



Western Music

Don Wright Faculty of Music

WESTERN UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA HALLOWEEN CONCERT

7:30 p.m., October 31, 2025

Paul Davenport Theatre

Simone Luti, *conductor*

Suite from Lieutenant Kijé, Op. 60

Sergei Prokofiev
(1891–1953)

- I. The Birth of Kijé
- II. Romance
- III. Kijé's Wedding
- IV. Troika
- V. The Burial of Kijé

Mother Goose Suite (Ma Mère l'Oye)

Maurice Ravel
(1875–1937)

- I. Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty
- II. Tom Thumb
- III. Laideronnette, Empress of the Pagodas
- IV. Conversations of Beauty and the Beast
- V. The Fairy Garden

Symphony No. 1 in D major

Gustav Mahler
(1860–1911)

- III. Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen

The Typewriter

Leroy Anderson
(1908–1975)

The Unanswered Question

Charles Ives
(1874–1954)

Sabre Dance

Aram Khachaturian
(1903–1978)

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PROGRAM NOTES

Prokofiev's *Lieutenant Kijé Suite* (1934) began as a film score for a Soviet movie satirizing military bureaucracy. The story tells of a clerical error that creates a fictional officer, Lieutenant Kijé, whose nonexistent life and heroic deeds are dutifully recorded by the imperial administration. When the mistake is discovered, the officials "kill him off" with an equally pompous funeral. With its inventive use of saxophone, offstage cornet, and striking contrasts of wit and pathos, *Lieutenant Kijé Suite* remains one of Prokofiev's most colorful and characterful orchestral works.

Originally composed in 1910 as a piano duet for two children, *Ma Mère l'Oye* ("Mother Goose") reflects Ravel's fascination with the world of childhood and fairy tales. He later orchestrated the work in 1911, expanding its delicate charm and color into a shimmering orchestral palette.

Each of the five movements evokes a classic fairy tale with tenderness and imagination: *Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty*, *Tom Thumb*, *Laideronnette*, *Empress of the Pagodas*, *Conversations of Beauty and the Beast*, and *The Fairy Garden*. Ravel's music glows with refinement and wonder, transforming these simple stories into a magical sound world of innocence, elegance, and fantasy.

The third movement of Mahler's *Symphony No. 1* is one of the most unusual and striking moments in all of symphonic music. It opens with a haunting solo double bass playing a minor-key version of the children's song *Frère Jacques*—a surprising and eerie transformation of an innocent tune. This funeral march parody is laced with irony and dark humor, reflecting Mahler's fascination with the grotesque and his ability to blend the serious with the absurd.

This movement, sometimes called a "Funeral March in the manner of Callot" (referring to the macabre artist Jacques Callot), is both a satire and a lament. In this sound world, joy and sorrow uneasily coexist, as they so often do in life.

With *The Typewriter*, Leroy Anderson turned an everyday office machine into a charming and unexpected musical star. Composed in 1950, this witty orchestral novelty features a real manual typewriter as a solo instrument—complete with key clicks, carriage returns, and bell dings—set against a brisk, bouncy orchestral backdrop. Frequently used in film, television, and comedy routines, *The Typewriter* remains a delightful example of how music can be both sophisticated and fun—proof that even office equipment can swing.

Charles Ives' *The Unanswered Question* is a quietly radical work that still feels strikingly modern more than a century after it was written. Scored for a small, spatially separated ensemble—strings, solo trumpet, and a quartet of flutes—the piece unfolds as a kind of philosophical drama. The serene, slow-moving string chorale represents "The Silence of the Druids," eternal and unchanging. Against this backdrop, a solo trumpet poses "The Perennial Question of Existence," a short, solemn phrase that recurs several times. Each time, the flutes attempt to answer—at first calmly, then with increasing agitation and dissonance—until they give up entirely. In the end, the trumpet asks one final question, and the strings continue undisturbed.

Few pieces in classical music are as instantly recognizable—and electrifying—as Khachaturian's *Sabre Dance*. Taken from the final act of his ballet *Gayane*, this whirlwind showpiece explodes with energy, urgency, and a touch of the exotic. Inspired by Armenian folk rhythms and melodies, the piece accompanies a frenzied dance of warriors brandishing sabres, and it captures that dangerous, exhilarating spirit with relentless percussion, sharp syncopations, and blazing tempos.

Program notes by Tasman Tantasawat

WESTERN UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Violins

Yanet Campbell**
Helen Faucher*
Julian Trippel*
Eden Silverberg*
Alex Matwijiw
Erin Van Dyke
Yuyin Chen
Jerry Ma
Ravi Thangirala
Zisen Zhou
Frank Su
Cordelia Poon
Brett Trampleasure
Clara Martin
Ashley Lo
Charlotte Usprich
Yongxuan Wu
Haiyue Yang
Kate Roberge
Khloe Wang
Cyr Cyr
Eileen Lee
Kierin Barnum
Lerissa Mowatt
Jayden so
Deion Liu
Theodore Chow

Violas

Tasman Tantasawat*
Ludmilla Kraneck*
Cian Diamond*
Lincoln St John*
Yifan Liu
Yining Yang
Maria Camila Lopez
Lexi White
Olivia Cardillo

Stella Shin
Grace Wright
Adora Yao

Celli

Abigail Greenland*
Isaac Lee
Felicity Ngo
Nicholas Lago
Kara Lim
Jason Too
Thomas Gadd
Charlotte Montgomery-Seto

Basses

Adela Montgomery*
Joshua Guttormson
Thomas Locke

Flutes

Grace Zhu*
Yiping Zhang*
Jenny Zhang
Darren Wo

Oboes

Mateo Zapata*
Ashlyn Black*
Leona Wen (*English Horn*)

Clarinets

Finn Inglis*
Kaitlyn Chambers
Maria Con (*Bb & Bass*)
Justine Dennis (*Bb & Eb*)

Saxophones

Shaharizan Kamal*
Evan Cheng
Madison Caswell

Bassoons

Yaron Felter-Gonen*
Siodhachan Morehead
Oskar Martinez (*Contrabassoon*)

Horns

Chrysa Balaka*
Kai Church
Lela Burt

Trumpets

Matthew Usher*
Rex Mulder*
Toshi Kawabe

Trombones

John Lau*
Max Zhang
Amy Jordaan (*Bass Trombone*)

Tuba

Daniel Montaseri

Keyboard

Lauren Esch

Percussions

Cora Peters
Anang Binesi
Dylan Lillie
Emily Finnigan

** Concert Master

* Principle