**Steven Schick, Music Director**
**David Chase, Choral Director**
**Thomas Nee, Music Director Emeritus**

**Mandeville Auditorium**
**Saturday, February 9, 2008, 8 P.M.**
**Sunday, February 10, 2008, 3 P.M.**

**MARSHALL** **Kingdom Come**

**PROKOFIEV** **Violin Concerto No. 1 in D Major, Opus 19**
*Andantino*
*Scherzo: Vivacissimo*
*Moderato*

Pasha Tseitlin, violinist

INTERMISSION

**BERLIOZ** **Symphonie Fantastique, Opus 14**
*Reveries. Passions*
*A Ball*
*Scene in the Fields*
*March to the Scaffold*
*Dream of a Witches' Sabbath*

**Kingdom Come**
INGRAM MARSHALL
Born May 10, 1942, Mount Vernon, NY

The composer has furnished biographical materials and a program note for this work.

As a graduate student at Columbia in the mid-sixties, Ingram Marshall was attracted to the possibilities of the then-nascent electronic music studio, and he enrolled in the studio course taught by Vladimir Ussachevsky where he created his first tape pieces. After a trip to France in 1968, he dropped out of the academic scene and began working independently as a composer member of the NYU Media Arts studio on Bleecker Street in New York's Greenwich Village.

In 1970 Marshall went to California to study electronic music with Morton Subotnick at California Institute of the Arts, but he became entranced with the dark colors and endless forms of the Javanese *gamelan*, which was installed there, and spent most of his time learning that tradition. He went to Bali for three months in the summer of 1971 where he immersed himself in both Javanese and Balinese modes of traditional gamelan music. Upon his return, he worked again in the electronic medium but with a new ideal of sound and time.

In 1973 Marshall took up residence in the San Francisco Bay area where he became active as composer, performer, producer and occasional critic in the exciting new-music scene there. Throughout the seventies he developed a series of live electronic works which incorporated some tape text pieces as well as Balinese flute, and in the late seventies Marshall began experimenting with combining live instrumental work with tape and/or electronic processing. Marshall has held academic posts at San Francisco Conservatory, Evergreen State College, Brooklyn College, the Hartt School, and the Yale School of Music, where he is currently a visiting teacher in composition.

***Kingdom Come***

*Kingdom Come* was composed in 1996-97 for the American Composers Orchestra, although some parts of it were conceived earlier. Some of the sound materials used for the tape part were recorded a number of years ago in Yugoslavia. The first element is that of a Croatian Catholic church service where the congregation is singing a hymn. The second is a fragment of a

Serbian Orthodox service in which both the priest and female cantor are heard, as well as various bells. The third element is taken from an old recording of a Bosnian Muslim “gusle” epic singerEach element has its own section: the Croatian runs from Letter B to Letter I (about five minutes) where the Serbian element takes over; it runs to Letter M (about four minutes); there the Bosnian element appears and runs about two and one half minutes. In the final minute and one half, the three elements are combined. The first section of the piece, about two and one half minutes, is for orchestra alone.

Needless to say the symbolism of these sections relates to the bellicose events in the countries of the former Yugoslavia of the last several years–especially Bosnia. The profound tragedy of this war was amplified in a personal way for me and my family when my brother-in-law, Francis Tomasic, an American journalist, was killed by a land mine on May 1, 1995, near Mostar. It is to his memory that this work is dedicated.

*Kingdom Come* was commissioned by the American Composers Orchestra, Dennis Russell Davies, Music Director, with the generous support of Francis Goelet and the National Endowment for the Arts.

The first performance was on November 2, 1997, in Carnegie Hall, Paul Lustig Dunkel conducting.

Ingram Marshall

**Violin Concerto No. 1 in D Major, Opus 19**
SERGE PROKOFIEV
Born April 23, 1891, Sontsovka
Died March 5, 1953, Moscow

Early in his career Prokofiev developed a reputation as a bad boy of music, and he took delight in the scandals, hisses, and mass exits that greeted his music. One of the most violent of these scenes took place at the premiere of his *Scythian Suite* in January 1916 in St. Petersburg. The performance was so brutal that the timpanist broke the membrane of his drums, the audience erupted in outrage, composer Alexander Glazunov walked out, and newspapers were full of the spectacle. So it is all the more surprising that the *Violin Concerto No. 1*, which Prokofiev began just a few months later, should be so gentle. Only twenty minutes long and scored for a relatively

small orchestra, it is marked by a lyricism and restraint far removed from the ear-splitting aggressiveness of some of Prokofiev's other scores from this period.

Even more remarkable is the fact that this music was composed at a time when the world was coming apart around Prokofiev. He completed the score during the summer of 1917, which he spent at a country estate outside St. Petersburg. Around him, World War I raged and the Bolshevik Revolution was about to topple the Czar and transform the history of the twentieth century. There is no trace of these events in this music, which seems to come from another world entirely. The only impact of world events on this score, in fact, is that these upheavals meant that Prokofiev could not get his new concerto performed: it had to wait six years for its premiere, which took place on October 18, 1923, at one of the Koussevitzky Concerts in Paris.

Prokofiev liked to keep notebooks full of themes he would use later, and the opening theme of the first movement of this concerto came to him in 1915. The *Andantino* begins with the quiet rustle of tremolo violas, and over that soft haze the soloist sings this opening melody, which Prokofiev specifies should be played *sognando* ("dreamily"), a marking that might apply to much of this concerto. A second subject–full of rhythmic snap, craggy leaps, grace notes, and pungent harmonies–contrasts sharply with the opening, and Prokofiev will build this movement on these two quite different ideas. The development, which begins with the soloist playing only pizzicato, grows more active, but at the end of the movement Prokofiev returns to the dreamy mood of the opening. Solo flute recalls the opening melody as the violinist weaves a filigree of notes around it, and movement drifts to a subdued close.

The *Scherzo* throws off sparks as the solo violin races up and down the scale–here at last is some of the characteristic Prokofiev fire and sauciness. Its central episode, which Prokofiev marks *staccato marcatissimo*, brings a range of different sounds: passages played *ponticello* (bowed close to the bridge to produce a grainy, buzzing sound), glissando octaves that fly off double-stopped harmonics, left-handed pizzicatos, and so on–this is brilliant music, and Prokofiev drives it to an abrupt close.

Far from being a virtuoso display piece, the finale returns to the dreamy manner of the opening movement. Over woodwinds' steady tread, the solo violin arcs upward and sings beautifully: Prokofiev specifies that this opening idea should be played *cantabile*. The movement

grows more active as it proceeds, but it never becomes really dramatic, and Prokofiev rounds the concerto off beautifully: in its closing minutes he brings back the opening theme of the first movement and combines it with the opening theme of the third movement. Far from sounding academic, this feels completely natural, and on a long series of runs and trills from the solo violin this surprisingly gentle concerto draws to its shimmering close.

**Symphonie Fantastique, Opus 14**
HECTOR BERLIOZ
Born December 11, 1803, La Côte-St-André
Died March 8, 1869, Paris

It is impossible for modern audiences to understand how revolutionary Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* was when it burst upon surprised listeners in Paris in 1830. The music has become so over-familiar that we forget that it represented not only a brilliant new use of the orchestra but also an entirely new conception of the role of the composer. For Berlioz subtitled this symphony "Episode in the Life of an Artist" and based it on details of his own life. And what made the symphony so sensational was that these autobiographical details were so lurid, private, and painful. No longer was music an abstract art, at some distance from the psyche of its maker. When Berlioz created the nightmare journey of the *Symphonie Fantastique* out of his own internal fury, the art of music was all at once propelled into a new era.

In 1827 an English acting troupe visited Paris, where their performances of Shakespeare created a sensation. Nowhere did these performances have more impact than on a 23-year-old music student named Hector Berlioz, who was as much smitten with the company's leading lady, Harriet Smithson, as he was with Shakespeare. Berlioz himself recalled the effect of watching the actress play the part of Juliet: "It was too much. By the third Act, hardly able to breathe–as though an iron hand gripped me by the heart–I knew I was lost." Berlioz resolved on the spot to marry Harriet Smithson and soon mounted a concert of his own works as a way of attracting her attention; she never even heard of the concert. Plunged into the despair of his own helpless love, Berlioz came up with the idea that would–after much revision–become the *Symphonie Fantastique*: he would depict in music the nightmare mental adventures of a love-stricken young musician who took opium as a way to escape his pain.

Such an idea carries with it all sorts of dangers for unbridled self-indulgence, but in fact the *Symphonie Fantastique* is a tightly-disciplined score. Its unity comes from Berlioz's use of what he called (borrowing the term from the psychology of his day) an *idée fixe*, or "fixed idea"; today we would call it an obsession. In the symphony, this obsession takes the form of a long melody which Berlioz associates with his beloved. This melody appears in each of the symphony's five movements, varied each time to suit the mood of the movement and the mental state of the suffering hero.

Berlioz, an unusually articulate writer, provided program notes of the symphony that are still worth quoting in detail (Berlioz's notes are in italics in the following paragaphs):

*A young musician of unhealthily sensitive nature and endowed with vivid imagination has poisoned himself with opium in a paroxysm of lovesick despair. The narcotic dose he had taken was too weak to cause death, but it has thrown him into a long sleep accompanied by the most extraordinary visions. In this condition his sensations, his feelings, and his memories find utterance in his sick brain in the form of musical imagery. Even the Beloved One takes the form of a melody in his mind, like a fixed idea which is ever returning and which he hears everywhere.*

*First Movement: Dreams, Passions. At first he thinks of the uneasy and nervous condition of his mind, of somber longings, of depression and joyous elation without any recognizable cause, which he experienced before the Beloved One had appeared to him. Then he remembers the ardent love with which she suddenly inspired him; he thinks of his almost insane anxiety of mind, of his raging jealousy, of his reawakening love, of his religious consolation*

The movement's opening, with murmuring woodwinds and muted strings, depicts the artist drifting softly into the drugged dream-state. The animated *idée fixe* theme, the musical backbone of the entire symphony, is soon heard in the first violins and flute. This undergoes a series of dramatic transformations (this opening movement is in a sort of sonata form) before the movement closes on quiet chords marked *Religiosamente*.

*Second Movement: A Ball. In a ballroom, amidst the confusion of a brilliant festival, he finds the Beloved One again.*

Berlioz here creates a flowing waltz, beautifully introduced by swirling strings and harps. Near the end, the music comes to a sudden stop, and the *idée fixe* melody appears in a graceful

transformation for solo clarinet before the waltz resumes.

*Third Movement–Scene in the Fields. It is a summer evening. He is in the country, musing, when he hears two shepherd lads who play, in alternation, the ranz des vaches (the tune used by the Swiss shepherds to call their flocks). This pastoral duet, the quiet scene, the soft whisperings of the trees stirred by the zephyr wind, some prospects of hope recently made known to him, all these sensations unite to impart a long unknown report to his heart and to lend a smiling color to his imagination. And then She appears once more. His heart stops beating, painful forebodings fill his soul. "Should she prove false to him!" One of the shepherds resumes the melody, but the other answers him no more . . . Sunset . . . distant rolling of thunder . . . loneliness . . . silence ...*

*The Scene in the Fields* is one of Berlioz's most successful examples of scene-painting, perhaps inspired by Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*, but nothing like it musically. The dialogue of the shepherds' pipes to the accompaniment of distant thunder is a particularly imaginative touch; the *idée fixe* is heard during the course of the dreamy summer afternoon in the woodwinds.

*Fourth Movement: March to the Scaffold. He dreams that he has murdered his Beloved, that he has been condemned to death, and is being led to execution. A march that is alternately somber and wild, brilliant and solemn, accompanies the procession. The tumultuous outbursts are followed without modulation by measured steps. At last the idée fixe returns, for a moment a last thought of love is revived, which is cut short by the deathblow.*

This is the most famous music in the symphony, with its muffled drums giving way to the brilliant march. At the end, the solo clarinet plays a fragment of the *idée fixe*, then the guillotine blade comes down as a mighty chord from the orchestra; pizzicato notes mark the severed head's tumble into the basket.

*Fifth Movement: Witches Sabbath. He dreams that he is present at a witches' revel, surrounded by horrible spirits, amidst sorcerers and monsters in many fearful forms, who have come together for his funeral. Strange sounds, groans, shrill laughter, distant yells, which other cries seem to answer. The Beloved Melody is heard again, but it has lost its shy and noble character; it has become a vulgar, trivial and grotesque dance tune. She it is who comes to attend the witches' meeting. Riotous howls and shouts greet her arrival. She joins the infernal orgy. Bells toll for the dead, a burlesque parody of the Dies Irae. The witches' round dance. The dance and the Dies*

*Irae are heard together.*

Here is a nightmare vision in music: the horrible growls and squeaks of the beginning give way to the grotesque dance for witches and spirits. Berlioz here takes his revenge on the Beloved, who had scorned him: her once-lovely tune is made hideous and repellent. The orchestral writing here is phenomenal: bells toll, clarinets squeal, the strings tap their bowsticks on the strings to imitate the sounds of skeletons dancing.

The first performance of the *Symphonie Fantastique* on December 5, 1830 (six days before the composer's 27th birthday) was a mixed success: the work had its ardent defenders as well as its bitter enemies. The storybook climax of this whole tale was that Harriet Smithson finally recognized the composer's great passion for her, and they were married three years later. If this all sounds a little too good to be true, it was–the marriage was unhappy, the couple was divorced, and Harriet died after a long struggle with alcohol.

But this in no way detracts from the musical achievement of the *Symphonie Fantastique*: Berlioz looked deep within the nightmare depths of his own agonized soul and found there the material for a revolutionary new conception of music, music that was not an artistic abstraction but spoke directly from his own anguish, and he gave that torment a dazzling pictorial immediacy. Composers as different as Liszt, Tchaikovsky, Mahler, and Richard Strauss were among the many who would be directly influenced by this new conception of what music might be.