

Sunday, April 6, 2014 at 3pm

Kwamé Ryan, conductor

Michelle DeYoung, mezzo-soprano

**GABRIEL FAURÉ (1845-1924)**

*Pelléas et Mélisande, Op.80 (1898)*

**HECTOR BERLIOZ (1803-1869)**

*Les nuits d'été, Op.7 (1841)*

- I. *Villanelle*
- II. *Le spectre de la rose*
- III. *Sur les lagunes*
- IV. *Absence*
- V. *Au cimetière*
- VI. *L'île inconnue*

**Ms. DeYoung**

*Intermission*

**ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)**

*Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op.120 (1841; rev. 1851)*

- I. *Ziemlich langsam - Lebhaft*
- II. *Romanze: Ziemlich langsam*
- III. *Scherzo: Lebhaft*
- IV. *Langsam - Lebhaft*

*For their leading support throughout the season we are deeply grateful to Robert Arnow, Mr. and Mrs. Richard B. Dannenberg, Mr. and Mrs. Murray Stahl and Ruth B. Toff.*

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**Pelléas et Mélisande, Op.80 (1903)**

**GABRIEL FAURÉ**

(Born May 12, 1845 in Pamiers, France; died November 4, 1924 in Paris)

*Instrumentation: two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, timpani, harp and strings.*

Belgian playwright Maurice Maeterlinck's dramatic masterpiece *Pelléas et Mélisande* premiered in Paris in 1893, and within a dozen years became a source of inspiration for four prominent composers: Debussy, collaborating with Maeterlinck himself, unveiled an opera of the same name in 1902; Schoenberg completed a large-scale tone poem based on the play the following year; Sibelius composed a score for a production of the drama two years after that; but perhaps the most famous of these works was that of French composer Gabriel Fauré.

Commissioned by Mrs. Patrick Campbell for her 1898 London premiere of an English translation of Maeterlinck's drama, Fauré's *Pelléas et Mélisande* originally existed as a set of incidental music. Campbell approached him with her offer in April of that year, to which he initially responded with reluctance: "I shall have barely a month and a half to write all this music," he wrote to his wife, adding, "It is true that part of it already exists in my big head!" Nonetheless, with the help of his pupil Charles Koechlin, Fauré completed his score in time for the premiere. Shortly thereafter, he revised and re-orchestrated his score in the form of a concert suite, which he introduced in 1903.

A slow *Prélude* establishes the dreamlike world with a rising melody that suggests intimacy and impassioned yearning, as Mélisande wanders through the woods at the beginning of the play. *Fileuse* draws from a scene in Act III, in which Mélisande sits at

her spinning wheel, blissful in the presence of Pelléas. A gentle oboe melody evokes their budding romance. The old-style dance of *Sicilienne* captures the fleeting happiness of Pelléas and Mélisande's meeting in the park with a sunny duet for flute and harp. *Mort de Mélisande* brings the suite to its somber conclusion with a slow dirge of winds and strings — funereal and fairytale-like all at once.

**Les nuits d'été, Op.7 (1856)**

**HECTOR BERLIOZ**

(Born December 11, 1803 in La Côte-Saint-André, France; died March 8, 1869 in Paris)

*Instrumentation: two flutes, one oboe, two clarinets, two bassoons, three horns, harp, strings and solo voice.*

Although Berlioz is considered to have been one of the more talkative and opinionated musicians of his time (he was the first major composer to write his memoirs), he apparently had very little to say about his song cycle *Les nuits d'été*. Composed inconspicuously between 1840 and 1841, shortly after his ambitious *Roméo et Juliette* symphony, it was based on an 1838 collection of poems by Berlioz's friend Théophile Gautier titled *La Comédie de la mort*. While Berlioz originally composed the piece for voice and piano, he would over the course of several years develop it into a fuller orchestral version.

When he left Paris in 1842, Berlioz traveled with his mistress, the singer Marie Recio. He asked Recio to participate in his concerts — perhaps as a way of justifying her presence — by offering a pair of songs, one of which was *Absence*. After a lovers' quarrel in Frankfurt, he expanded the piano-vocal arrangement of *Absence* into its more familiar orchestral

arrangement, which Recio sang at its premiere in Leipzig in February of 1843.

After putting it aside for more than a decade, Berlioz returned to *Les nuits d'été* in 1856. He re-orchestrated the beautiful *Spectre de la rose*, with a new introduction, for the mezzo-soprano Anna Bockholtz-Falconi. The Swiss publisher Rieter-Biedermann was present at the performance of the new arrangement in Gotha that February. He was awestruck by what he heard and asked Berlioz to orchestrate the remaining four songs of *Les nuits d'été* for publication. Berlioz needed little in the way of persuasion, and set about to complete one of the most popular contributions to the repertoire of song of the time.

### Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op.120 (1851)

#### ROBERT SCHUMANN

(Born June 8, 1810 in Zwickau, Germany; died July 29, 1856 in Endenich, Germany)

*Instrumentation: two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani and strings.*

Schumann's *Symphony No. 4 in D minor* serves as a sort of symphonic bridge between the classical forms of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, and the later romantic works of Brahms and Dvořák. Though it adhered to the standard four-movement structure, it was innovative in its unity and cohesiveness, with Schumann calling it a "symphony in one movement."

Like many works that eschew, or at least circumvent, convention, the road was not an easy one for Schumann's symphony. Coming off the heels of his successful First Symphony, Schumann began work on what would eventually become *Symphony No. 4 in*

*D minor* in the spring of 1841. It premiered in December of that year in Leipzig with disastrous results. Whether it was the insufficient rehearsal time, the players' unfamiliarity with Schumann's musical innovations or Schumann's reputation as a poor conductor, his symphony was largely considered a failure. Undeterred, Schumann wrote that the performance's cool reception "meant nothing. I know it is not a whit behind the [First Symphony]." However, despite his defiance, the piece remained on the shelf for a decade.

Schumann returned to the piece in 1851, revising the orchestration in a number of ways. The orchestral textures were emboldened, with more instruments playing each part. Moreover, the more traditional symphonic structure of the first draft was changed into its more innovative final version. The four movements were played without pauses and shared several themes, whereas a traditional symphony's themes were more self-contained. In this sense, Schumann's *Symphony No. 4 in D minor* approaches the novel "cyclical" construction proposed by Liszt, wherein certain musical ideas recur in different forms throughout a multi-movement composition.

Interestingly, while the final version has been praised as one of Schumann's finest works, it was the original effort that made a strong impression on Brahms, who years later obtained a manuscript and remarked, "It is a real pleasure to see anything so bright and spontaneous expressed with corresponding ease and grace. Everything is so absolutely natural that you cannot imagine it in any other way — there are no harsh colors, no forced effects." )))

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## *Kwamé Ryan, conductor*

**T**he 2012-13 season marked Kwamé Ryan's sixth season as music director of the Orchestre National Bordeaux Aquitaine. Mr. Ryan's work with this orchestra attracted international attention due to their hugely successful concerts in Bordeaux as well as the orchestra's appearances throughout Europe (including extensive tours of Spain and Switzerland) and Japan. Mr. Ryan's work with Opera National de Bordeaux included acclaimed performances of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Le Balcon*, *Tosca* and a new production of *Macbeth*.

As a guest conductor, Mr. Ryan has performed with the Orchestre National de Belgique in June 2011 and at the Grant Park Festival in Chicago in July

2011. Additional highlights include a new production of Berlioz's *Damnation of Faust* for Staatsoper Stuttgart in 2011 and concerts in Seoul conducting both the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra and its contemporary ensemble.

Mr. Ryan has worked with such orchestras as the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, SWR Sinfonieorchester Stuttgart and SWR Sinfonieorchester Baden-Baden und Freiburg. Past engagements have also included Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Bamberger Symphoniker, Bayerisches Staatsorchester and Die Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen.

Kwamé Ryan's recordings with the Orchestre National Bordeaux Aquitaine for

Mirare include Schubert's Symphony No. 9, praised by *Le Figaro* as "an individual approach to Schubert, clear, transparent, flowing." The orchestra has also recorded Rachmaninov's Symphony No. 2, described by *Classic FM Magazine* as a "modern, sophisticated reading ... rich in detail and clarity," and Beethoven's Piano Concertos Nos. 1 and 2 with pianist Shani Diluka.

As a result of his successful work in Bordeaux, in 2009 Mr. Ryan was invited to become musical director of Orchestre Français des Jeunes. In 2010, Mr. Ryan led his final concerts in this capacity, subsequent to which he was awarded the title of Officier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, given for significant contribution to art and literature by Frédéric Mitterrand, the French Minister of Culture.

Kwamé Ryan held the position of general music director of Theater Freiburg and the Philharmonisches Orchester Freiburg between 1999 and 2003, having previously been assistant conductor of the Staatsoper Stuttgart, where he gave the premiere of Gérard Pesson's *Pastorale* and a critically acclaimed filmed production of Hartmann's *Simplicius Simplicissimus* (DVD-Arthaus). His close association with his mentor Peter Eötvös has seen him conduct the first French revival of the composer's *Tri Sestri* at Opéra de Lyon and the German premiere of *Le Balcon*. Mr. Ryan has also conducted *Salome* for the English National Opera, Honneger's *Jeanne d'Arc au Bucher* for the Edinburgh International Festival and the world premiere of Pintscher's *L'espace dernier* for Opéra National de Paris (Bastille). )))

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*Michelle DeYoung, mezzo-soprano*

**M**ichelle DeYoung has already established herself as one of the most exciting artists of her generation. She appears frequently with many of the world's leading orchestras,

including the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, The Met Orchestra (in Carnegie Hall), the Met Chamber Ensemble, Vienna Philharmonic,

BBC Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Bayerische Staatsoper Orchestra, Berliner Staatskapelle, Sao Paulo Symphony and the Concertgebouworkest. She has also appeared in the prestigious festivals of Ravinia, Tanglewood, Aspen, Cincinnati, Saito Kinen, Edinburgh, Salzburg and Lucerne.

The conductors with whom she has worked include Daniel Barenboim, Pierre Boulez, James Conlon, Sir Colin Davis, Stéphane Denève, Christoph von Dohnányi, Gustavo Dudamel, Christoph Eschenbach, Daniele Gatti, Alan Gilbert, Bernard Haitink, Manfred Honeck, James Levine, Lorin Maazel, Zubin Mehta, Kent Nagano, Seiji Ozawa, Antonio Pappano, Andre Previn, David Robertson, Donald Runnicles, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Mariss Jansons and Michael Tilson Thomas.

Ms. DeYoung has also appeared with many of the finest opera houses of the world including the Metropolitan Opera, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Houston Grand Opera, the Seattle Opera, the Glimmerglass Opera, La Scala, the Bayreuth Festival, Berliner Staatsoper, Hamburg State Opera, Opera National de Paris, Théâtre du Châtelet, Opéra de Nice, Theater Basel and the Tokyo Opera. Her many roles include the title roles in *Samson et Dalila* and *The Rape of Lucretia*, Fricka, Sieglinde and Waltraute in *The Ring Cycle*; Kundry in *Parsifal*, Venus in *Tannhäuser*, Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde*, Eboli in *Don Carlos*, Amneris in *Aida*, Marguerite in *Le Damnation de Faust*, Judith in *Bluebeard's Castle*, Dido in *Les Troyens*, Gertrude in *Hamlet*, and Jocaste in *Oedipus Rex*. She also created the role of the Shaman in Tan Dun's *The First Emperor* at the Metropolitan Opera.

In recital, Ms. DeYoung has been presented by the University of Chicago Presents series, the Ravinia Festival, Weill Recital Hall, Alice Tully Hall, San Francisco Symphony's Great Performances series, Cal Performances in Berkeley, SUNY Purchase, Calvin College, the Pittsburgh Symphony, Roy Thomson Hall, the Théâtre du Châtelet, the Gulbenkian Foundation (Lisbon), the Edinburgh Festival, London's Wigmore Hall and Brussels's La Monnaie.

Ms. DeYoung's recording of *Kindertotenlieder* and Mahler's Symphony No. 3 with Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony (SFS Media) was awarded the 2003 Grammy Award for Best Classical Album. She has also been awarded the 2001 Grammy Award for Best Classical Album and Best Opera Recording for *Les Troyens* with Sir Colin Davis and the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO Live). Her growing discography also includes recordings of Mahler's Symphony No. 3 with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Bernard Haitink (CSO Resound) and with the Pittsburgh Symphony and Manfred Honeck (PID); Bernstein's Symphony No. 1, *Jeremiah* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Leonard Slatkin (Chandos), *Das Klagende Lied* with the San Francisco Symphony and Michael Tilson Thomas (BMG), and *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Minnesota Orchestra (Reference Recordings). Her first solo disc was released on the EMI label.

This season, Ms. DeYoung returns to Basel as Ortrud in *Lohengrin* and appears in concert with the Montpellier Opera, National Symphony Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Radio France and the NDR Symphony Orchestra in Hamburg. )))