University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
Department of Music and Theatre Arts

presents the

SYMPHONY

ORCHESTRA

NOBUYOSHI YASUDA CONDUCTOR

with guest soloist

Paul R. Kosower, Cello

Sunday, April 22, 2007
2:00 p.m.
Gantner Concert Hall
Haas Fine Arts Center

www.uwec.edu/mus-the
PROGRAM

Prelude und Liebestod (1859) .................................. Richard Wagner (1813-1883)
from Tristan and Isolde

Prélude à L’Après-midi d’un faune (1894) ...... Claude Debussy (Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun) (1862-1918)

*Paul R. Kosower, Solo Cello

INTERMISSION

Tod und Verklärung (1889) ......................... Richard Strauss (Death and Transfiguration) (1864-1949)

La Valse (1921) ........................................ Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

* UW-Eau Claire Music Faculty
Wagner prefices the score of the prelude with this note:

‘An old, old tale, inexhaustible in its variations, and ever sung anew in all the languages of medieval Europe, tells us of Tristan and Isolde. For his king the trusty vassal had wooed a maid he dared not tell himself he loved, Isolde; as his master’s bride she followed him, because, powerless, she had no choice but to follow the suitor. The Goddess of Love, jealous of her downtrodden rights, avenged herself: the love potion destined by the bride’s careful mother for the partners in this merely political marriage, in accordance with the customs of the age, the Goddess foists on the youthful pair through a blunder diversely accounted for; fired by its draught, their love leaps suddenly to vivid flame, and they have to acknowledge that they belong only to each other. Henceforth no end to the yearning, longing, rapture, and misery of love: world, power, fame, honor, chivalry, loyalty, and friendship, scattered like an insubstantial dream; one thing alone left living: longing, longing unquenchable, desire forever renewing itself, craving and languishing; one sole redemption: death, surcease of being, the sleep that knows no waking!’ (Trans. from Norton Critical Scores)

Prélude à L’Après-midi d’un faune
(Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun)

Stéphane Mallarmé’s poem L’Après-midi d’un faune ("The Afternoon of a Faun"), written in 1876, inspired Debussy, at about the time he turned 30, to conceive an orchestral work in three parts, to be designated respectively Prélude, Interlude and Paraphrase finale. A performance of such a triptych was announced for Brussels in March 1894, but it did not take place,
for Debussy never got beyond the most rudimentary sketches for the second and third sections. He decided to abandon them altogether and revise the *Prélude*, extending it as a self-standing piece in which he felt the character of Mallarmé’s eclogue to be fully reflected. The word *Prélude* was retained as part of the title on the printed score.

The flute, indeed, in one of the most celebrated solo passages in the orchestral literature, begins this work with an evocation of the opening lines of Mallarmé’s poem:

I would perpetuate those nymphs.
Their rosy
Bloom’s so light, it floats upon air drowsy
With heavy sleep.
Was it a dream?

*(Norton Critical Scores)*

**Kol Nidrei, Adagio for Violoncello, Op. 47**

Max Bruch’s conservatively structured works in the German romantic musical tradition, placed him in the camp of Romantic classicism exemplified by Johannes Brahms; rather than the opposing “New Music” of Franz Liszt and Richard Wagner. In his time, he was known primarily as a choral composer.

*Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47, is a composition for cello and orchestra. Bruch completed the composition in Liverpool before it was first published in Berlin in 1881. It is styled as an *Adagio on Hebrew Melodies* and consists of a series of variations on two main themes of Jewish origin. The first theme, which also lends the piece its title, comes from the Kol Nidrei prayer which is recited during the evening service on Yom Kippur. In Bruch’s setting of the melody, the cello imitates the rhapsodical voice of the cantor who chants the liturgy in the synagogue. The second subject of the piece is quoted from the middle section
of Isaac Nathan’s arrangement of “O Weep for those that wept on Babel’s stream,” a lyric which was penned by Byron in a collection called Hebrew Melodies (which also included the famous poem “She Walks in Beauty”).

Tod und Verklärung (Death and Transfiguration)

In the small, poverty-stricken room, only dully illuminated by a candle end, lies the sick man on his cot. He has just struggled once again with death in wild desperation. Now, exhausted, he has sunk into sleep, and the quiet ticking of the clock on the wall is all you can hear in the room, in which the fearful silence is a premonition of the approach of death. Around the pale features of the sick man plays a sorrowful smile. At the confines of life, is he dreaming of the golden days of childhood? – But death does not grant its victim sleep and dreams for very long. It shakes him awake cruelly and starts the battle anew. The urge for life and power of death! What a horrible struggle! Neither one wins the victory, and it becomes quiet once again! – Sinking back, weary from battle, sleepless as if in feverish delirium, the sick man now sees his life, trait by trait and image by image, passing by his mind’s eye. First the dawn of childhood, shining sweetly in untouched innocence! Then the bolder games of the young man, using and trying out his strength, until he has matured for the manly battle, which now blazes forth in hot joy with life’s highest benefits as its stake. To take everything that ever seemed transfigured and to mold it into an even more transfigured shape: this alone is the noble impulse that accompanies him through life. Coldly and scornfully the world places one barrier after another in the path of his efforts. Whenever he believes he is near his goal, he is greeted by a thunderous “Halt!” “Turn the barrier into a rung by which to rise ever higher and higher!” Thus he strives, thus he climbs, does not abandon his scared impulse. What he has sought all this time with his heart’s deepest longing, he still seeks while bathed in mortal sweat, seeks – but, alas,
cannot find it. Even if he conceives of it more clearly, even if it gradually grows upon him, still he can never exhaust its possibilities, can never consummate it in his mind. Then the last blow of death's iron hammer rings out, breaks the earthy body in two and covers his eyes with the night of death. — But he hears mightily resounding from heaven that which he sought here longingly: world-redemption, world-transfiguration! (R. Strauss, Dover Score)

La Valse

Maurice Ravel's own scenario prefaces the score:

'Through breaks in the swirling clouds, waltzing couples may be glimpsed. Little by little they disperse: one makes out an immense hall filled with a whirling crowd. The stage is illuminated gradually. The light of the chandeliers peaks at the fortissimo. An imperial Court, about 1855.' (Translation from The Cambridge Companion to Ravel)

La Valse was composed between December 1919 and March 1920 after the First World War. The First World War deeply affected Ravel in a personal way. Ravel once said, 'I conceived of this work as a sort of apotheosis of the Viennese waltz, mingled with, in my mind, the impression of a fantastic, fatal whirling....'. Most of European cities were destroyed and many people became victims of the war; people lost their hope and courage, but, instead, harbored confusion, anxiety, and despair. 'A fantastic, fatal whirling', as Ravel described in his scenario, must have been Ravel's personal view of the life and the society in Europe after the First World War. The world began to waltz and the waltz gradually became wilder and wilder, then it turned into destructive fatal-whirling; spinning and spinning; alas! It finally self-destructed.

This reminds me of the famous Charlie Chaplin movie, Modern Times. People were overly excited about the development of
industry and technology; however, machines suddenly began to take over people. Chaplin gave us a warning in the movie that the society is leading itself into destruction. Ravel wrote to his friend Maurice Emmanuel: “Some people have discovered in it an intention of parody, even caricature, while others plainly have seen a tragic allusion – end of the Second Empire, state of Vienna after the war.... Tragic, yes, it can be that like any expression – pleasure, happiness – which is pushed to extremes. You should see in it only what comes from the music: a mounting volume of sound.”

When I think what has been happening in our own time, I cannot just neglect it as other people’s concerns. The fatal-whirling has definitely begun to spin in our own planet. (Nobuyoshi Yasuda)

Paul R. Kosower, cello

Paul R. Kosower is Professor of Cello, coordinator of the String Division and conductor of the University Chamber Orchestra at the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire. He was awarded five years of scholarship to study at the Cleveland Institute of Music with former principal cellist of the Cleveland Orchestra, Ernst Silberstein. Professor Kosower made his New York debut in Town Hall and has performed many concerts throughout the U. S. along with a concert tour with the Dolce Cello Trio with his son Mark and daughter Paula to Romania, Hungary and Austria. As soloist with orchestras, he frequently performs concertos and has soloed with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Milwaukee Symphony and frequently solos with the Mississippi Valley Symphony Orchestra of St. Paul along with the Manitowoc Symphony. His concerts have been broadcast over Wisconsin Public Radio, Minnesota Public Radio and in addition he has performed a number of live broadcast concerts on the “Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series” in Chicago.
University Symphony Orchestra
Nobuyoshi Yasuda, conductor

Violin I
Peter Chang**
Laura Wenzel
Laura Hutchens
Jesse Traner
Bethany Webster
Emily Schneider
Nat Shuda
Craig Heckner
Liz Krickhahn
Amanda Buchmeier
Bethany Ratzlaff

Violin II
Mary Heimerman*
Kim Drewiske
Mike Muelling
Naomi Hasan
Kathleen Nottingham
Danielle Smith
Ann Hepp
Katie Reimer
Jerry Noth
Mary Zimmerman

Viola
Steven Ethington*
Martha Seroogy
Katie Atherton
Sarah Griesman
Callie Keaton
Christianne Stagg
Elizabeth Mackey

Cello
Errin Kilgore^*
Hayley Nelson^*
Amanda Spindler
Katie Douglass

Cello cont.
Nathan Brunette
James Wesson
Philip Olson
Chris Miller
Amanda Blake
Bass
Kevin Rowe*
Mike Steen
Josh Kimball
Aaron Winter
Andy Detra
Josh Mittendorf
Kevin McInterny
Shane McLaughlin
Kyle Bonnell

Flute
Nich Handahl^*
Angela Roehl^*
Anne Bitney

Oboe & English horn
Tim Baumann^*
Lauren Zemlicka^*
Emily Weber^*

Clarinet
Liz Wilson^*
Jennifer Tinberg^*
Jim Skaleski
Emily Mattheisen

Bass Clarinet
Jacob Boyle*
Bassoon
Claire Tiller*
Makenzie Kojis

Contrabassoon
Matthew Kruszka^*
Arica Hoppe^*

Horn
Charles Willcutt*
Michael Renneke
Paul Saganski
Amy Schmidt

Trumpet
Tom Krochock*
John Lydon
Josh Nims

Trombone
Randall D. Pingrey^*
Kyle J. Siegrist^*
Joshua A. Becker

Tuba
Joshua J. Lee*

Percussion
Nick LaMuro*
Zach Hines
Brian Claxton
Peter Elkin
David Power
Cody Schleichert

Harp
Bethany Van Goor*

** Concertmaster
* Principal
^ Co-Principal

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