



## “Mother Russia”

Edward C. Harris, conductor

Sara Moravej, soprano

*Sunday, May 31, 2009, 3:00 p.m.*

*McAfee Center*

*Saratoga, California*

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HALVORSEN    Entry March of the Boyars

TSCHESNOKOFF    Salvation Is Created

PROKOFIEV    Athletic Festival March

KALINNIKOV    Finale from *Symphony No. 1 in G minor*

INTERMISSION

SHOSTAKOVICH    Prelude

RACHMANINOFF    Vocalise

*Sara Moravej, soprano*

GLIÈRE    Russian Sailors' Dance

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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**DR. EDWARD C. HARRIS** is in his seventh season as music and artistic director of the San Jose Wind Symphony. After an extensive national search in 2001, Harris was named as only the second conductor in the group's 51-year history. Dr. Harris brings to his position a broad knowledge of both traditional and contemporary wind band literature. Under his direction the San Jose Wind Symphony has gained wide recognition for its diverse, creative and entertaining programs.

Dr. Harris has been director of the School of Music & Dance and the director of bands at San Jose State University since 2000. Born and educated in Santa Monica, Dr. Harris received his bachelor of music degree in music education and master of arts degree in clarinet performance from San Francisco State University. He received his doctor of arts degree in conducting and clarinet performance from the University of Northern Colorado, where he studied under Eugene Corporon.

Before joining the San Jose State faculty, Dr. Harris served in a similar capacity at California State University, Stanislaus; Humboldt State University; and at the University of Wisconsin, Platteville. Preceding these appointments he served as director of instrumental music at Sequoia High School in Redwood City from 1971 to 1978. Dr. Harris maintains an active schedule as guest conductor and lecturer throughout the United States. He has guest conducted honor groups and festivals in over eight states and has been selected to conduct both the California Community College All-State Honor Band and the California All-State Honor Band.

**SARA MORAVEJ** became interested in music at an early age. She started playing the piano six years before her move to the United States from Iran in 2000. This move allowed her to pursue her dream of becoming a classical singer. She began her training in 2001 with Melissa McIntosh at Mt. San Antonio College in Walnut, California (near Pomona), where she received two awards for exceptional vocal performance: the Harriet Genung Music Award and Concert at the Park Award.

In 2004, Sara transferred to the University of California, Irvine, and studied with Darryl Taylor and Robin Buck. From 2004 to 2006, she received the UCI Music Scholarship for two consecutive academic years. After receiving her degree *cum laude* in 2006, Sara began working at opera companies and festivals in southern California. She has worked not only as a freelance singer, but also as a production manager, stage manager and vocal programs coordinator. Sara enrolled at San Jose State University as a graduate student in the fall of 2008. Last month she attended the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) Festival in San Francisco, where she won first place in the Art Song division and third place in the Aria division. She also won second place in the current (2009) San Jose Music Study Club's annual Young Artist Awards. This month Sara sang the title role in Puccini's *Suor Angelica* with the San Jose State opera and orchestra. She is currently studying with Professor Joseph Frank.

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## PROGRAM NOTES

### Entry March of the Boyars

*Johan Halvorsen (1864-1935), revised edition arranged by Frederick Fennell*

Johan Halvorsen was born in the small industrial town of Drammen, Norway. He learned to play the violin at the age of seven and went on to play in the Civil Defense Band. He pursued his musical studies at the Stockholm Conservatory, in Leipzig, Berlin and Liege. Between 1893 and 1899, he served as conductor for the theater orchestra in Bergen, where he composed his *Entry March of the Boyars*. For the next 30 years, he served as the conductor for the Christiania National Theatre.

The following describes Halvorsen's inspiration for this composition: "Got hold of an encyclopaedia to find out what Bucharest was like. There I read about the art-loving Queen Carmen Sylva and the descendants of the rich, distinguished Boyars who invaded Bucharest so and so many years ago. 'This would look good in the newspapers,' I thought. And then there was the Queen! She would immediately summon me to the palace with my quartet. I had to find release, so I wrote a march and called it *The March of the Boyars*, and just when I had finished it, the same afternoon, Edvard Grieg came in. 'Now, how are you doing? Already in full swing I see.' He saw the manuscript on the piano, looked at it carefully and said, 'That is good!'"

The march didn't receive national recognition until Grieg, who was the uncle of Halvorsen's wife, arranged it for piano in 1898. From the 10th through the 17th centuries, the Boyars were the highest ranking members of the Bulgarian, Romanian, Russian and Ukrainian aristocracy, second only to the ruling princes. Halvorsen's *March* depicts the ceremonial entrance of these aristocrats in a theatrical setting. A solo clarinet softly introduces the regal theme, and more instruments are added to represent the approach of the entourage. Woodwind ornamentation complements the brass fanfares.

### Salvation Is Created

*Pavel Tschesnokoff (1877-1944), arranged by Bruce A. Houseknecht*

Pavel Tschesnokoff was a Russian composer and choirmaster who led many choral groups in Russia. He also taught at the Moscow Conservatory. He composed over 400 sacred choral works and another 100 secular pieces.

*Salvation Is Created* was one of the very last sacred works composed by Tschesnokoff before the oppressive Soviet regime forced him to turn to secular arts. In 1917, the peasants of Russia started a revolution and overthrew the reign of the tsars. The new form of government that took over established communism. Among the many changes that resulted was the shutting down of the Russian Orthodox Church. The government held a great deal of control over the type of music composers could write, and music for the church was discouraged. Composers wrote sacred music at the risk of being killed or having their families taken. Tschesnokoff opted to save

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his family and himself and never wrote another piece of sacred music. Years after his death communism fell, the Berlin Wall came down and the Russian Orthodox Church opened its doors again. *Salvation Is Created* became the unofficial anthem of the church. Tschesnokoff never heard the piece performed, but his children were finally able to hear it years later. This piece was originally written as vocal music. The English translation is: "Salvation is created, in the midst of the earth, O God, O our God. Alleluia." Tschesnokoff may have been inspired by this verse from Isaiah 45:8:

*Heavens, sprinkle from above,  
and let the skies shower righteousness.  
Let the earth open up  
that salvation sprout  
and righteousness spring up with it.  
I, the Lord, have created it.*

### **Athletic Festival March, Op. 69, No. 1**

*Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953), arranged and edited for American band by Franko Goldman*

Born in 1891 in Russia, Sergei Prokofiev exhibited exceptional musical talent as a child. Tutored at the piano by his mother, he wrote a number of piano pieces, including six marches, when he was five. At nine, he wrote the piano score to the opera *Giant*. He entered the St. Petersburg Conservatory at the age of 13, where he studied with Rimsky-Korsakov, Liadov and Tcherepnin. His travels after graduation took him to the United States, but he found the political and cultural climate of Paris in 1920 to be more sympathetic to his compositions. He retained his Russian citizenship and returned there in 1936, where he lived until his death in Moscow. His death was overshadowed by that of Joseph Stalin, who died the same day. Prokofiev's works include symphonies, band works, concertos, piano sonatas and chamber music. His better known works include the opera *The Love of Three Oranges*, the ballet *Romeo and Juliet* and the symphonic suites *Lieutenant Kije* and *Peter and the Wolf*.

Prokofiev began composing marches for wind band in the mid-1930s, following his return to the Soviet Union. His first was *Athletic Festival March* (or *March for the Spartakiad*) from 1935, in which he imagined a festival march for millions of young Soviet athletes. The composer had been interested in athletics from his youth. In this work, he not only wrote in the triumphant, positive vein for the glory of Soviet Russia, but also in the festive tradition of much 19th-century Russian music by composers such as Rimsky-Korsakov and Tchaikovsky. Prokofiev interspersed a basic march theme with more tuneful Russian melodies and kept dissonance to a minimum. In keeping with Prokofiev's style, the form is clear cut, using rondo and reprise elements.

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## **Finale from *Symphony No. 1 in G Minor***

*Vasily Kalinnikov (1866-1901), transcribed by Glenn Cliffe Bainum*

Vasily Kalinnikov was born in Orlov, Russia. He received early musical training at the Orlovsky Seminary, where he directed the choir. He received a scholarship to attend the Philharmonic Music School in Moscow. He tried to earn a living by playing bassoon, timpani or violin in theater orchestras, but the bitter poverty of his family forced him to abandon his studies. Tchaikovsky, impressed by Kalinnikov's skill, secured him an appointment as conductor of the Italian Opera in Moscow in 1893. Stricken by tuberculosis, Kalinnikov was forced to relinquish the position after just a few months. He then moved to the relative warmth of the South Crimea, where he completed his two symphonies, orchestral intermezzi, a cantata and incidental theatrical music.

Kalinnikov's *First Symphony* was a rousing success at its premiere in Kiev in 1897. The "Finale" provides a summation of the full symphony that is thoroughly national in character. Starting with a broad, sonorous melody, we hear contrasts in texture and color. Plaintive and dance-like motives evolve into a spirited and triumphant ending.

## **Prelude, Op. 34, No. 14**

*Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975), transcribed by H. Robert Reynolds*

Dmitri Shostakovich studied at the Leningrad Conservatory under Glazunov and others. He gained international fame at the age of 19 when his powerful and mature *First Symphony* was performed in Leningrad and later in Moscow. Following this success, his subsequent works were attacked by the Soviet press as a product of "bourgeois decadence." Like many Soviet composers, Shostakovich found himself under restrictions imposed by the Soviet musical world, with its concern for the moral and social, rather than the purely aesthetic, aspects of music. He was even formally censured for "anti-democratic tendencies." The musical style of Shostakovich varies widely, with works containing simple parodies and programmatic devices, as well as works of tremendous originality, distinction and significance.

The *Twenty-Four Preludes* for piano were composed in 1932-33. The *Prelude in E-Flat Minor*, op. 34, no. 14, opens with a calm but strong chordal statement and builds toward a grand climax. Following the peak, the music quickly returns to the quiet mood of the beginning. This piece achieves the feel of an expansive and lengthy composition in only 36 measures.

## **Vocalise**

*Sergei Rachmaninof (1873-1943), transcribed by Ronald L. Moehlmann*

Sergei Rachmaninoff, born in Russia, was the son of amateur pianists. When he was four, his mother gave him casual piano lessons, and later his grandfather hired

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a music teacher from Saint Petersburg for him. He studied at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory before moving to Moscow to study piano, harmony and counterpoint. In his early years, he showed great skill in composition. While still a student, he wrote the one-act opera *Aleko* (for which he was awarded a gold medal in composition), his *First Piano Concerto* and a set of piano pieces, *Morceaux de Fantaisie* (op. 3, 1892), which includes the famous *Prelude in C-sharp minor*. While in Moscow, he met Tchaikovsky, who became an important mentor and commissioned the teenage Rachmaninoff to arrange a piano transcription of the suite from Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Sleeping Beauty*.

*Vocalise* was originally written around 1912 and was published as the last of a set of 14 songs. The first 13 songs were set to poems written by Russian romantic poets including Pushkin, Polonsky, Korinsky and Shaginyan. In contrast, *Vocalise* was written without words, relying entirely on the beauty of the melodic line. It quickly became the most successful song of the set and has remained one of Rachmaninoff's most popular compositions.

### **Russian Sailors' Dance from *The Red Poppy***

*Reinhold Glière (1875-1956), transcribed for the Goldman Band by Erik W. G. Leidzen*

Reinhold Glière was born in Kiev and studied composition there, as well as at the Moscow Conservatory, where he later taught. His students included Prokofiev and Khachaturian. His compositions are generally nationalistic, with romantic and impressionistic elements, and show the influence of Russian folk melodies that he collected throughout Europe and Asia.

The "Russian Sailors' Dance" is the best-known excerpt from Glière's landmark ballet *The Red Poppy*. The scene depicts an uprising on a Chinese ship and the successful intervention of the Russian sailors. This energetic dance music is based on "Yablochka" ("Little Angel"), a popular Russian folk tune.

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Program notes are edited by Karen Berry. They are excerpted from the composers' notes, *Band Notes* by Norm Smith, *The Pepper Music Catalog* and:

[http://www.windband.org/foothill/pgm\\_note.htm](http://www.windband.org/foothill/pgm_note.htm)

<http://en.wikipedia.org>

<http://www.dramonline.org/albums/temple-university-wind-symphony/notes>

<http://www.theportobelloorchestra.co.uk/ProgrammeNotes/>

[RachmaninoffVocalise.php](http://www.rachmaninoffvocalise.php)

<http://www.symphonysiliconvalley.org/concerts>

[php?pagecontID=56&showID=42](http://www.symphonysiliconvalley.org/concerts.php?pagecontID=56&showID=42)

<http://www.orchestraofnorthernnewyork.org/programnotes100408.html>

<http://www.k-state.edu/musiceducation/teachingunits/SalvationIsCreated/Salvation%20is%20Created%20Student%20Guide.htm>

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