

presents

THE UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY
David Alexander Rahbee, *conductor*

*Featuring winners of the
School of Music Concerto Competition
held November 18, 2013:*

Joseph Dougherty, *piano*

Sol Im, *violin*

Corentin Pokorny, *violin*

June 6, 2014

7:30 PM

Meany Theater

PROGRAM

NAVARRA, Op. 33 for two violins & orchestra..... PABLO DE SARASATE (1844-1908)
Corentin Pokorny & Sol Im, *violin*

RAPSODIE ON A THEME BY PAGANINI, Op. 43 SERGEI RACHMANINOFF
(1873-1943)
Joseph Dougherty, *piano*

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PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION	MODEST MOUSSORGSKY (1839-1881)
<i>Promenade</i>	orchestrated by Maurice Ravel
1. <i>Il vecchio castello</i>	
<i>Promenade</i>	
2. <i>Tuileries</i>	
3. <i>Bydlo</i>	
<i>Promenade</i>	
4. <i>Ballet de poussins dans leurs coques</i>	
5. <i>Samuel Goldenberg und Schmuyle</i>	
6. <i>Limoges – Le Marché</i>	
7. <i>Catacombæ</i>	
<i>Cum mortuis in lingua mortua</i>	
8. <i>La Cabane sur des pattes de poule (BABA-YAGA)</i>	
9. <i>La grande porte de Kiev</i>	

PROGRAM NOTES

PABLO DE SARASATE, *NAVARRA, Op. 33* for two violins and orchestra

NAVARRA is a demanding showpiece for two violins. Rather than favoring one violin and letting the other off with easier material, the piece comprises numerous technical difficulties and demeanors and creates an equal playground for both soloists. A large orchestral chord begins the piece, introducing a lyrical and passionate passage by the two violins, which displays how closely the violinists will work together throughout the piece. The theme soon breaks into a Spanish melody on a dance rhythm. One violin may play a trilled melody while the other plays arpeggios, double stop drones or quick runs, but very often, the two soloists play in close harmony. This is very apparent in the middle section, which is slower, gentler, and waltz-like. After a mix of large jumps and pizzicato, the two soloists fly into fast, arpeggiated lines that go to each end of the violin's range. After a high-pitched Spanish minuet, the first dance theme returns, building up in speed and finishing in a whirl of pizzicato notes and pyrotechnic bow action.

[Program Notes by Sol Im & Corentin Pokorny]

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF, *RAPSODIE ON A THEME BY PAGANINI, Op. 43*

After leaving Russia during the Communist Revolution in 1917, Rachmaninoff's compositional output declined severely over the next few decades, which instead saw his focus turn toward performing in order to support himself and family. Even though his legendary recitals soon earned him the reputation of being one of the finest pianists of his time, as well as one of the highest paid, he only managed to finish a handful of compositions by his death in 1943. One of these works was the *RHAPSODY ON A THEME OF PAGANINI*, Op. 43, written during the summer of 1934 at his villa in Switzerland. Later that year he gave its premiere with the Philadelphia Orchestra under the baton of Leopold Stokowski. The work proved highly successful in America and Europe, quickly cementing itself into the concert repertoire as one his most popular works.

The memorable theme, which is taken from the last of Niccolò Paganini's notoriously difficult 24 Caprices for Solo Violin (1805), had already been borrowed by Schumann, Liszt and Brahms, but was to attain new levels of fame through Rachmaninoff's Op. 43, a theme-and variations work for piano and orchestra. The succinct and pithy character of the *Rhapsody* embodies his leaner "late style" in comparison to his more lush and expansive pre-World War I compositions. The term "Rhapsody" would seem to imply a more loosely organized structure, yet the work is very much a tightly crafted drama, compact and to the point, with a clear trajectory across twenty-four variations. The variations roughly cluster into three groups resembling the traditional "fast-slow-fast" structure of a concerto, creating a sort of fusion between theme-and-variation form and concerto form. This cohesion among variations allows for a continuous plot, helping to give the work an exciting sense of momentum that is intrinsic to many of Rachmaninoff's works. Sharp rhythmic vitality throughout much of the *Rhapsody* propels the phrasing forward with irresistible drive, creating the necessary momentum within the variations. Unquestionably, however, the harmony is where much of the magic lies. Rachmaninoff achieves a unique sound through the use of angular progressions that resolve incessantly,

producing a sort of perpetual motion effect, reflective of the theme's propensity to keep repeating itself. His harmonizing of the thematic material frequently produces a modal flavor and at times almost puts one in mind of Gershwin, whose *Rhapsody in Blue* Rachmaninoff had heard at its premiere.

The variety of moods and unforgettable characters experienced over this approximately twenty-three minute journey is profound and exhilarating. The impish theme invites all sorts of mischief in ensuing variations in which one could easily imagine activity from a colorful world of sprites and fairies. Indeed, some moments resemble Mendelssohn's famous fairy music, although in a darker and more dynamic style. In Variation 7, Rachmaninoff introduces a new sinister character with the *Dies irae* (*Day of Wrath*) melody, a menacing medieval chant he was so fond of weaving into his compositions. It can also be heard in Variations 10, and 24 interacting with the main theme. Variation 8 is like a horrible monster clutching and violently shaking its victim(!) followed by the next variation, a desperate attempt to escape the harrowing nightmare. *Dies irae* cannot be stopped and announces doom in the next variation with an explosive climax that leaves nothing to survive but the fairies to scurry back to their forest. Variation 11 begins with a mysterious calm, then swells to a burst of colorful and scintillating finger work that ends with a soft question. A curiously charming Minuet version of the theme emerges in Variation 12 and conveys a certain wistful nostalgia. Without warning, Variation 13 violently starts up momentum again that continues to build through Variation 14, which makes a surprising shift to the relative major. After a series of thundering chords, Variation 15 finally begins to exhaust the pent-up energy in a brilliant piano solo passage that is soon joined by the orchestra to create a lush and flowing texture that ends with a worried exclamation...then resolves, smiling quaintly in F major. Variation 16 changes the mood again toward the darker side with a ghostlike duet between piano and orchestra before entering the most dismal territory yet in the ominously brooding 17th Variation. While certainly very dark, moments of eerily beautiful daylight waft through here and there, prophesying of hope that will soon come---the famous 18th Variation. This ultra-romantic rose blossom of a melody seals the *Rhapsody* for success with its audiences. Rachmaninoff quipped, "That one is for my manager." Interestingly, the melody is the original theme turned "upside-down" (or should we say "head-over-heels"?) and transposed to D^b Major—the key of love. After the passionate song softly closes in the piano solo, the orchestra interrupts the silence with pointy chords, demanding attention, quickly modulating back to the home key of A minor, then sets the final group of variations in motion which never let up until the finish. Variations 19, 20, and 21 fly by in an ever-growing wave of energy full of rhythmic drive. Variation 22 begins as a march and almost forsakes its duties as a variation taking the listener through a series of magnificent time-warping passages, full of lively dialogue between piano and orchestra, culminating in Variation 23. Variation 24, the last and final variation, unleashes a torrent of bone-mangling passages full of lightning quick leaps that are especially cruel to small hands. After the *Dies irae* theme rears its ugly head once more in combination with the main theme, the bombastic final climax arrives only to be extinguished by a quiet two-bar cadence in one of the most ironic and witty musical endings ever written.

[Program notes by Joseph Dougherty]

MODEST MUSSORGSKY, PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION

In 1874, though immersed in the composition of his massive opera, *KOVANSHCHINA*, MODEST MUSSORGSKY took time off when he received word of a memorial exhibit of works by his close friend, artist and architect Victor Hartmann, who had died earlier that year. Inspired by Hartmann's works, Mussorgsky decided to compose a set of piano pieces based on drawings and watercolors which Hartmann had produced mostly during travels abroad—this piano suite would be his personal tribute to his close friend. Immediately after starting the project in early June, Mussorgsky claimed that "sounds and ideas fill the air, and I can barely scribble them down fast enough." Mussorgsky speedily completed the work on June 22, 1874. *PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION* represents ten of Hartmann's images.

An opening prelude, which returns throughout the suite, serves as an interlude to connect the movements. Mussorgsky described that the prelude was himself "roving through the exhibition—now leisurely, not briskly—in order to come close to a picture that has attracted attention." This unifying theme is the "Promenade." In Mussorgsky's time, musical depictions of art were not exactly new. Yet, it is the structural and formal setting of the sonic "exhibition" that gives the piece its unique character. The simple yet grand "Promenade" theme sets the tone for the entire piece and recurs time and again as it provides transitions between vastly different movements. It is what takes Mussorgsky into the gallery and then proceeds to accompany him as he walks around the room, reflecting a change in mood from one picture to another. And, after the theme transitions through various major and minor keys and time signatures, it receives a long awaited zenith in the final movement. This piece seems almost idiosyncratic at times in some ways, but despite the overall focus being on the pictures themselves, the "Promenade" theme captures the blending of thought and emotion that one experiences when walking through an exhibition and makes what would be a seemingly disorganized collection of musical sketches a deliberate and thoughtful experience.

Though Mussorgsky's genius as composer is clear, much of the success of *Pictures* in modern times is owed to the French composer Maurice Ravel. Commissioned by Serge Koussevitzky in 1922 to orchestrate Mussorgsky's piece, Ravel combined his experience and skill at orchestration with a few unorthodox methods to create the masterwork that exists as we know it today. For example, the classical and mournful saxophone melody in "Il vecchio castello", and the beautiful yet very challenging tuba solo in "Bydło" are two of the most unexpected yet memorable passages. Powerful pizzicati in the string, precise woodwind dovetailing, and extreme dynamics allow Ravel's creativity and expertise to shine throughout the music.

A Promenade majestically opens the piece with melody and meter that are reminiscent of Russian folk songs. The asymmetrical meter, with time signatures alternating between 5/4 and 6/4, gives the impression of wandering through the gallery.

Gnomus is the first movement to follow the Promenade, which depicts a little gnome that is awkwardly frolicking around with crooked legs. The distinct tempi that vary from "Vivo" to "Meno mosso, pesante" evoke the clumsy nature of the gnome. Awkward leaps, bizarre harmonies and strange glissandi in the string and winds are used to convey the gnome's "droll movements" and "savage shrieks". Though Hartmann's original sketch is lost, critics think it was a drawing of a grotesque nutcracker-like figure with large teeth.

Following another short promenade, now in A^b major instead of the original B^b major, we come to see "Il Vecchio Castello", the old castle. The inspiration for this movement comes from Hartmann's travels in France, however the wistfully sighing melody, memorably given to the alto saxophone, evokes a Russian troubadour song.

Again the promenade theme returns, with prominently more weight than before, moving onto the next work. *Tuileries* is a dispute between children at play, illustrating Hartmann's picture of the Jardin des Tuileries near the Louvre in Paris. Featured oboe and flute melodies capture the foolish quarrelling of the children, while their nurses are chasing after them in the garden.

The fourth movement, *Bydło*, with a stark contrast from bickering children of the previous movement, features the somber voice of the solo tuba. "Bydło", the Polish term for cattle, evokes the image of a wagon drawn by oxen. Although in the original Mussorgsky version, the movement begins fortissimo—"right between the eyes," as he put it—it was orchestrated to begin pianissimo, swelling into a huge crescendo and ending pianissimo again. The dynamic markings of a pianissimo opening followed by a crescendo create the illusion of the approaching cart and the tread of hooves—how the oxcart approaches the listener through a gradual crescendo to fortissimo and then recedes into the distance, once more pianissimo.

The "Tranquillo" tempo marking of the following Promenade theme suggests that the viewer is more wistful, solemn and reflective after the previous paintings. The interlude seamlessly transitions in to the *Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks*, which was inspired by Hartmann's 1871 costume design for a children's ballet, "Trilbi". The scene shows young pupils of the theater school dressed as canaries, scampering around onstage. Canary chicks are pecking away as the movement opens, and the movement follows the ternary form of ABA and a coda. Rather light and almost humorous in nature, this movement captures the sketch of dancers, all dressed in large eggshells with the heads of canaries.

"Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle" is a scene Hartmann painted in a Jewish ghetto while visiting Poland in 1868 with his wife, who was Polish. Depicted are "two Polish Jews, one rich and the other poor", who seem to be quarreling. The movement begins with the commanding Goldenberg, followed by Schmuyle's whining reply and then both themes restated in counterpoint. This movement is believed to be a composite of two figures Hartmann drew near the Warsaw ghetto.

"Limoges" illustrates the lively marketplace at Limoges in central France. Animated conversations and arguments fly between two rival female vendors immersed in a heated argument. This scherzo ends with a scurrying coda that directly flows into the next movement, *Catacombae*.

The movement is in two distinct parts. In "Catacombe (Sepulchrum Romanum)", Hartmann and a guide with a lantern explore the underground tombs of Paris. To the right of the figures in the artist's watercolor lies a pile of skulls. The looming portrait of the ancient underground tomb carries out elegiac lines with melancholy and gloomy characteristics. The first section, featuring the alternating loud and soft chords, draws attention to the grandeur of the catacombs. The second half of the movement, "Con mortuis in lingua mortua" (Latin for "with the dead in a dead language") depicts an observer descending into the catacombs in a rather eerie atmosphere of ghostly whispers. It is a mysterious and mournful transformation of the Promenade theme, bringing us back to a home key. Ghostly harmonics in the strings are reminiscent of light illuminating the end of the shadowy tunnel of the catacombs.

Mussorgsky's "The Hut on Fowl's Legs (Baba-Yagá)", focuses not so much on Hartmann's drawing (a picture of a clock in the shape of the hut of the witch Baba Yagá) but on the character from Slavic folklore for which this movement is named. The whirlwind sounds of fast scales in the strings and dissonant tritone leaps evoke the child-eating witch's chase through the forest looking for her victims. Structurally the movement largely mirrors the grotesque qualities of "Gnomus."

Finally, we arrive at “The Great Gate of Kiev”. This final movement brings to life Hartmann’s sketch of a majestic gateway to adorn a church in the city of Kiev. His design included a belfry in the shape of a Slavic warrior’s helmet. Though the plan to build the structure was never carried out, the design for the gate was Hartmann’s best work, and had won him the national competition. This majestic music describes not only the grandeur of the design but contains a Russian hymn and a heroic variation on the Promenade theme realized in Ravel’s orchestration of the music with magnificent climaxes and the ringing bells of the city.

Performed infrequently during his lifetime, the suite has become a showpiece for virtuoso pianists as Mussorgsky's most famous composition for piano. However, it became further known through various orchestrations and arrangements produced by other musicians and composers – Ravel's orchestral arrangement is the most performed and recorded.

[Program Notes by Robert Babs, UW Symphony Orchestra Violist]

PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

JOSEPH DOUGHERTY

Joseph Dougherty is a student of Craig Sheppard at the University of Washington where he earned his Bachelor's degree in Piano Performance and is scheduled to finish his Master's this month. Around the age of eleven, Joseph began intermittent lessons with various teachers after showing an interest in classical music and learning to play on his own. In addition to playing solo piano repertoire, he enjoys collaborative work and currently teaches piano at La Belle Music Studio in Bellevue. In the fall, he plans to begin a second MM but in Collaborative Piano at the University of Texas, Austin.

SOL IM

Born in South Korea, Sol Im began her violin studies at age 5. She came to the United States at age 10 and has studied under Kwanbin Park and Ronald Patterson. Following her debut performance at Benaroya Hall with Cascade Youth Symphony at age 16, she has performed in masterclasses with world-renowned artists such as Gil Shaham and Elisa Barston. She has performed with the University of Washington (UW) Symphony and has won first prize in the Washington State Korean Music Association, third place in the State Solo competition and honorable mention in the Sannamish Symphony Concerto Competition. Sol has served as the Donald and Gloria Swisher concertmaster for the UW symphony for two years and is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in violin performance. She studies under Professor Ronald Patterson, a student of Jascha Heifetz, at the UW School of Music.

CORENTIN POKORNY

Corentin Pokorny is a sophomore violin performance major at the University of Washington. He was born and raised in France, where he studied violin, piano, and voice. At the age of 11, he studied for a year in the Boulogne Conservatory of Music, and then several years in the Aulnay-Sous-Bois Conservatory of Music, under the teaching of violinist José Alvarez, former principal second violin of the Paris Opera, and assistant violin teacher in the Paris Conservatory of Music. Corentin is currently studying with Ron Patterson, the Violin Professor at the University of Washington, and plans on graduating in 2016.

DAVID ALEXANDER RAHBEE

David Alexander Rahbee is currently artist in residence at the University of Washington School of Music in Seattle, where he is conductor of the University Orchestra and teaches conducting. He was a recipient of the American-Austrian Foundation's 2003 Herbert von Karajan Fellowship for Young Conductors, the 2005 International Richard-Wagner-Verband Stipend, and received a fellowship from the Acanthes Centre in Paris in 2007.

Dr. Rahbee has appeared in concert with orchestras such as the RTE National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Kammerphilharmonie Berlin-Brandenburg, Orchestre de la Francophonie (Canada), the Dresden Hochschule orchestra, the Boston New Music Initiative, Orquesta

Sinfónica de Loja (Ecuador), Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra, Savaria Symphony Orchestra (Hungary), Cool Opera of Norway (members of the Stavanger Symphony), Schönbrunner Schloss Orchester (Vienna), the Whatcom Symphony Orchestra, and the Divertimento Ensemble of Milan. He has collaborated with prominent soloists such as Sarah Chang, David Chan, and Joseph Lin. He was an assistant at the Vienna State opera (2002-2010), music director and conductor of the Fidelio Chamber Orchestra in Cambridge, Massachusetts (1997-2001). He has been engaged as a guest rehearsal conductor for numerous young orchestras, such as the New England Conservatory Symphony Orchestra, The Symphony Orchestras of the Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music at Chapman University, and the Vienna University of Technology orchestra, and the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras (BYSO). Festivals he has been involved with include the Salzburg Festival, the International Bartók Festival, and the Atlantic Music Festival.

Dr. Rahbee's principal conducting teachers were Charles Bruck and Michael Jinbo at the Pierre Monteux School. He holds Bachelor of Music degree in violin and composition from Indiana University, a Master of Music degree from the New England Conservatory in orchestral conducting, and a Doctorate of Musical Arts from the University of Montreal in orchestral conducting. He has also participated in post-graduate conducting classes at the Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, Vienna. Mr. Rahbee has been selected to active participate in masterclasses by renown conductors such as Kurt Masur, Sir Colin Davis, Jorma Panula, Zdeněk Mácal, Peter Eötvös, Zoltán Peskó, and Helmut Rilling, and counts Nikolaus Harnoncourt among his most influential mentors.

THE UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY

David Alexander Rahbee, *conductor*

Anna Edwards & Tigran Arakelyan, *assistant conductors*

VIOLIN I

Emily Choi §
Corentin Pokorny
Erin Kelly
Yunjung Kim
Christopher Lee
Kayang Lee
Kelsie Haakenson
Jonathan Kuehn
Maddie Down
Daniel White
Kelsey Brewster
Anthony Fok
Jason Fu
Weston Hambleton
Xuanlin Li
Allion Abraham

VIOLIN II

Heather Borrer *
Anatasia Nicolov
Matt Cancio
Ester Yang
Alex Mangubat
Annie Wu
Kara Wages
Kuikui Liu
Natalie Meek
Jason Lum
Samantha Wiegenstein

VIOLA

Romarc Pokorny *
Emily Barker
Emmeran Pokorny
Amylia Pavlovna
Glaskova
Robert Babs
Emily Hull
Karl Vyhmeister
Edwin Li

CELLO

Yang Lu *
Hye Jung Yang
Hajung Yuk
Thomas Zadrozny
Jens Luebeck
Minjing Zhu
Melissa Kersh
Allyson McGaughey

BASS

Kelsey Mines *
Patrick Aubyrn
Charles Welty
Brad Gaylor
Darian Woller
Dune Butler
Tyler Cigich
Ramon Salumbides
Julia Viharlahti

FLUTE

Natalie Ham
Joyce Lee
Mona Sangesland #
Kathleen Shin
Alexander Wood Hoelzen

OBOE

Bhavani Kotha *
James Phillips
Paulo Ceppi

ENGLISH HORN

James Phillips #

CLARINET

Alex Thompson *
David Bissell
Alexander Tu
David Zeng

ALTO SAXOPHONE

Ian Mendedoht

BASSOON

Jamael Smith
Gabrielle Hsu

CONTRABASSOON

Lydia Castro

FRENCH HORN

Matthew Anderson *
Trevor Cosby
Jacob Parkin
Elizabeth Jantzen

TRUMPET

David Sloan *
Tyler Stevens
Nicole Herreld

TROMBONE

Caroline Harbitz * -G
Rebecca Musslewhite -G
Steve Gellersen -G

TUBA

Julio Cruz *

PERCUSSION

David Solomon
Sam Schwabacher
Evan Berge
Declan Sullivan

HARP

Catherine Case -G
Tiffany Chen -G

CELESTA

Geoffrey Liu

§ *Concert master*

* *Principal*

Principal – Pictures

@ *Principal –*

Rachmaninoff

% *Principal – Sarasate*

-G *Guest musician*