

LALO

Symphonie Espagnole

Sarasate: Zigeunerweisen • Ravel: Tzigane
Saint-Saëns: Havanaise

Marat Bisengaliev, Violin

Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra
Johannes Wildner



Edouard Lalo (1823 - 1892)

Symphonie espagnole, Op. 21

Pablo Sarasate (1844 - 1908)

Zigeunerweisen, Op. 20

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835 - 1921)

Havanaise, Op. 83

Maurice Ravel (1875 - 1937)

Tzigane, rapsodie de concert

Edouard Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole* is among the most popular works in the violinist's repertoire. Lalo's name may be Spanish but his family had established themselves in northern France in the 16th century. The composer was born in Lille in 1823, son of a father who had served in Napoleon's armies. Early training at Lille Conservatoire in violin and cello was followed, at the age of sixteen, by a brief period of study in Paris with the violinist and conductor Habeneck and private lessons in composition. In Paris, in independence of his father, who disapproved of his son's choice of career, he earned a living as a violinist and as a teacher, while writing music that did not achieve the success he needed. From the 1850s he was particularly involved in performance as viola-player in the Armingaud Quartet, and later in his own quartet, ensembles that re-introduced to the French public the classical quartet repertoire of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven.

It was not until the 1870s that Lalo began to make an impression as a composer, with the performance of his *Violin Concerto* in 1874 by Pablo Sarasate, to whom the *Symphonie espagnole* of the same year was dedicated. This was followed by other orchestral compositions, including the successful *Cello Concerto* and a series of works for solo violin and orchestra. Still greater success came at last in 1888 with the production of his opera *Le roi d'Ys* at the

Opéra-Comique, after a series of earlier operatic disappointments. He died in 1892.

The *Symphonie espagnole* is a symphony only in name. The mood of the work is established at the start with the brief orchestral introduction, followed by the entry of the soloist and the characteristic Spanish rhythms of the principal theme. The second scherzando movement, with its contrasting central section, is followed by a characteristically Spanish Intermezzo and a lyrically moving slower movement that grows in intensity with its idiomatically Spanish turns of phrase. The work ends with a final Rondo of bright elegance and charm in which there is ample opportunity for virtuoso display.

The Spanish violinist Pablo Sarasate studied in Paris and at the age of fifteen started on a concert career that was to bring him fame throughout Europe and the Americas. Composers who wrote for him include Bruch, and his fellow-violinists Joachim and Wienawski. For his own use he wrote a number of works for violin of which his Gypsy piece, *Zigeunerweisen*, Opus 20, was published in Leipzig in 1878.

Camille Saint-Saëns, a composer whose life spans a vast period, from the age of Schumann and Mendelssohn to that of Ravel and Debussy, and whose works embrace every conceivable genre, wrote two of his violin concertos for Sarasate, as well as the very Spanish Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso. The same Spanish element informs the well known *Havanaise*, written in 1887.

Having left the Paris Conservatoire in 1895, Ravel returned two years later to study with Gabriel Fauré. He nevertheless failed to win any prize for composition, an achievement that was obligatory for the continuance of studies. His attempts to win the Prix de Rome in successive years brought no result, while he was at the same time winning considerable success outside the academic world. This success continued, while the scandal of his ultimate failure to win the Prix de Rome in 1904 led to the resignation of the Director of the Conservatoire and his replacement by Fauré, a composer of more progressive tendencies. In the years after the 1914 - 1918 war, during which he served as a driver, Ravel moved out of Paris. His compositions of this period

include a violin sonata, a sonata for violin and cello in memory of Debussy and the famous Tzigane, written in 1924 for the Hungarian violinist Jelly d'Aranyi, whose own improvised additions the composer added to the completed work. Ravel reportedly remarked that he had no idea what she was doing, as she played the piece, but he liked it. The Tzigane remains a show-piece of the violin repertoire, whether in the version for violin and orchestra or in its original form, for violin and piano, designed by the composer to test the musical and technical ability of any performer and later described by one of Ravel's friends as a violinist's minefield. The work captures the spirit of gypsy improvisation, its art successfully concealing art.

Marat Bisengaliev

Marat Bisengaliev was born in Alma-Ata in Kazakhstan in 1962 and began to learn the violin at the age of six, graduating from the Alma-Ata Conservatory in 1984 with a first prize. He went on to study at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow with Boris Belinky and Valerie Klimov. Having made his concerto debut at the age of nine in Alma-Ata, Bisengaliev continued to perform as a soloist throughout Eastern Europe and also served as Artistic Director of the Kazakhstan Chamber Orchestra, before settling in 1989 in England. In 1991 Bisengaliev won first prize in the International Nicanor Zabaleta Competition, also receiving the special virtuoso prize for the most outstanding performance of the competition. He earlier was a prize-winner in 1988 at the Leipzig International Bach Competition. He made his concerto debut in England playing the Beethoven concerto with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, followed by a London performance of the Tchaikovsky concerto. He has appeared as a soloist with major orchestras in Russia, England, Germany, Poland and the former Republic of Czechoslovakia. His recordings include concertos issued by Melodiya, Naxos and Marco Polo and he has been three times the subject of a Central Soviet Television documentary, most recently in 1992.

The Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra of Katowice (PNRSO)

The Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra of Katowice (PNRSO) was founded in 1945, soon after the end of the World War II, by the eminent Polish conductor Witold Rowicki. The PNRSO replaced the Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra which had existed from 1934 to 1939 in Warsaw, under the direction of another outstanding artist, Grzegorz Fitelberg. In 1947 Grzegorz Fitelberg returned to Poland and became artistic director of the PNRSO. He was followed by a series of distinguished Polish conductors - Jan Krenz, Bohdan Wodiezko, Kazimierz Kord, Tadeusz Strugala, Jerzy Maksymiuk, Stanislaw Wislocki and, since 1983, Antoni Wit. The orchestra has appeared with conductors and soloists of the greatest distinction and has recorded for Polskie Nagrania and many international record labels. For Naxos, the PNRSO will record the complete symphonies of Tchaikovsky and Mahler.

Johannes Wildner

Johannes Wildner was born in the Austrian resort of Müzzzuschlag in 1956 and studied violin and conducting, taking his diploma at the Vienna Musikhochschule and proceeding to a doctorate in musicology. A member of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, he has toured widely as leader of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra's Johann Strauss Ensemble and of the Vienna Mozart Academy. As a conductor he has directed the Orchestra Sinfonica dell'Emilia Romagna Arturo Toscanini, the Budapest State Opera Orchestra, the Silesian Philharmonic, the Malmö Symphony Orchestra, the Dresden Philharmonic and others. He has recorded works by Schumann, Wagner and Mozart for Naxos and is one of the main conductors in the Marco Polo Johann Strauss II complete edition.

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Eduard Lalos Symphonie espagnole gehört zu den populärsten Werken der Violinliteratur. Obwohl der Name spanisch ist, war die Familie des Komponisten seit dem 16. Jahrhundert in Nordfrankreich ansässig. Lalo wurde 1823 in Lille geboren. Sein Vater hatte in der Armee Napoleons gedient. Am Konservatorium seiner Heimatstadt lernte er Geige und Cello spielen, danach folgte ein Studium in Paris, das auch Komposition einschloß. Gegen den Willen seines Vaters wurde er Musiker, und er lebte in Paris von Einkünften als Geiger und Lehrer, während er mit seinen Kompositionen nicht den erhofften Erfolg hatte. Nach 1850 war er zunächst als Bratschist im Armingaud-Quartett tätig, dann leitete er sein eigenes Quartett, mit dem er der französischen Öffentlichkeit die Streichquartette von Haydn, Mozart und Beethoven wieder ins Bewußtsein brachte.

Erst in den siebziger Jahren begann man auf Lalo als Komponist aufmerksam zu werden. 1874 führte Pablo de Sarasate sein Violinkonzert zum erstenmal auf. Im gleichen Jahr entstand auch die Symphonie espagnole, die Sarasate gewidmet wurde. Es folgten Kompositionen für Orchester und das erfolgreiche Cellokonzert, außerdem einige Stücke für Solovioline und Orchester. Nach mehreren Enttäuschungen auf dem Gebiet der Oper kam der

ganz große Erfolg 1888 mit der Uraufführung der Oper *Le roi d'Ys* an der Opéra Comique. Lalo starb im Jahre 1892.

Bei der *Symphonie espagnole* handelt es sich eigentlich nicht um eine Sinfonie im formalen Sinne. Die Orchestereinführung bestimmt von Anfang an den Charakter des Stücks, noch bevor der Solist das Hauptthema mit den charakteristischen spanischen Rhythmen vorträgt. Der zweite Satz, *Scherzando*, hat einen kontrastierenden Mittelteil. Es folgt ein *Intermezzo* mit typisch spanischem Charakter und ein lyrischer langsamer Satz, ebenfalls mit spanischem Idiom, dessen Intensität sich steigert. Den Schluß bildet ein *Rondo* voll strahlender Eleganz und Charme, in dem der Solist reichlich Gelegenheit erhält, sein Können zu zeigen.

Der spanische Geiger Pablo de Sarasate studierte in Paris und begann eine Karriere als Solist im Alter von fünfzehn Jahren, im Verlauf derer er in ganz Europa und Amerika Berühmtheit erlangen sollte. Komponisten wie Max Bruch und seine Kollegen Joachim und Wieniawski schrieben Stücke für ihn. Er selbst schrieb eine Reihe von Stücken für den eigenen Gebrauch, darunter die *Zigeunerweisen* op.20, die 1878 in Leipzig veröffentlicht wurden.

Das Leben des Komponisten Camille Saint-Saëns umspannt eine lange Periode, von der Zeit Schumanns und Mendelssohns bis zu Debussy und Ravel. Ebenso umfangreich ist sein Schaffen, das Werke jeglicher Gattung aufweist, darunter zwei Violinkonzerte für Sarasate und das sehr spanische *Introduction und Rondo Capriccioso*. Dasselbe spanische Element findet sich in der bekannten *Havanaise* aus dem Jahre 1887.

1895 hatte Maurice Ravel das Pariser Konservatorium verlassen; zwei Jahre später allerdings kehrte er an das renommierte Institut zurück, um bei Gabriel Fauré zu studieren. Aber es gelang ihm nicht, einen jener Kompositionspreise zu gewinnen, die für die Fortsetzung des Studiums unverzichtbar waren. Mehrmals nahm er den begehrten *Prix de Rome* (Rom-Preis) in Angriff - vergebens. Doch während die Resultate in der Welt der Akademiker ausblieben, konnte er sich in der Öffentlichkeit mehr und mehr durchsetzen. Während ihm der Erfolg treu blieb, gab es auf der andern Seite einen

herzhaften Skandal: Auch 1904 verweigerte ihm das Konservatorium den Prix de Rome, worauf der konservative Direktor zurücktreten mußte. An seine Stelle trat der fortschrittlichere Gabriel Fauré.

Nach dem Ende des Ersten Weltkrieges, den er als Fahrer überstanden hatte, verließ Maurice Ravel Paris. Damals komponierte er unter anderem die Violinsonate und die Duosonate für Violine und Violoncello (Claude Debussy in memoriam). 1924 entstand schließlich die berühmte Tzigane für die ungarische Geigerin Jelly d'Aranyi. Sie überraschte den Komponisten mit improvisatorischen Einlagen, die er in das Werk aufnahm: Er habe die Zutaten zwar nicht recht verstanden, bemerkte er dazu, doch sie hätten ihm gefallen.

Die Tzigane wurde sowohl in der Originalfassung für Violine und Klavier wie auch in der orchestrierten Version zum Paradestück der Violinliteratur: eine Komposition, in der die musikalischen und technischen Fähigkeiten des Solisten auf eine solche Weise gefordert werden, daß ein Freund des Komponisten das virtuose Werk später als ein Minenfeld für Geiger bezeichnete.

Formales Vorbild der Tzigane sind die Ungarischen Rhapsodien von Franz Liszt: eine langsame, improvisatorisch freie Einleitung geht in einen rasanten Csárdás über. "Echt" wirkt auch der Gebrauch der charakteristischen Zigeuner-Molltonleiter. Und doch ist alles reinstes Ravel, das Produkt eines Komponisten, der jegliche Form der Exotik aufs Kunstvollste in seinen eigenen Stil übersetzen konnte.

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STEREO

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DDD

Playing
Time :
61'29"

- | | | |
|---|--|--------|
| 1 | EDOUARD LALO: Symphonie Espagnole, Op. 21 | |
| | Allegro non troppo | (7:28) |
| 2 | Scherzando: Allegro molto | (4:14) |
| 3 | Intermezzo: Allegretto non troppo | (6:27) |
| 4 | Andante | (6:36) |
| 5 | Rondo: Allegro | (8:29) |
| 6 | PABLO SARASATE: Zigeunerweisen, Op. 20 | (8:22) |
| 7 | CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS: Havanaise, Op. 83 | (9:51) |
| 8 | MAURICE RAVEL: Tzigane | (9:33) |

Recorded at the Concert Hall of the Polish Radio in Katowice,
from 31th January to 3rd February, 1992.

Producer: Beata Jankowska

Engineer: Otto Nopp

Music Notes: Keith Anderson

Cover photo by RBF Filmstore



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