



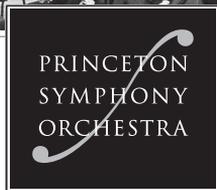
2019-20

ROSSEN MILANOV, Edward T. Cone Music Director

Saturday January 18, 2020, 8pm

Sunday January 19, 2020, 4pm

Richardson Auditorium



SCHEHERAZADE

Rossen Milanov, conductor

Kinan Azmeh, clarinet

Jacques Ibert

Escales (Ports of Call)

Rome—Palerme

Tunis—Nefta

Valencia

Saad Haddad

Clarinet Concerto*

*World premiere—a commission of the Princeton Symphony Orchestra and the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition at Brigham Young University

INTERMISSION

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov *Scheherazade, Op. 35*

The Sea and Sinbad's Ship

The Story of the Kalendar Prince

The Young Prince and the Young Princess

Festival at Baghdad—The Sea—

The Ship Goes to Pieces on a Rock

Surmounted by a Bronze Warrior—

Conclusion

This concert is made possible in part by the generous support of Taft Communications.

We welcome our PSO BRAVO! Listen Up! student artists and writers who will respond creatively to Saad Haddad's concerto. Their artwork and writings will be on display at the PSO's March concert.

Assistive listening devices and large print programs are available in the lobby.



This program is made possible by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.



No audio or video recording or photography permitted. No one will be admitted during the performance of a piece.

Program Notes _____

We make a facile distinction between Eastern and Western musical traditions, but the reality is complex, with many commonalities as well as widely disparate traditions within each category. Yet certain musical markers point to one part of the world or the other, including which instruments are used, typical rhythms, scales, tuning systems, and different types of ornamentation. The “exotic” sounds of the East have intrigued and inspired Western composers for centuries, and there is a long tradition in Western orchestral music of referencing and incorporating ideas from Eastern music. Haydn’s use of “Turkish” percussion in his “Military” Symphony, No. 100, is a familiar example, and in today’s program we’ll hear examples from 19th-century Russia, 20th-century France, and the contemporary United States.

Jacques Ibert (1890–1962)

Escales (Ports of Call)

Composed in 1922

Premiere

1924 – the Lamoureux Orchestra led by Paul Paray, Paris

Instrumentation

two flutes and piccolo, two oboes and English horn, two clarinets, three bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, snare drum, tambourine, castanets, tam-tam, triangle, xylophone, two harps, and strings

Duration

15 minutes

Born in 1890 in Belle Époque Paris, Jacques Ibert grew up in a highly cosmopolitan city exploding with artistic activity and innovation. After deciding on a career in music over his other passion, theater, his studies were interrupted by WWI, during which he served as an officer in the French Navy. In 1919, he was awarded the prestigious Prix de Rome in composition.

Escales, “Ports of Call,” was inspired by Ibert’s honeymoon cruise. The Mediterranean has been and remains

a highly active area of cultural interface, and the cultures that developed along its shores bear witness to this complex history. The first movement, Rome-Palermè, begins as the ship leaves for Sicily, with impressionistic and languorous water music reminiscent of Debussy. The centerpiece of

the movement is an energetic Italian dance, the Tarantella, after which the ship sets sail again. The second movement, Tunis–Nefta, features a sensual, Arabic-inspired improvisational melody for the oboe over an irregular metric structure, with the strings playing *col legno* (with the wood of the bow). The third movement, Valencia, evokes Spanish cabaret and folk dance, using typical percussion such as castanets and tambourines, guitar-like plucking in the strings, and flamenco-inspired vocal ornamentation. The sounds of Spain are themselves strongly influenced by the centuries-long Arab presence on the Iberian Peninsula. Ibert did not include descriptive movement titles in the score, insisting that the music existed apart from any program, but friends convinced him that the titles provided useful context to the listener.

Saad Haddad (b. 1992)

Clarinet Concerto

Composed in 2019

Premiere

2020 – Kinan Azmeh, soloist;
Princeton Symphony Orchestra
led by Rossen Milanov

Instrumentation

solo clarinet, three flutes and
two piccolos, three oboes,
three clarinets, three bassoons
and contrabassoon, four
horns, three trumpets, three
trombones, tuba, timpani, bass
drum, cabasa, congas, bongos,
tam-tam, log drums, harp,
electronics, and strings

Duration

15 minutes

From the composer:

This Clarinet Concerto is the latest chapter of my output that fuses my love for all things orchestral, technological, and ancestral. I composed this work from January to October 2019 on both coasts of the U.S., though it more aptly relates to a region and tradition that is mostly unfamiliar to America and the rest of the West: that of the Middle East and its rich tradition of classical Arab music.

Kinan Azmeh, a Syrian-born, New York-based clarinetist and composer, and I met five years ago through our association with Juilliard professor Mari

Kimura, a violinist known for ushering in a new wave of conservatory-trained classical musicians to the wonders of interactive music technology. Like

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myself, Kinan is enraptured by the spectrum of emotion that lies between Western and Middle Eastern musics, and is always searching for ways to use our modern technological tools to highlight those facets. The clarinet itself is an instrument I have a personal fondness for, having played it in marching band throughout my high school years. There is a physicality (i.e. “marching”) that I will always associate with the instrument, and this is certainly the case with this Clarinet Concerto.

Kinan’s role in the orchestra is governed by where and when he moves on stage. He is unseen, yearning for attention, unwittingly thrust into public view, given a platform to express his thoughts, overshadowed and forgotten, and finally, elegiac from all the pain he holds inside. While the work draws on tenets from very specific traditions of music, it is my hope that this music conveys a more universal spirit of cooperation and cordiality with our fellow human beings as we live out our finite time here in the most just and loving way that we can.

The coda, entitled “For Jido,” was written in the memory of my late grandfather, Jido Adib, who passed in August 2019 at the age of 76. He moved his family of seven, including my grandmother Salimeh, uncles George, Elie, and Salim, aunt Sylva, and my mother Lucy, halfway across the world to escape war-torn Lebanon during the midst of its civil war.

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844–1908)

Scheherazade, Op. 35

Composed in 1888

Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Scheherazade* is a four-movement symphonic suite, inspired by the tales of the *Arabian Nights*. A loud, angular motive representing the stern Sultan Schahriar opens the first movement, followed by an interlude reminiscent of the opening of Mendelssohn’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream Overture*, in which static woodwind chords invite the listener into a magical storybook world. The solo violin then enters in the role of Scheherazade, the brilliant storyteller who saves her own life and countless others by seducing the Sultan with her marvelous stories. Both Scheherazade’s sinuously weaving

Premiere

1888 – Saint Petersburg with the composer conducting

Instrumentation

two flutes and piccolo, two oboes and English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, triangle, cymbals, snare drum, bass drum, tambourine, tam-tam, harp, and strings

Duration

46 minutes

melody and the Sultan's motive reappear throughout the piece, serving as a narrative link that maintains the dramatic tension between these two figures and anchoring the musical structure. Like Ibert, Rimsky-Korsakov had reservations about including specific movement titles, insisting that while the story of the *Arabian Nights* had served as the jumping off point for the themes, the music did not attempt to tell the stories, but followed a purely musical logic. He described the piece as "a kaleidoscope of fairy-tale images and designs of Oriental

character." The music of the first movement evokes the rolling waves of the sea and Sinbad's ship, and this music returns in the last movement, lending unity and a sense of completion to the work.

Rimsky-Korsakov had a great genius for orchestration, which we hear in the brilliant and glittering colors of *Scheherazade*. I particularly enjoy his use of the trumpet, playing in virtuosic unison with the snare drum, the large battery of percussion, harp *glissandos*, and instrumental effects such as string harmonics, tremolos, mutes, and trills.

~Nell Flanders, Assistant Conductor
Princeton Symphony Orchestra