Princeton University Orchestra
Michael Pratt, conductor

Miri Murakami '04, violin
3rd Runner 2004 Concerto Competition

Mendelssohn
Symphony No. 4 Italian

Korngold
Violin Concerto

Stravinsky
Firebird Suite

Friday
March 5, 2004
8:00 p.m.

Saturday
March 6, 2004
8:00 p.m.

Richardson Auditorium
in Alexander Hall
The
Princeton University Orchestra
Michael Pratt, conductor

FELIX MENDELSSOHN
1809-1847
Symphony No. 4 in A Major, “Italian,” Opus 90
   Allegro vivace
   Andante con moto
   Con moto moderato
   Saltarello: Presto

INTERMISSION

ERIC WOLFGANG KORNGOLD
1897-1957
Violin Concerto in D Major, Opus 35
   Moderato nobile
   Romance: Andante
   Finale: Allegro assai vivace

KIRI MURAKAMI ’04, violin
Co-winner 2004 Concerto Competition

IGOR STRAVINSKY
1882-1971
Suite from The Firebird (1919 version)
   Introduction
   The Firebird and its Dance
   Variation of the Firebird
   Round of the Princesses (Khorovod)
   Infernal Dance of King Kotschei
   Berceuse
   Finale

No audio or video recording or photography is permitted in Richardson Auditorium.
No one will be admitted into the Auditorium during the performance of a piece.

Friday, March 5, 2004 and Saturday, March 6, 2004 at 8:00 p.m.
RICHARDSON AUDITORIUM IN ALEXANDER HALL • PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
Kiri Murakami '04, violin, began studying the violin and piano at the age of three and four, respectively. In 1993, she entered The Juilliard School to study violin with Masao Kawasaki, composition with Andrew Thomas and Iris Touix, and piano with Elena Waldorsky. She was the First Prize winner in the Bach Violin Concerto Competition at The Juilliard School, and earned recognition from the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts as a finalist in violin and Honorable Mention in composition. Her orchestral compositions Metamorphosis and Reminiscence were given their premieres by The Juilliard Pre-College Orchestras. In 2000, she was commissioned by the Gemini Youth Symphony to compose a short orchestral work.

Other musical activities include the Aspen Music Festival, where she performed with the Young Artist Orchestra, and the New York Youth Symphony where she served as a concertmaster for three years. Currently, she is a member of the Princeton Symphony Orchestra, Co-concertmaster of the Princeton University Orchestra, a member of the Princeton University String Quartet, and studies the violin with Anna Lim. Ms. Murakami is a music major at Princeton, pursuing certificates in Musical Performance, Japanese, and Environmental Studies. She is this year's Student Member of the Princeton University Concerts Committee.

Special thanks to the judges of this year's Concerto Competition: Jan Krzywicki, Temple University; Susan Novickii, Curtis Institute of Music; Steve Mackey, Princeton University.

Michael Pratt joined the Princeton faculty in 1977. Over the past twenty-six seasons, he has helped to engineer a major expansion of performance activities at Princeton, currently serving as Director of the Certificate Program in Musical Performance. Mr. Pratt also co-directs both the Composers' Ensemble and The Richardson Chamber Players, and teaches conducting and other performance courses. Mr. Pratt is Co-founder and was Music Director of the Opera Festival of New Jersey from 1984 to 1995. With the Opera Festival, he conducted eighteen new productions of works ranging from Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro to Verdi's Falstaff to the world premiere of Peter Westergaard's The Tempest. Under Mr. Pratt, the Opera Festival achieved international recognition.

Music Director of the Delaware Valley Philharmonic since 1990, Mr. Pratt has appeared as guest conductor with the Concerto Soloists of Philadelphia, the Boston Symphony Chamber Players, the orchestras of Detroit, Rochester, Atlanta, Long Island, and Indianapolis, the Aspen Music Festival, and Opera Delaware. From 1985 to 1990 he also served as Associate Conductor of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra.

Notes on This Evening's Program

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A Major, "Italian," Opus 90

Another musical prodigy graces this evening's program: Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. One only needs to be reminded that Mendelssohn wrote his great Octet at age sixteen and the Overture to A Midsummer Night's Dream at age seventeen. By the premire of the Italian Symphony, Mendelssohn was twenty-four years old and a mature composer. His parents deserve much credit for providing young Felix and his equally talented sister, Fanny, with unbelievable opportunities to learn music. They often hired an orchestra of musicians with whom young Felix could test his many youthful compositions. To refine and cultivate his musical tastes beyond his North German heritage, Felix embarked upon a "grand tour" of Europe. Many works were inspired by these new environments, including the Hebrides Overture and the "Scotch" Symphony. Italy, where he sojourned from late 1830 through 1831, proved a fruitful destination for him as well, just as it had for countless other artists. Letters written to his family describe his steady work upon a "merry symphony." Much of the symphony was finished in Italy, but it took the motivation of a commission from the London Philharmonic Society for Mendelssohn to finish the full score. The symphony was heard for the first time in London on 13 May 1833 under the composer's baton.

One significant historical twist has received much scholarly attention in recent years. Despite the work's resounding success, Mendelssohn was unhappy with his symphony, and set out to revise much of it. These "improvements" were left hanging at Mendelssohn's early death in 1847. The symphony was performed and published posthumously in Germany, but in its initial version. Audiences have applauded its brilliance without knowing of the composer's self-critical battles. Mendelssohn's revisions have been recently incorporated into a new edition, but tradition has given precedence to the first version.

Italian-inspired sounds seem to creep into several corners of this symphony, and the opening of the Allegro vivace is often cited as an embodiment of Italy's ebullient energy. Felix spoke of in his letters. The opening passage of punctuating wind chords under the spontaneous sounding violin melody serves as the pulse of the movement. The second theme sung by the clarinets and bassoons is a wonderful example of Mendelssohn's sense for orchestral color, although more will follow in the next movement. The development introduces a new idea that undergoes thorough fugal procedures. All three principal ideas then intertwine in the recapitulation and close of the movement. The second movement is usually described as a religious procession, the first six beats serving as a chant-like intonation. However, the Andante con moto tempo marking and the rather brisk walking bass line can sometimes disturb this pious metaphor. Still, the concluding bars do represent the idea of a departing procession, the melody first fragments and disappears, followed by the bass line. The third movement is not
Italian at all, as it evokes the elegant minuet of bygone days. Perhaps it is because so much of the symphony is scherzo-like that Mendelssohn opted for this alternative. The trio is more peculiar, filled with forest horns (the two actually in the orchestra, aided by the bassoons) and martial fanfares. German Romantic commentators were quick to suggest Mendelssohn's apparent homesickness in this music. The finale is explicitly based upon an Italian folk dance: the saltarello. Castanet riffs and tambourine flourishes abound in the movement. The A-minor tonal setting is perhaps an unexpected antithesis to the A-major opening but the

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Korngold

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Korngold: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in D major, Opus 35

Erich Wolfgang Korngold was a child prodigy, whose talent won him the praises of such leading composers as Mahler, R. Strauss, Puccini, and Sibelius. His first great success was the ballet Der Schneemann performed at the Vienna Court Opera in 1910. Symphonic works and several notable operas followed. Die tote Stadt (1920) was one of the most successful operas of the early 1920s, and it securely established Korngold as one of Austria's leading composers. However, the aesthetic climate of the late 1920s no longer supported Korngold's progressive harmonic language and late Romantic idiom. His next operas were criticized and quickly disappeared. Anti-Semitism in Germany contributed to his growing artistic frustration, and his work was banned there after 1933. Later in the decade, the Nazi's influence in Vienna stymied his career there as well.

However, by 1934, Hollywood provided Korngold with an alternative career. Max Reinhardt invited Korngold to write the film score to A Midsummer Night's Dream, and this led to several further film music successes, including Academy Awards for Anthony Adverse (1936) and The Adventures of Robin Hood (1938). Korngold's philosophy of treating a film as an "opera without singing" became an influential model. After World War II, Korngold returned to concert music and composed such works as the Violin and Cello Concertos, a Symphony, and a beautiful Serenade for string orchestra. His style was still considered late Romantic, and this view resulted in the neglect of this body of music. Most of the Violin Concerto was written in 1945 and was intended for the virtuoso Bronislaw Huberman. However, the première went to another great artist, Jascha Heifetz, who also made the first recording of the work.

In the Violin Concerto, Korngold wove his three movements out of themes from his film scores. Although the film titles may not be as well known, the expressive and direct nature of these melodies overtake the progress of the music. The first movement, marked Moderato nobile, opens directly with a theme from Another Dawn (1937). The stature of the violin opposite the orchestra is, indeed, noble, if not Herculean, in its steady use of wide interval leaps in the solo part. The tranquil secondary idea is taken from Judrez (1939). The middle movement, a "romance," traces a ternary form song based largely on music from Anthony Adverse (1936). In the middle section, the violin opts for a more flexible, parlando-like texture, while the harp, vibraphone, and celesta come forward with otherworldly sounds. The Finale takes off with a brisk 6/8 tune (from The Prince and the Pauper) that sounds unequivocally folk-like. The tune is transformed at times into a rougher 2/4 guise. The movement moves in and out of meters before a brilliant deluge of energy and virtuosity.

Stravinsky: Suite from The Firebird, reorchestrated by the composer in 1919

Igor Stravinsky was virtually unknown to the music world when the impresario Serge Diaghilev commissioned him to write a score to The Firebird for the 1910 Paris season of the Ballet Russes. It was not the first (or last) commission from Diaghilev, but its success did launch Stravinsky's career. Many of the unique sounding harmonies and features of orchestration are indebted to Stravinsky's teacher, Rimsky-Korsakov. Stravinsky's close collaboration with the choreographer Mikhail Fokine created a remarkably integrated work, both visually and sonically. For practical reasons Stravinsky shortened the complete ballet into several shorter suites. In the case of tonight's 1919 Suite, he significantly reduced the total instrumentation to a more moderate number.

Strands of Russian folktales, both magical and mortal, converge in the ballet's scenario. While out hunting, young Prince Ivan wanders into the enchanted garden of Kastchei, ruler of the monsters, who turns all intruders into stone. It is there that Ivan captures the magical Firebird. In exchange for her freedom, the Firebird offers Ivan a feather with which he may summon her in a moment of danger. Thirteen beautiful princesses then appear, and their dance, the khoroood, ignites Ivan's love for the most beautiful of the princesses, the Tsarevna. At dawn, Ivan is magically compelled to return to Kastchei's castle, but in doing so awakens the monsters on guard. In this moment of danger, the Danse infernale. Ivan draws out his magic feather. The Firebird appears and reveals the way to destroy Kastchei: Ivan must break the egg that contains Kastchei's soul. Meanwhile, the Firebird's spell forces the rest of the monsters to dance to their doom. In the finale, the freed captives hold a majestic celebration and Ivan and the Tsarevna are married. The 1919 Suite includes music from each of the main dance scenes, including the Firebird's dance, the Khorouod, and the famous Danse infernale. Stravinsky uses different musical idioms to distinguish the different characters. Most notably diatonic melodies mark the human world, such as with the princesses' folk Khorouod dance, while chromatic ideas and clusters, along with the prominent use of the tritone, denote members of the fantasy world. The Firebird's music (heard after the Introduction) also makes use of
splendid instrumental shimmer and color, with filigreed runs in the upper woodwinds and ample use of harmonics and gymnastic-like bow technique in the strings.

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Danielle Smolak '06

‘ denotes Principal or Co-Principal
The Princeton University Orchestra began as a group of professional musicians from the New York Symphony and Philharmonic Societies who performed a series of concerts at Alexander Hall in 1896, the first on February 13th. The proceeds were “devoted to the funds for the establishment of a School of Music for the study of Musical Composition, Theory, and History at Princeton University.”

During the ensuing century, the Orchestra has come to be an almost exclusively student organization: some 90 to 100 undergraduate and graduate musicians representing a broad spectrum of academic departments come together for concerts in Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall. The Orchestra performs eight to ten concerts on campus each year; programs include both new music and works from the standard repertoire.

The Orchestra also serves an important role in Princeton’s Music Department by both reading and performing new works by graduate composition students. In addition, the Orchestra has been invited to give performances for special University events, such as the celebrations of Princeton’s 250th Anniversary which included world premiere performances of Ringing Changes by Princeton Professor Peter Westergaard on campus and at New York’s Alice Tully Hall.

Under the direction of Michael Pratt since 1977, the Orchestra has played some of the most ambitious works in the symphonic and operatic repertory, including Mahler’s Das Lied von der Erde, and his First, Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies; Stravinsky’s Le Sacre du printemps and Petrushka; Weber’s Der Freischütz and Wagner’s Tristan und Isolde in a concert version. The Orchestra has also made successful tours of the United States, the United Kingdom, Central and Eastern Europe and Spain. In January, 2003, the Orchestra played concerts in Prague, Brno, and Vienna. Two years ago, the Orchestra played benefit concerts in New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, and helped Princeton alumni there raise over $8,000 for the University’s September 11 funds.

In recent years, the Orchestra has taken an important place in the concert calendar of the State of New Jersey: the Newark Star-Ledger called the performance of Mahler’s Third Symphony “one that would make any orchestra proud.”

Participation in the Orchestra is voluntary and extracurricular: students commit many hours to rehearsal above and beyond the time required for academic coursework. Graduates of the Orchestra have gone on to be performers, music teachers, and arts administrators; but the list of professions also includes lawyers, physicians, business executives, government officials, economists, architects, research scientists, and journalists.