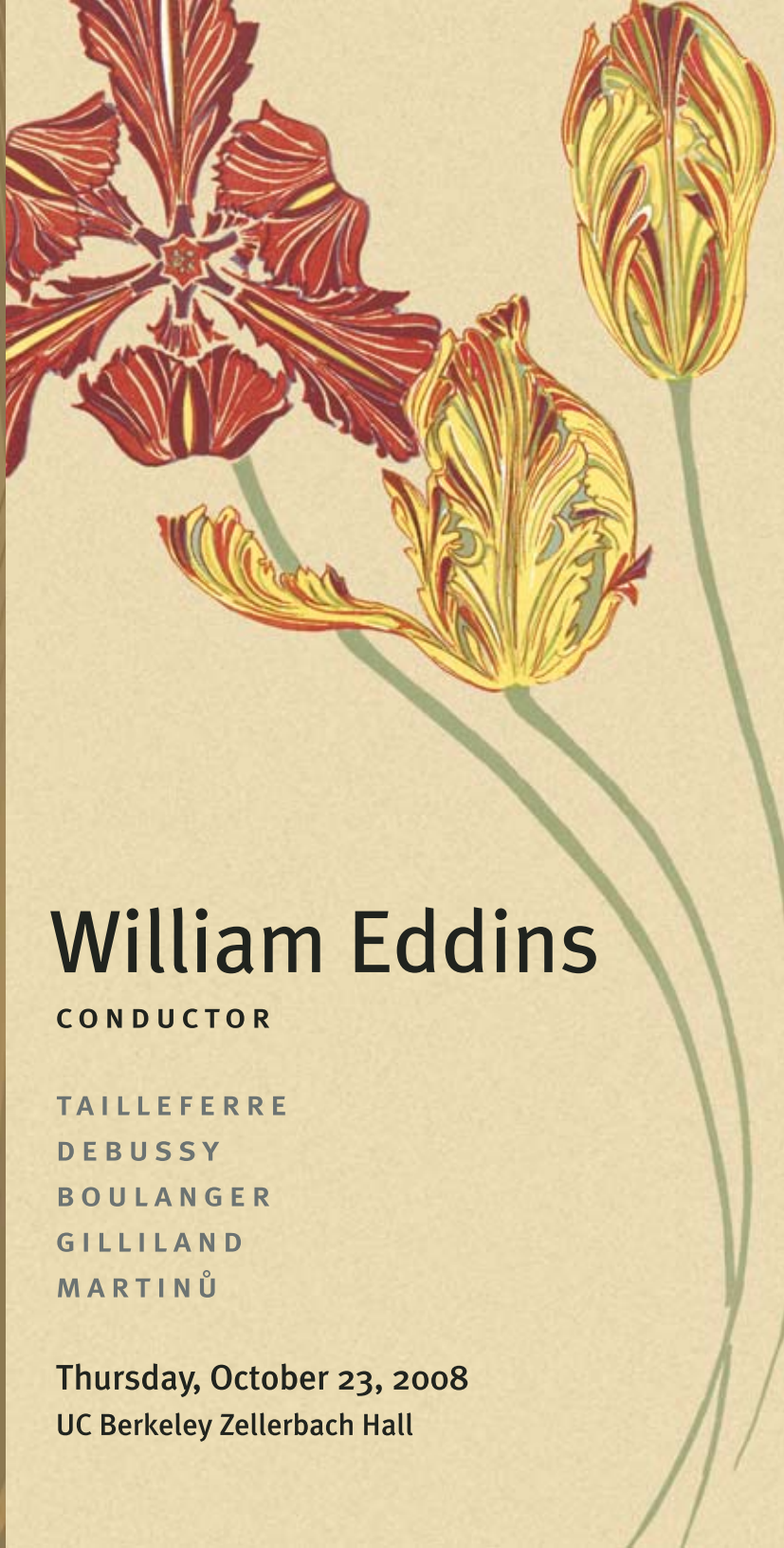


BERKELEY  
SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA  
**NOW**

08109 SEASON



# William Eddins

CONDUCTOR

TAILLEFERRE

DEBUSSY

BOULANGER

GILLILAND

MARTINŮ

Thursday, October 23, 2008

UC Berkeley Zellerbach Hall

# BERKELEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

2007–08 SEASON



**KENT NAGANO, MUSIC DIRECTOR**

**WILLIAM EDDINS, CONDUCTOR**

**JAMES A. KLEINMANN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**8:00 pm, Thursday, October 23, 2008**  
**Zellerbach Hall**

**PARIS BEFORE THE WAR:**

**GERMAINE TAILLEFERRE**

*Valse des dépêches (Waltz of the Telegrams)*

**CLAUDE DEBUSSY**

*La fille aux cheveux de lin (The Girl with the Flaxen Hair)*

**LILI BOULANGER**

*D'un matin du printemps (Of a Spring Morning)*

**ALLAN GILLILAND**

*Dreaming of the Masters II — Rhapsody GEB*

**U.S. Premiere**

— INTERMISSION —

**BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ**

**Symphony No. 1**

- I. Moderato
- II. [Scherzo:] Allegro—Molto allegro—Allegro vivace/  
Trio: Poco moderato
- III. Largo
- IV. Allegro non troppo

Season Sponsors

Kathleen G. Henschel



Support for Berkeley Symphony's Music Director search is provided by  
the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation,  
the James C. Irvine Foundation,  
and the Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation.

Presentation bouquets are graciously provided by Jutta's Flowers.

Tonight's concert will be broadcast on KALW 91.7 FM,  
Sunday, March 15, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.

Berkeley Symphony is a member of the League of American Orchestras  
and the Association of California Symphony Orchestras

# Program Notes

## **Valse des dépêches**

**GERMAINE TAILLEFERRE**  
(1892–1983)

*Germaine Tailleferre was born in Saint-Maur-des-Fossés on April 19, 1892 and died in Paris on November 7, 1983. Valse des dépêches was composed in 1921. Scored for 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 percussionists, harp, celesta and strings. Duration ca. 3 min.*

## **La fille aux cheveux de lin**

**CLAUDE DEBUSSY** (1862–1918)

*Achille-Claude Debussy was born in Saint-Germain-en-Laye on August 22, 1862 and died in Paris on March 25, 1918. Originally written for solo piano in 1910, this piece was arranged for orchestra by Colin Matthews in 2001. Scored for 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns and strings. Duration ca. 5 min.*

## **D'un matin du printemps**

**LILI BOULANGER** (1893–1918)

*Marie-Juliette Olga Lili Boulanger was born in Paris on August 21, 1893 and died at the age of 24 in Mézy-sur-Seine (Yvelines) on March 15, 1918. Scored for a large orchestra with an expanded woodwind section: 3 flutes, piccolo, 3 oboes, English horn, 3 clarinets, bass clarinet, 3 bassoons, contrabassoon (the original calls for sarrusophone), 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, 2 percussionists, harp, celesta and strings. Duration ca. 5 min.*

In 1904 the young, talented Germaine Tailleferre entered the Paris Conservatoire, where she later became acquainted with Georges Auric, Arthur Honegger, and Darius Milhaud. They brought her into the fold of Erik Satie, the “father” of a group of “upstart” composers that also included Francis Poulenc and Louis Durey. Despite recognition—and notoriety—as a member of “Les Six,” as a reporter dubbed the group, Tailleferre later detached herself because she lacked enthusiasm for attacking Impressionism and for creating a new French art music based on popular sources. Her music nevertheless retained something of Les Six’s values—spontaneity and humor.

In 1921 Les Six were asked to compose the music for Jean Cocteau’s *Les mariés de la tour Eiffel* (The Wedding on the Eiffel Tower), a play-ballet commissioned by Rolf de Maré for the Ballet Suédois. It was to be Cocteau’s most extensive exploration of everyday themes and diverse forms of entertainment. He described it thus: “Ballet? No. Play? No. Revue? No. Tragedy? No. Rather a sort of secret marriage between ancient tragedy and the end-of-the-year revue, between a chorus and a music-hall number.” The one-act farce presents unexpected and unexplained events on the Eiffel Tower, complete with two talking phonographs and a giant camera that ejects its subjects.

Auric contributed the Overture and certain ritornellos to effect entrances and exits, Milhaud wrote the *Nuptial March* and *The Massacre at the Wedding*, Poulenc was responsible for *The General’s Discourse* and *The Bathing Belle of Trouville*, Arthur Honegger composed the

*Funeral March of the General*, and Tailleferre contributed the *Quadrille of the Telegrams*. Durey opted out of the collaboration, much to the irritation of Cocteau, and passed his assignment, the *Valse des dépêches* (*Waltz of the Telegrams*), to Tailleferre, thus giving her another dance for the same characters.

In the original ballet, the *Waltz of the Telegrams* follows the “massacre” of the wedding guests by ping-pong balls and the Manager’s request for calm so as not to frighten the Telegrams, who have just arrived from New York. The Telegrams—five ballerinas in blue with little telegraph-boy hats—flit about to Tailleferre’s jaunty waltz strains.

Debussy composed his first book of twelve piano Preludes in 1910, and the second book, also containing twelve, in 1913. The works all bear picturesque titles, which Debussy attached only at the end of each piece, or in some cases listed only in the index—perhaps to keep the programmatic inspiration from interfering with the music itself, or perhaps because he actually thought up some of the titles after the pieces had been composed. Debussy’s Preludes are improvisatory in character, short and free in form, and often, like those of his predecessors—Chopin, and even Bach—concentrate on a specific texture or kind of figuration.

Delicately glistening, perfectly proportioned, and fully deserving its superstar status, *La fille aux cheveux de lin* (*The Girl with the Flaxen Hair*, Book I, no. 8) recalls the simple lyricism of some of Debussy’s earlier works. The composer had written a song of the same title as early as 1880, setting a poem by Conte de Lisle from his *Chansons écossaises*. Though the Prelude borrows no music from the song, the texture—primarily melody with accompaniment—and the

directness create a similar aspect. Debussy’s mature style is revealed in the modal harmonies and consecutive parallel chords.

Many composers and arrangers have felt compelled to orchestrate Debussy’s piano pieces, and most recently, in 2001, English composer Colin Matthews was commissioned by the Hallé Orchestra to orchestrate all twenty-four Preludes, a series he completed in 2006. Said Matthews, “I’m no pianist but have always taken great pleasure in playing through the Preludes. Orchestrating them is a wonderful way of getting inside the mind of another composer, although I haven’t tried specifically to emulate Debussy’s orchestral writing—rather I’ve wanted to find my own way into the music.” For *The Girl with the Flaxen Hair* that meant taking a slower tempo than Debussy’s, which creates a more pensive atmosphere.

Lili Boulanger was extremely gifted musically to the extent that her older sister Nadia, who became one of the world’s foremost composition teachers, felt somewhat eclipsed. Because Lili suffered from Crohn’s disease (intestinal tuberculosis) her entire short life, she could not attend school regularly or go to concerts, but she studied with her sister, Paul Vidal, and Georges Caussade. At the age of nineteen Lili attracted considerable attention as the first woman to win the Premier Grand Prix de Rome for her cantata *Faust et Hélène*.

In 1917 a serious operation left Lili with only months to live. The last compositions she was able to pen herself in the early months of 1918 were the orchestral pair *D’un soir triste* (*Of a Sad Evening*) and *D’un matin du printemps* (*Of a Spring Morning*), for which she also provided chamber music versions. She nevertheless continued to compose by

dictating to her sister up until her last hours on March 15, 1918.

*Of a Spring Morning* complements the mournful atmosphere of its companion piece with an animated spirit, enlivened by a constantly changing orchestral palette with winsome wind solos and colorful percussion bursts. Passages of introspection throw the more impish moments into high relief.

©2008, Jane Vial Jaffe

## ***Dreaming of the Masters II - Rhapsody GEB***

**ALLAN GILLILAND** (b. 1965)

*Allan Gilliland was born in Darvel, Scotland in 1965 and immigrated to Canada in 1972. Gilliland wrote this composition in 2007 for William Eddins, who played the piano solo at its premiere in Edmonton, Canada. Scored for an orchestra which includes alto, tenor and bass saxophones, plus a standard complement of 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, strings, percussions and piano. The percussionists play cymbal with mallets, xylophone, glockenspiel, sizzle cymbal, claves, and drum set. Duration 25 min.*

### ***The composer has provided the following comments:***

**M**y “Dreaming” series arose from a desire to combine my experience as an orchestral composer with my background as a jazz player. I wanted to write a series of jazz concertos for soloists who were comfortable in both classical and jazz idioms. Each concerto would be inspired by the jazz greats of that particular instrument and though fully notated, would allow the player to improvise. *Dreaming of the Masters I* was written for clarinetist James Campbell and has

become my most performed orchestral work.

*Dreaming of the Masters II - Rhapsody GEB* is a one-movement work inspired by Gershwin, Ellington, and Bernstein. The form follows the letters GEB. Section I has two themes; the first is fast and loosely based on the blues and the second, slow and sweeping. Toward the end of the section both themes are brought together revealing that they are constructed from the same harmony. Section II reflects the compositional style of Duke Ellington. The melody is in AABA song form with the A section recalling the highly chromatic nature of Duke’s writing. A phrygian melody is prominent in the B section, giving it a Spanish flavor. Section III is least like its inspiration. The only reference to Bernstein comes toward the beginning where I allude to the *Prelude* and *Mambo* from *West Side Story*. The bulk of the section is a large canon beginning with a long bass line and building toward the piano “trading fours” with the orchestra. This all leads to a recap of the Gershwin themes.

Bill Eddins’ performance tonight will be the American premiere.

©2008, Allan Gilliland

## **Symphony No. 1**

**BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ**  
(1890–1959)

*Bohuslav Martinů was born in Polička, Bohemia, on December 8, 1890, and died in Liestal, Switzerland, on August 28, 1959. Martinů’s Symphony No. 1 was commissioned by the Koussevitzky Music Foundation in memory of Natalie Koussevitzky. He began work on the symphony while on holiday on Jamaica in May of 1942, and completed the score in short order, on September 1. The premiere took*

*place in Boston on November 13, 1942 by the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Serge Koussevitzky. The work is scored for piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, English horn, 3 clarinets, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 each of trumpets and trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (triangle, tambourine, side drum, bass drum, cymbals, and tam-tam), harp, piano, and strings. Duration ca. 35 minutes.*

**B**orn in a church bell tower high above a small village near the Eastern border of Bohemia, Bohuslav Martinů grew up to be the most notable Czech composer of the 20th century, after Leoš Janáček. And although he loved his native country, through a peculiar series of historical accidents he was to spend most of his career abroad. Early study on the violin led to expectations that he might become a virtuoso, but his attempt to pursue formal education at the Prague Conservatory met mostly with disaster. He continued to work as a violinist and teacher, all the while honing his craft as a composer, finally acquiring a bit of a reputation in his late 20s.

In 1923, he left for Paris to study with Albert Roussel, never to reside in Bohemia again. Through the 1920s and 1930s his renown as a composer continued to grow, and after the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Nazis in 1939, the government in exile named him as cultural attaché. In this role, he aided many Czech artists arriving in Paris as refugees, but as the fall of France loomed in 1940, Martinů realized his activities made him *persona non grata* with the Germans. He fled to Provence, and then to Portugal, eventually finding passage on a ship to the USA in early 1941.

After the War, he was offered a composition professorship in Prague, but because of serious injuries sustained in a fall while teaching at Tanglewood in 1946 he remained resident in America for seven

years. During this time, the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia discouraged him from returning to his homeland, and he spent the remainder of his life as something of a nomad, moving among Paris, Nice, Rome and finally settling in Switzerland, where he died in 1959.

Like many composers of the early 20th century, Martinů was heavily influenced by the rediscovery of the music of past historical eras. These “neoclassical” composers incorporated into their styles such diverse elements as scales and harmonic practices from Medieval, Renaissance, or folk music (in addition to actual folk melodies) or formal procedures and textures from Baroque music. In the case of Martinů, the influence of the Elizabethan madrigalists and the *concerto grosso* form are particularly strong. Whereas standard symphonic forms are built on progressive thematic development, governed by a large-scale tonal plan, the *concerto grosso* is based on the *ritornello* principle. Key structural points are marked by recurring statements of a more or less fixed melody (the “ritornello theme”), while the intervening passages introduce a variety of contrasting themes and textures.

The first movement of Martinů’s *Symphony No. 1* is colored by modal harmony, thanks to the use of a 12th-century Bohemian hymn melody as its main theme. The movement opens with a B minor chord played by the full orchestra (almost), followed by a series of upward-swooping chromatic scales that lead to a B major chord. This striking gesture is repeated at the end of the movement, providing a vivid frame for the whole. Plus, the chromatic scales recur as a linking motif throughout the subsequent movements of the work. Martinů sets the hymn melody to a syncopated rhythm, which at times gives it a jazzy character and at other times reminds one of Slavic folk dance. Another

salient feature of this movement (and much of Martinů's orchestral music, for that matter) is the inclusion of the piano in the scoring. Never singled out as a solo instrument, the piano serves several purposes: its precise attack allows it to provide percussive punch, and its clear, bell-like tone adds a certain sparkle to the overall orchestral color. Sometimes, when the piano is used in conjunction with the harp, it almost sounds like Martinů is trying to concoct a modern substitute for the sound of the harpsichord continuo in a Baroque concerto.

Following immediately on the heels of the first movement, the Scherzo picks up on, and augments, its syncopated feeling. The frantic energy of this symphony overall is said to be Martinů's response to the hectic pace of life in the United States, where he had arrived as a refugee the previous year. Of his initial stay in New York, he wrote:

Believe me, New York's endless avenues and streets are not exactly the best source of inspiration . . . They fall in on you, hold you fast so escape is impossible. No, I can't say my recollections of New York are of the happiest.

The pace relaxes momentarily as the oboe stretches out the main theme into a more languid form, but eventually the music accelerates into a full restatement of the opening material. The Scherzo proper closes with an emphatic statement of a simple neighbor-note motive (B-flat—A—B-flat), which the ensuing Trio picks up and elaborates into a calm melody for the winds. Peppered throughout the Trio are the rising chromatic scales from the first movement. After the Trio the Scherzo is repeated verbatim to close the movement.

"Elegiac" is the word most often

used to describe the slow movement. It opens with the low strings outlining an E-flat triad—but in an echo of the B minor/major juxtaposition in the first movement, the third of the chord flips back and forth between G flat and G natural. The strings enter, playing a soulful melody that capitalizes on the minor/major alternation, building to an immense climax. Then follow several episodes of remarkable experiments in orchestral color, including a passage in which the English horn plays a broken version of the main theme over a shimmering accompaniment provided by the harp, piano, and plucked strings. The chromatic scales return once more to close the movement.

The symphony concludes with a lively rondo, dominated by two themes: a bouncy dotted melody, and a syncopated, folk-like dance tune. Lively sections using this material alternate with more lyrical episodes which are scored for the unusual combination of winds, harp, and piano. A final rousing section in swinging triple meter brings the work to a joyous close.

The eminent composer and critic Virgil Thomson summed up the appeal of this symphony in his review of the premiere for the *New York Herald Tribune*:

The Martinů Symphony is a beaut. It is wholly lovely and doesn't sound like anything else . . . The shining sounds of it sing as well as shine; the instrumental complication is a part of the musical conception, not an icing laid over it. Personal indeed is the delicate but vigorous rhythmic animation, the singing (rather than dynamic) syncopation that permeates the work. Personal and individual, too, is the whole orchestral sound of it, the acoustical superstructure that shimmers constantly.

©2008, Victor Gavenda