

ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FOURTH SEASON

Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Riccardo Muti Zell 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, March 12, 2015, at 8:00
 Saturday, March 14, 2015, at 8:00
 Tuesday, March 17, 2015, at 7:30

Charles Dutoit Conductor
Louis Lortie Piano

Ravel

Rapsodie espagnole

Prélude à la nuit

Malagueña

Habanera

Feria

D'Indy

Symphony on a French Mountain Air, Op. 25

Allez lent—Modérément animé

Assez modéré, mais sans lenteur

Animé

LOUIS LORTIE

INTERMISSION

Franck

Symphonic Variations for Piano and Orchestra

LOUIS LORTIE

Ravel

Suite No. 2 from *Daphnis and Chloe*

Dawn—

Pantomime—

General Dance

These performances are made possible in part by a generous gift from the Arthur Maling Trust.

CSO Tuesday series concerts are sponsored by United Airlines.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra is grateful to 93XRT and RedEye for their generous support as media sponsors of the Classic Encounter series.

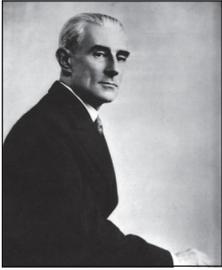
This program is partially supported by grants from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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.) *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. 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.)

R*apsodie 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 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

COMPOSED

1907

FIRST PERFORMANCE

March 15, 1908; Paris, France

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES

November 12 & 13, 1909, Orchestra Hall. Frederick Stock conducting

July 1, 1944, Ravinia Festival. Pierre Monteux conducting

MOST RECENT

CSO PERFORMANCES

May 31, June 1, 2 & 5, 2012, Orchestra Hall. Ludovic Morlot conducting

August 7, 2013, Ravinia Festival. Carlos Miguel Prieto 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,

tuba, timpani, bass drum, side drum, cymbals, triangle, tambourine, castanets, tam-tam, xylophone, two harps, celesta, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

16 minutes

CSO RECORDINGS

1956. Fritz Reiner conducting. RCA

1968. Jean Martinon conducting. RCA

1991. Daniel Barenboim conducting. Erato

Vincent d'Indy

Born March 27, 1851, Paris, France.

Died December 2, 1931, Paris, France.

Symphony on a French Mountain Air, Op. 25



Vincent d'Indy was part of the late-nineteenth century circle of Paris-based composers headed by César Franck—including Duparc, Chausson, and Chabrier—which unexpectedly became the precursor of Les six.

While Chabrier, for instance, was greatly admired and emulated by Francis Poulenc, d'Indy, more directly, was a forebear of Arthur Honegger: not only was he Honegger's teacher, but he also shared with his Swiss pupil both a sober sense of duty to his art and a certain religious devotion. D'Indy also passed to his pupils a masterful inventiveness in writing for the orchestra—having himself learned his craft by playing timpani and horn in various orchestras. Other d'Indy pupils associated with Les six included Georges Auric, whose irreverence was quite contrary to his teacher's sensibility, though d'Indy was widely recognized for nurturing the compositional talent of pupils even contrary to his own style; and Erik Satie, the “godfather” of Les six.

The latter two pupils studied under d'Indy at the Schola Cantorum, France's major alternative center of higher music education established by d'Indy in 1894 to rival the Paris Conservatory. D'Indy's activities as composer and teacher were complemented by his work as a scholar, researching and editing what was then

considered early music: he presented the first modern performances of Monteverdi's operas *Orfeo* and *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, and of Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie*, *Castor et Pollux*, and *Dardanus*, as well as championing works by Bach and Gluck.

Though a leading composer of his generation, with at least two major operas to his credit, two very fine string quartets, and a deal of piano music, d'Indy's reputation in that field was eclipsed not long after the end of his life in 1931. Possibly this was due to his right-wing and, in particular, his anti-Semitic views; these did not affect his professional relations with Jewish colleagues—he held Paul Dukas in high regard, who in turn hailed d'Indy as “one of the greatest French musicians”—yet, by the 1940s, they were sufficient grounds for many, including Pierre Boulez, to reject his work out of hand. Just twenty years after d'Indy's death, the French music specialist Edward Lockspeiser noted that only three of his works were at all known even in d'Indy's own country: a set of orchestral variations, *Istar*; the symphonic poem *Jour d'été à la montagne*; and his earliest masterpiece, now being performed at this concert, the *Symphonie sur un chant montagnard français*.

The *Symphony on a French Mountain Air* was composed in 1886, ten years after d'Indy had attended the premiere of Wagner's *Ring* cycle at the opening festival of Bayreuth—d'Indy becoming thereafter a devotee of Wagner's work and aesthetic theories—and about eight years before he founded the Schola Cantorum.

COMPOSED

1886

FIRST PERFORMANCE

March 20, 1887, Paris

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES

March 20 & 21, 1903, Auditorium Theatre. Rudolph Ganz as soloist, Theodore Thomas conducting

MOST RECENT

CSO PERFORMANCES

February 13, 1945, Orchestra Hall.
Robert Casadesus as soloist, Désiré Defauw conducting

August 7, 1947, Ravinia Festival.
Maxim Schapiro as soloist, Pierre Monteux conducting

INSTRUMENTATION

solo piano, three flutes and piccolo, two oboes and english horn, two clarinets and bass clarinet, three bassoons, four horns, two trumpets and two cornets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

27 minutes

Having been encouraged by Wagner to seek out national characteristics of his own homeland which paralleled those he admired in the German composer's music dramas, d'Indy began researching folk music in such hitherto little-examined regions in southeast France as Vercors, and particularly in his own ancestral homeland within the Ardèche: Vivarais, and Périer, overlooking the Cévennes mountains, where he notated the mountain song upon which the symphony is based (hence the alternative title sometimes given the work, *Symphonie cévenole*). D'Indy himself thought the scoring Wagnerian, yet included in the work a virtuoso part for a very un-Wagnerian instrument—the piano. There was some precedent in Franck's Symphonic Variations for piano and orchestra, composed just a year earlier, whose final section d'Indy's work appears to echo. The piano's prominent role in all three movements of d'Indy's work has prompted some writers to suggest it is in effect a *sinfonia concertante*, though the pianist's role is not so much that of an individual soloist as a "first among equals"—a leading spokesman for the orchestra, often interacting with the harp.

The first movement, *Assez lent*, in the form of a slow introduction and sonata allegro, opens with two rather sinister-sounding notes sounded by bassoons and clarinets; this proves to be an introductory upbeat to a charming english horn solo, evocative of a shepherd's pipe, playing the Périer folk song. The song is taken up, maintaining the pastoral atmosphere, by flute supported by horns. Clouds appear to gather with shuddering bass strings, but with the piano's entry, the music livens up and brightens, building to the main sonata section with a climbing dotted rhythm. After the piano has initiated a development of the song, a second theme, introduced by

woodwinds accompanied by fluttering strings, soon enters more turbulent emotional territory. With the development section, there is a striking episode involving rippling piano and woodwind figuration which anticipates the dawn sequence of Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloé*. The movement eventually reaches a rousing climax, involving the climbing dotted rhythm, with brass foremost (involving several harmonic turns which clearly inspired Fauré in later works). After the english horn's recapitulation of the folk theme, the movement ends wistfully, some of its mildly sinister inflections recalling Berlioz, another composer d'Indy greatly admired.

The second movement evokes the great distances and valleys of the mountains. It opens with the piano soloist playing yet another variant on the folk theme, answered by orchestra. Not long afterwards, piano and bassoons introduce a darker, "oriental"-sounding theme, and the music becomes emotionally turbulent. Calm is restored as horns and muted brass fanfare as if across great spaces in the mountains. The music then seems to boil and reaches a brass-capped climax. Calm returns once more, albeit one senses only of a temporary nature, as the "oriental" theme alternates with the brass fanfares.

The finale opens in bubbling good humor—another variant on the folk theme presented by the piano—and reaches an exuberant climax before being succeeded by a mellow second theme presented by clarinet. This being a cyclic work, several themes from previous movements make their reappearance here, including a fierce rendition of the "oriental" theme. In the end, though, it is variants of the folk theme which ultimately triumph, the movement ending with a dramatic flourish which perhaps recalls Berlioz's *Harold in Italy*. ■

—Daniel Jaffé

César Franck

Born December 10, 1822, Liège, Belgium.

Died November 8, 1890, Paris, France.

Symphonic Variations for Piano and Orchestra



César Franck matured as a composer very late in life, but he first won acclaim as a child prodigy. He was born in Liège, in the French-speaking Walloon district of the Netherlands; this heritage was reflected in the mixture of French and

Flemish in his name. Early on he showed unusual musical talent, which his father, Nicolas-Joseph, set about nurturing, promoting, and finally exploiting. César made his first tour as a virtuoso pianist at the age of eleven, traveling throughout the newly formed kingdom of Belgium. (His specialty was playing variations on popular opera themes à la Liszt.)

Having outgrown the Liège Conservatory, two years later César moved to Paris, with his entire family in tow, for advanced study. When the Paris Conservatory initially rejected his application because of his Belgian birth, Nicolas-Joseph applied for French naturalization papers. César was an exemplary student, and he walked off with many top prizes. He was always interested in composing, but his father discouraged him from entering the prestigious Prix de Rome competition in the hope that he would devote his life to concertizing. Nicolas-Joseph even pulled César out of school in 1842 to send him off on another recital tour, which was highlighted by a meeting with Franz Liszt, who encouraged him to keep composing.

Franck next won fame as an organist and a composer of organ music (his impassioned organ improvisations were greatly celebrated). Then, in middle age, he devoted himself to teaching, and, in the process, influencing an entire generation of French composers. Like Bruckner (with whom he has sometimes been compared), Franck came into his own as a composer late in his career. His major works—the Symphony in D minor, the violin sonata and piano quintet, several symphonic poems, and these Symphonic Variations—were all composed between 1880 and 1890, the last decade of his life. He was sixty-three when he wrote the Symphonic Variations, his only significant work for piano and orchestra.

Often considered the composer's masterpiece, the Symphonic Variations is indebted to both Franck's flair for improvisation and the influence of Liszt's concept of thematic metamorphosis. It's really a set of variations framed by a large introduction and a finale that's more than twice as long as the variations themselves. It opens with a dramatic encounter between stern and assertive string octaves and dreamy piano music, not unlike the two factions that dominate the slow movement of Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto, where Orpheus supposedly tames the Furies. Here, the two forces merely engage in dialogue while awaiting the arrival of a lyrical new theme, which is then ingeniously and seamlessly elaborated in six variations. The finale, signaled by a long trill in the piano and only distantly related to the preceding variations, is music of dance and an almost reckless joy. ■

—Phillip Huscher

COMPOSED

1885

FIRST PERFORMANCE

May 1, 1886; Paris, France. The composer conducting

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES

March 7, 1898, Carnegie Hall. Raoul Pugno as soloist, Theodore Thomas conducting (U.S. premiere)

January 26 & 27, 1906, Orchestra Hall.

Raoul Pugno as soloist, Frederick Stock conducting

August 4, 1945, Ravinia Festival.

Leon Fleisher as soloist, Leonard Bernstein conducting

MOST RECENT

CSO PERFORMANCES

August 14, 1998, Ravinia Festival. André Watts as soloist, Christoph Eschenbach conducting

May 22, 23, 24 & 27, 2003, Orchestra

Hall. Emanuel Ax as soloist, Daniel Barenboim conducting

INSTRUMENTATION

solo piano, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, timpani, strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

15 minutes

Maurice Ravel

Suite No. 2 from *Daphnis and Chloe*



Maurice Ravel wrote home from his first tour of the United States in 1928: “I am seeing magnificent cities, enchanting country, but the triumphs are fatiguing. Besides, I am dying of hunger.”

Although he found American food alarming (Ravel traveled with his own favorite wines and cigarettes) and the pace relentless, in city after city Ravel was reminded of the extent of his celebrity. At the matinee concert of the Chicago Symphony on January 20, 1928, Ravel accepted enthusiastic applause throughout the afternoon, a standing ovation at the conclusion of the program, and a fanfare from the orchestra he conducted. (The second performance, the following night, started a good half hour late because Ravel, a famously impeccable dresser, discovered that he had left his evening shoes in a trunk at the train station and would not go onstage until they had been retrieved—by his *Sheherazade* soloist Lisa Roma, no less.) The Chicago program included, as its centerpiece, the second suite from the ballet *Daphnis and Chloe*, which Ravel later called his most important score.

Ravel wrote *Daphnis and Chloe* for Sergei Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes. It was begun in 1909, before Diaghilev’s troupe had set Paris ablaze with a series of new ballets unlike anything the worlds of music or dance had known, starting with Stravinsky’s *Firebird* in 1910 and climaxing with the scandalous premiere of *The Rite of Spring* in May 1913. Ravel’s *Daphnis and Chloe* wasn’t introduced until June 8, 1912, due to the composer’s difficulty in finishing the score, compounded by backstage squabbling once rehearsals began. Although *Daphnis and Chloe* wasn’t well received, that date isn’t engraved in music history, for this isn’t music to provoke fistfights or catcalls.

The principal players in the creation of *Daphnis and Chloe* were a distinguished group: Sergei Diaghilev, the impresario; Michel Fokine, the choreographer; Léon Bakst, the designer; Pierre Monteux, the conductor; and Vaslav Nijinsky and Tamara Karsavina, the leading dancers. Ravel worked tirelessly with Fokine to translate the most famous of the Greek prose pastorals into a scenario for ballet—the collaboration partly hampered, as the composer admitted, because “Fokine doesn’t know a word of French, and I know only how to swear in Russian.”

At first, there was also a serious difference of opinion about the style of the piece. “My

COMPOSED

1909–1912

July 21, 2012, Ravinia Festival. James Conlon conducting

FIRST PERFORMANCE

ballet: June 8, 1912, Paris
Suite no. 2: April 30, 1914, Paris

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCES

November 2 & 3, 1923, Orchestra Hall.
Frederick Stock conducting

July 4, 1936, Ravinia Festival. Ernest Ansermet conducting

MOST RECENT

CSO PERFORMANCES
November 10, 11, 12 & 15,
2011, Orchestra Hall. Stéphane
Denève conducting

CSO PERFORMANCE, THE COMPOSER CONDUCTING

January 20 & 21, 1928, Orchestra Hall.
Maurice Ravel conducting

INSTRUMENTATION

two piccolos, two flutes and alto
flute, two oboes and english horn,
two clarinets, E-flat clarinet and bass
clarinet, three bassoons and contra-
bassoon, four horns, four trumpets,
three trombones, tuba, timpani, bass
drum, snare drums, cymbals, triangle,
tambourine, castanets, glockenspiel,
two harps, celesta, strings, optional
wordless chorus (omitted at
these performances)

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

16 minutes

CSO RECORDINGS

1958. Carlo Maria Giulini conducting.
CSO (*From the Archives*, vol. 9: *A Tribute to Carlo Maria Giulini*)

1964. Jean Martinon conducting. RCA

1987. Sir Georg Solti conducting. CSO
(*Chicago Symphony Orchestra: The First 100 Years*)

1991. Daniel Barenboim conducting.
Erato

2007. Chicago Symphony Chorus
(Duain Wolfe, director), Bernard
Haitink conducting. CSO Resound
(complete ballet)

intention in writing [*Daphnis and Chloe*],” Ravel later said, “was to compose a vast musical fresco in which I was less concerned with archaism than with reproducing faithfully the Greece of my dreams, which is very similar to that imagined by French artists at the end of the eighteenth century.” But Fokine had in mind the “ancient dancing depicted in red and black on Attic vases.” The result has something of the classical austerity of Jacques-Louis David’s canvases as well as the stunning clarity of Greek pottery. But it is both more sumptuous and subtle than either.

In rehearsal, Fokine and Nijinsky fought endlessly over the choreography, and Diaghilev



Serge Diaghilev

grew so tired of serving as intermediary that he finally threatened to cancel the project. As it was, he was forced to postpone the premiere twice, largely because Ravel was having trouble completing the final dance, on which, by the first rehearsals, he had labored

for a full year. (And then, when the music was delivered at last, Diaghilev’s dancers were stymied by the finale’s asymmetrical 5/4 meter—Ravel suggested chanting “Ser-gei-Dia-ghi-lev” to each measure to help them keep their place.) Ultimately, the rancor and tension of the *Daphnis* rehearsals led to a rift between Diaghilev and Fokine, who left the company at the end of the season.

Daphnis and Chloe is the largest orchestral work Ravel wrote; he called it a “choreographic symphony in three parts,” and in its scale and developmental detail it’s as close as he ever came to tackling symphonic form. “The work is constructed symphonically,” Ravel said at the time, “out of a small number of themes, the development of which ensures the work’s

homogeneity.” *Daphnis and Chloe* is perhaps the greatest example of Ravel’s remarkable ear for orchestral sounds, and of the subtlety with which he shades and colors his canvas. Few passages in music are as justifiably famous as the opening of this suite, when the rising sun gently bathes the music in warmth and light.

The story is adapted from a tale by the fifth-century Greek author Longus.

Daphnis and Chloe, abandoned as children and raised by shepherds, have fallen in love (Daphnis charmed Chloe by playing for her on his pan-pipes). In the first part of the ballet, Daphnis earns Chloe’s kiss; pirates land and abduct Chloe. In part 2, Pan and his warriors rescue Chloe; part 3 reunites the lovers. Ravel arranged two sets of symphonic fragments from the ballet for the concert hall.

The second suite—the one the Chicago Symphony played under Ravel’s baton in 1928—includes the music of part 3 of the ballet. It opens with the sounds of daybreak, one of the most magical depictions of the gradual awakening of nature in all music. The birds (three solo violins and piccolo) sing and the shepherds stir, and the music is slowly warmed by the brightening rays of the sun. Daphnis awakens and joins Chloe. It is now full day.

In a gentle pantomime, Daphnis and Chloe recreate the old story of Pan wooing the nymph Syrinx—the very event that Pan recalled and which moved him to intervene with the pirates and return Chloe to Daphnis. Pan’s seductive flute solo is one of the most famous in music. Daphnis and Chloe eventually forget their roles and fall into each other’s arms, declaring their love. All that’s left is celebration, accomplished in an extraordinary final dance that took Ravel, perhaps the greatest perfectionist among composers, a year to polish and fine tune. ■

—Phillip Huscher

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

Daniel Jaffé is a regular contributor to *BBC Music Magazine* and a specialist in English and Russian music. He is author of a biography of *Sergey Prokofiev* (Phaidon) and the *Historical Dictionary of Russian Music* (Scarecrow Press).