

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

Chorus & Orchestra

Bees

Ajtony Csaba, *conductor*

Susan Young, *chorus director*

Soloists:

Ariel Boughen, Tasha Farivar,

Josh Lovell, Nicholas Allen

Saturday, April 5, 2014, 8:00 p.m.

University Centre Farquhar Auditorium

University of Victoria

Adults: \$17.50 / Students & seniors: \$13.50

Program

Hector Berlioz

Symphonie Fantastique Op. 14

1. *Rêveries – Passions (Daydreams – Passions)*
2. *Un bal (A ball)*
3. *Scène aux champs (Scene in the Country)*
4. *Marche au supplice (March to the Scaffold)*
5. *Songe d'une nuit de sabbat (Dream of a Witches' Sabbath)*

Intermission

Anton Bruckner

Mass No. 3 in F minor, WAB 28

1. *Kyrie*
2. *Gloria*
3. *Credo*
4. *Sanctus*
5. *Benedictus*
6. *Agnus Dei*

Soloists:

Ariel Boughen, Tasha Farivar, Josh Lovell, Nicholas Allen

PROGRAM NOTES

Welcome

Western Europe of the nineteenth century can be characterized as having an obsession with the anomalous and the liminal. During this century, mysterious or unexplained phenomena came under examination as never before: Freud published the *Interpretation of Dreams*, citizens flocked to the international expositions to witness scientific and cultural advances near and far, and the romanticization of unusual lifestyles such as the hedonistic artist and the eclectic genius took hold.

The topic of the otherworldly was of course under the purview of this cultural curiosity, which is evident in the two works on our program tonight. Both reflect a wondrous extra-human power and mythos which surely attracted audiences at the times of their premieres. The works have opposing subjects—a the former an opium-fueled dream of a witches Sabbath and the latter the setting of the Catholic mass—yet in their simultaneously grandiose and personal expression of the otherworldly, these works make ready complements.

On behalf of the University of Victoria Orchestra, we'd like to thank you for your support this year. We have enjoyed performing a wide repertoire of music together, and are honoured to capitulate our season with you.

Hector Berlioz's Program Notes:

The composer's intention has been to develop various episodes in the life of an artist, in so far as they lend themselves to musical treatment. As the work cannot rely on the assistance of speech, the plan of the instrumental drama needs to be set out in advance. The following programme¹ must therefore be considered as the spoken text of an opera, which serves to introduce musical movements and to motivate their character and expression.

Part one Daydreams, passions

The author imagines that a young musician, afflicted by the sickness of spirit which a famous writer has called the vagueness of passions (*le vague des passions*), sees for the first time a woman who unites all the charms of the ideal person his imagination was dreaming of, and falls desperately in love with her.

¹ This programme should be distributed to the audience at concerts where this symphony is included, as it is indispensable for a complete understanding of the dramatic plan of the work. [HB]

By a strange anomaly, the beloved image never presents itself to the artist's mind without being associated with a musical idea, in which he recognises a certain quality of passion, but endowed with the nobility and shyness which he credits to the object of his love.

This melodic image and its model keep haunting him ceaselessly like a double *idée fixe*. This explains the constant recurrence in all the movements of the symphony of the melody which launches the first *allegro*. The transitions from this state of dreamy melancholy, interrupted by occasional upsurges of aimless joy, to delirious passion, with its outbursts of fury and jealousy, its returns of tenderness, its tears, its religious consolations – all this forms the subject of the first movement.

Part two A ball

The artist finds himself in the most diverse situations in life, in the tumult of a festive party, in the peaceful contemplation of the beautiful sights of nature, yet everywhere, whether in town or in the countryside, the beloved image keeps haunting him and throws his spirit into confusion.

Part three Scene in the countryside

One evening in the countryside he hears two shepherds in the distance dialoguing with their 'ranz des vaches'; this pastoral duet, the setting, the gentle rustling of the trees in the wind, some causes for hope that he has recently conceived, all conspire to restore to his heart an unaccustomed feeling of calm and to give to his thoughts a happier colouring. He broods on his loneliness, and hopes that soon he will no longer be on his own... But what if she betrayed him!... This mingled hope and fear, these ideas of happiness, disturbed by dark premonitions, form the subject of the *adagio*. At the end one of the shepherds resumes his 'ranz des vaches'; the other one no longer answers. Distant sound of thunder... solitude... silence...

Part four March to the scaffold

Convinced that his love is spurned, the artist poisons himself with opium. The dose of narcotic, while too weak to cause his death, plunges him into a heavy sleep accompanied by the strangest of visions. He dreams that he has killed his beloved, that he is condemned, led to the scaffold and is witnessing *his own execution*. The procession advances to the sound of a march that is sometimes sombre and wild, and sometimes brilliant and solemn, in which a dull sound of heavy footsteps follows without transition the loudest outbursts. At the end of the march, the first four bars of the *idée fixe* reappear like a final thought of love interrupted by the fatal blow.

Part five Dream of a witches' sabbath

He sees himself at a witches' sabbath, in the midst of a hideous gathering of shades, sorcerers and monsters of every kind who have come together for his funeral. Strange sounds, groans, outbursts of laughter; distant shouts which seem to be answered by more shouts. The beloved melody appears once more, but has now lost its noble and shy character; it is now no more than a vulgar dance tune, trivial and grotesque: it is she who is coming to the sabbath... Roar of delight at her arrival... She joins the diabolical orgy... The funeral knell tolls, burlesque parody of the *Dies irae*², the *dance of the witches*. The dance of the witches combined with the *Dies irae*.

(b) 1855 version

Symphonie Fantastique, Op. 14 (1830) Hector Berlioz, 11 Dec 1803 – 8 March 1869

The *Symphonie Fantastique* is known for expanding the boundaries of the symphonic medium, and its importance in that respect cannot be understated. In many ways it is an avant-garde work: its use of syncopation, loud dynamics, and percussive effects were unprecedented and displeased many of its first listeners, and earned Berlioz the criticism of being an artless, brash composer. Additionally, its unusual five-movement form, integral narrative, and use of thematic and onomatopoeic melodic content broke the norms for absolute orchestral music, grafting on qualities of opera. These features were taken up by composers such as Wagner, Strauss, and Stravinsky.

Yet for all of its gigantisms, the work is extraordinarily personal. Berlioz, an archetypal Romantic, was primarily concerned with individual expression and perceived of his art as an extension of personal communication. *Symphonie Fantastique* is particularly autobiographical, chronicling the composer's adoration for the actress Harriet Smithson.

This symphony's programmatic tale of its subject's obsession with his muse is well loved. According to it, the first movement portrays the rapturous joys and sorrows of love that haunt the subject. The subject retreats to a ball and then a pastoral scene in the second and third movements, but finds no respite from the image of his beloved. Depressed at the thought of his love being spurned, the artist falls into an opium-induced sleep, wherein he dreams he witnesses his own execution. Finally, grotesque supernatural beings gather on a witches' Sabbath for the artists' funeral, and are joined by the beloved.

² **A hymn sung in funeral ceremonies in the Catholic Church. [HB]

Her melodic theme, the *idée fixe* which has tormented the artist, is distorted into a diabolical dance, and the funeral devolves into an orgy accompanied by the *Dies Irae*. The funeral bell tolls.

Mass No. 3 in F minor, WAB 28 (1867-68)
Anton Bruckner, 4 Sept 1824 – 11 Oct 1896

The first three masses composed by Bruckner represent a self-defined point of change in Bruckner's career. While he had written many masses while studying under Otto Kinzler, he regarded these earlier works as studies, and the D, E, and F minor masses as demonstrative of his personal style. The present work, a commission from the Vienna court chapel, represents a synthesis between the Classicism found in the composer's prior vocal works and expressive use of unusual and adventurous harmonies inspired by a mounting interest in Wagner and Liszt. Additionally, the F minor mass is an early instance of Bruckner's intentional use of meaningful durational proportions in both smaller phrases and larger structures. Finally, the work was started shortly after a three-month sanatorium treatment following a nervous breakdown.

Bruckner is known for fastidiously revising his work throughout his life, and the F minor mass is no exception. This process was mostly fine-tuning of orchestration and harmonic shading, easing of demands on performers, and perfection of durational proportions, though much of the 1877 revision was inspired by his in-depth study of Mozart's requiem. Scholars note that the choral parts did not change after the first revision, and can thus be seen as a structural skeleton.

Intriguing connections can be drawn between this work and *Symphonie Fantastique*. Where Berlioz's work is harmonically simple and complex in orchestration, the F minor mass is the inverse, relying on form and shifts in harmonic colour for interest in a timbrally conventional context. Both pieces, however, display a respect for classical musical values and a meaningful use of motive. Interestingly, while Berlioz was an extrovert given to passions, Bruckner was a solitary, pragmatic, and godly man. Both composers had obvious obsessions and neuroses which affected their music.

– Dave Riedstra

BIOGRAPHIES

Ajtony Csaba, *conductor*

Ajtony Csaba, born in Cluj, Romania, began his studies on the cello and later piano and composition in Budapest at the Academy of Music. He began studying conducting in Vienna and Budapest simultaneously with Tamás Gál, András Ligeti, Uroš Lajovic, Peter Eötvös, Istvan Dénes and Zoltán Pesko. He was awarded many prizes as a conductor and composer, and was a semi-finalist in the first competition for opera in Cluj, Romania. He has had numerous concerts in Hungary and Austria with orchestras including UMZE, Sinfonietta Baden, Webern Sinfonietta, Savaria Symphonic Orchestra, and Danube Symphonic Orchestra. In the 2003/04 season he was the assistant conductor and tutor of the Academy Orchestra Budapest and in 2005 was invited to be the assistant conductor of the Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra with their contemporary program. He made his conducting debut in the Viennese Musikverein with the RSO (Radio-Symphonieorchester, Wien) in 2007.

Since 2006 he has served as the chief conductor of the Central European Chamber Orchestra, and led the orchestra on a tour in China (performances including halls in Shenzhen, Lanzhou and in the Parliament in Beijing), with return engagements in 2007 and 2009. Ajtony Csaba has been the leader of the Vienna Jeunesse Choir since 2007. In 2008 he conducted at the Darmstadt Summer Courses for New Music and was assistant to Peter Eötvös at the Salzburg Festspiele. In 2008 he conducted the EuroMed Youth Orchestra in Damaskus, Syria.

In 2010 he was appointed as Assistant Professor at the University of Victoria, British Columbia where he conducts the UVic Symphony and teaches conducting.

Susan Young, *chorus director*

Canadian soprano Susan Young is a faculty member of the University of Victoria School of Music. In addition to her teaching duties, she maintains a demanding performance schedule. She has performed in Canada, the United States, Spain, France and Austria. Educated as both pianist (B.Mus Brigham Young University) and singer (M.Mus University of Calgary), she is known for the diversity of her skills, and though her first and enduring love is the art song, she is equally at home singing Bach cantatas, Verdi's Requiem, Schoenberg's Pierrot Lunaire, or more recent chamber works by Canadian composers such as Christopher Butterfield or Douglas Schmidt. She is sought after as a choral conductor, clinician and adjudicator and loves nothing more than to be involved in the performance of good music.



PHOTO: LIAM ALONSI

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Elena Bokova
Natalie Dzbik
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Cecilia Li
Gabriel Cayer

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Brittany Tsui
Jilaine Orton
Emily MacCallum
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Fahlon Smith
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Calvin Yang
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Shiun Kim
Ella Hopwood
Alex Klassen
Steven Jeon
Natalia Stoney
Paul Joo

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Brock Foerster
Mackenzie Carroll
Blake Palm

FLUTE

Aleksandra Tremblay*
Thomas Bauer
Cooper Reed

PICCOLO

Thomas Bauer

OBOE

Allison Phillips*
Diana Doublet

OBOE (outside)

Teigan Cosgrove

ENGLISH HORN

Diana Doublet

CLARINET

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James Yi

E-FLAT CLARINET

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BASSOON

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Eric Boulter
Lee Whitehorn

HORN

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Simon Dawkins
Justin Malchow
Collin Lloyd

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Ian Cohen
Ian VanGils
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TROMBONE

Liam Caveney*
Megan White
Trevor Hoy

TUBA

Alicia Sayell*
Paul Beauchesne §

TIMPANI

Brendan Chow*
Keenan Mittag-Degala

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Keenan Mittag-Degala
William Exner
Allyssa Haigh
Julia Albano-Crockford

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Annabelle Stanley §
Julia Cunningham §

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Heather Sander
Sarah Tao
Koba ter Neuzen
Anita Walper
Season Wang
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Stefani Yap
Alvina Yee
Monika Zabrowski

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Monty Clements
Spencer Davis
Aaron How
Chris Hsu
DJ Lohead
Robbie MacIntyre
Pierre Mackenzie
Kyle Newman
Thomas Nicholson
Joshua Poon
Matthew Roberson
Sheila Ruffell
Sonja Ruffell
Jordan Shier
James Zhang

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Solomon Cheung
Peter Constabel
Simon Dawkins
Harry Han
Ben Hillier
Tristan Holleufer
John Kaye
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Calvin Yang
Josh Yates
Terence Young

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Susan Young

REHEARSAL ACCOMPANIST

Tony Booker

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, April 6, 2:30 p.m. (\$12 advance / \$15 at the door)

PHILOMELA WOMEN'S CHOIR: A Potpourri for Spring

Mary Kennedy, director
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Monday, April 7, 8:00 p.m. (Admission by donation)

NEW MUSIC CONCERT

The New Music Performance class presents new pieces by UVic composition students written for UVic performance students as well as important works from the 20th/21st century.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Tuesday, April 8, 8:00 p.m. (Free Admission)

LISTENING TO THE 20TH CENTURY

Lectures and performances by students from Suzanne Snizek's History in Contemporary Music class.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Wednesday, April 9, 8:00 p.m. (Free Admission)

GRADUATING RECITAL: Maria Wang, cello

Cellist Maria Wang presents her Masters of Music graduating recital.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Monday, April 14, 8:00 p.m. (Free Admission)

GRADUATING RECITAL: Andrea Paddock, voice

Vocalist Andrea Paddock presents her Masters of Music graduating recital.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Wednesday, April 16, 8:00 p.m. (Free Admission)

GRADUATING RECITAL: Lindsey Herle, violin

Violinist Lindsey Herle presents her Bachelor of Music graduating recital.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

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