. Without pause, Falla transports us to festivities in the Sierra de Córdoba. Music historians like to attribute this brilliant finale to the *zambra gitano*—a night festival characterized by lively gypsy dancing and singing traditionally held for the feast of Corpus Christi. But

Falla, no fan of explicit program music, didn't care to be pinned down. As he wrote:

If these "symphonic impressions" have achieved their object, the mere enumeration of their titles should be a significant guide to the hearer. Although in this work—as in all which have a legitimate claim to be considered as music—the composer has followed a definite design regarding tonal, rhythmical, and thematic material . . . the end for which it was written is no other than to evoke places, sensations, and sentiments. The themes employed are based

(as is much of the composer's earlier work) on the rhythms, modes, cadences, and ornamental figures which distinguish the popular music of Andalusia, though they are rarely used in their original forms; and the orchestra frequently employs, and employs in a conventional manner, certain effects peculiar to the popular instruments used in those parts of Spain. The music has no pretensions to being descriptive; it is merely expressive. But something more than the sounds of festivals and dances has inspired these "evocations in sound," for melancholy and mystery have their part also. ■



Maurice Ravel

Born March 7, 1875, Ciboure, France.

Died December 28, 1937, Paris, France.

Rapsodie espagnole

Maurice Ravel was born in the French Pyrenees, only a few miles from the Spanish border, a geographical boundary he often crossed in his music. Even though his family moved to Paris while he was still a baby, Ravel came by his fascination with Spain naturally, for his mother was Basque and grew up in Madrid. (His Swiss father inspired in his son a love for things precise and mechanical that carried over into his impeccable music, provoking Stravinsky to dismiss him as a “Swiss watchmaker.”) *Rapsodie espagnole* is among his best-known evocations of the Spain he visited so seldom yet seemed to know so well. (Most of Ravel’s Spanish music

was written before he had spent much time in that country, just as his *La valse* predates his first visit to Vienna.)

One of Ravel’s earliest pieces—written just after he left the Paris Conservatory in 1895—was a habanera for two pianos, the first indication that he would join that group of French composers, which includes Bizet, Lalo, and Chabrier, who have written some of our best Spanish music. The habanera was Ravel’s first music to be performed publicly, in March 1898, and, despite the two pianists’ inability to stay together, it made a strong impression on Claude Debussy, who was in the audience. (He hadn’t yet met the composer whose

COMPOSED

1907

FIRST PERFORMANCE

March 15, 1908, Paris, France

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCE

November 12, 1909, Orchestra Hall. Frederick Stock conducting

MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCE

September 16, 2007, Orchestra Hall. Riccardo Muti conducting

INSTRUMENTATION

two flutes and two piccolos, two oboes and english horn, two clarinets and bass clarinet, three bassoons and sarrusophone (traditionally played by contrabassoon), four horns, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba, timpani, bass drum, side drum, cymbals, triangle, tambourine, castanets, tam-tam, xylophone, celesta, two harps, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

15 minutes

CSO RECORDINGS

1956. Fritz Reiner conducting. RCA

1968. Jean Martinon conducting. RCA

1991. Daniel Barenboim conducting. Erato

name would one day be linked with his own.) Debussy asked to borrow the score, and his *La soirée dans Grenade* (Night in Grenada), written five years later, suggests that he studied it carefully. (The suspicious similarity of the two pieces contributed to the eventual falling out between the composers.)

Rapsodie espagnole, the only work Ravel originally conceived as a concert piece for orchestra, is his first Spanish music to take advantage of his incomparable ear for orchestral color. In 1907, Ravel set out to write his first opera and his first orchestral score. Both works were Spanish in flavor, and, although the opera, *L'heure espagnole*, would take two more years to finish, most of *Rapsodie espagnole* was written quickly, as a set of four Spanish sketches, incorporating the 1895 habanera as the third, now in full Technicolor.

The first movement, *Prelude à la nuit* (Prelude to the night), is all atmosphere over a slow, soft, but persistent descending ostinato: F, E, D, C-sharp. Malagueña is based on a type of fandango danced in Malaga, in southern Spain.

The Habanera is a slow Cuban dance in duple meter (with the characteristic tum, ta-tum-tum



Lake Oô in the French Pyrenees, around 1900

rhythm) that Bizet imported to Seville for *Carmen*. It has been suggested that Ravel's Habanera, virtually identical with the 1895 two-piano music, is based on a song his mother taught him. The final *Feria* is a brilliant festival, complete with castanets. ■

Phillip Huscher is the program annotator for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.