

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra  
2017-2018 Mellon Grand Classics Season

May 18 and 20, 2018

CRISTIAN MĂCELARU, CONDUCTOR  
AUGUSTIN HADELICH, VIOLIN

GEORGES ENESCU                      Rumanian Rhapsody No. 1 in A major, Opus 11, No. 1

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK                      Concerto in A minor for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 53  
I.     Allegro ma non troppo —  
II.    Adagio, ma non troppo  
III.   Finale: Allegro giocoso, ma non troppo  
      **Mr. Hadelich**

Intermission

AARON COPLAND                      Symphony No. 3  
I.     Molto moderato (with simple expression)  
II.    Allegro molto  
III.   Andantino quasi allegretto  
IV.   Molto deliberato (Fanfare) — Allegro risoluto

## PROGRAM NOTES BY DR. RICHARD E. RODDA

### GEORGES ENESCU

#### Rumanian Rhapsody No. 1 in A major, Opus 11, No. 1 (1901)

Georges Enescu was born in Liveni-Virnav, Rumania on August 19, 1881, and died in Paris on May 4, 1955. He composed his Rumanian Rhapsody No. 1 in 1901, and it was premiered alongside Rumanian Rhapsody No. 2 at the Rumanian Atheneum with Enescu conducting on March 8, 1903. The Pittsburgh Symphony first performed the work at Syria Mosque under the direction of Eugene Goossens on October 28, 1928, and most recently performed it in Heinz Hall with former music director Mariss Jansons on November 27, 1999. The score calls for piccolo, three flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, two cornets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, two harps and strings

Performance time: approximately 11 minutes

Georges Enescu, Rumania's greatest composer, was one of the most prodigiously gifted musicians of the 20th century. He began playing violin at age four, wrote his first compositions a year later, and was admitted to the Vienna Conservatory when he was seven. He was already an accomplished violinist and composer by the time he moved to Paris to continue his studies with Massenet and Fauré when he was fourteen. The first concert of his works was given in Paris in 1897; the next year he introduced the *Poème roumain*, which he counted as his Op. 1. During the years before the First World War, Enescu's career as violin soloist and chamber ensemble player flourished, he was much in demand as a conductor, and his compositions, especially the two *Rumanian Rhapsodies* of 1901, carried his name into the world's concert halls. Though he regarded himself as a cosmopolitan musician rather than as a strictly national one (he actually spent more time in Paris than in his homeland), Enescu had a decisive influence on the music of Rumania. In his native country, he encouraged performances, wrote articles, lectured, conducted, taught, and undertook research, and also fostered interest in a national tradition of concert music by instituting the Rumanian Composers' Society and founding the Enescu Prize for original compositions. His work not only enhanced the world's awareness of Rumanian music, but he also gave that country's composers and performers an unprecedented model and inspiration.

Enescu's music shows a broad range of influences — alongside native folksong stand echoes of Wagner, Brahms, Strauss, Fauré, Debussy, Bach, Bartók and Stravinsky. It is the folk influence, however, that dominates the two *Rumanian Rhapsodies*, the works for which Enescu is best known. Rumania stands at the crossroads between the familiar cultures of Europe and the intoxicating milieu of the Middle East — its capital, Bucharest, is closer to Istanbul than to Vienna, closer to Cairo than to Paris. The country's folk music is based largely upon the traditions of the Gypsies, those peoples whose ancient ancestors were brought from the distant lands of Egypt and India centuries ago as servants to the Roman conquerors. This cultural heritage infused native Rumanian music with a curious and fascinating Oriental aura which lends it a very different character from the unaffected simplicity of the folk tunes of Britain, France and Germany — the strange movement of melodic tones, the flying virtuosity and deep melancholy of the Gypsy fiddler, and a vibrant rhythmic vitality all recall its exotic origins.

Enescu's *Rumanian Rhapsodies* are modeled in form and style on Franz Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsodies*. Based on indigenous tunes, the *Rumanian Rhapsody No. 1* is a work of high spirits and splendid good cheer. The themes are presented episodically with little development. The first melody, a traditional drinking song with the straightforward title *I have a coin and I want a drink*, is a perky ditty given by the clarinet and woodwinds. It is taken up by the strings, and leads to the second theme, a slow dance in 6/8 meter with a sweeping figure in its first measure. This motive is succeeded by a languid phrase initiated by the violins. The slow dance, led this time by the solo viola, and the languid phrase return before a ponderous theme with an Oriental tinge is introduced. The last half of the work is a brilliant display of flashing orchestral sonority and leaping rhythmic vivacity. Enescu's *Rumanian Rhapsody No. 1* is among the richest musical treasures that sprang from the countries of Eastern Europe during the opening decades of 20th century.

## ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

### Concerto in A minor for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 53 (1879; revised in 1880 and 1882)

Antonin Dvořák was born in Nelahozeves, Bohemia on September 8, 1841, and died in Prague on May 1, 1904. He composed his Violin Concerto in 1879 and revised in 1880 and 1882 with suggestions from the preeminent violinist Joseph Joachim, who went as far as to read through the work with a student orchestra. Joachim would not ultimately premiere the work, which was first performed in Prague with the Czech National Theater Orchestra, conductor Mořic Anger, and soloist František Ondříček. The Pittsburgh Symphony first performed the work at Syria Mosque with conductor Vladimir Bakaleinikoff and soloist Ruth Posselt, and most recently performed it on subscription with conductor Michael Francis and soloist Christian Tetzlaff on January 27, 2013. The score calls for woodwinds in pairs, four horns, two trumpets, timpani and strings.

Performance time: approximately 31 minutes

When the popularity of his 1878 *Slavonic Dances* rocketed Dvořák to international fame, he suddenly found himself welcome in the most august musical company. Liszt, the renowned critic Hanslick, Brahms — who had recommended the young composer to his publisher Simrock — and the violinist Joseph Joachim were among his new friends. Joachim premiered Brahms' Violin Concerto in January 1879, and Dvořák, perhaps under its influence and certainly spurred on by Simrock, decided to try a similar composition of his own. As a trial for the larger work, he composed the short *Mazurek*, Op. 49 for solo violin and orchestra in February 1879. He brought the Concerto to his desk in July, and by September he was able to send the first version of the score to Joachim for his criticism.

Joseph Joachim, perhaps the most distinguished violinist of the time in Europe and, in that age of fustian virtuosi, one of the few dedicated to the highest musical standards, had been performing Dvořák's recent chamber music with his ensemble. His advocacy of the Sextet (Op. 48) and the E-flat Quartet (Op. 51) did much to establish the composer's reputation in Vienna and elsewhere. Joachim had been of inestimable help to Brahms during the composition of his Violin Concerto in 1878, and he offered similar assistance to Dvořák. Though Dvořák had studied the violin and performed in the orchestra of the Czech National Theater from 1866 to 1873, he welcomed Joachim's advice on the finer points of string technique and concerto composition. Unfortunately, Joachim could not generate much enthusiasm for the new work, and he invited Dvořák to Berlin to discuss his suggestions for its improvement. After Dvořák made the journey, he wrote to Simrock on May 9, 1880, "At Mr. Joachim's suggestion I have revised the whole Concerto, leaving not a single bar untouched. I have kept the main themes and added a few new ones, but the whole conception of the work is different; harmonies, rhythms, orchestration are all changed."

The revision was dutifully dispatched to Joachim, who, reluctant to again express his disappointment, did not mention the Concerto for two full years. Finally, on August 14, 1882, he sent Dvořák a letter of lukewarm praise in which he wrote that, though he (Joachim) had made the solo part more practicable, he still considered the work not ready for public performance. Once more, he asked the composer to come to Berlin for a conference. This second evaluation included a run-through of the score by Joachim and the student orchestra of the Berlin Hochschule für Musik, following which Dvořák made a large cut in the finale and, again, retouched the solo part.

Joachim was still dissatisfied. In the Concerto's structure, Dvořák had joined together the first two movements. Joachim thought that they should be separated, but the composer remained adamant on the work's form. The score was completed with the intention that Joachim would give the premiere in November, but he did not play it on that occasion or any other. The honor of the first performance fell instead to František Ondříček the following year, when Dvořák's intuition about the work's form and content were proven correct. The Concerto was immediately successful and has remained one of his most popular scores.

Dvořák composed his Violin Concerto during the first flowering of his representative Czech style. His biographer Otakar Šourek wrote, "The national character of Dvořák's music became strongly marked when he began to make his appeal outside his own country, and felt impelled to emphasize his national origins and characteristics. This was about the beginning of 1878." In this Concerto, Dvořák was influenced by several facets of the Czech personality — the blending of sadness and determination in the first movement, the tenderness of the second and the boisterous peasant joy of the finale. The main

theme group of the Concerto's first movement comprises a bold, almost tragic, opening statement, a lamenting phrase with a prominent triplet rhythm presented by the soloist and (after a repetition of the first two motives) a lyrical woodwind strain above a simple string accompaniment. These three motives are treated at some length before the smoothly flowing second theme is introduced as a duet for oboe and solo violin. The development section is a challenging exercise in broken chords for the soloist. The recapitulation is greatly truncated, and brings back only the lamenting theme from the exposition. A delicate woodwind chorale leads without pause to the second movement, a song of sweet nostalgia sung by the soloist. The bucolic mood is twice interrupted by stern proclamations from the orchestra. The finale is a scintillating rondo whose main theme is reminiscent of the fiery Czech dance, the *furiant*.

## AARON COPLAND

### Symphony No. 3 (1944-1945)

Aaron Copland was born in Brooklyn, New York on November 14, 1900, and died in North Tarrytown, New York on December 2, 1990. He composed his Symphony No. 3 in 1944-1945, and it was premiered by the Boston Symphony and conductor Serge Koussevitzky on October 18, 1946. The Pittsburgh Symphony first performed the work at Syria Mosque with Aaron Copland conducting on December 18, 1964, and most recently performed it with Leonard Slatkin on December 6, 2008. The score calls for two piccolos, three flutes, two oboes, English horn, E-flat clarinet, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, four trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, piano, celeste, two harps and strings.

Performance time: approximately 42 minutes

A search through the catalog of Aaron Copland's works will reveal the absence of a "Symphony No. 1" and a "Symphony No. 2." The composition that Copland considered his first in the symphonic genre was the infamous *Symphony for Organ and Orchestra* of 1924, a piece about which Walter Damrosch, the conductor of its premiere, said, "If a young man at the age of 24 can write a symphony like that, in five years he will be ready to commit murder." Damrosch was (thankfully) wrong, but the Organ Symphony does remain one of the most challenging works in Copland's creative output. Much the same may be said of the style of the composition that came second in Copland's symphonic output, the 15-minute *Short Symphony* (1933). Both of these early symphonic efforts show Copland as a serious composer in the most modern idiom of those years, a style which, despite the splendid quality of the music, listeners found difficult to accept. During the Depression years, Copland started to search for a language that would be both closer to his American roots and more accessible to wide audiences. *Appalachian Spring*, *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo*, the *Lincoln Portrait* and other works of the early 1940s are clear evidence that he succeeded.

The Third Symphony of 1944-1946 brings together the two dominant strains of Copland's musical personality: the abstract style of his *Symphony for Organ and Orchestra* (1924) and *Short Symphony* (1933) is particularly evident in the first and third movements, while the influence of folk song and New England and Quaker hymnody familiar from *Appalachian Spring*, *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo*, *Lincoln Portrait* and other works of the early 1940s is strongest in the second and fourth. The opening movement, in moderate tempo, eschews traditional symphonic sonata form in favor of a structure in two large musical paragraphs with a benedictory coda. The first section presents the movement's three themes, each introduced with the simplicity and economy that mark Copland's best music: a smooth melody in wide-spread octaves for violins, clarinets and flute; a theme in similar style initiated by oboes and clarinets; and a broad phrase of unsettled tonality intoned by the trombones. The trombone phrase is worked out at some length, and rises to a mighty climax before a sudden quiet ushers in the briefer second section, in which the first two themes are ingeniously combined to lead to an even more violent outburst based on the trombone motive. Another abrupt hush begins the coda, which is built from variants of the first and second themes exquisitely suspended in a musical setting of unaffected beauty and sweet melancholy.

The *Scherzo* begins with a boisterous brass preview of the movement's principal theme. The theme is presented in full by horn, clarinets and violas in a more deliberate tempo, and recurs twice (unison low strings and, in augmentation, in the low brass) with intervening episodes. The trio is given over to a folksy little waltz melody that would not be out of place in *Rodeo* or *Billy the Kid*. After a truncated return of the first section, a grandiloquent presentation of the waltz theme and a striding transformation of the *Scherzo* theme close the movement.

The main part of the *Andantino* is occupied by what Copland called a “close-knit series of variations” on a graceful theme presented by the solo flute. The melody, he continued, “supplies thematic substance for the sectional metamorphoses that follow: at first with quiet singing nostalgia; then faster and heavier — almost dance-like; then more child-like and naive; and finally vigorous and forthright.” Framing these variations as introduction and postlude are austere, almost mysterious transformations of the trombone theme from the first movement hung high in the violins.

The Finale follows without pause. The *Fanfare for the Common Man*, written in 1942 at the invitation of Eugene Goossens for a series of wartime fanfares introduced under his direction with the Cincinnati Symphony, provides the thematic material for the introduction. The well-known strains are first heard, softly, in the high woodwinds and then given in their familiar stentorian guise by the brass and percussion. The main portion of the movement begins with the presentation of an animated, syncopated theme by the oboe. A broad restatement of the *Fanfare* motive by the trombones opens the development section, which is unusual in that the structural second theme, a lyrical strain of swaying metric configuration, is embedded within it. The development builds to a galvanic climax. The recapitulation weaves together the finale’s principal theme, fragments of the *Fanfare* and the opening motive of the first movement. A magnificent peroration capped by another return of the theme that began the entire work closes this great American Symphony.

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