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# ST. OLAF ORCHESTRA

STEVEN AMUNDSON, CONDUCTOR

WITH SENIOR SOLOISTS:

Noah Livingston, *flute* | Siriana Lundgren, *mezzo-soprano* | Hannie McGarity, *violin*  
Darrius Morton, *tenor* | Greta Ramsey, *soprano* | Jacob Rothermel, *cello* | Olav Serres, *piccolo trumpet*

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SUNDAY, MAY 12, 2019 | 3:30 P.M.

*BOE MEMORIAL CHAPEL*

# Program

## Bacchanale from *Samson et Dalila*, Op. 47

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Born into a world still mourning the loss of Beethoven, Camille Saint-Saëns lived a long life marked by many skills. Not only did he become a distinguished composer, but he was also a teacher, accomplished writer, traveler of the world, scholar of archaeology and astronomy, and an advocate for contemporary French music. German music was taking over the classical scene even in Paris, and Saint-Saëns took this opportunity to found the Société Nationale de Musique, providing a platform for French composers to share their work. He continued to compose and evolve his musical style until his death in 1921.

Saint-Saëns began work on *Samson et Dalila* in 1867, originally planning it to be an oratorio until his librettist convinced him to write it as an opera. The debut of Act 1 was not well received by critics and listeners, but Saint-Saëns refused to give up the work and eventually finished it. It was not until Franz Liszt endorsed the opera that it was premiered in its entirety by the court theater of the Grand Duke of Weimar. Eventually, Parisians learned to love *Samson et Dalila* and it became one of the composer's most performed operas.

One of the most famous moments in the opera is the Bacchanale, which falls at the beginning of the third act. Delila seduces Samson, the leader of the Hebrews, and cuts his hair short, which caused him to lose his power. The Philistines then capture Samson and celebrate their victory with a wild dance, for which the Bacchanale provides a musical backdrop. However, their celebration will not last long: Samson soon regains his power and brings the temple crashing down. With his frequent use of the augmented second in evocative melody lines inspired by his time in Africa and the Middle East, Saint-Saëns embodies the widespread though problematic European fascination with distant cultures and desire for "oriental exoticism."

- Notes by Penelope Musto '21

## Concerto in D major

I. Allegro

Olav Serres, *piccolo trumpet*

Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770)

arr. David Hickman

Giuseppe Tartini was born in 1692 in Pirano, Slovenia (formerly of the Republic of Venice). As a child he was mandated by his parents to become a Franciscan priest. It was in monasteries of his native region where he was given basic musical training. Around 18 years of age, he took up the violin and devoted his time to practicing. Soon after, he was offered positions in opera orchestras and eventually started his own violin school in 1728. Tartini's compositions consist mainly of his 135 violin concertos. He also wrote sonatas, two flute concertos and a number of sacred vocal works. The Trumpet Concerto in D major is an arrangement of Tartini's Violin Concerto in E major (D.53) by the French trumpet virtuoso, Maurice André. Transcriptions like this were a common trend from the 1950s and 60s known as the Baroque Revival, which sought to bring dormant Baroque works to life. It is unclear when this particular concerto was composed due to the lack of dates on Tartini's manuscripts, but it displays elements of late Baroque and Classical styles.

- Notes by Olav Serres '19

## "Laurie's Song" from *The Tender Land*

Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

Greta Ramsey, soprano

Aaron Copland is an American composer who wrote music for orchestra, band, piano, voice, ballet, and film. *The Tender Land* is Copland's only opera composed for professional performance—he previously wrote the opera *The Second Hurricane* in 1937 specifically for school performances. Copland composed *The Tender Land* between 1952 and 1954 for the NBC Television Opera Workshop, but the network never televised it. It was eventually premiered in 1954 at the New York City Opera, but it was poorly received and criticized for the weakness of the characters and storyline. "Laurie's Song", however, has been widely performed outside of the context of the opera.

*The Tender Land* tells the story of a family living on a farm in the Midwest during the Great Depression. One of the daughters, Laurie Moss, is about to finish high school when she sings her act I aria. She is concerned about the uncertainty of life following her graduation.

- Notes by Greta Ramsey '19

Once I thought I'd never grow tall as this fence.  
Time dragged heavy and slow.

I'll be graduated soon.  
Why am I strange inside?

But April came and August went  
Before I knew just what they meant,  
And little by little I grew.  
And as I grew I came to know  
How fast the time could go.

What makes me think I'd like to try  
To go down all those roads beyond that line  
Above the earth and 'neath the sky?

Once I thought I'd never go outside this fence.  
This space was plenty for me.

Tomorrow when I sit upon  
The graduation platform stand,  
I know my hand will shake  
When I reach out to take that paper  
With the ribboned band.

But I walked down the road one day  
And just happened I can't say,  
But little by little it came to be,  
That line between the earth and sky,  
Came beckoning to me.

Now that all the learning's done,  
O who knows what will now begin?

Now the time has grown short;  
The world has grown so wide.

O it's so strange...  
I'm strange inside.

The time has grown so short,  
The world so wide.

- Horace Everett

## Violin Concerto in D minor, Op. 47

II. Adagio di molto

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

Hannie McGarity, violin

Finnish composer Jean Sibelius is one of the most successful symphonic composers of Scandinavia. He is recognized for his seven symphonies and tone poems which have established a strong sense of identity for the people of Finland. A fine violinist, Sibelius wrote of his hopes to perform internationally: "The violin took me by storm, and for the next ten years it was my dearest wish, my overriding ambition, to become a great virtuoso." Sibelius's dreams to perform never came to fruition, so instead he poured both his love and a farewell to his "dearest wish" into his first and only concerto, which has become one of the most performed in the repertory.

The concerto was completed and premiered by Victor Nováček in 1904, but the first audience reacted unenthusiastically. In response, Sibelius condensed the work and simplified the solo part, and his new version was performed in Berlin in 1905. Even after his edits, the violin concerto has proven to be one of the most technically demanding, and features the full range and color palette of the violin.

In the second movement, Sibelius captures listeners with a soulful and searching melody, featuring several intimate moments between orchestra and soloist. Following a dramatic climax, the movement comes to a close with the peaceful serenity with which it began.

- Notes by Claire Folson '19

"Ich hab' ein glühend Messer" from *Lieder Eines Fahrenden Gesellen*  
Siriana Lundgren, mezzo-soprano

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

The year: 1883. The place: Kassel, Germany. A 23 year-old Gustav Mahler (then the conductor of Kassel's opera house) was desperately in love with a soprano named Johanna Richter, but the love affair was doomed from the start. Though Mahler ardently loved Richter, she never returned his advances. Facing rejection and unrequited love, Mahler turned to artistic pursuits, first penning six poems on his love for Richter and then setting them to music.

The resulting song cycle, Mahler's *Lieder Eines Fahrenden Gesellen*, reflects the angst of lost love. The third movement, *Ich hab' ein glühend messer*, is the emotional climax of the four song set in which the narrator reflects the pain of betrayal they felt when seeing their lover married to someone else. The text lingers on the phrase "oh, weh" literally translated as "oh, woe." This phrase is always accompanied by a piercing half-step motive, seeming to suggest a twisting of the knife the narrator speaks of in the first line of poetry. Throughout the beginning of the piece, the orchestra has a constantly driving eighth note pulse and the rollicking 9/8 time signature gives the opening a sense of churning agony. Abruptly, the opening motive of the orchestra returns in different keys and is repeated and fractured, ushering the song into a peaceful dreamlike state. The singer recounts the memories of their lost love over a soft and gentle orchestra, but the reprieve from agony only lasts a moment. As the singer remembers their lover's "silver laughter," they're snapped out of their reverie and the orchestra returns to its violent churning. The final sung passage seems to crumble through a near two octave descent as the singer proclaims their wish to "nevermore open my eyes."

Perhaps thanks to Mahler's failed attempts at love with Johanna Richter, the raw and emotional power of this movement is undeniable. The angst over lost love comes through loud and clear throughout the entire song cycle, but this work was more than a fleeting youthful fancy; later, Mahler would use melodies and themes from *Lieder Eines Fahrenden Gesellen* to compose his First Symphony.

- Notes by Siriana Lundgren '19

- INTERMISSION -

**Cello Concerto in E minor, Op. 85**

IV. Allegro ma non troppo

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

Jacob Rothermel, *cello*

Edward Elgar's Cello Concerto, Op. 85 has been referred to as the composer's final masterpiece. The piece was written between 1918-1919 when Elgar was about 62. It was dedicated to his friends, Frances and Sidney Colvin. During and after World War I, Elgar experienced much depression and sadness over the state of things in Europe and the loss of so many lives. Some of his greatest works came out of this sense of despair, including this concerto. Elgar himself led the premiere in 1919 with the London Symphony Orchestra and cellist Felix Salmond.

The solo cello plays a heroic role in the final (fourth) movement of the concerto, which is a fitting way to follow the humorous second movement and the slow, heart-wrenching third movement. The fourth movement begins with a brief orchestral introduction, immediately followed by a soaring cadenza for solo cello. This is followed by a proud articulation of the very British and often jaunty main theme. For some time, Elgar tries to convey something emotionally weighty but cannot seem to fully state it until the end of the piece, when the solo cello restates the beautifully melancholic theme from the third movement. Next, Elgar recalls the poignant main theme from the first movement and a boisterous statement of the primary material brings the movement to an exciting close.

- Notes by Jacob Rothermel '19

**Fantaisie pour flûte et orchestra**

Georges Hüe (1859-1948)

Noah Livingston, *flute*

Georges Hüe was born in Versailles to a wealthy family of architects in May 1858. After working with the organist at Paris's St. Clotilde basilica church and notable composer Charles Gounod, he went on to study music at the Paris conservatory under César Franck. Although Hüe was not as popular as the composers with whom he studied, he gained the admiration of many of France's prominent musicians. He won the Prix de Rome for his cantata *Médée* in 1879 and earned praise for his opera *Les Pantins* two years later. While Hüe composed mostly vocal works and operas, many of his other works, especially his *Fantaisie*, remain important in the instrumental repertory.

Hüe wrote his *Fantaisie* for the 1913 competition at the Paris Conservatory, dedicating it to renowned professor and flautist Adolphe Hennebains. The work is written in two basic sections: the first section is free and rhapsodic, alternating wild cadenza-like activity with more regular, lushly orchestrated lyricism. Notice the thick, reedy timbres and the snappy, double-dotted rhythms. The second section, written in  $\frac{3}{8}$  time, resembles a quick scherzo, with the solo flute engaging in cheeky call-and-response with various sections of the orchestra. Notice the sinuous chromatic melodies and the unpredictable changes of mood. Following these two main sections is a brief coda full of flourishes for solo flute, building momentum to a final soaring climax.

- Notes by McKinley Green '13 and Noah Livingston '19

**"Fantaisie aux Divins Mensonges" from *Lakmé***

Léo Delibes (1836-1891)

Darrius Morton, *tenor*

A French composer of the Romantic era, Léo Delibes, specialized in ballets, operas and other works for the stage. His notable works include *Coppélia* (1870), *Sylvia* (1876), *Lakmé* (1883), and *Le roi l'a dit* (1873). *Lakmé* is set in 19th century India where British troops are beginning to colonize. The story centers around the exoticized Lakmé, daughter of a Brahmin priest, who disobeys the wishes of her father by falling in love with the English officer Gérald. Upon arriving to India, Gérald and his companions speculate about Lakmé's beauty and divinity. At a garden surrounding her secret temple, Lakmé has set down some of her jewelry. Left alone by his friends so that he can make a drawing of the jewelry, Gerald sings of Lakmé. He imagines that she is there.

- Notes by Darrius Morton '19

Prendre le dessin d'un bijou,  
 Est-ce donc aussi grave?  
 Ah! Frédéric est fou!  
 Mais d'où vient maintenant cette crainte insensée?  
 Quel sentiment surnaturel  
 A troublé ma pensée  
 Devant ce calme solennel!  
 Fille de mon caprice,  
 L'inconnue est devant mes yeux!  
 Sa voix à mon oreille glisse  
 Des mots mystérieux.  
 Non! non!

Fantaisie aux divins mensonges, tu reviens m'égarer  
 encor.  
 Va, retourne au pays de songes,  
 O fantaisie aux ailes d'or!  
 Val va! Retourne au pays des songes.  
 O fantaisie aux ailes d'or!

Au bras poli de la païenne  
 Cette annelet dut s'enlacer!  
 Elle tiendrait toute en la mienne,  
 La main qui seule y peut passer!  
 Ce cercle d'or  
 Je le suppose,  
 A suivi les pas voyageurs  
 D'un petit pied qui ne se pose  
 Que sur la mousse ou sur les fleurs..  
 Et ce collier encor parfumé d'elle,  
 De sa personne encor tout embaumé.  
 A pu sentir battre son coeur fidèle,  
 tout tressaillant au nom du bien aimé.  
 Non! Non! Fuyez!  
 Fuyez, chimères.  
 Rêves éphémères  
 Qui troublez ma raison.  
 Fantaisie aux divins mensonges,  
 Tu reviens m'égarer encor.  
 Va, retourne au pays des songes,  
 O fantaisie aux ailes d'or.

- Text by Edmond Gondinet

To make a sketch of a jewel,  
 Is it then so serious?  
 Ah! Frederic is crazy!  
 But from where does this foolish fear come from now?  
 What supernatural feeling  
 has troubled my thoughts  
 Before this solemn calm!  
 Child of my fancy,  
 The unknown girl stands before my eyes!  
 Her voice whispers in my ear  
 Mysterious words.  
 No! no!

Fantasy of divine illusions, you come to mislead me  
 again.  
 Go, return to the land of dreams,  
 O fantasy with golden wings!  
 Go! go! Return to the land of dreams.  
 O fantasy with golden wings!

At the polite arm of the pagan  
 This bracelet had to circle!  
 She would hold everything in mine,  
 The hand that alone can it pass!  
 This golden ring  
 I suppose so,  
 Followed the footsteps  
 From a small foot that does not arise  
 Only on the moss or on the flowers ..  
 And this necklace still scented with her,  
 From her person still all fragrant,  
 Could feel her faithful heart beat,  
 all shuddering in the name of her beloved.  
 No! No Begone!  
 Flee, visions.  
 Ephemeral dreams  
 That disturb my reason.  
 Fantasy of the divine illusions,  
 You come back to mislead me again.  
 Go, return to the land of dreams,  
 O fantasy with golden wings.

- Translation by Nico Castel (used by permission)

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### Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908)

- I - *Alborada*
- II - *Variazioni*
- III - *Alborada*
- IV - *Scena e Canto Gitano*
- V - *Fandango Asturiano*

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov was an eclectic and prolific Russian composer and music theorist of the mid-late 19th century. He is best known for a number of operas and orchestral works that helped cement the style of Russian nationalist composition in the European music scene as well as his contribution to the overall pedagogy of composition through his teachings on orchestration. Perhaps the greatest of “The Five” Russian composers of the mid 19th century, (Rimsky-Korsakov, Balakirev, Borodin, Mussorgsky, and Cui) his works such as *The Golden Cockerel*, *Scheherazade*, and of course *Capriccio Espagnol* have had lasting success as standard orchestral repertoire.

*Capriccio Espagnol* is a selection of dances that Rimsky-Korsakov sourced from an annotated collection of Spanish folk songs. Initially proposed as a simpler work featuring a virtuoso solo violin, Rimsky-Korsakov reimagined the piece as a full scale orchestral composition using the full spectrum of timbral color to evoke images of Spanish countryside.

The first movement, “Alborada,” literally translates to “daybreak” and is represented by a jaunty 2/4 dance featuring solo clarinet. The dance is filled with sparkling ornamentations reminiscent of Spanish bagpipers. The second movement begins in a completely different style, presenting a leisurely theme by a quartet of horns, which is varied throughout, moving through groups of instruments and orchestrations until it meanders its way through chromatic scales to a quiet close. The third movement repeats the Alborada of the first movement, this time with a fuller orchestration and a solo violin replacing solo clarinet. The fourth movement, *Scena e Canto Gitano*, begins with a powerful brass fanfare, continuing to cadenzas by violin, flute, clarinet, and harp. The 6/8 meter feels like it can’t quite stay on its feet until the cadenzas end, then launches into the *Canto Gitano* and pushes attacca into the final movement, entitled *Fandango Asturiano*. The last movement represents a flamenco dance from the Asturias region of Spain, continuing many of the themes from the previous movement, which evolve into a presto coda, refreshing the Alborada theme and increasing in velocity to the final chord.

- Notes by William Beimers '20

## Biographies

Born and raised in Roseville, Minnesota, **Noah Livingston** has been playing flute since he was 10 years old. Since then, he has attended summer music festivals around the country, including Madeline Island Chamber Music, Sewanee, and ARIA International Summer Academy. Primary teachers include Dr. Catherine Ramirez, Alicia McQuerrey, and Carol Gilkey; he has also studied with Jonathan Keeble, Donna Shin, and Miriam-Scholz Carlson. After graduating from St. Olaf this spring, Noah will pursue a Master's in Flute Performance at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Someday he hopes to play flute in a professional symphony orchestra or opera orchestra.

Hailing from Montana, **Siriana Lundgren** has always loved singing stories as big as the sky in her home state. She has enjoyed performing several roles with the St. Olaf Lyric Theater including Miss Todd in Menotti’s *The Old Maid and the Thief*, Dame Hannah in Gilbert and Sullivan’s *Ruddigore*, and Faustine in Strauss’s *Die Fledermaus*. Siriana also enjoys singing oratorio and has recently collaborated with the St. Olaf Cantorei as the alto soloist in Bach’s *St. John Passion*. While not singing, Siriana works on initiatives to highlight the music of marginalized composers that include designing lecture recitals, producing podcasts, and creating on air content for Classical MPR. Next year, Siriana will pursue a PhD in Musicology at Harvard University.

**Hannie McGarity**, from Bellingham, Washington, studies with Dr. Francesca Anderegg and will graduate with her Bachelor of Music Performance in May. During recent summers, she studied at Domaine Forget International Music Academy, Brevard Music Center, and ENCORE! Chamber Music. As the winner of the 2017 Edvard Grieg Society of Minnesota String Competition, she performed at the International Grieg Society Seminar in Bergen, Norway in October 2017. In January 2018, she performed a solo recital in her hometown, Bellingham, Washington as the annual “Welcome Home” soloist through the Bellingham Festival of Music. Studying abroad in Vienna, Austria last spring, and the St. Olaf Orchestra’s concert in Carnegie Hall are two highlights from this past year. Hannie looks forward to touring Norway with the orchestra in June.

Tenor, **Darrius Morton** is a fourth year vocal performance major from Clyde, Ohio. Darrius has sung exclusively with the Chapel Choir, appearing twice as a soloist during the St. Olaf Christmas Festival. Highlights of his 2018-19 season include a mainstage debut with the Minnesota Opera as Giuseppe in *La Traviata* and a role debut as the Evangelist in Bach's *Johannespassion* at St. Olaf College. Highlights of his 2019-20 season include debuts at the Lincoln Center and with the Rochester Symphony Orchestra. This summer, Morton will join 15 other undergraduate vocalists selected internationally to participate in the Houston Grand Opera's Young Artist Vocal Academy.

**Greta Ramsey** is a senior English and music major with a concentration in women's and gender studies from Park Ridge, Illinois. During her time at St. Olaf, she has sung soprano I with the St. Olaf Choir and Manitou Singers, and has sung the roles of Amelia in *Amelia Goes to the Ball* (2018) and Rose Maybud in *Ruddigore* (2017) with the St. Olaf Lyric Theater. Greta has also been a member of Agnes A Cappella, St. Olaf's treble-voiced a cappella group, since her sophomore year. Following graduation, Greta plans to stay in Minnesota to pursue a career in arts management. Greta would like to thank her family for supporting her in her musical endeavors throughout her life, and her voice teacher, Karen Wilkerson, for believing in her and helping her grow as a musician and performer.

**Jacob Rothermel** is a music and philosophy double major from southern California, though lived in Maryland for several years. He played with the St. Olaf Philharmonia during his first year and has since been a member of the St. Olaf Orchestra. The January and spring terms of his junior year were spent studying music in Vienna, Austria. After graduation, he will make his way over to Chicago, Illinois to pursue a M.M. at DePaul University.

**Olav Serres** is a psychology and music major from Duxbury, Massachusetts. He is co-principal trumpet in the St. Olaf Orchestra and St. Olaf Jazz I, principal trumpet in the St. Olaf Band, and a member of Polaris Brass. Outside of music, Olav is involved in various groups on campus to promote mental health awareness and education. He also enjoys conducting research with the Speech and Cognition Lab on physiological arousal and emotional responses to music. Following graduation this spring, Olav will move back to Massachusetts to work as a research assistant before applying to graduate school for Clinical Psychology. He plans to continue playing trumpet in local ensembles and teach lessons.

