

Maud Moon Weyerhaeuser Sanborn International Artist Series

## Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, piano

Tuesday, October 28, 2025 • 7:30 PM Wednesday, October 29, 2025 • 10:30 AM

Ordway Concert Hall

Welcome to the Schubert Club!

We are excited to begin a new season of concerts and music education activities across the Twin Cities. In this, Schubert Club's 143rd season, our array of musicians, music, and educational events is broader and deeper than ever.

Our first recitals this fall at the Ordway feature Renée Fleming and Inon Barnatan (in partnership with Hope Arts Center), and then master of French piano repertoire, Jean-Efflam Bavouzet paying tribute to Maurice Ravel in his 150th anniversary year.

Music in the Park Series, founded back in 1979 by Julie Himmelstrup in the St Anthony Park neighborhood, opens with performances of Schubert's two piano trios by our long-time series friends, David Finckel and Wu Han, together with Benjamin Beilman; and we welcome back Roomful of Teeth to Schubert Club Mix. Accordo's concert series and our Courtroom Concert season kick off too. We anticipate a fall full of uplifting music, and look forward to seeing you among us. If you haven't visited the Schubert Club Music Museum recently, please come and explore our redesigned exhibits on the second floor of Landmark Center. *The Music Makers Zone* includes dozens of instruments for visitors to try out, recordings to explore and music from cultures throughout the world. Bring children! They can blow on flutes, play violins, bang on drums and push many buttons.

Our museum's *Keyboard Journey* gallery features an extraordinary selection of instruments from a 17th-century Italian harpsichord to a 20th-century Hammond B organ. And a selection of composer letters from our Gilman Ordway Manuscript Collection is highlighted in the new multimedia presentation *Letters Alive*.

Old music and new, strings and wind, percussion and voice, hands on and sitting still, Schubert Club is many things to many people. Join us this season and revisit new performances of some of our favorites or explore something new you've not heard before.

For what is life without music?

Jun gergus

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Lang Kenyta

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Schubert Club

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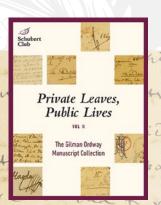
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Tuesday, October 28, 2025 • 7:30 PM

Ordway Concert Hall

## JEAN-EFFLAM BAVOUZET, PIANO

This concert is dedicated in honor of Catherine and John Neimeyer by Nancy and Ted Weyerhaeuser

#### Ravel: Complete Piano Works I

Sérénade grotesque, M.5 (1893)

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Menuet antique, M.7 (1895)

Pavane pour une infante défunte, M.19 (1899)

**Jeux d'eau, M.30** (1901)

**Sonatine, M.40** (1903–05)

Modéré

Mouvement de menuet

Animé

Intermission

*Miroirs*, M.43 (1904–05)

Noctuelles. Très léger

Oiseaux tristes. Très lent

Une barque sur l'océan. D'un rythme souple

Alborada del gracioso. Assez vif

La vallée des cloches. Très lent

*La valse*, **M.72** (1919–20)



Composer Maurice Ravel in his garden with his cat Mouni, 1929

Maurice Ravel: Complete Piano Works (b. Ciboure, France, 1875; d. Paris, 1937)

Igor Stravinsky's description of Maurice Ravel as "the Swiss watchmaker of composers" is well-deserved. He was a slow and painstaking worker who composed fewer pieces than many of his contemporaries, and his scores are distinguished by their obsessive attention to details large and small. Every note was carefully placed, painstakingly edited, and copied out with perfect calligraphy. Ravel fastidiously indicated precise dynamics, articulations, and tempi with explicit metronome marks.

The piano was Ravel's first instrument, and although he was no virtuoso himself he successfully composed some of the most virtuosic pieces in the repertoire. He had an extraordinary understanding of the instrument and knew exactly what sounds and effects he wanted to achieve, and his works include meticulous instructions for the performer. While the sound world of Ravel gives the listener much to enjoy, performers find the complexity of his scores a challenge to execute exactly as he notated.

This may be a long-winded way of saying that the success of Ravel's music is never an accident, but a carefully crafted effort meant to ensure that his intentions are followed to the letter. He was also a superb orchestrator, who spent much of his time orchestrating his piano works by himself. The most famous of these are the *Pavane pour une infante défunte* and *Rapsodie Espagnole*, and he occasionally orchestrated works by others, such as Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

Ravel was equally fastidious in his appearance. Whenever he went out in public, he was always nattily dressed, with every hair in place, a carefully waxed mustache and his trademark black patent leather shoes and top hat. For his 1927 USA tour, he took at least 50 shirts in the dozen steamer trunks that accompanied him, and his main concern at the premiere of his

one-act opera *L'heure Espagnole* was that he and his companion were the only ones not wearing the latest midnight-blue evening clothes.

Ravel was famously aloof; he had a distant, reserved manner that set him slightly apart from the world around him. He did not form many personal attachments – he preferred the company of his cats to human beings – and his music too, retains an objective, rather than subjective point of view. His greatest asset may have been what Claude Debussy described as "the most refined ear that has ever existed."

Ricardo Viñes, his friend from childhood, described Ravel at age 21 as "...very complicated, there being in him a mixture of Middle Ages Catholicism and satanic impiety, but also with a love of Art and Beauty which guide him and which make him react candidly."

Jean-Efflam Bavouzet offered these thoughts about Ravel, to accompany his April 2025 release of Ravel's complete works for piano: "I subscribe completely to Ravel's idea that a composer does not have to be profound in order to write good music. And furthermore, owing no doubt to his modest character, Ravel rarely addresses us in the first person. He does not confide in us intimately except on the rarest occasions. At these exceptional moments, our admiration for this musical giant, for his intelligence and elegant style of writing, for his perfect proportions, give way to a wave of emotion that is difficult to contain."

#### Maud Moon Weyerhaeuser Sanborn International Artist Series



Maud Moon Weyerhaeuser Sanborn (1876-1965) was born in Rochester, Minnesota. She married Charles Weyerhaeuser in 1898 and lived most of her life in Saint Paul. A talented singer

always active in the musical community, she supported Schubert Club and the Minneapolis Symphony. She had a special affection for Salzburg and Tanglewood where she spent summers. She developed close friendships with important musicians of her day such as Dmitri Mitropoulos and Serge Koussevitsky. The International Artist Series is dedicated to her memory by her grandchildren.



Photograph of French composer, and early teacher of Ravel, Émile Pessard

#### Sérénade grotesque, M.5 (1893)

Sérénade grotesque is believed to be Ravel's earliest surviving piano piece, composed in 1893 when he was just 18 years old and a student at the Paris Conservatory. Originally entitled Sérénade in the manuscript, he expanded the title in 1928 to Sérénade grotesque, perhaps a more fitting title as it is full of surprises that foreshadow the innovations Ravel would bring to his later piano works. For example, the beginning is marked "pizzicatissimo," a technique normally for the domain of string players or guitarists, implying the sound should mimic the dry, rough arpeggiated chords as they would be strummed by a flamenco guitarist.

As the story goes, young Ravel brought the Sérénade to class one day, and his teacher Émile Pessard, sat down at the piano to play it himself. Quickly realizing the complexity of piece and several notation "anomalies" that baffled him, he turned over the piano bench to Ravel to demonstrate it instead. It is dedicated to his long-time friend Ricardo Viñes, who gave the premieres of many of Ravel's works. Sérénade grotesque was likely influenced by Emmanuel Chabrier's Bourrée fantasque.

#### Menuet antique, M.7 (1895)

Composed two years after *Sérénade grotesque*, the *Menuet* was another tribute piece to Emmanuel Chabrier, who had championed Ravel's early works. It was first performed by Ricardo Viñes and it would be Ravel's first published work. He played the piece often in recitals, later orchestrating it in 1929. Ravel appropriated older forms often, and the menuet appears in several other works, such as in *Le Tombeau de Couperin*.

#### Pavane pour une infante défunte, M.19 (1899)

Considered to be one of his masterpiece miniatures, "Pavane for a Dead Princess" was composed in in 1899 while Ravel was studying at the Paris Conservatory under Gabriel Fauré. Dedicated to his patron, the Princesse de Polignac, Ravel described the piece as "an evocation of a pavane that a little princess might, in older times, have danced at the Spanish court." However, he later contradicted himself when asked how he arrived at the title: "Do not be surprised, that title has nothing to do with the composition. I simply liked the sound of those words, and I put them there, that's all." Ravel was also on the record as saying the piece depicted a pavane as it would be danced by an "infanta" found in a painting by Diego Velázquez. According to his biographer Benjamin Ivry, Ravel intended the piece to be played extremely slowly - more slowly than almost any modern interpretation – with one critic complaining that Ravel's playing of the work was "unutterably slow."

#### *Jeux d'eau*, **M.30** (1901)

Composed in 1901 when Ravel was 26, Jeux d'eau is variously translated as "Fountains," "Playing Water" or literally "Water Games." At this point, Ravel had yet to make any noticeable impression on the French musical scene, and in fact, he had failed to win any graduation prizes as a student at the Paris Conservatory, which by rule, ended in his expulsion. However, as a former student he was allowed to attend the classes of his teacher Gabriel Fauré, to whom the piece is dedicated. Partly inspired by Franz Liszt's Les jeux d'eau à la Villa d'Este, it was also inspired by the poem Fête d'eaux by Ravel's friend Henri de Régnier. It contains the line "Dieu fluvial riant de l'eau qui le chatouille" ("river god laughing at the water that tickles him"), which at the composer's request, the poet inscribed on the manuscript of Jeux d'eau.



Photograph of Spanish pianist Ricardo Viñes (1919)

After its first public performance by Ricardo Viñes, "Jeux" was denounced by musical conservatives and most of the faculty of the Conservatory, including Camille Saint-Saëns, who dismissed it as "total cacophony." Today it is considered one of Ravel's most important works for piano and can rightfully claim to be the first example of *Impressionism* in piano music, characterized by its shimmering, cascading piano figurations, meant to evoke the sound of flowing water. There is a hint of Classicism that runs through "Jeux," as it is structured in traditional sonata form that presents two main motives for development that serve to unify the piece.

#### **Sonatine, M.40** (1903–05)

Ravel wrote the first movement of the *Sonatine* for a competition sponsored by the Weekly Critical Review magazine after being encouraged by a friend who was a regular contributor. The only requirements of the competition were that the first movement of a sonata be specifically in the key of F-sharp minor and be no longer than 75 bars. The competition's first prize was 100 francs, but it was cancelled for lack of contributors, as Ravel's was the only entry, at a rule-busting 84 bars at that. Whether Ravel won the competition or not, *Sonatine* proved to be a windfall. It became one of his most popular works and put him in contact with the renowned Durand publishing house. To the concise first movement, he added a minuet and a toccata-like finale.

Ravel included *Sonatine* regularly in his performance repertoire. It is generally regarded as less difficult than many of his other works, such as *Gaspard de la nuit*. Ravel — who was anxious about his skills as a pianist — typically omitted the third movement, which he considered too technically challenging. He dedicated *Sonatine* to Ida and Cipa Godebski. He later dedicated his *Ma mère l'Oye* (Mother Goose Suite) to their children.

#### Miroirs, M.43 (1904–05)

In 1900, Ravel joined a group of young artists, poets, critics, and musicians who called themselves Les Apaches (The Hooligans), a term coined by Ricardo Viñes to refer to his band of "artistic outcasts." Ravel composed the five-movement *Miroirs* to pay tribute to his fellow "Apaches," with each movement dedicated to a fellow member.

Noctuelles (Night Moths) is dedicated to Léon-Paul Fargue, who was a poet and essayist who would later write a book of recollections about Ravel, his life-long friend, Noctuelles is a highly chromatic movement that maintains a dark, nocturnal mood throughout.

Oiseaux Tristes (Sorrowful Birds) is dedicated to pianist Ricardo Viñes, who performed the premiere of *Miroirs*. It represents a melancholic bird whistling a sad tune, after which others join in. The high-spirited middle section ends with a solemn cadenza, which brings back the melancholy mood of the beginning. Ravel said that this haunting, nocturnal scene evokes "birds lost in the torpor of a very dark forest, during the hottest hours of summertime."

Une barque sur l'océan (A Boat on the Ocean) was written for Paul Sordes, a French painter and set designer. The longest movement in the suite, it recounts a boat as it sails upon the ocean. Ravel's use of energetic arpeggios and broad, sweeping melodies mimic the undulating waves that toss a small boat in a shimmering ocean.

Alborada del gracioso (The Morning Song of the Jester) is dedicated to Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi, a distinguished music critic and musicologist of Greek descent. "Alborada" is a technically challenging piece that incorporates the sound of strummed guitar music from Spain's Basque region

La vallée des cloches (The Valley of Bells) is dedicated to Maurice Delage, a French composer and pianist who for a time was a student of Ravel. Through its use of sonorous harmonies, the piece evokes the haunting tones of distant church bells fading into silence. Ravel said that the closing chords in the bass were inspired by the sound of the big bell in the Basilica of Montmartre.



This watercolor painting by Wilhelm Gause depicts Emperor Franz Joseph I of Austria at a Ball in Vienna, to celebrate the beginning of a new century (1900)

#### *La valse*, **M.72** (1919–20)

First conceived as a ballet written under commission from Serge Diaghilev for his Ballet Russe, *La Valse* ("a choreographic poem for orchestra") is more often heard as a concert work by full symphony orchestra. After hearing a two-piano reduction of the piece, Diaghilev agreed that it was a masterpiece, but declined the opportunity to choreograph it, saying it was "not a ballet. It's a portrait of ballet." (Stung by the rejection, Ravel, ended their relationship). While it is often performed in the two-piano reduction, Ravel also transcribed it for one piano, which is infrequently performed due to its difficulty.

Completed in 1920, the idea of *La Valse* began as early as 1906, when Ravel intended to orchestrate a work in tribute to the waltz form and specifically to Johann Strauss II, aka "The Waltz King." While it has been described as a tribute to the waltz genre, the composer George Benjamin, in his analysis of *La Valse*, summarized the ethos of the work this way: "Whether or not it was intended as a metaphor for the predicament of European civilization in the aftermath of the Great War, its one-movement design plots the birth, decay and destruction of a musical genre: the waltz."

Ravel denied that it was a reflection of post-World War I Europe, saying, "While some discover an attempt

at parody, indeed caricature, others categorically see a tragic allusion in it – the end of the Second Empire, the situation in Vienna after the war, etc... This dance may seem tragic, like any other emotion... pushed to the extreme. But one should only see in it what the music expresses: an ascending progression of sonority, to which the stage comes along to add light and movement."

Despite Ravel's denials, many still interpret *La Valse* through the lens of a defeated Germany and the demise of Vienna and its culture, in ruins after WWI: it is a dance of death; a macabre waltz to end all waltzes.

In his preface to the score, Ravel offered this description of *La Valse*: "Set in an imperial court, about 1855, clouds whirl about. Occasionally they part to allow a glimpse of waltzing couples. The scene is gradually illuminated, and one can discern a gigantic hall, filled by a crowd of dancers in motion. The stage gradually brightens. The light of the chandeliers bursts forth, fortissimo."

Regardless of one's view of the piece, *La Valse* is one of Ravel's most intense and musically colorful works.

Program notes © 2025 by Michael Adams



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The Arts Partnership is a strategic alliance between the four organizations that regularly perform on the Ordway stages. Together, the Arts Partners manage the Ordway facility, collaborate on joint programming, and share resources to provide a world-class venue

and exceptional artistic programming for over 300,000 people annually. The work of the Arts Partnership is supported by donors to the Arts Partnership Annual Fund. We extend a sincere thank you to the following contributors to this fund for the 2024–2025 fiscal year.

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#### Jean-Efflam Bayouzet

Award-winning pianist Jean-Efflam Bavouzet enjoys a prolific recording and international concert career. He regularly works with The Cleveland, NHK Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, BBC Symphony and London Philharmonic orchestras and collaborates with many renowned conductors including Vladimir Jurowski, Gianandrea Noseda, Vasily Petrenko, Ludovic Morlot, Edward Gardner, Louis Langrée, and Sir Andrew Davis.

Orchestral engagements during the 2024/25 season included Orchestre National de France, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Bremen Philharmonic Orchestra, Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra, Deutsche Radio Philharmonie Saarbrucken, and Royal Northern Sinfonia amongst others. He continued his relationship with the Manchester Camerata performing and recording the final instalment of the Mozart concertos which include K. 365 and K. 242 for two and three pianos respectively, conducted by Gábor Takács-Nagy. Jean-Efflam toured to New Zealand and Australia appearing with the Auckland Philharmonic and Adelaide Symphony Orchestras with recitals in Sydney, Adelaide, and Canberra.

Elsewhere in recital, Bavouzet visited Wigmore Hall in November 2024 for the final instalment in the 12-concert series entitled *Tour de Debussy.* He returned to Wigmore Hall in May, with a concert consisting of a unique programme showcasing every solo piano work written by Maurice Ravel. He will also be performing this programme on tour in Italy and the United States. Other notable recitals include Shanghai Symphony Hall and Prague Piano Festival.

Bavouzet's previous notable performances include Carnegie Hall with London Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonie de Paris with Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo, a BBC Proms appearance with BBC Philharmonic Orchestra under Nicholas Collon and a successful eight-concert tour of China with Philharmonia and Lan Shui. He has recently appeared with Budapest Festival Orchestra, Sao Paulo Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Symphony, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, directed a three concerto programme with Seattle Symphony Orchestra and toured the Baltics with Manchester Camerata. Bavouzet is a frequent guest of Verbier Festival. In summer 2023, Bavouzet's recital tour took him from International Keyboard Institute and Festival in New York, Bravo! Vail Festival and Aspen, across the Atlantic to Finland's Mänttä Music Festival and St Ursanne in Switzerland.

Bavouzet records exclusively for Chandos. His most recent release, *A Musical Tribute to Pierre Sancan* with BBC Philharmonic Orchestra under Yan Pascal Tortelier, won the *Gramophone* Editor's Choice and Diapason d'Or awards. His complete Haydn Piano Sonatas series has been named a modern benchmark by *Gramophone* and *The Beethoven Connection* received numerous accolades from magazines including the *New York Times, BBC Music Magazine* and *Choc-Classica*. Ongoing cycles include the complete Mozart Piano Concertos with Manchester Camerata and Gábor Takács-Nagy, the fourth volume of which was nominated for a *Gramophone* Award in 2020. In September of the same year, the complete Beethoven Concertos were released with Swedish Chamber Orchestra directed by Bavouzet.

Other recordings include Bartók's Piano Concerti and the complete Prokofiev Piano Concerti with BBC Philharmonic and Gianandrea Noseda – the latter won the Concerto category of the 2014 Gramophone Awards. Under Yan Pascal Tortelier, he recorded Stravinsky's Complete Works for Piano and Orchestra with Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo and the Ravel Piano concerti with BBC Symphony Orchestra which won both a *Gramophone* and *BBC Music Magazine* award. Bavouzet's recordings have also garnered Diapason d'Or and Choc de l'Année awards.

Bavouzet has worked closely with Sir Georg Solti, Pierre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Zoltan Kocsis, György Kurtág, Maurice Ohana, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Bruno Mantovani, and Jörg Widmann and is also a champion of lesser-known French music, notably that of Gabriel Pierné and Albéric Magnard. He is the International Chair in Piano at the Royal Northern College of Music and an Advisory Board member of the Pianofest in the Hamptons. In 2012 he was ICMA Artist of the Year and in 2008 he was awarded Beijing's first ever Elite Prize for his Beethoven complete sonata series.



Maud Moon Weyerhaeuser Sanborn

## INTERNATIONAL ARTIST SERIES

2025-2026 SEASON

Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, piano Tue, Oct 28, 2025 • 7:30 PM Wed, Oct 29, 2025 • 10:30 AM Pablo Ferrández, *cello*Wed, Mar 18, 2026 • 7:30 PM
Thu, Mar 19, 2026 • 10:30 AM

Roderick Williams, baritone lain Burnside, piano Thu, Nov 13, 2025 • 7:30 PM Jordi Savall & Hespèrion XXI Un Mar de Músicas Thu, Apr 16, 2026 • 7:30 PM

Garrick Ohlsson, piano Richard O'Neill, viola Fri, Feb 6, 2026 • 7:30 PM Sat, Feb 7, 2026 • 10:30 AM

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2025-2026 SEASON

Wu Han, piano
Benjamin Beilman, violin
David Finckel, cello
Sun, Oct 5, 2025 • 4:00 PM

Danish String Quartet Sun, Nov 23, 2025 • 4:00 PM

Nathan Amaral, violin
Alice Chenyang Xu, piano
Sun, Feb 15, 2026 • 4:00 PM

Le Consort Sun, Mar 15, 2026 • 4:00 PM

Miró Quartet Steven Banks, saxophone Sun, Apr 12, 2026 • 4:00 PM

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2025-2026 SEASON

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Monday, October 13, 2025 Westminster Hall Tue, Oct 14, 2025 Accordo at Icehouse

#### Concert II

Monday, January 12, 2026 Westminster Hall Tue, Jan 13, 2026 Accordo at Icehouse with Anne-Marie McDermott, quest piano

#### Concert III

Monday, April 20, 2026 Westminster Hall Wed, Apr 22, 2026 Accordo at Icehouse with Roderick Williams, baritone

#### Concert IV Tuesday, May 5, 2026

Accordo with Silent Film (at the Ordway) with Stephen Prutsman, guest piano

Full program details available at schubert.org/accordo

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This concert is dedicated in honor of Catherine and John Neimeyer by Nancy and Ted Weyerhaeuser

#### Ravel: Complete Piano Works II

#### *Valses nobles et sentimentales,* **M.61** (1911–12)

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)

Modéré, très franc

Assez lent, avec une expression intense

Modéré

Assez animé

Presque lent, dans un sentiment intime

Vif

Moins vif

Épilogue. Lent

Menuet sur le nom d'Haydn, M.58 (1909)

Gaspard de la nuit, M.55 (1908)

Ondine. Lent Le Gibet. Très lent Scarbo. Modéré

Intermission

À la manière de Chabrier, M.63/2 (1912–13)

À la manière de Borodine, M.63/1 (1912–13)

**Prélude, M.65** (1913)

Le tombeau de Couperin, M.68 (1914–17)

Prélude. Vif

Fugue. Allegro moderato

Forlane. Allegretto

Rigaudon. Assez vif

Menuet. Allegro moderato

Toccata. Vif



Oil painting of Joseph Haydn by Thomas Hardy (1791)

#### Valses nobles et sentimentales, M.61 (1911–12)

Ravel had always been captivated by the waltz form. Indeed, the roots of his choreographic poem for orchestra, *La Valse*, completed in 1920, date back to 1906. Preceding it was his suite of "Noble and Sentimental Waltzes," published in 1911. Ravel was paying homage to Franz Schubert, who had composed two collections of waltzes in 1823 entitled "Valses nobles" and "Valses sentimentales." He freely acknowledged that "The title sufficiently indicates my intention to compose a succession of waltzes, after Schubert's example." Within a year of completing the piano suite, Ravel orchestrated it, and it was later adapted into a ballet version. While the ballet has since faded into oblivion, the orchestrated waltzes live on in the concert hall.

There are eight movements in the suite – seven waltzes and an epilogue – however there is no way to differentiate which ones Ravel meant as either noble or sentimental, as they only bear titles that indicate their tempo. The rich variety of music contained in the set, ranging from Ravel's elegant sensuality to his piquant, sometimes caustic use of dissonance, illustrates just how much he felt there was still left to say about this old Viennese dance form.

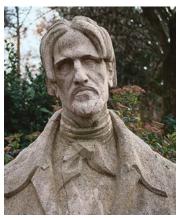
The score contains an epigraph from Ravel's friend, the Symbolist poet Henri de Régnier, that gives us a sense of the atmosphere of the music: "...le plaisir délicieux et toujours nouveau d'une occupation inutile" (the delicious and forever-new pleasure of a useless occupation), excerpted from his 1904 book *Les recontres de Monsieur de Bréot*.

#### Menuet sur le nom d'Haydn, M.58 (1909)

In 1909, the director of the Société International de Musique in Paris wrote to several eminent French composers asking for their input on how to mark the 100th anniversary of Haydn's death. He proposed they use an interesting gimmick: a five note melody derived from the five letters of Haydn's name. (The letter H represents B-natural, A and D represent their respective pitches, Y was represented as D-natural, and N as G-natural. Somewhat arbitrary for sure, but he got to make up the rules.)

Of the composers who were invited to join the party, both Faure and Saint-Saëns declined, but five accepted in addition to Ravel: Claude Debussy, Vincent d'Indy, Paul Dukas, Reynaldo Hahn, and Charles-Marie Widor. There were no preconditions but for the 5 note theme. Imagine a musical "Iron Chef" challenge: here are the ingredients, see what you can cook up!

Some were inspired to write a fugue on the name. Debussy produced a waltz, and Ravel outdid himself in a Menuet employing the melody not just forwards but in retrograde, inverted, and in retrograde inversion. The piece is just 54 bars long and lasts for about a minute and a half. The challenge for you, dear listener, is to find the theme, which is sometimes obvious, sometimes cleverly concealed. (Think Iron Chef meets Where's Waldo.)



Statue of Aloysius Bertrand located in Dijon, France

#### Gaspard de la nuit, M.55 (1908)

Subtitled *Trois poèmes pour piano d'après Aloysius Bertrand*, "Gaspard" is a three movement work from 1908. Each movement is based on a poem from the collection *Gaspard de la Nuit – Fantaisies à la manière de Rembrandt et de Callot* completed in 1836 by Aloysius Bertrand. The piece is notoriously difficult, especially the final movement, *Scarbo*, considered to be one of the most difficult solo works in the piano repertoire. Interestingly, it was far too difficult for Ravel himself to play!

Of the piece, Ravel said: "Gaspard has been a devil in coming, but that is only logical since it was he who is the author of the poems. My ambition is to say with notes what a poet expresses with words."

This quote requires a bit of explanation, as Aloysius Bertrand, author of *Gaspard de la Nuit*, introduces his collection by attributing them to a mysterious old man that he met in a park in Dijon, who "lent" him the book. When he goes in search of Gaspard to return the volume, he asks: "Tell me where Gaspard of the night may be found?"

Comes the reply: "He is in hell, provided that he isn't somewhere else."

The poet continues, "Ah! I am beginning to understand! What Gaspard de la Nuit must be...?" His informant responds: "Ah! Yes... the devil!"

The poet replies: "Thank you, mon brave!... If Gaspard de la Nuit is in hell, may he roast there. I shall publish his book."

The first movement, *Ondine*, is the tale of the water nymph Ondine singing to seduce the observer into visiting her kingdom deep at the bottom of a lake. It is reminiscent of Ravel's early piano piece *Jeux d'eau*, which depicts the sounds of water falling and flowing.

The second movement, *Le Gibet* (The Gallows), is based on the poem of the same name that presents the observer with a view of the desert, where the lone corpse of a hanged man on a gallows stands out against the horizon, reddened by the setting sun. A bell tolls from inside the walls of a far-off city, creating the deathly atmosphere that surrounds the observer.

The final movement, based on the poem *Scarbo*, depicts the nighttime mischief of a small goblin, flitting in and out of the darkness, disappearing and suddenly reappearing. Its flight scratches against the walls and bed curtains, casting a menacing shadow in the moonlight and creating a nightmarish scene for the observer lying in his bed. Ravel remarked of this movement: "I wanted to make a caricature of romanticism. Perhaps it got the better of me."

#### À la manière de Chabrier, M.63/2 (1912–13) À la manière de Borodine, M.63/1 (1912–13)

Written on the suggestion of his friend, composer Alfred Casella, who had himself written a series of six similar musical pastiches ("In the manner of..." Wagner, Fauré, Brahms, Debussy, Strauss, and Franck), Casella asked Ravel to contribute a second series of humorous tributes to pay homage to important predecessors.

Emmanuel Chabrier was a source of inspiration for Ravel from an early age, and here, Ravel borrows a tune from Charles Gounod's *Faust*, set as an elegant waltz, as Chabrier might have done. Alexander Borodin was a member of the Russian National School known as "The Mighty Five." He wrote very little piano music, so Ravel chose to set a tune from his *Polovetsian Dances*, also set as a charming waltz. Both of these short works were completed in 1912 and are dedicated to Ida and Cipa Godebski, who were also the dedicatees of *Sonatine* and "Mother Goose" Suite.

#### Prélude, M.65 (1913)

A brief work of just 27 bars, *Prélude* was commissioned by the Paris Conservatory as a sight-reading piece for the 1913 women's piano competition. This thoughtful, elegant piece is not terribly difficult, providing a good vehicle with which to assess a student's artistic expression.

#### Le tombeau de Couperin, M.68 (1914-17)

Written after the death of Ravel's mother in 1917 and of several friends in World War I, "The Tomb of Couperin" is actually quite a light-hearted work rather than a sentimental or maudlin memorial. As Ravel explained, "The dead are sad enough, in their eternal silence." Ravel experienced firsthand the horrors of war when he served as an ambulance driver on the battlefront. He refused to talk about his experiences during the war, but from what we know about his service, he saw many things almost too terrible to imagine, and he suffered variously from exposure, frostbite, and other maladies. Although he escaped relatively unscathed, at least externally, it is easy to see that Ravel was defined by the trauma of WWI. It cleaved his adult life in half. After the war, his music had changed, and who would expect otherwise? His attitude towards musical texture transformed from lush and thick, to spare and austere. That change is reflected in the music of "Tombeau."

Although most audiences are more familiar with the frequently performed orchestral version, the original piano suite contains two additional movements that Ravel chose not to orchestrate. Its six movements are based on the traditional Baroque dance suite, each dedicated to the memory of a friend (or in one case, two brothers) who had died fighting in the war. Although the name of the French Baroque composer Francois Couperin is immortalized in the title, Ravel said that his intention was to pay tribute more generally to the sensibilities of the Baroque French keyboard suite, not necessarily to imitate or pay tribute to Couperin in particular.

The gracefully energetic *Prélude* is a study in motion, dedicated to the memory of Lieutenant Jacques Charlot who had transcribed some of Ravel's piano music for Ravel's publishers.



Photograph of Maurice Ravel as a soldier during WWI (1917)

The Fugue is dedicated to Jean Cruppi, whose Mother had helped Ravel get his comic opera *L'heure Espagnole* performed.

Forlane is dedicated to the memory of Lieutenant Gabriel DeLuc, a Basque painter whom Ravel met in a small town in the Pyrenees.

Rigaudon is dedicated to Pierre and Pascal Gaudin, two brothers whose family was friends with Ravel's family. The brothers were killed by the same shell on their first day at the front.

The *Menuet* is dedicated to the memory of Jean Dreyfus, the stepson of one of Ravel's friends. While he retains the stateliness of the Baroque minuet, Ravel colors it with touches of melancholy.

The concluding *Toccata* is dedicated to Joseph de Marliave, who died at the very start of the war. He was a musicologist and the husband of Ravel's favorite pianist Marguerite Long, who premiered "Tombeau."

Ravel finished writing "Tombeau" in 1917, with a request from his publisher two years later to orchestrate four of the original six movements, omitting the fugue and the toccata. It was published with a front page – designed by Ravel – that featured a draped funeral urn.

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#### SCHUBERT CLUB ENDOWMENT:

The Schubert Club Endowment was started in the 1920s. Today, our endowment provides more than one-quarter of our annual budget, allowing us to offer free and affordable performances, education programs, and museum experiences for our community. Several endowment funds have been established to support education and performance programs, including the International Artist Series with special funding by the family of Maud Moon Weyerhaeuser Sanborn in her memory. We thank the following donors who have made commitments to our endowment funds:

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Music in the Park Series was established by Julie Himmelstrup in 1979. In 2010, Music in the Park Series merged into the Schubert Club and continues as a highly sought-after chamber music series in our community. In celebration of the 35th Anniversary of Music in the Park Series and its founder Julie Himmelstrup in 2014, we created the Music in the Park Series Fund of the Schubert Club Endowment to help ensure long-term stability of the Series. Thank you to Dorothy Mattson and all of the generous contributors who helped start this new fund:

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#### ARTISTIC AND STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES FUND

The Schubert Club Artistic & Strategic Opportunities Fund was established by the Board of Directors at its February 2017 meeting as an operating fund to support artistic initiatives and program development that are not part of the ongoing programming of Schubert Club. Examples include commissions, community partnerships, artistic or ensemble residency, purchase of instruments for the Schubert Club Museum, high tech productions, etc. Thank you to our generous donors who have given gifts above and beyond their annual giving to help make this fund a reality. New opportunities always present themselves, so you are encouraged to consider a special gift to this fund to allow for future projects. Contact Amy Marret for more information at 651.292.3270.

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Legacy Society members are listed on the previous page.

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