“fast, sleek, and dynamic.”
– LA Times
Ma Mère l'Oye

At the same time that Ravel was working on his piano piece for the children of his friend Cyprien Godebski in 1908, drawing inspiration from well-known fairy tales by Charles Perrault, he composed his own work. The influence of French artists of the 18th century imagined. Likewise, the music indicates the influence of Russian, French and German composers whose music Ravel studied in preparation to compose his own work. The influence of the harmonic language in Rimsky-Korsakov’s Shéhérazade is particularly evident in the second suite.

Ma Mère l'Oye: Suite, Op. 80

Gabriel Fauré

(1845–1924)

Prelude

Entr'acte: Fileuse (The Spinner)

Sicilienne

La mort de Mélisande (The Death of Melisande)

Ma Mère l'Oye (Mother Goose)

Maurice Ravel

(1875–1937)

Prelude

Danse du rouet et scène (Dance of the Spinning Wheel and Scene)

Pavane de la belle au bois dormant (Pavane of Sleeping Beauty)

Les entretiens de la belle et de la bête (Conversations of Beauty and the Beast)

Petit poucet (Tom Thumb)

Laideronnette, impératrice des pagodes (Laideronnette, Empress of the Pagodas)

Le jardin féerique (The Enchanted Garden)

Daphnis et Chloé: Suite No. 2

Maurice Ravel

INTERMISSION

Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14

Hector Berlioz

(1803-1869)

The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra gratefully acknowledges Milton and Tamar Maltz for their generous underwriting of the Orchestra’s United States touring program, and American Friends of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra as the principal underwriter of this tour.

PROGRAM NOTES

In 1898, Gabriel Fauré received a commission to compose the incidental music for the first staging in London of Maurice Maeterlinck’s symbolist play Pelléas et Mélisande. Fauré’s music, orchestrated by his student Charles Koechlin, depicted the shadowy world of Maeterlinck’s drama. In 1901 and 1909, Fauré revisited the work to re-orchestrate it and construct a concert suite.

Maurice Ravel wrote a four-hand children’s piano piece for the children of his friend Cyprien Godebski in 1908, drawing inspiration from well-known fairy tales by Charles Perrault, the Comtesse d’Aulinoy and Marie Leprince de Beaumont. Jacques Rouché, director of the Théâtre des Arts in Paris, recognized the music’s theatrical possibilities and commissioned Ravel to rework the piece as a ballet. The composer adapted his simple pianistic style into a score for small orchestra. Each movement of the ballet depicts a tableau from a fairy tale, rather than narrating a plot.

At the same time that Ravel was working on Ma Mère l’Oye, Sergei Diaghilev, impresario of the Ballets Russes, asked him to collaborate with Michel Fokine on a ballet of the Greek legend of Daphnis and Chloé. The project proved to be disillusioning for the composer. He had difficulty managing his creative differences with Fokine, and the scandal Mikael Nijinsky created with his ballet of Debussy’s Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune overshadowed the premiere of Ravel’s work ten days later. The Ballets Russes did not stage Daphnis et Chloé again for two years. Diaghilev later wrote that the music was better suited for a symphonic performance than it was to a ballet. Indeed, after the ballet’s premiere, Ravel constructed two orchestral suites from the music, the second of which was completed in 1913. Ravel insisted that his intention was not to depict ancient Greece, but rather the Greece that French artists of the 18th century imagined. Likewise, the music indicates the influence of Russian, French and German composers whose music Ravel studied in preparation to compose his own work. The influence of the harmonic language in Rimsky-Korsakov’s Shéhérazade is particularly evident in the second suite.

The printed program that Hector Berlioz distributed at the 1830 premiere of Symphonie fantastique tells a loosely autobiographical tale inspired by Berlioz’s passion for the Shakespearean actress Harriet Smithson, whom he first saw on stage in 1827. The program follows a young musician as he pursues his love through a series of increasingly fantastic scenes: their first encounter in a dream, an elegant ball, a pastoral setting, the musician’s execution and a witches’ dance. An idée fixe – a recurring melody – appears in each movement as the object of the musician’s affections materializes in the tableau. Berlioz’s masterful orchestration paints sonic images of each scene. Berlioz also includes an off-stage oboe to create a sense of space in the pastoral movement, a pizzicato depiction of the musician’s head bouncing down the steps of the scaffold at the end of the fourth movement, and integrates Dies Irae into the counterpart of the witches’ dance in the final movement.

– Catherine Hughes is a PhD candidate in Music at UNC-Chapel Hill.
The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra

The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (IPO) is one of Israel’s oldest and most influential cultural institutions. Since its founding in 1936, the IPO has dedicated itself to presenting the world’s greatest music to audiences around the world. Founded by Polish violinist Bronislaw Huberman, the IPO represents the fulfillment of his dream “to unite the desire of the country for an orchestra with the desire of the Jewish musicians for a country.” Its inaugural concert was conducted by Arturo Toscanini, who felt his participation was a means to demonstrate his opposition to fascism. Members traveled in armored cars to play in a besieged Jerusalem during the War of Independence, and among Israelis, the memory of IPO Laureate Conductor Leonard Bernstein conducting the Orchestra after the battle for Beersheba is an historic moment.

Under the esteemed leadership of Zubin Mehta, Music Director for Life, the IPO travels extensively throughout the world as Israel's premiere cultural ambassador. The goodwill created by these tours, including historic visits to Japan, Argentina, Poland, Hungary, Russia, China and India, is of enormous value to the state of Israel. In 2005, the IPO traveled to Berlin to commemorate 40 years of diplomatic relations between Israel and Germany. In 2013, Maestro Mehta led the IPO with violinist Julian Rachlin in a tribute concert at Poland’s National Opera, commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Joined by Zubin Mehta and Principal Guest Conductor Gianandrea Noseda, the IPO travels to 14 cities across the US this season.

Through the efforts of the American Friends of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and generous support of donors worldwide, the IPO returned to its home at Tel-Aviv’s Heichal Hatarbut following extensive renovations. The Mann Auditorium was renamed the Charles Bronfman Auditorium and hosted its inaugural gala on May 25, 2013. The IPO has released over 40 live recordings on the Helicon, Sony, Deutsche Grammophon, EMI, Philips and Teldec labels. The IPO gives more than 100 performances each year in Israel to their 26,000 subscribers in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa.

Gianandrea Noseda, principal guest conductor

Gianandrea Noseda is among the most sought-after conductors of our time. Since becoming music director of the Teatro Regio Torino in 2007, he has propelled it into the ranks of leading opera houses. Maestro Noseda is chief guest conductor of the Israel Philharmonic, Victor De Sabata guest conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony and conductor laureate of the BBC Philharmonic.

His career took off in 1997 when he was appointed the first foreign principal guest conductor of the Mariinsky Theatre. In 2002, he became principal conductor of the BBC Philharmonic, a post he held for nearly 10 years. Maestro Noseda now visits many of the world’s great orchestras, including regular engagements with the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO). He made his debut at the Barbican in September.

In 2012, he made his highly anticipated debut at the Teatro alla Scala. He continued his work with young artists by leading a multi-city tour of the European Union Youth Orchestra with performances at the Stresa Festival in Italy (Maestro Noseda is artistic director) and at the Edinburgh International Festival – his debut there.

Recent seasons have seen successful debuts in Europe at the Vienna State Opera as well as in the US with the Cleveland Orchestra and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He has made return visits to the Filharmonica della Scala, the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Pittsburgh Symphony.

An exclusive Chandos artist since 2002, Noseda’s numerous recordings include the highly acclaimed series Musica Italiana, championing known and lesser-known Italian composers of the 20th century. For Deutsche Grammophone, he has recorded arias albums with Ildemando d’Arcangelo, Anna Netrebko and Rolando Villazon.

Born in Milan, Gianandrea Noseda is one of the highest profile Italian cultural figures and holds the honor of Cavaliere Ufficiale al Merito della Repubblica Italiana.

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BIOGRAPHIES

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In 1936, the Polish-born Jewish violinist Bronislaw Huberman, anticipating the destruction of the impending world war, persuaded 75 Jewish musicians from around Europe to come to Palestine and form the Palestine Orchestra. 78 years later, the orchestra, now known as the Israel Philharmonic, is a major thriving music institution in Israel. From its founding, the musicians of the IPO have known that their orchestra was different. But the IPO of the 21st century consists of musicians from around the world and has a sound that cannot be compared to its counterparts in neighboring Europe.

Growing up a music lover and now a young conductor myself, I am captivated by recordings of the great orchestras: New York, Chicago, Cleveland, and Berlin; however, upon hearing my first Israel Philharmonic Orchestra recording, I knew that there was something special about this orchestra. The rich and tumultuous history of the orchestra creates a sound that is open and honest, fueled by the inspiration, imagination and creativity of the diverse group of musicians that make up the orchestra.

As most of our audiences would agree, no recording can replace the magic of experiencing a live performance. Here at UNC, we are very lucky to play host to an ensemble as brilliant and full of character as the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

The program that the orchestra has selected is of particular interest to me because I am a huge fan of the 19th-century French orchestral repertoire. When I was a freshman percussionist in the UNC Symphony Orchestra, Ravel’s *Ma Mère l’Oye* Suite was the first piece that I performed, on the very stage where I will now hear one of the world’s greatest orchestras perform some of history’s greatest music.

I cannot help but be inspired by a great orchestra playing great music and can assure our audience that the performance of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra will not disappoint. Certainly Huberman foresaw the potential of the IPO at its founding in 1936. And here in 2014, we see that potential realized on the stage of our very own Memorial Hall. Tonight’s performance will be a memory that lasts for many, many years.

**Vincent Povázsay** is a senior music major at UNC-Chapel Hill. He studies conducting with Tonu Kalam and percussion with Dr. Juan Alamo. He is the founder and music director of the UNC Lab Orchestra, an all-volunteer student orchestra.