

PERSONNEL

University of Oregon Symphony Orchestra

Zeke Fetrow, conductor

Violin I

Bashar Matti, *concertmaster*

Mary Evans

Anne Wolfe

Izabel Austin

Christopher Ives

Elyse Hudson

Lionel Thomas

Valerie Nelson

Violin II

Miya Saito-Beckman,

principal

Christopher Stark

Christine Senavsky

Elizabeth Thornton

Ji yeon Shin

Camille Barnisin

Cilka Daniels

Michelle Brunader

Viola

Amanda German, *principal*

Sean Flynn

Hannah Breyer

Emily Wade

Kailie DeBolt

Annissa Olsen

Christina Tatman

Tommi Moore

Cello

Chas Barnard, *principal*

Makenna Carrico

Jennifer Jordan

Molly Tourtelot

Kevin Hendrix

Gabriel Skyrms

Natalie Parker

Bass

Andrew Reid, *principal*

Georgia Muggli

Sam Miller

Josef Ward

Hayden Martinez

Flute

Sarah Benton, *co-principal*

Alexis Evers, *co-principal*

Robert Wakeley

Oboe

Laura Goben, *principal*

Tass Schweiger

Megan Zochart, *English horn*

Clarinet

Joshua Hettwer, *principal*

Courtney Sams

Bassoon

Kaden Christensen,

co-principal

Bronson Klimala-York,

co-principal

Horn

Gavin Betterley,

co-principal

Kelsi McGlothlin,

co-principal

Arryn Bess

Amos Heifner

Michelle Stuart

Trumpet

John Davison,

co-principal

Casey Riley, *co-principal*

Hannah Abercrombie

Trombone

John Church, *principal*

Kellyn Haley

Stephen Young, *bass*

Tuba

Gavin Milligan,

principal

Timpani

Adam Dunson, *principal*

Percussion

Todd Bills

Mason Caldwell

Leila Hawana

Aaron Howard

Tim Mansell

Harp

Rachel Petty



UNIVERSITY OF
OREGON

SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND DANCE

University of Oregon Symphony Orchestra

Zeke Fetrow, conductor

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Season 114, Program 50

Beall Concert Hall
Thursday, Feb. 5, 2014 | 7:30 p.m.



Polovtsian Dances**from *Prince Igor*** (1869-87)

Aleksandr Borodin

(1833-1887)

Scheherazade, Op. 35 (1888)

Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov

(1844-1908)

1. The Sea and Sinbad's Ship

Largo e maestoso. Allegro non troppo.

2. The Legend of the Kalendar Prince

Lento. Andantino. Allegro molto. Con moto.

3. The Young Prince and The Young Princess

Andantino quasi allegretto. Pochissimo più mosso.

Come prima. Pochissimo più animato.

4. Festival at Baghdad. The Sea. Ship Breaks against a Cliff Surmounted by a Bronze Horseman

Allegro molto. Vivo. Allegro non troppo maestoso.

in the winds that mark the opening of the piece before the ultimate tender embrace of the conclusion.

It is interesting to note that Rimsky-Korsakov actually never intended for *Scheherazade* to have such a definitive program. As he writes in his autobiography, "My Musical Life", completed some eighteen years after finishing *Scheherazade*, he details the process of composing the piece:

"...I had in view the creation of an orchestral suite in four movements, closely knit by the community of its themes and motives, yet presenting, as it were, a kaleidoscope of fairy-tale images and designs of oriental character..."

Almost completely divorced of the idea of having a strict program in mind, Nikolai initially wanted to title the movements of the suite: I. Prelude, II. Ballade, III. Adagio, and IV. Finale. On the advice of many friends, most notably Anatoly Lyadov, he was dissuaded from doing so. He goes on to explain:

"In composing *Shekherazada* I mean these hints to direct but slightly the hearer's fancy on the path which my own fancy had travelled, and to leave more minute and particular conceptions to the will and mood of each. All I had desired was that the hearer, if he liked my piece as symphonic music, would carry away the impression that it is beyond doubt an oriental narrative of some numerous and varied fairy-tale wonders and not merely four pieces played one after the other and composed on the basis of themes common to all the four movements."

How then do we react to this knowledge? Does that make the story of *Scheherazade* any less enchanting, or compelling? Does that mean that there's no Sultan, and no Sultana? Does that mean there's no ship, no sea, no prince, nor princess? The beauty of the imagination is that it gives us the freedom to make art whatever we want it to be. Listening to *Scheherazade* will conjure many images, likely different ones for every person—and that is exactly what Rimsky-Korsakov wanted. The magic of *Scheherazade* is that it inspires the imagination—encouraging us to approach a world full of adventure with an open heart and mind.

The first movement is full of vivid oceanic images; the foreboding power of the Sultan, the sweet lyricity of the Sultana—Scheherazade, the arpeggiated strings that imitate the flowing of ocean waves, harmonically searching the horizons, and the sense of boldy adventuring across the sea.

The second movement, embodying the tale of the Kalandar Prince beholds several very juxtaposed images—one, of the seduction, temptation and mystery of veiled women and another, of a monstrous genie, terrorizing the prince. Many recitative style sections lend the movement a conversational quality, and several very frantic responses create an atmosphere of extremes. A rejuvenated sense of triumph, dance and adventure pervade the middle of the movement and the section closes with a dramatic crescendo and accelerando underpinned with the powerful theme of the Sultan returning near the close of Scheherazade's tale.

The third movement tells the story of a young prince and princess—a love story that finds a charming balance between sincerity and playfulness. Between the rich, modal mixture found in the cantabile string sections and the wistful dancing of the woodwinds, this movement conjures images of passion and youth, love and innocence, fervor and excitement. The movement closes in a delicate, flirtatious spirit, trailing off into the horizon almost as softly as it began.

The final movement is filled with the excitement of the bazaar in Baghdad. It opens with a flurry of terror, recalling the imposing sultan and his threats. Scheherazade's response grows increasingly frightful, adding double, triple, and even quadruple stops to the solo violin, and is also underpinned by a soft but ominous drone. Between images of the buzz of the festival, and the contagious energy of the city, Rimsky-Korsakov reuses sounds from every movement, stirring up the emotions and images of the piece into a whirlwind of excitement. The tension builds steadily until, with the triumphant arrival of the music from the first movement, we reach the re-emergence of the sea and Sindbad's ship. In one fateful gesture, the ship crashes into the rocks of a cliffside as Scheherazade begins to conclude her final tale. The story begins to fade as Scheherazade offers her final statements to the Sultan. His response, heard in the pulsing heartbeats of the strings, is at first ominous, and foreboding. We hear again the chords

Alexander Borodin

Born: Oct. 31st, 1833, in St. Petersburg

Died: February 18th, 1887, in St. Petersburg

Alexander Borodin along with Mily Balakirev, César Cui, Modest Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov formed "The Five"—a group of Russian composers who met in St. Petersburg from 1856 to 1870. "The Five" dedicated themselves to creating a uniquely Russian flavor of classical music. Their use of Russian folk songs, orthodox church music, and Russian dances gave their nationalistic writing the air of Russian life. Equally unique was the group's reliance on exoticism and orientalism—their use of whole tone, pentatonic, and octatonic scales coupled with eastern themes and harmonies gave the music a refreshing, mystical and distinctive character.

Borodin, a Russian chemist, doctor and part-time composer is most well-known for his symphonies, string quartets and his opera, *Prince Igor*. *Prince Igor* is a four act opera based on the ancient Russian tale "The Lay of Igor's Host" which tells the story of military conquest and invasion. When Borodin died in 1887, the score for *Prince Igor* remain unfinished. Two of his dear friends and colleagues, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Alexander Glazunov set out to complete *Prince Igor* posthumously.

Polovetsian Dances

Composed in 1869 – 1887 (unfinished)

When Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazunov had completed the score to the opera, Nikolai began work on orchestrating the movements. *Polovetsian Dances* is a suite of dances from exotic scenes in *Prince Igor*. Orchestrated by Rimsky-Korsakov, the piece bears many of the great hallmarks of the orchestration found in *Scheherazade*. Borodin's wild sense for dance and rhythm paired with Rimsky-Korsakov's impeccable sense for orchestral color, and variety has given the work the longevity and timelessness it deserves.

There are six unique dances featured in the suite, which is often performed without the first of the six.

(No. 8) *Dance of the Polovetsian Maidens* (Omitted in this edition)

- I. Introduction
- II. Gliding Dance of the Maidens
- III. Wild Dance of the Men
- IV. General Dance (Sometimes called the Dance of the Archers)
- V. Dance of the Boys

The first dance, marked by lyricism and simplicity creates images of relaxation.

The second dance, a flowing, expressive melody, is sweet and tender.

The third dance, a wild flurry of notes, conjures images of dancing, and the running and stomping of feet.

The fourth dance, which is perhaps the most famous of the suite, features the percussion in a bold way, and has a very militaristic, regal quality.

The fifth dance, featuring many syncopated steps, gives the feeling of skipping, jumping, and generally just frolicking around.

The piece ends in a ferocious coda that builds excitement and energy continuously before the final resounding sonority.

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov

Born: March 18th, 1844 in Tikhvin, east of St. Petersburg
 Died: June 21st, 1908 in Lyubensk, south of St. Petersburg

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov was one of the most important influences in 19th-century Russian music. Born to a poor but aristocratic family, Rimsky-Korsakov's experience of Russian folk and religious music came to him from his mother and grandmother, both of which were born peasants. He served in the Russian Navy from 1862-1865. On a three-year cruise, he visited New York, London, and Rio de Janeiro, buying music in every port. After returning home, Rimsky-Korsakov takes up a desk job, and begins studying composition with Mily Balakirev. Six years later, at 27 years old, Nikolai is appointed professor of composition at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, where he would meet Alexander Borodin, a professor of chemistry. In a period of creative outpouring between 1887-1888, Nikolai would write his three most important orchestral works—Capriccio Espagnol,

Russian Easter Overture, and Scheherazade. These three orchestral works, along with his operas, would establish Rimsky-Korsakov's place in the history of classical music as a great orchestrator, teacher and composer. Nikolai dies in the summer of 1908, at 64 years old, after complications with a failing heart.

Scheherazade

Composed in Winter 1887- Fall 1888

Premiered in St. Petersburg on November 9th, 1888

The magic, mystery, and power of Scheherazade has captivated audiences for over a century. Immediately well-received, the work stands as Rimsky-Korsakov's most famous and most performed composition. A staple of modern orchestras around the world, Scheherazade is essentially a concerto for orchestra. Each movement is littered with challenging, exotic solos for various instruments. The work boasts one of the most diverse, brilliant, and colorful orchestrations of any piece in classical music.

Rimsky-Korsakov introduces the tale of Scheherazade with the following inscription that prefaces the score:

“The Sultan Schahriar, convinced of the perfidy and faithlessness of women, vowed to execute each of his wives after the first night. But the Sultana Scheherazade saved her own life by interesting him in the tales she told him through 1001 nights. Impelled by curiosity, the Sultan continually put off her execution, and at last entirely abandoned his sanguinary resolve. Many marvels did Scheherazade relate to him, citing the verses of poets and the words of songs, weaving tale into tale and story into story.”

This programmatic suite features musical pictures of the fantastical tales from *The Arabian Nights*, also known as *One Thousand and One Nights*, a famous collection of West and South Asian stories and folk tales, written in Arabic. The four movements of the suite are titled:

- I. The sea and Sindbad's ship.
- II. The story of prince-kalandar.
- III. The young prince and princess.
- IV. Festival in Baghdad. The sea. The ship breaks up against a cliff surmounted by a bronze horseman. Conclusion.