



PENINSULA MUSIC FESTIVAL

PROGRAM 3

Saturday, August 6, 2016, 7:30 p.m.

Victor Yampolsky, Conductor
Alexander Sevastian, Accordion
Benjamin Firer, Emerging Conductor**

ACCORDION WIZARD

- MASSENET Overture to Racine's *Phèdre**
- GALLIANO Concerto for Accordion and String Orchestra, "Opale"*
 Allegro furioso
 Moderato malinconico — Nobile ed espressivo
 Allergo energico
- TICHELI *Blue Shades**
- INTERMISSION —
- DVOŘÁK Slavonic Dance in E minor, Op. 46, No. 2**
- WEBER *Invitation to the Dance*
orch. Berlioz
- WEBER Finale (Presto giocoso) from *Konzertstück*
 for Accordion and Orchestra in F minor, Op. 79*
- GRIDIN *Gypsy Rhapsody* for Accordion and Orchestra*
- ENESCO *Romanian Rhapsody No. 1* in A major, Op. 11, No. 1

* first PMF performance

This concert is sponsored by Joan and Robert Schaupp.

Alexander Sevastian appears by arrangement with Agence Station bleue.

*Photography and audio recordings of this concert are strictly prohibited.
Please, no cell phones during the concert.*

Program 3

Overture to Racine's *Phèdre*

Jules Massenet (1842-1912)

Composed in 1873.

Premiered on February 22, 1874 in Paris, conducted by Jules-Étienne Padeloup.

The tragic character of Phaedra was first threaded into the web of ancient mythology when she married the aging King Theseus. Hippolytus, Theseus' son by his liaison with the Amazon woman Antiope, comes to visit his father, and Phaedra is overwhelmed to the point of madness with love for her stepson. Hippolytus, however, has foresworn absolutely the love of women, and does not pay Phaedra the slightest notice. The plight of Phaedra, ravaged by guilt but unable to conquer her lust, becomes known to her faithful old nurse, who pleads with Hippolytus to requite her mistress' passion. Hippolytus recoils from the nurse in horror, insisting that he would never betray either his father or his vow to shun romantic love. Phaedra, having witnessed this scene, tells the nurse that she will settle her own affairs, and rushes into her house. Theseus' return just minutes later is met by the screams of serving women, who tell him that Phaedra has killed herself. A note clutched in her lifeless hand falsely accuses Hippolytus of having raped her. Hippolytus protests his innocence, but Theseus is enraged against his son, curses him, and sends him away. As Hippolytus drives his chariot along the coast road, he is attacked by a sea monster, and mortally injured. At this moment, Artemis, chaste goddess of the hunt, whom Hippolytus has faithfully served, appears to Theseus with the message that this tragic chain of events has been ordained by Aphrodite, the goddess of love who has sworn revenge upon Hippolytus for having rejected her domain. Hippolytus is brought to Theseus' palace, where father and son are reconciled before the boy dies.

The tragedy of Phaedra was the last subject that the celebrated French dramatist Jean Racine (1639-1699) took up before attacks by his rivals forced his retirement from the theater in 1677. In 1873, Jules Massenet turned to Racine's *Phèdre* as the inspiration for a piece he was composing to fulfill a commission from the conductor and impresario Jules-Étienne Padeloup. The *Phèdre Overture*, which seeks to capture the grandeur and stark tragedy of Racine's drama, opens with a stern summons that recurs as a motto throughout the work. A sad, lyrical melody depicts the longing of Phaedra before the summons theme returns to close the introduction. The main body of the work is launched by a breathless mutation of the summons motive. Following a climax, the complementary theme, distinguished by a languid turn figure, provides contrast. The playing out of these two subjects occupies the rest of the Overture, which is once interrupted for a reminiscence of the theme of Phaedra's longing.

Concerto for Accordion and String Orchestra, "Opale" Richard Galliano (born in 1950)

Composed in 1994.

Premiered on September 19, 1994 in Paris, with the composer as soloist.

Richard Galliano, one of the world's foremost accordion and bandoneón virtuosos and composers, was born in Cannes in 1950 into the family of an Italian-born teacher of that instrument, and began playing it himself when he was four. He went on to study accordion, harmony, counterpoint and trombone at the Nice Conservatoire as a teenager, when he also discovered jazz as well as the rarity of his instrument in that genre — establishing accordion in the world of jazz has helped shape his life's work. In 1973 Galliano moved to Paris, where he worked as an arranger, conductor and composer for singer-songwriter Claude Nougare, began performing with local jazz musicians as well as such touring luminaries as Chet Baker, Toots Thielemans, Ron Carter and Jan Garbarek, and developed as a classical artist playing music by Bach, Tchaikovsky, Ravel, Gershwin and others that earned him competition prizes in Spain and France. By 1980 Galliano was touring internationally; he recorded his first album in 1993 and two years later received the Django Reinhardt Prize from the Académie du Jazz for Best Jazz Album of the Year for *Laurita* on the Dreyfus Jazz label, a collection of his own compositions. His discography now includes more than fifty entries, an achievement capped in 2010 by a new contract with the prestigious German classical label Deutsche Grammophon, for whom he has made albums of music by Bach, Vivaldi and Nino Rota. Galliano's recordings have been recognized with multiple awards, including a *Grand Prix du Disque*, and he has been named a *Chevalier dans l'Ordre National du Mérite*, *Officier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* and *Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*; the pedagogical method for accordion he co-wrote with his father, Lucien Galliano, received a top prize from SACEM (the French Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers of Music).

Galliano composed his Accordion Concerto in 1994 for the Festival Côte d'Opale, the "Opal Coast" near Calais popular with tourists that has also provided inspiration for Victor Hugo, Charles Dickens, J.M.W. Turner, Henri Dutilleul and other noted artists. In addition to its French provenance, the "Opale" Concerto is also much under the sway of the Argentinean master of the modern tango, Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992), who collaborated with Galliano frequently during the last decade of his life and encouraged him to incorporate the styles and ethos of French music into his own compositions. "The inspiration came to me directly from the influence of my Mediterranean roots," wrote Galliano of the "Opale" Concerto. The first and third movements are hard-driving tangos with sultry slow interludes, while the second is a smoky midnight waltz that the composer said is "made from two very nostalgic themes that evoke images of Old Paris."

Blue Shades

Frank Ticheli (born in 1958)

Composed for winds and percussion in 1996; arranged for orchestra in 1999.

Orchestral version premiered in December 1999 in Costa Mesa, California, conducted by Carl St. Clair.

Frank Ticheli, born in 1958 in Monroe, Louisiana, joined the faculty of the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California in 1991; he is now Professor of Composition at the school. From 1991 to 1998, he was Composer-in-Residence with the Pacific Symphony Orchestra in Orange County, California. Ticheli (ti-KEL-ee) received his bachelor's degree from Southern Methodist University and his master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Michigan. His distinctions include the Charles Ives Scholarship, Goddard Lieberman Fellowship, and Arts and Letters Award (all from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters), Frances and William Schuman Fellowship from the MacDowell Colony, and frequent summer residencies at the MacDowell Colony and Yaddo; in 2006, he won the William D. Revelli Memorial Band Composition Award from the National Band Association.

The composer wrote, "*Blue Shades*, as its title suggests, alludes to the blues, and a jazz feeling is prevalent — however, it is not literally a blues piece. There is not a single twelve-bar blues progression to be found, and, except for a few isolated sections, the eighth-note is not played in swinging style. The work, however, is heavily influenced by the blues: 'blue notes' (flatted 3rds, 5ths and 7ths of the scale) are used constantly; blues harmonies, rhythms and melodic idioms pervade the work; and many 'shades of blue' are depicted, from bright blue to dark, to dirty, to hot blue. At times, *Blue Shades* burlesques some of the clichés from the Big Band era, not as a mockery of those conventions, but as a tribute. A slow and quiet middle section recalls the atmosphere of a dark, smoky blues haunt. A clarinet solo played near the end recalls Benny Goodman's hot playing style, and ushers in a series of 'wailing' brass chords recalling the train whistle effects commonly used during that era."

Slavonic Dance in E minor, Op. 46, No. 2
Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

Composed in 1878.

Premiered on May 16, 1879 in Prague, conducted by Adolf Čech.

The eight *Slavonic Dances*, Op. 46, were the first efflorescence of the Czech nationalism that was to become so closely associated with Dvořák's music. On the advice of his mentor Johannes Brahms, he sent them to the noted publisher Fritz Simrock of Berlin in May 1878 and was paid 300 marks, the first substantial sum Dvořák had ever made from any of his works. Though these pieces were originally intended for piano duet (a shrewd marketing strategy by Simrock — there were a lot more piano players than orchestras), Dvořák began the orchestrations even before the keyboard score for all

eight dances was completed, and Simrock issued both versions simultaneously in August 1878. Louis Ehlert, the influential critic of the *Berliner Nationalzeitung*, saw an early copy of the *Slavonic Dances*, and wrote admiringly of their "heavenly naturalness" and Dvořák's "real, naturally real talent." The public's interest was aroused, there was a run on the music shops, and Dvořák was suddenly famous (and Simrock was suddenly rich). Eight years later, as part of a deal with Simrock to publish the Symphony No. 7, which the publisher contended would not sell well, Dvořák wrote a second series of *Slavonic Dances* (Op. 72). The fee was 3,000 marks, ten times the amount tendered for the earlier set. Though he did not quote actual folk melodies in this music, as had Brahms in his *Hungarian Dances*, Dvořák was so imbued with the spirit and style of indigenous Slavic music that he was able to create such superb, idealized examples of their genres as the Ukrainian *dumka* in the *Slavonic Dance in E minor*, Op. 46, No. 2.

Invitation to the Dance

Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826)
Orchestrated by Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)

Composed in 1819; orchestrated in 1841.

Orchestral premiere on June 7, 1841 in Paris, conducted by Françoise-Antoine Habeneck.

The mania for the waltz first spread across Europe when the delegates to the Congress of Vienna returned home from that music-mad city in 1814. A motley of *Ländler*, German Dances and original waltz melodies was used to accompany the newly popular dance, and Schubert, Hummel and even Beethoven devised some delightful triple-meter confections that would not have been out of place in the ballroom. The first important step in elevating the waltz into a concert vehicle, however, was taken by that pioneer of German musical Romanticism, Carl Maria von Weber, with his infectious *Invitation to the Dance*, composed for piano during the summer of 1819, when he was easing his way back into creative work after a difficult period of ill health and bereavement. (The *Polacca Brillante* for piano that he wrote at the same time also proved to be historically significant as the model for later works by Chopin and others.) In its organization, the *Invitation to the Dance* is a compact, continuous suite of waltz melodies pleasingly balanced in tempo, character and key in which the opening strain returns, in the manner of a rondo, to buttress the form (Weber subtitled the piece *Rondo Brillante*); thoughtful passages at beginning and end serve as the expressive frame for the principal waltz section. In its mood, the composition evokes subtleties of emotion that had been little broached in earlier music in dance idioms. The style and structure of the *Invitation to the Dance* established the plan that served as the model for the wondrous flood of waltzes produced by Josef Lanner, the Strauss clan and even Maurice Ravel (*La Valse*) during the following century. "Weber was the first founder of the dance-music expressive of deep feeling," wrote the 19th-century scholar Wilhelm Riehl. "He showed how profoundly he was imbued with the spirit of the age. This composition has deep historical significance."

Finale from *Konzertstück* (“*Concert Piece*”) for Accordion and Orchestra in F minor, Op. 79

Carl Maria von Weber

Composed for piano and orchestra in 1821.

Premiered on June 25, 1821 in Berlin, with the composer as soloist.

Carl Maria von Weber, remembered principally as the founder of German Romantic opera and one of the seminal figures of 19th-century music, was also an excellent pianist. In 1810 and 1812, he wrote two concertos in the Classical mold for his own use, and started sketching a third one in 1815. The form he envisioned for the new work — four continuous movements played without pause — was, however, original enough to cause him some concern that it might confuse audiences. On March 14, 1815, he announced to the eminent German musical author Johann Friedrich Rochlitz a projected solution to the problem: “I have instinctively inserted into the whole thing a kind of story whose thread will connect and define its character — moreover, one so detailed and at the same time dramatic that I found myself obliged to give it the following headings: *Allegro*, Parting. *Adagio*, Lament. *Finale*, Profoundest misery, consolation, reunion, jubilation.” So saying, he then put the composition aside for six years. In February 1821, Weber retrieved the sketches and set to work in earnest on his *Konzertstück*, originally for piano and orchestra.

***Gypsy Rhapsody* for Accordion and Orchestra
Viktor Fedorovitch Gridin (1943-1997)**

Accordionist and composer Viktor Gridin was born in Russia’s Kursk region, 300 miles south of Moscow, and studied in Moscow at the School of Music and the Gnesin Conservatory. Immediately after graduating in 1962, Gridin joined the Symphonic Orchestra of Moscow Radio and six years later became accordion soloist of the Red Banner Song and Dance Ensemble of the Soviet Army, with whom he toured internationally until 1975. Gridin enjoyed his greatest fame as a virtuoso, songwriter and conductor as a member of the State Russian Folk Ensemble from 1976 to 1993; he was named a People’s Artist of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic in 1987. The vitality, color, expressive range and melodiousness for which Gridin’s playing was known are captured in the two complementary sections of his *Gypsy Rhapsody*, the first soulful, the second virtuosic.

**Romanian Rhapsody No. 1 in A major, Op. 11, No. 1
Georges Enesco (1881-1955)**

Composed in 1901.

Premiered on February 16, 1908 in Paris, conducted by the composer.

Georges Enesco, Romania’s greatest composer, was one of the most prodigiously gifted musicians of the 20th century. He began playing violin at age four, wrote his first compositions a year later, and was admitted to the Vienna Conservatory when he was seven. He was already an accomplished violinist and composer by the

time he moved to Paris to continue his studies with Massenet and Fauré when he was fourteen. The first concert of his works was given in Paris in 1897; the next year he introduced the *Poème roumain*, which he counted as his Op. 1. During the years before the First World War, Enesco’s career as violin soloist and chamber ensemble player flourished, he was much in demand as a conductor, and his compositions, especially the two *Romanian Rhapsodies* of 1901, carried his name into the world’s concert halls. Though he regarded himself as a cosmopolitan musician rather than as a strictly national one (he actually spent more time in Paris than in his homeland), Enesco had a decisive influence on the music of Romania. In his native country, he encouraged performances, wrote articles, lectured, conducted, taught, and undertook research, and also fostered interest in a national tradition of concert music by instituting the Romanian Composers’ Society and founding the Enesco Prize for original compositions. His work not only enhanced the world’s awareness of Romanian music, but he also gave that country’s composers and performers an unprecedented model and inspiration.

Enesco’s music shows a broad range of influences — alongside native folksong stand echoes of Wagner, Brahms, Strauss, Fauré, Debussy, Bach, Bartók and Stravinsky. It is the folk influence, however, that dominates the two *Romanian Rhapsodies*, the works for which Enesco is best known. Romania stands at the crossroads between the familiar cultures of Europe and the intoxicating milieu of the Middle East — its capital, Bucharest, is closer to Istanbul than to Vienna, closer to Cairo than to Paris. The country’s folk music is based largely on the traditions of the Gypsies, those peoples whose ancient ancestors were brought from the distant lands of Egypt and India centuries ago as servants to the Roman conquerors. This cultural heritage infused native Romanian music with a curious and fascinating Oriental aura that lends it a very different character from the unaffected simplicity of the folk tunes of Britain, France and Germany — the strange movement of melodic tones, the flying virtuosity and deep melancholy of the Gypsy fiddler, and a vibrant rhythmic vitality all recall its exotic origins.

Enesco’s *Romanian Rhapsodies* are modeled in form and style on Franz Liszt’s *Hungarian Rhapsodies*. Based on indigenous tunes, the *Romanian Rhapsody No. 1* is a work of high spirits and splendid good cheer. The themes are presented episodically with little development. The first melody, a traditional drinking song with the straightforward title *I have a coin and I want a drink*, is given by the clarinet and woodwinds. It is taken up by the strings, and leads to the second theme, a slow dance in 6/8 meter with a sweeping figure in its first measure. This motive is succeeded by a languid phrase initiated by the violins. The slow dance, led this time by the solo viola, and the languid phrase return before a ponderous theme with an Oriental tinge is introduced. The last half of the work is a brilliant display of flashing orchestral sonority and leaping rhythmic vivacity. Enesco’s *Romanian Rhapsody No. 1* is among the richest musical treasures that sprang from the countries of Eastern Europe during the opening decades of 20th century.

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