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CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS AT PENN STATE

Opus 3 Artists

present

Moscow State Symphony Orchestra

Pavel Kogan, conductor
Joshua Roman, cellist

7:30 p.m. Tuesday, November 11, 2014
Eisenhower Auditorium

The performance includes one intermission.

This presentation is a component of the Center for the Performing Arts Classical Music Project. With support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the project provides opportunities to engage students, faculty, and the community with classical music artists and programs. Marica Tacconi, Penn State professor of musicology, and Carrie Jackson, Penn State associate professor of German and linguistics, provide faculty leadership for the curriculum and academic components of the grant project.

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The Center for the Performing Arts at Penn State receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

PROGRAM

Faust: Ballet Music
Charles Gounod
(1818–1893)

I. Dance of the Nubian Slaves
II. Cleopatra and the Golden Cup
III. Antique Dance
IV. Dance of Cleopatra and Her Slaves
V. Dance of the Trojan Maidens
VI. Mirror Dance
VII. Dance of the Phryné

Cello Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Op. 33
Camille Saint-Saëns
(1835–1921)

Joshua Roman, cellist

I. Allegro non troppo
II. Allegretto con moto
III. Allegro non troppo

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98
Johannes Brahms
(1833–1897)

I. Allegro non troppo
II. Andante moderato
III. Allegro giocoso
IV. Allegro energico e passionato

The Moscow State Symphony Orchestra tour is supported by the Ministry of Culture, Russian Federation.

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PROGRAM NOTES

BY SUSAN HALPERN

Ballet Music from the Opera *Faust*

Charles Gounod's *Faust* is the most popular of the many musical works based on the old tale of the man who sells his soul to the Devil in exchange for youth and love. In its original form, it had one brief dance episode—a carnival scene—but for a new production at the Paris Opéra in 1869, Gounod composed a complete ballet to be placed near the beginning of Act Five. This production, the work's most lavish up until that time, helped *Faust* achieve remarkable popularity in France. It was almost a requirement of French operas to include ballet because the wealthy and aristocratic patrons expected it. Because the Parisians' expectations were so strong, Giuseppe Verdi composed ballet music for the Paris performances of his operas.

The new scene Gounod composed took Faust to the highest point in the Hartz Mountains to witness Walpurgis Night, or "Witch's Night," on the eve of May 1. In an attempt to distract Faust from his grief at the absence of his beloved Marguerite, the devilish Mephistopheles transports Faust to a cave and conjures up for him the sight of the most beautiful queens and courtesans of antiquity: Thais, Cleopatra, Helen of Troy, Astarte, and Phryné. The ballet music keeps with the presence of the Devil, who continues to encourage Faust in his worldly pursuits. An orgiastic ballet full of revelry takes place, continuing until dawn.

The first of the dances is *Dance of the Nubian Slaves*, a waltz, *Allegretto*. It is followed by *Cleopatra and the Golden Cup*, a slower dance, *Adagio*, which in its second part becomes more spirited, *Animato*. Then comes the wonderfully melodic *Antique Dance*, *Allegretto*, and *Dance of Cleopatra and Her Slaves*, *Moderato maestoso*. Next is *Dance of the Trojan Maidens*, *Moderato con moto*, and *Mirror Dance*, *Allegretto*. The finale, *Dance of the Phryné*, is *Allegro vivo*.

Camille Saint-Saëns called this ballet suite "a masterpiece of its kind," but Gounod had been reluctant to take it on and considered letting Saint-Saëns compose it for him; Saint-Saëns had tentatively agreed with the understanding that Gounod could replace it with his own music whenever he wanted to do so. According to Saint-Saëns, after that interchange with Gounod, "I never wrote a note, and never heard any more about it."

Now, almost all performances of the opera omit the substantial ballet, leaving the ballet music to be heard only rarely in concert.

The orchestra includes two flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets (one doubling bass clarinet), two bassoons, four horns, four trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, tambourine, harp, and strings.

Concerto for Cello and Orchestra No. 1 in A minor, Op. 33

Camille Saint-Saëns, an extensive traveler, took many concert tours and pleasure trips—visiting more diverse places than most well-traveled tourists today. He traveled to the United States twice and made his South American debut at the formidable age of 81. When not traveling, he was a com-

poser, a conductor, and a pianist. He contributed to France's musical life by establishing the importance of instrumental composition, when opera had long been the dominant form.

This concerto, one of the most popular in the cello's relatively small solo repertoire, was composed in 1872. It debuted on January 19, 1873, at a concert of the Paris Conservatory Orchestra, with soloist and dedicatee August Tolbecque. A compact work in a single continuous movement, its new ideas about concerto form give the soloist—not the orchestra—the initial statement of major themes. The music has great melodic vitality and much charm. Like many other composers of the nineteenth-century concerto, Saint-Saëns combines elements of three separate movements into one three-part structure with the last part functioning both as finale and as recapitulation of the first part.

The concerto begins, *Allegro non troppo*, energetically with the cello set against the violins and violas as it announces the main theme. After the cello develops the first theme, the orchestra takes it over; then the cello introduces the second theme, which has a brief development before the initial theme returns for both orchestra and soloist to develop at length. Then, a new theme is articulated, *Allegro molto*, and the music quickly transitions into the central section, *Allegretto con moto*, a light, graceful minuet. At this point, the muted strings sing the theme, and the cello answers with another dance-like theme. Both are developed: the minuet by the orchestra and the waltz by the soloist. In the third and last section, the cello displays showy runs and passagework, the initial theme reappears, and the tempo quickens as the recapitulation brings the concerto to a dazzling climax.

The work is scored for an accompanying orchestra of two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98

Johannes Brahms spent a large part of his early years wandering from one city to the next, meeting important participants in Germany's decentralized musical life and broadening his artistic horizons. When he was in his 20s, he held a post at the court of a minor principality. He settled in Vienna when he was in his 30s—and like Beethoven before him and Mahler after—he soon began to spend his summers in the country. In winter, Brahms polished his recent compositions and planned his next ones, but the serious business of invention and creation were summer activities or him.

Brahms wrote his Symphony No. 4, two movements each summer, during 1884 and 1885 in the Styrian Alps of Austria. He returned home one day from a mountain walk to find his home on fire. Fortunately, his friends had saved most of his books and music. Fortuitously, the manuscript of this symphony was among the papers saved.

Hans von Bülow prepared the orchestra for its first performance of Brahms's Symphony No. 4 at the court of the Duke of Meiningen. Brahms conducted the premiere on October 25, 1885. A week later, Bülow had his chance to conduct the new work, and in November, Brahms and Bülow set off on a concert tour of Germany and the Netherlands with the new symphony in

their repertoire. The work was slow to win public favor. Even in Brahms's own Vienna, the symphony disappointed his friends and delighted his enemies. Twelve years later there was an extraordinary performance of the symphony again in Vienna. Fatally ill with a disease of the liver, Brahms made his last public appearance at a concert of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra on March 7, 1897. The orchestra played Symphony No. 4.

The composer's English pupil, Florence May, described the touching scene: "The Fourth Symphony had never become a favorite work in Vienna. It had not gained much more from the general public than the respect accorded there to any important work by Brahms. Today, however, a storm of applause broke out at the end of the first movement, not to be quieted until the composer, coming to the front of the box in which he was seated, showed himself to the audience. The demonstration was renewed after the second and third movements, and an extraordinary scene followed the conclusion of the work. The applauding, shouting house, its gaze riveted on the figure standing in the balcony, seemed unable to let him go. Tears ran down his cheeks as he stood there, shrunken in form, with lined countenance, strained expression, white hair hanging lank, and through the audience there was a feeling as of a stifled sob, for each knew that they were saying farewell. Another outburst of applause, and yet another; one more acknowledgment from the master, and Brahms and his Vienna had parted forever."

Considered by some to be Brahms' most stimulating symphonic work, it is undoubtedly now one of the cornerstones of the symphonic repertoire. This grave symphony, which has been called an "elegiac" and a "character" symphony, reflects the earnestness and introspection of Brahms's late years. The first movement, *Allegro non troppo*, which begins lyrically, becomes alternately contemplative and dramatic, and it builds to a very dramatic and tension-filled climax. The second, *Andante moderato*, with its air of nostalgia and serenity, is based principally on an austere theme in the old, ecclesiastical Phrygian mode. The contrasting robust third movement is the symphony's scherzo, *Allegro giocoso*, although it is only distantly related in form to the classical scherzo of Beethoven. It is capricious and full of high spirits. The finale, *Allegro energicoe passionato*, is a chaconne—or passacaglia—a set of continuous variations on an eight-measure theme, based on the chaconne from Bach's Cantata 150, *Nach dir*, *Herr, verlanget mich*, and unleashed by the trombones in triple meter. Of magnificent proportions, the movement is full of richly contrasting orchestral colors. After presenting the theme in the wind instruments, Brahms constructs a monumentally powerful series of thirty variations, carefully controlling the ebb and flow of the music and the continuity and the contrasts in the eightmeasure phrases, until a brilliant coda brings the symphony to a close.

The score calls for piccolo and two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, triangle, and strings.

MOSCOW STATE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Moscow State Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1943 by the Kremlin and is one of the five oldest concert orchestras in Russia.

Leo Steinberg, the People's Artist of USSR and conductor of the Bolshoi Theatre, became the orchestra's first chief conductor, a post he held until his death in 1945. He was succeeded by a series of distinguished Soviet musical giants, including Nicolay Anosov (1945–1950), Leo Ginsburg (1950–1954), Mikhail Terisan (1954–1960), and Veronica Dudarova (1960–1989). The collaboration with these major figures helped to shape the orchestra into one of the most prominent national symphonic ensembles, revered for its performances and premieres of Russian and Soviet classical music, including the works of Myaskovsky, Prokofiev, Shostakovich, and Glier.

The Moscow State Symphony Orchestra has reached new levels of success around the world under the leadership of Pavel Kogan. In 1989, he was engaged as music director and chief conductor and immediately started incorporating European and American music into the orchestra's repertoire.

A landmark of the orchestra has been to present the great cycles of complete symphonic works from leading composers such as Brahms, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, R. Strauss, Mendelssohn, Mahler, Bruckner, Sibelius, Dvořák, Tchaikovsky, Glazunov, Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Scriabin, Berlioz, Debussy, and Ravel. The orchestra's wide-ranging programs combine great orchestral, operatic, and choral classics with equally significant music of the twenty-first century, including many forgotten and neglected works.

The orchestra plays some 100 concerts annually. Along with the series in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory and in the Tchaikovsky Concert Hall, the Moscow State Symphony Orchestra performs in the Great Hall of the St. Petersburg Shostakovich Philharmonic Society and on the stages of many other Russian cities. The orchestra tours overseas in the United States, United Kingdom, Japan, Spain, Austria, Italy, Germany, France, South Korea, Australia, China, and Switzerland.

The Moscow State Symphony Orchestra also has a long and distinguished recording and broadcast history on television and radio. In 1990, the orchestra, led by Kogan, made a live recording ofTchaikovsky's piano and violin concertos, soloed by Aleksey Sultanov and Maxim Vengerov and released by Pioneer. In the early 1990s, Russian television stations aired the documentary "Travels with the Orchestra" about the ensemble and Kogan on tour in Europe and in St. Petersburg. Their Rachmaninoff cycle, released by Alto—which recorded all of Rachmaninoff's symphonies and symphonic dances—has become a chart-topping album.

The orchestra has a proud history of collaborating with eminent conductors and soloists, including Evgeny Svetlanov, Kirill Kondrashin, Aleksandr Orlov, Natan Rahlin, Samuil Samosud, Valery Gergiev, David Oistrakh, Emil Gilels, Leonid Kogan, Vladimir Sofronitsky, Sergei Lemeshev, Ivan Kozlovsky, Svyatoslav Knushevitskyi, Sviatoslav Richter, Mstislav Rostropovich, Danill Shafran, and Angela Gheorgiu.

The partnership with Kogan has earned the orchestra an enviable reputation for high standards of artistic excellence, imaginative programming, community engagement, and having a broad and loyal constituency around the world.

For more information, visit **msso-kogan.com**.

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PAVEL KOGAN, conductor

Maestro Pavel Kogan's career, spanning more than forty years and appearances on five continents, has made him one of the most respected and widely recognized Russian conductors of our time.

He was born into a distinguished musical family. His parents are legendary violinists Leonid Kogan and Elizaveta Gilels; his uncle is the inimitable pianist Emil Gilels. From an early age, Kogan's artistic development was divided between conducting and the violin. He was granted special permission to study both disciplines at the same time, a rarity in the former Soviet Union.

In 1970, 18-year-old Kogan, then a violin pupil of Yuri Yankelevich at the Moscow Conservatory, won first prize in the Sibelius Violin Competition in Helsinki, catapulting a violin career that took him to concert halls around the world. Forty years after his win, a panel of judges was asked to determine the most impressive winner in the forty-five year history of the Sibelius competition for the newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat*. A unanimous vote put Kogan in the coveted spot, surpassing decades worth of violin virtuosos.

As a conducting pupil of Ilya Musin and Leo Ginsburg, in 1972 the young maestro gave his debut with the USSR State Symphony Orchestra and subsequently turned his focus to conducting. In the years that followed, he conducted the leading Soviet orchestras both at home and on tour abroad at the invitation of Mravinsky, Kondrashin, Svetlanov, and Rozhdestvensky.

As a conductor of the Bolshoi Opera, Kogan opened the 1988 season with a new production of Verdi's *La Traviata*. That same year he became the head of the Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra.

In 1989, Kogan was appointed the music director and chief conductor of the eminent Moscow State Symphony Orchestra and has been there since, building it into one of Russia's most widely known and highly acclaimed ensembles.

Kogan has also appeared with many prominent orchestras, including the St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, USSR State Radio and Television Symphony Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Munich Philharmonic, Orchestre National de Belgique, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, RTVE Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Dresden Staatskapelle, Orquestra Filarmónica de Buenos Aires, L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Orchestre National de France, Houston Symphony, Orchestre National de Capitole de Toulouse, and the Luxembourg Philharmonic Orchestra. From 1998–2005 he served as principal guest conductor of the Utah Symphony Orchestra.

Kogan has recorded countless works with the Moscow State Symphony and other ensembles, recordings which have been a major contribution to the world's musical culture. Many of his albums have garnered acclaim from critics and audiences. His recording of the Rachmaninoff cycle (symphonies 1, 2, 3, Symphonic Dances, "Isles of the Dead," "Vocalize & Scherzo") was hailed by *Gramophone* as "... sparkly, strongly communicative Rachmaninoff ... vibrant, soulful, and involving."

Kogan earned the State Prize of the Russian Federation for his performance of the complete symphonies and vocal cycles of Gustav Mahler. He is a member of the Russian Academy of Arts; recipient of the Order of Merit of Russia; the Peoples' Artist of Russia award; and is a Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, among many other international accolades.

Jeremy Sawatzky

JOSHUA ROMAN, cellist

The *San Francisco Chronicle* calls Roman "a cellist of extraordinary technical and musical gifts." He is nationally renowned for perform-

ing a wide range of repertoire with commitment to communicating the essence of the music at its most organic level. He's also recognized as an accomplished curator and programmer, particularly in his work as artistic director of Seattle Town Hall's Town Music series, with a vision to engage and expand the classical music audience. For his ongoing creative initiatives on behalf of classical music, Roman was named a 2011 TED Fellow.

During the 2014–2015 season, Roman will premiere a new cello concerto by Mason Bates with the Seattle Symphony, under Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla. He will also perform the work with the Columbus Symphony, under Rossen Milanov. In the role of artistic director of the Town Music series, Roman showcases his eclectic musical influences and inspirations, presenting concerts by the NOW Ensemble, Third Coast Percussion, and the Deviant Septet. In the 2013–14 season, Roman gave the San Francisco premiere of *Dreamsongs*, a new cello concerto written for him by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Aaron Jay Kernis, with the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra. He also revisited *On Grace*, a work for actor and cellist that he co-created and performed with Anna Deavere Smith when both artists were in residence at the University of Chicago. As Alumnus-in-Residence at the Music Academy of the West, he lead the August premiere of *we do it to one another*, a nine-part song cycle based on *Life on Mars*, a collection of poems by the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Tracy K. Smith.

Before embarking on a solo career, Roman spent two seasons as principal cellist of the Seattle Symphony, a position he won in 2006 at the age of 22. Since that time he has appeared as a soloist with the San Francisco Symphony, the Seattle Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the BBC Scottish Symphony, and the Mariinsky Orchestra, among many others. An active chamber music performer, Roman has collaborated with Cho-Liang Lin, the Asaad Brothers, Christian Zacharias, the JACK Quartet, and members of So Percussion. He recently completed an ongoing video series called *The Popper Project*, where he performed, recorded, and uploaded the complete David Popper's *High School of Cello Playing* to his YouTube channel (youtube.com/joshuaromancello).

His newest YouTube project, *Everyday Bach*, features Roman performing Bach's cello suites from beautiful settings around the world. He was the only guest artist invited to play an unaccompanied solo during the YouTube Symphony Orchestra's 2009 debut concert at Carnegie Hall. He is grateful for the loan of an 1899 cello by Giulio Degani of Venice. Learn more about the cellist at **www.joshuaroman.com**.

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