

**La Revue de Cuisine****Bohuslav Martinů**

The influence of jazz is found in this witty one-act ballet by Czech composer Bohuslav Martinů. Composed in 1927 for sextet, Martinů made an orchestral suite of the work in 1930.

After study at the Prague Conservatory, Martinů played violin the Czech Philharmonic. He moved to Paris in 1923 and studied composition with Vincent d'Indy at the Schola Cantorum. He fled France during the German occupation and came to the United States where he was a visiting professor at Princeton. His final years were spent in Switzerland.

La Revue de Cuisine was Martinů's first real success. In the ballet the dancers play a variety of cooking utensils. The marriage of Pot and Lid is being threatened by Twirling Stick. Dishcloth makes eyes at Lid but is challenged to a duel by Broom. Lid disappears and suddenly an enormous foot appears from the wings and kicks him back on stage. Pot and Lid kiss and make up. Twirling Stick goes off with Dishcloth.

**The Spider's Feast, Op.17****Albert Roussel**

Orphaned at an early age, Albert Roussel was raised by his grandfather and an aunt. His studies were in science and math as he prepared to join the French navy. On his first journey as a crew member, his voyage took him to Indo-China. In 1898 he left the navy and went to the Schola Cantorum in Paris and studied composition with Vincent d'Indy. His music is impressionistic and lushly orchestrated. The Spider's Feast was a ballet pantomime written in 1912. The ballet depicts life in a garden with the flute solo at the opening and closing of the work. Various insects are trapped in the spider's web, but when the spider prepares to eat them she in turn is eaten by a praying mantis. The funeral procession of the mayfly concludes the work. The ballet has been transcribed into an orchestral suite.

**Excerpts from "A Midsummer Night's Dream"****Mendelssohn**

Felix Mendelssohn and his sister Fanny had a great love for the plays of Shakespeare. Born into a wealthy and intellectual family, young Felix was encouraged and supported both in his musical and literary endeavors. At age seventeen he wrote an Overture to Midsummer Night's Dream in which

he captured the essence of this fairyland world. The play is one of Shakespeare's comedies and has three interlocking plots. In 1842 Mendelssohn was asked to compose incidental music for performances in Potsdam and Berlin. This incidental music comprises thirteen numbers including entr'actes, songs, choruses and instrumental accompaniment to stage action.

The Scherzo is played before Act I, and is a far-fetched Puckish transformation of the buffoon theme. It casts an enchanted spell with twittering flute, then comes to a quiet end.

Intermezzo follows the end of Act II. This Allegro Appassionato describes the frustrations of the four lovers, Lysander and Helena, Demetrius and Hermia, as they wander through the enchanted forest.

The Nocturne in which the French horn sings its lovely melody, is both "night" and the "lover's music." The play ends happily with all the couples solving the mix-ups and celebrating the wedding of Theseus and Hippolyta

Nothing could be more merry than the ending of this play and the wonderful joyful music of the Wedding March. Familiar to most listeners, it tells of a reception with family and friends and much happiness.

### **Paranoid Cheese**

**Marc Mellits**

Marc Mellits is one of the outstanding American composers of this generation. His music reflects his impressive training and his imaginative quest into jazz, minimalism, and electronic music. He lives in Syracuse, New York and is the founder and keyboard artist of The Mellits Consort. With this group he has made numerous CD's which are popular in the United States, Canada, and Europe.

Paranoid Cheese is the title of a CD produced in 2007 and is also the title of one of the pieces on the recording. In this work he uses devices of classical minimalism – repeated patterns and static tonal harmonies. His music is witty, engaging, and as delicious as ripe cheese.

### **Wine, Women and Song, Op. 333**

**Johann Strauss, Jr.**

This delightful waltz was commissioned in 1869 for the Vienna Men's Choral Association's so-called Fool's Night. It was dedicated to the association's chorus master, Johann Herbeck. The title was drawn from an old adage:

"Who loves not wine, women and song remains a fool his whole life long." Although the waltz is seldom heard in the choral version, it epitomizes Strauss at the height of his creative genius. After a 137 bar introduction the first waltz is typically Viennese. The waltzes that follow alternate between lush passion and good humor, and the swirling finish is underlined by a brass fanfare and a snare drum roll.

### **Symphony No. 35 in D Major, K. 385 (Haffner)**

**W.A. Mozart**

One of the most prominent citizens in the town of Salzburg Austria during the latter half of the eighteenth century was Sigmund Haffner, son of a wealthy burgomaster. In the spring of 1782 Haffner asked Leopold Mozart for a serenade to celebrate his ennoblement. Leopold promptly wrote to his son who was in Vienna, urging him to compose the work. Mozart was very busy at the time and his head was full of other compositions, but a commission from Haffner was not to be taken lightly. Six years earlier Mozart had composed a large scale work for the marriage of Elizabeth, Haffner's sister, and this Haffner Serenade had turned out to be a very ambitious project with six movements. Now Mozart was faced with the need to produce a new symphony he was to conduct in Vienna and to satisfy Herr Haffner. His father's letter gave rise to the thought of the six movement serenade, and he hastily dispatched a note to Leopold asking for the score. He took four of the original movements of the serenade and added clarinet and flute parts to the existing scoring and came up with this cheerful symphony which has ever after been called The Haffner.

The first movement, Allegro con spirito, has dramatic impact which continues throughout the movement.

In the slow movement, a song-like Andante, the music has a gentle charm which is enhanced by the simple instrumentation – only oboe, bassoon and horn along with the strings handle the fragile material.

In the Minuetto the trumpet and drum return to the orchestration and brighten the texture. The Trio contains an undulating melody throughout.

The finale, a bright Presto, is jocular and light-hearted. There is a constant recurrence of the opening theme of the movement which lends to a feeling of a rondo.

Program Notes by Annette Albright