

Boston University

OpenBU

<http://open.bu.edu>

School of Music

Boston University Concert Programs

1995-02-16

Boston University Symphony Orchestra, February 16, 1995

<https://hdl.handle.net/2144/32424>

"Downloaded from OpenBU. Boston University's institutional repository."

*Boston University School for the Arts
Music Division*

—presents—

BOSTON UNIVERSITY
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

DAVID HOOSE, *conductor*

XX

Thursday, February 16, 1995 at 8:00 p.m.
The Tsai Performance Center
685 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

DAVID HOOSE, *conductor*

Thursday, February 16, 1995

8:00 p.m.

PROGRAM

Le Baiser de la fée (The Fairy's Kiss) (1928)

Igor Stravinsky
(1882-1971)

Prologue
A Village Fête
By the Mill
Epilogue

—*Intermission*—

Pohjola's Daughter (1906)

Jean Sibelius
(1865-1957)

La Mer (1905)

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

De l'aube à midi sur la mer
Jeux de vagues
Dialogue du vent et de la mer

PROGRAM NOTES

The following remarks appear in *Expositions and Developments*, co-authored by Stravinsky and Robert Craft:

"In 1928 Ida Rubinstein commissioned me to compose a full-length ballet. The thirty-fifth anniversary of Tchaikovsky's death was 1928...and I therefore conceived my compatriotic homage as an anniversary piece. I chose [Hans Christian] Andersen's *The Snow Maiden* because it suggested an allegory of Tchaikovsky himself. The fairy's kiss on the heel of the child is also the muse marking Tchaikovsky at his birth—though the muse did not claim Tchaikovsky at his wedding, as she did the young man in the ballet, but at the height of his powers...My only precept in selecting the music was that none of the pieces should have been orchestrated by Tchaikovsky—i.e., my selection would have to come from piano music and songs. I was already familiar with about half of the music I was to use; the other pieces were discoveries. At this date [1962] I only vaguely remember which music is Tchaikovsky's and which mine."

Stravinsky also provided a synopsis for the ballet:

- 1. Prologue.** A woman carrying her child struggles through the storm. The Fairy's attendant spirits appear and pursue her. They separate her from the infant and carry him off. The Fairy herself appears. She approaches the child, enfolding him with tenderness. She kisses his forehead and vanishes, leaving him alone on the stage. Passing peasants find the child abandoned, search in vain for his mother and, deeply distressed, take him with them.
- 2. A Village Fête.** Peasants dance, musicians play; the young man and his fiancée dance with the rest. The musicians and the crowd disperse; the fiancée also goes, leaving the young man alone. The Fairy, disguised as a gypsy, approaches the young man; she takes his hand and tells his fortune. She dances, increasing her spell over the young man. She talks of his romance and promises him great happiness. Captivated by her words, he begs her to lead him to his fiancée. She does so.
- 3. By the Mill.** Guided by the Fairy, the young man arrives at the mill where he finds his fiancée among her companions, playing games. They all dance; the girl then goes with her friends to put on her wedding veil. The young man is left alone. The Fairy appears, concealed by a wedding veil. The young man takes her for his fiancée and approaches her with rapture. Suddenly the Fairy throws off her veil. Dumbfounded, the young man realizes his mistake. He tries to escape, but in vain; he is defenseless before the supernatural power of the Fairy. His resistance overcome, she holds him in her power. Now she will take him away to a land beyond time and place, where she will again give him a kiss.

4. Epilogue. The fairy spirits slowly group themselves across the stage in ranks representing the infinite space of the heavens. The Fairy and the young man appear on a ridge. She kisses him.

The inspiration for Sibelius' symphonic poem *Pohjola's Daughter* comes from the epic Finnish folk saga *Kalevala*. Although the stories and poems of the *Kalevala* were handed down orally over the course of many centuries, like the *Nibelungen*, it was first published in complete form in 1849 by Elias Lönnrot. Its publication fundamentally shaped the emergence of the modern Finnish language; its impact is analogous to Martin Luther's translation of the Bible into German. The circulation of the *Kalevala* in print also coincided with and furthered the growth of Finnish nationalism.

Sibelius first encountered the *Kalevala* as a young boy in Finland. In 1889, he went to Berlin to continue his musical studies. There he heard the *Aino Symphony*, composed by another Finn, Robert Kajanus. This work, also based upon the *Kalevala*, opened Sibelius' eyes to the musical possibilities inherent in the poem. The musical inspiration provided by the *Kalevala* sparked his imagination; its influence endured throughout his compositional career, from the *Kullervo Symphony* and *Lemminkäinen Legends* of the 1890's to his last major work, *Tapiola*, published in 1926.

Sibelius called *Pohjola's Daughter* a "symphonic fantasia"; however, it is actually a tone poem, his most overtly programmatic one. The music closely mirrors the details of the story. The gloomy darkness of Pohjola in the opening cello theme, the daughter's spinning wheel heard in the violins, Väinämöinen's reaction to his first glimpse of Pohjola's daughter, his passion for her, his efforts to fulfill her mocking demands, his inevitable failure and departure, wounded and defeated: all are clearly delineated. *Pohjola's Daughter* also works as pure music, however, independent of its program. One of Sibelius' biographers, Erik Tawaststjerna, wrote "It is the remarkable inventiveness in his handling of thematic metamorphosis and his mastery of the poetic as well as the symphonic that makes *Pohjola's Daughter* so impressive an achievement."

The following is an adaptation of Sibelius' synopsis:

Väinämöinen travels homeward on his sledge, out of the dark kingdom of Pohjola. Suddenly he hears a noise and looks up: there he sees Pohjola's daughter sitting on a rainbow and spinning. Overcome by her beauty, he begs her to come down, but she teasingly refuses. Finally she says, "If you can make me a boat out of my spindle and show me your magical skills, I will gladly follow you." Old Väinämöinen toils and almost succeeds, but as he works, a devil causes his ax to slip, wounding Väinämöinen's leg. Foul-tempered and in great pain, with Pohjola's daughter lost to him forever, Väinämöinen limps to his sledge and journeys on alone.

"You may not know that I was destined for a sailor's life and that it was only the hazards of fate that led me in another direction. But I have always held a passionate love for the sea," Debussy wrote to André Messager in 1903, as he began work on *La Mer*. Debussy's connection to the ocean began in his childhood, when he made several extended visits to Cannes. Interestingly, the lure of the sea worked so powerfully on Debussy that he wrote the majority of *La Mer* in Paris, safely beyond the intensity of the ocean's presence. The work was completed in 1905 and performed later that year, with Camille Chevillard at the podium.

La Mer received decidedly mixed reactions at its 1905 premiere and later in 1908, when Debussy himself conducted it. It disappointed those who expected a musical version of *Pelleas et Melisande*. One critic wrote, "For the first time in listening to a descriptive work of Debussy's I have the impression of beholding not nature, but a reproduction of nature, marvellously subtle, ingenious and skillful, no doubt, but a reproduction for all that...I neither hear, nor see, nor feel the sea." In contrast, an admirer of *La Mer* wrote, "Never was music so fresh, spontaneous, unexpected, novel rhythms; never were harmonies richer or more original; never has an orchestra possessed more voices and sonorities with which to interpret compositions overflowing with such a wealth of fantasy." At the 1908 performance, reactions from enthusiasts and enemies alike were so loud they lasted a full ten minutes after the piece concluded.

Clearly *La Mer* elicited no unanimity of opinion. Some were captivated by its rich sonorities, while others were baffled by its form (Debussy subtitled the work "Three Symphonic Sketches", but they are clearly finished movements, each with its own character). *La Mer's* effectiveness lies in its refusal to explicitly define the sea. Instead, Debussy drew on his own instinctive perceptions of the sea and transformed them into musical imagery; such perceptions are beyond the ability of words to capture.

—Elizabeth Schwartz

MEET THE ARTIST

David Hoose is Conductor of the Boston University Symphony Orchestra and Chair of the Conducting Department. He is in his thirteenth year as Music Director of the Cantata Singers and Ensemble, his third as Music Director of Collage New Music, and his second as Music Director of the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Hoose has appeared as guest conductor of the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, the Utah Symphony, Korean Broadcasting System Symphony Orchestra (KBS), Boston Symphony Chamber Players, Orchestra Regionale Toscana, Handel & Haydn Society, and the June Opera Festival of New Jersey. He has also conducted the Emmanuel Chamber Orchestra, Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra (Boston), Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra, Chorus Pro Musica (Boston), Back Bay Chorale (Boston), American-Soviet Festival Orchestra, Cayuga Chamber Orchestra and the New Hampshire Festival Orchestra. His recordings appear on Nonesuch, New World, Delos, CRI and GunMar labels. As a horn player, Mr. Hoose served as principal horn of the New Hampshire Symphony, Portland Symphony, Boston Musica Viva, and Handel & Haydn Society, and performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Boston Pops and Smithsonian Chamber Players. For ten years, he was a member of the Naumberg Award-winning Emmanuel Wind Quintet.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Violin I

Shelley Lucht, *concertmistress*
Robert Lehmann
Cristina Buciu
Heidi Braun
Bing Jing Yu
Danica Mills
Karine Swandquist
Rinko Takehashi
Leah Mohling
Anna Korunsky
Marie Le Carlier
Andrea Somma
Eliane Tokeshi
Eugenia Bogachek
Jessica Platt
Daniel Han

Violin II

Jodi Hagen, *principal*
Penelope Wayne
Susanna Klein
Lauren Trussell-Cullen
Wilson Pedrazas
Herbert Engel
Hillary Foster
Kathleen Patrick
San-yi Lin
Emily Goodyear
Chris Zoski
Rebecca Erskine
Andy Tsai
Alexia Taylor

Viola

Emma Lively
Andrew Cahoon
Michael Ireland
Móeídur Sigurdardóttir
Abigail Kubert
Irina Naryshkova
Bing Liu
Isaac Levine
Yvonne Liu
Kerry Floyd
Meghan Ryan
Jing-Huey Wei

Cello

Christopher Hutton, *principal*
Tobias Werner
Jan Müller Szeraus
Melissa McCarthy
Moshfegh Sarvenaz
Florent Renard-Payen
Jennifer Minnich
Asaf Kolerstein
Ásdís Arnardóttir
Chorong Lee
Tido Janssen
Emily Yang
Chung-Cheng Lin
Cathy Park
Michael Verrette

Bass

Eric Larson, *principal*
Meredith Johnson
Erin Bewsher
Susan Hagen
Irving Steinberg
Donald Howey
Matthew Medlock

Flute

Heather Holden
Heather Fortune
Melissa Lindon
Vasco Gouveia
Lori Ziegler
Anne White

Oboe

Andrew Price
Amanda Paine
Pamela Ajango
Russell deLuna

Clarinet

Xiaoping Tang
David Arrivé
Frank Adams
Timothy Hay
Adrian Chtchour
Sharon Koh

Bassoon

Shinyee Na
Lisa Gibbs
Adrian Jojatu
Dale Clark

Horn

Jessica Privler
Chris Seligman
Jamie Hersch
Gabriel Gitman
Jason Koczur
Fritz Foss

Trumpet

Gary Peterson
Brendan Kierman
Chris Parks
Jeffrey Popadic
Radhika Murali

Trombone

Chris Schweiger
Marcos Martin
Tom Joyce
Dennis Klophaus
Eran Levy
Stephen Cooley

Tuba

Drew Gamet
Scott Wilson
Michael Milnarik

Timpani

Joe Pereira
Deborah Walsh
Michael Laven

Percussion

Gregory Gazzola
Haekyung Do
Phillip Kiamie
Brian Moura

Harp

Katherine Huang

Orchestra Managers

Frank Adams David Arrivé Leah Mohling

Boston University School for the Arts

Advisory Board

Nancy Reis Joaquim
Esther B. Kahn
Stephen M. Mindich
Anne-Marie Soullière
Ralph Verni

Administration

Bruce MacCombie, *Dean*

Christopher Kendall, *Director, Music Division*

Walt Meissner, *Associate Dean for Administrative Affairs*

Stuart Baron, *Director, Visual Arts Division*

Roger Croucher, *Director, Theatre Arts Division*

Leslie Burns, *Public Relations Director*

Shirley Ginsberg, *Graduate Financial Aid Coordinator*

Sarah Donnelly, *Alumni Representative*

Lynda Fairbanks Atkins, *Development Director*

General Information: (617) 353-3350

SFA Events Information Line: (617) 353-3349

The School for the Arts welcomes your support to help continue these concerts. Further information regarding gifts to the School may be obtained from: The School for the Arts Development Office, 855 Commonwealth Avenue, Rm. 203, Boston, MA 02215 (617) 353-7293.