

Boston Symphony Orchestra
128th season, 2008–2009

Thursday, February 26, 8pm
Friday, February 27, 1:30pm
Saturday, February 28, 8pm

YANNICK NÉZET-SÉGUIN conducting

RAVEL “VALSES NOBLES ET SENTIMENTALES”

LISZT PIANO CONCERTO NO. 2 IN A
JEAN-YVES THIBAUDET

{INTERMISSION}

DVORÁK SYMPHONY NO. 6 IN D, OPUS 60
Allegro non tanto
Adagio
Scherzo (Furiant): Presto
Finale: Allegro con spirito

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The evening concerts will end about 9:55 and the afternoon concert about 3:25.

Steinway and Sons Pianos, selected exclusively for Symphony Hall

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The program books for the Friday series are given in loving memory of Mrs. Hugh Bancroft by her daughters, the late Mrs. A. Werk Cook and the late Mrs. William C. Cox.

In consideration of the performers and those around you, cellular phones, pagers, and watch alarms should be switched off during the concert.

Maurice Ravel

“Valses nobles et sentimentales”

JOSEPH MAURICE RAVEL was born in Ciboure near Saint-Jean-de-Luz, Basses-Pyrénées, in the Basque region of France just a short distance from the Spanish border, on March 7, 1875, and died in Paris on December 28, 1937. He composed “Valses nobles et sentimentales” (“Noble and Sentimental Waltzes”) for piano solo in 1911; the first performance—played by Louis Aubert, to whom the score is dedicated—was in a concert of the Société Musicale Indépendante in the Salle Gaveau, Paris, on May 9, 1911. Ravel made the orchestration for a ballet, “Adelaide, or The Language of the Flowers,” performed at the Châtelet in Paris on April 20, 1912, with Ravel conducting the Lamoureux Orchestra. The first concert performance of the orchestral version was led by Pierre Monteux at the second of his Concerts Pierre Monteux on February 15, 1914, at the Casino de Paris.

THE SCORE OF “VALSES NOBLES ET SENTIMENTALES” calls for two flutes, two oboes and English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones and tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, side drum, tambourine, celesta, glockenspiel, two harps, and strings.

As with so many of his other orchestral works, Ravel wrote the “Noble and Sentimental Waltzes” first for piano, probably with no particular intention of orchestrating them at all. The work was first performed by Louis Aubert in May 1911 without an announcement of the composer’s name. Speculation as to the author’s identity ranged from Satie to Kodály. Once the composer’s name was revealed, Ravel was prevailed upon by Mlle. Trouhanova’s ballet company to orchestrate the work to accompany a ballet. He did so very quickly, and *Adélaïde, ou Le Langage des fleurs* had four gala performances at the Théâtre du Châtelet in April 1912 (on a program with Dukas’s *La Péri* and d’Indy’s *Istar*). After a revival in 1916, the ballet failed to hold the stage. This is not, perhaps, surprising, since it was laden with a rather silly scenario in which a flirtatious prima donna presents a series of flowers (symbolizing some emotion or characteristic) alternately to her suitors, the noble duke and the amorous Loredan. But the musical score stands firmly on its own without the dubious benefit of the narrative elements, and it has become firmly established (both in its original piano version and in orchestral dress) as a concert piece.

Probably more than any other dance or rhythmic pattern, the 3/4 lilt of the waltz characterizes the nineteenth century and romanticism. Certainly from at least the time of the Congress of Vienna in 1815 until World War I, the waltz was the dance craze that dominated Europe and America, first as a somewhat scandalous new dance that caused fathers to worry about their daughters (it was, after all, the first social dance in which the partners assumed an embrace position), eventually as a familiar and well-loved dance for the elders, while the younger fry turned to something else that was newly scandalous in its turn. The occasional waltz songs of an Offenbach, the strings of waltzes conceived by both the elder and younger Johann Strauss for dancing in Viennese cafés of mid-century, the vibrant ballet waltzes of a Tchaikovsky, were becoming, by the beginning of the present century, slow waltz songs in charming Ruritanian operettas, meltingly sentimental but wondrously evocative when properly used (for example, the principal waltz song in Lehár’s *The Merry Widow*, or Victor Herbert’s “Kiss me again” in *Mlle. Modiste*).

Ravel’s suite of waltzes is an amazingly objective summary of the waltz tradition, a *jeu d’esprit* that probably had no further aim, when first conceived, than taking the waltz medium almost as a “found object” and working with it as a modeler might with his clay. This intention is signaled by the epigraph that Ravel put at the head of his score, drawn from Henri de Regnier: “*Le plaisir délicieux et toujours nouveau d’une occupation inutile*” (“the delicious and ever-new pleasure of a useless occupation”). The score alternates faster and more vigorous waltzes (presumably the “noble” ones) with slower and more evocative movements (“sentimental”). The opening waltz is unusually acerbic in harmonic character (especially for a genre so associated in the public mind with sugary harmonies); Ravel makes use of appoggiaturas and added dissonances of the seventh, ninth, and eleventh to reduce the sugar content considerably. No. 2 is more fragile, featuring a delicate little melody on the flute. The third has a broader swing, with rhythmic patterns often extending over two bars in the manner of Tchaikovsky; the oboe gets the main tune. No. 4 continues this broader rhythm but in more animated fashion, more in the style of a Viennese waltz. It has hints of the raciness of the later Viennese operettas. The fifth waltz is slower, more delicate, essentially an interlude. No. 6 is extremely fast and harbors rhythmic complexities in its written-out alternations of 3/2 and 6/4 meters (a kind of rhythmic shift often employed in waltzes, but rarely notated so explicitly). Ravel himself regarded No. 7 as one of his finest creations; it begins tentatively and blossoms into a charming freshness of melody that builds to an exhilarating climax. Such an ending virtually requires a coda. Ravel’s Epilogue casts one more retrospective glance in slow waltz style with imaginative and evocative orchestral coloration. This *envoi* is a final sophisticated tribute to the long waltz tradition—a tradition that Ravel himself was to destroy with the violent satire of *La Valse* in less than a decade.

Steven Ledbetter

STEVEN LEDBETTER was program annotator of the Boston Symphony Orchestra from 1979 to 1998 and now writes program notes for other orchestras and ensembles throughout the country.

THE FIRST AMERICAN PERFORMANCE of “*Valses nobles et sentimentales*” in its orchestral form took place on October 27, 1916, with Walter Damrosch conducting the Symphony Society of New York.

THE FIRST BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PERFORMANCES of Ravel’s “*Valses nobles et sentimentales*” were led by Pierre Monteux on March 11 and 12, 1921, followed by a repetition in New York on the 17th, subsequent ones being given (though not until 1950) by Charles Munch, Seiji Ozawa (numerous times between 1975 and 1997, including the most recent subscription series in December 1997, followed by performances at Carnegie Hall, the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, and the Kennedy Center), Catherine Comet, Bernard Haitink, and Jeffrey Tate (the most recent Tanglewood performance, on July 27, 2002).

Franz Liszt

Piano Concerto No. 2 in A

FRANZ (FERENC) LISZT was born in Raiding, Hungary, on October 22, 1811, and died in Bayreuth, Germany, on July 31, 1886. He began composing his Piano Concerto No. 2 in 1839 (having begun No. 1 also around that time); he then put both concertos aside and reworked them in 1849, though he continued to revise the Piano Concerto No. 2 until 1861 (having played the premiere of No. 1 in 1855). The Piano Concerto No. 1 was published in 1857, No. 2 in 1863. The first performance of the Piano Concerto No. 2 took place at the Weimar Court Theatre on January 7, 1857, with Liszt conducting and his pupil Hans von Bronsart as soloist.

IN ADDITION TO THE SOLO PIANO, the score of Liszt’s Piano Concerto No. 2 calls for an orchestra of two flutes and piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, cymbals, and strings.

Liszt’s two piano concertos are standard works in the virtuoso’s repertoire, yet they are not at all what one might have expected of the world’s greatest pianist. (“Greatest” is arguable, of course, but with no recordings of his playing to prove or disprove the point, he occupies that throne unchallenged.) He lived a long, full life, gave innumerable concerts all over Europe, and composed an immense body of music. He was centrally involved in the great surge of music-making that marked his lifetime, and in the heated debates that surrounded himself, his pupils, and his friends, particularly his son-in-law Wagner. Yet he left only two concertos, both short and compact, and was reluctant to perform either of them himself. Both works gave him endless trouble and were constantly revised; both works have generated adverse criticism from those who wish his music were more like this and less like that; both works have won passionate admirers and been promoted by world-class performers. Why didn’t he compose at least five full-scale three-movement piano concertos like Beethoven?

Liszt’s concert world was very different from that of today. There was no clear distinction between a recital and an orchestral concert since most concerts involved solo pianists, solo vocalists, instrumental soloists, and a chorus and an orchestra in a variety of configurations and an equal variety of styles. Overtures, songs, solos, symphonies, and concertos were often inserted on programs without much apparent planning, and indeed there was always room for a spontaneous insertion or change of plan. Liszt is credited with launching the novel idea of a solo recital, in which only he took part, but he also figured frequently in the mixed type of program in which an orchestra (or a chorus) was available to accompany him if needed.

He liked the glamour of a solo appearance, undoubtedly, and often replaced the solo vocalist with whom other pianists would share the stage by performing operatic fantasies for piano alone. His solo performances were much more often of transcriptions and elaborations of familiar music by other composers (Mozart, Weber, Rossini, Verdi, etc.) than of true piano solos by himself or by others.

Such pieces could equally call for orchestral support, so we find among his works a handful of arrangements for piano solo and orchestra: fantasies on Beethoven's *Ruins of Athens*, on Berlioz's *Lélio*, on Hungarian folk melodies, and arrangements of Schubert's *Wanderer Fantasy* and Weber's *Polonaise brillante*. One of his favorite works was Weber's *Konzertstück* for piano and orchestra. In this context a traditional piano concerto in three movements had less appeal for him; in fact it was almost unthinkable. Since he wrote both a *Malédiction* and a *Totentanz* (notice the demonic titles) for piano and orchestra, we should perhaps think of his two piano concertos, both in a similar continuous single movement, as tone poems without titles, as concert-pieces or fantasies, rather than concertos in the traditional sense.

Liszt's overriding purpose is to integrate the concerto into a single movement, as he did also in his masterly B minor sonata for solo piano. The Piano Concerto No. 2, like the First, unfolds in a series of episodes using recurrent themes that are adapted to different speeds and different surroundings to provide variety and contrast. Sections of a dreamy, amorous character thus rub shoulders with energetic or martial music and passages of swashbuckling virtuosity, all sharing the same handful of melodic shapes and giving the impression of free improvisation, the art at which Liszt excelled.

The main theme is always recognizable from the beautiful sequence of chords under a gently falling melody (Ex. 1):



This appears in many different forms, sometimes speeded up, and even, toward the end, in military dress. The second main theme appears first as an agitated figure (Ex. 2a):



which provides an excellent illustration of the way in which Liszt can change the personality of the music while retaining its melodic outline. It soon appears on the strings in this more expressive form (Ex. 2b):



The whole work can be divided into seven or eight sections, but these are not movements in the traditional sense, and the real number of sections is arguable since one often leads without much of a break into another. By no means should all of the music be attributed to these melodic roots; there are new themes (such as the aggressive second section, with its furious handfuls in the piano's left hand) and fanciful wanderings which allow the piano to explore the full range of the instrument and the limits of the player's technique. There is no formal cadenza, but once the heavy brass and percussion join in, there is no respite for the soloist until the very end.

This Second Concerto, like the First, was drafted in 1839, when Liszt was living in Italy and about to embark on a decade of frantic touring and concert-giving and laying the ground for the legendary reputation that followed him for the rest of his life. But for a man so formidably confident in his stage appearances, Liszt was rarely satisfied with his own compositions. He was an obsessive reviser, subjecting most of his major works to years of rethinking and alteration. In view of the huge number of compositions and arrangements that he left, he must have found time amid the touring, teaching, and conducting to work patiently, refining works that had been in his mind for many years. The two concertos reappeared on his desk in the 1850s, when he was settled in Weimar and no longer

constantly on the road. The First Concerto reached completion in 1855 and was first performed then, with Liszt himself as soloist and Berlioz as conductor. The Second was first played two years later, not by Liszt himself, but by his brilliant pupil Hans von Bronsart, to whom it was dedicated. He was still not satisfied with it, and so it was not published until a few more years and many more hours of work had been devoted to it. It appeared in Liszt's concerts several times in the last years of his life, but he never played the solo part himself.

A Third Piano Concerto was reconstructed from scattered Liszt manuscripts by the scholar Jay Rosenblatt and first performed in Chicago in 1990. It too dates from 1839, but it seems that unlike its two siblings it never emerged from draft and was simply forgotten; indeed, its manuscripts may have already been dispersed when Liszt returned to the other two. In a single continuous movement, it belongs snugly with the others, but has yet to be accepted as a standard weapon in the virtuoso pianist's abundant arsenal.

Hugh Macdonald

HUGH MACDONALD is *Avis Blewett Professor of Music at Washington University in St. Louis and principal pre-concert speaker for the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra. General editor of the New Berlioz Edition, he has written extensively on music from Mozart to Shostakovich and is a frequent guest annotator for the BSO. His latest book is "Beethoven's Century: Essays on Composers and Themes," in the series of Eastman Studies on Music (University of Rochester Press).*

THE FIRST AMERICAN PERFORMANCE OF LISZT'S PIANO CONCERTO NO. 2 was given in Boston at the Music Hall on October 5, 1870, with soloist Anna Mehlig and Theodore Thomas conducting.

THE FIRST BOSTON SYMPHONY PERFORMANCES of Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 2 were given by Georg Henschel with soloist Carl Baermann on February 22 and 23, 1884. Subsequent BSO performances have featured Rafael Joseffy, Arthur Friedheim, Richard Burmeister, and Ferruccio Busoni (all with Arthur Nikisch conducting); Joseffy again (with Emil Paur conducting); Baermann, Leopold Godowsky, Joseffy, and Waldemar Lütschg (with Wilhelm Gericke); Rudolf Ganz, Heinrich Gebhard, and Ernest Schelling (Karl Muck); Ossip Gabrilowitsch, Yolanda Merö, Ganz, and Gebhard (Max Fiedler); Erwin Nyiregyhazi, Marjorie Church, and Mitja Nikisch (Pierre Monteux); Nadia Reisenberg and Merö (Serge Koussevitzky); Byron Janis (Charles Munch); Van Cliburn, Jorge Bolet, and Emanuel Ax (Erich Leinsdorf); Russell Sherman (Sergiu Comissiona); Krystian Zimerman (with Seiji Ozawa in April 1987, at which time the work was recorded for Deutsche Grammophon); André Watts (Ozawa, Kurt Masur, and Hermann Michael); Ax (Robert Spano); Yefim Bronfman (the most recent subscription performances, in October 2004 with Charles Dutoit conducting), and Jean-Yves Thibaudet (the most recent Tanglewood performance, on July 16, 2006, with Andrew Davis).

Antonín Dvorák

Symphony No. 6 in D, Opus 60

ANTONÍN DVORÁK was born in Nelahozeves (Mühlhausen), Bohemia, on September 8, 1841, and died in Prague on May 1, 1904. He composed this symphony between August 27 and September 20, 1880, completing the full score on October 15 that year. The score is dedicated to the conductor Hans Richter, who was to have given the premiere with the Vienna Philharmonic (but see below). Adolf Čech led the Czech Theatre Orchestra in the first performance on March 25, 1881, in Prague.

THE SCORE OF DVORÁK'S SYMPHONY NO. 6 calls for two flutes (second doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, and strings.

In July 1874, Antonín Dvorák submitted fifteen works, including his Third and Fourth symphonies (the E-flat and early D minor), into consideration for an Austrian State Stipend for "young, poor, and talented painters, sculptors, and musicians, in the Austrian half of the [Hapsburg] Empire." The judges included Johann Herbeck, who was conductor of the Vienna State Opera; the critic Eduard

Hanslick, and Johannes Brahms. Dvorák was one of the winners, as he would be again in 1876 and then in 1877, the year Brahms really set him on his way by championing him to the publisher Simrock, encouraging the latter to issue the younger composer's Moravian Duets for soprano and contralto:

Through the opportunity which the State Scholarship has afforded me, I have for several years now been rejoicing over the works by Anton Dvorák of Prague. This year he sends me among other things a book of ten duets for two sopranos with pianoforte, which seem to me to be very pretty and practical for publication....Dvorák has written every possible thing, operas (Bohemian), symphonies, quartets, and pianoforte pieces. Anyway, he is a talented man. Almost poor! And I ask you to consider this!...

Both the Moravian Duets, Opus 32, and the Slavonic Dances, Opus 46, the latter specifically commissioned by Simrock, were published in 1878, and a quick succession of further publications, and then performances throughout Europe and as far afield as Cincinnati and New York, began to earn the composer an international reputation. On the evening of November 16, 1879, Hans Richter led the Vienna Philharmonic in the local premiere of the Slavonic Rhapsody in A-flat, Opus 45, No. 3. As the composer himself recalled:

...I had to show myself to the audience. I was sitting beside Brahms at the organ in the orchestra and Richter pulled me out. I *had* to come out....Richter actually embraced me on the spot and was very happy, as he said, to know me and promised that the Rhapsody would be repeated at an extraordinary concert in the Opera House. I had to assure the Philharmonic that I would send them a symphony for the next season. The day after the concert, Richter gave a banquet at his house, in my honor so to speak, to which he invited all the Czech members of the orchestra. It was a grand evening which I shall not easily forget as long as I live.

It had been five years since Dvorák completed his last symphony, the F major of 1875, probably the earliest of his symphonies immediately to command attention and awaken enthusiasm for the composer's mastery of formal and instrumental technique, even with the work's undeniable echoes of Mendelssohn, Wagner, Smetana, and Schubert. The composer's delightful (and sadly neglected) Symphonic Variations for orchestra were completed in September 1877, followed in 1878 by the Opus 44 Serenade, the Opus 46 Slavonic Dances, the Opus 45 Rhapsodies, and some smaller works in 1879 and early 1880. Now it was time for another symphony. Richter was so thrilled with the new work upon its delivery to him by Dvorák in November 1880 that he kissed the composer after each movement as Dvorák played them through on the piano. The premiere was scheduled for December 26 in Vienna, but in the event the first performance, on which occasion the scherzo was encored, was given not by Richter but by Adolf Čech, in Prague, the following March: it seems that certain highly placed members of the Vienna Philharmonic were unwilling to play music by a new Czech composer in two successive seasons, though Dvorák found this out only by investigating the situation on his own after Richter had asked for a series of postponements citing various illnesses in his family, the death of his mother, and then work pressures. The symphony was finally heard in Vienna only on February 18, 1883, with the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde under the direction of Wilhelm Gericke, soon to become the second music director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra; by then it had already been given in London (at the Crystal Palace under William Manns in April 1882 and under Richter at St. James's Hall the following month) and New York.

The first movement of Dvorák's Sixth Symphony is one of the most majestic in the literature—grand, rhetorical, and yet totally unselfconscious. In beginning his discussion of Dvorák's Sixth, Donald Francis Tovey observed that

the very first line presents us with those intimations of mortality that make the child sublime....In this symphony Dvorák moves with great mastery and freedom; the scale and proportions are throughout noble....There is no illusion about it; the grandeur [of the first statement for full orchestra of the main theme] is not that of particular styles or particular themes, it is that of life itself; and when that grandeur is present art has little leisure for even the most solemn questions of taste, except in so far as the power to appreciate life is itself the one genuine matter of taste.

Brahms composed *his* D major symphony (No. 2) in 1877, and it is hard not to hear momentary echoes of that work in the opening phrases of Dvorák's first movement and finale.* But the point is that these echoes do not matter, for the language Dvorák speaks is his own, his music has an entirely individual feel and energy level. Throughout the first movement, indeed, throughout the symphony, everything *connects*: at the very beginning, over softly syncopated violas and horns, a woodwind accompaniment figure (horncall-like, though that particular combination of sonority and motivic shape is held for later) grows from two to three to four notes as it joins the violins for the first line of melody, then reverses its contour to echo what has preceded. Bit by bit, and still in the opening moments, the orchestral texture thickens, phrases extend a bit farther than we expect, there is an increase of movement and weight, and the main theme, marked "*grandioso*," is proclaimed by full orchestra. The effect is glorious, and there will be no comparable statement of this material until the movement's final pages, where trumpet-and-drum fanfares bathe it in new light. ("No comparable statement," that is, unless the conductor repeats the first-movement exposition—a repeat indicated in the published score, but in fact crossed out by Dvorák in his autograph manuscript.)

There are other connections to note as the first movement proceeds. The arabesque-like violin lines that play against the lilt of cellos and horns as the second theme begins grow directly from the end of the preceding transitional material; and the "real" second theme, given first to the oboes, achieves new strength and character when taken soon thereafter by full orchestra. It also provides the gently ebullient close of the last four measures after the suggestion of what could have been an equally convincing quiet ending.

Tovey's description of the Adagio bears repeating: "It has in perfection an artistic quality which Dvorák elsewhere unfortunately allowed to degenerate into a defect, the quality of a meandering improvisation on a recurring theme, the episodes being of the nature of ruminating digressions rather than of contrasts." In the woodwinds of the introductory measures, in the timpani strokes of the coda, and even in the scheme of successively embellishing and elaborating his theme, Dvorák's music suggests the slow movement of Beethoven's Ninth. But Beethoven *is* concerned with contrasts, and with leading us to higher spheres, whereas Dvorák—the son of a butcher and innkeeper, and who once observed that he "studied with the birds, flowers, trees, God, and myself"—is content here to offer more in the way of an outdoor idyll. The scherzo is overtly nationalistic, a stomping and energetic Czech *furiant* full of two-against-three cross-rhythms, while the Trio, emphasizing softer dynamic levels and the upper orchestral registers—this is the only place in the symphony where the piccolo is heard—returns to an airier and more relaxed view of the countryside.

Dvorák marks his finale "*Allegro con spirito*" (cf. Brahms's Symphony No. 2), and the second measure of his theme harks back to the first movement. Once again, an idea introduced pianissimo is quickened, fortissimo and *grandioso*, by full orchestra, and the weighty accents of this music heighten the rustic, dancelike character of the whole. The development churns up considerable energy but then eases into the recapitulation with mysterious and utmost tranquility. A cascade of violins ("left to do a volplane by themselves," says Tovey*) energizes the coda, in which the main theme, fragmented, serves as basis for a jovial lesson in counterpoint, bursting into a glorious peroration radiant with sunshine and high spirits.

Marc Mandel

* -Certain of Dvorák's compositional techniques in the outer movements of the Sixth Symphony are remarkably similar to Brahms's: the tight-knit contrapuntal textures, for example, and the soft-spoken beginnings of recapitulations, the final and climactic reserves of energy being reserved for the codas.

* -Tovey here uses a noun form of the verb given and defined in the *Random House Webster's College Dictionary* as "volplane: to glide toward the earth in an airplane with no motor power or with the power shut off"—though Dvorák's music here suggests something rather more precipitous than mere gliding.

THE FIRST AMERICAN PERFORMANCE of Dvorák's *Symphony No. 6* was given by Theodore Thomas and the Philharmonic Society of New York at the Academy of Music in that city on January 6, 1883.

THE FIRST BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PERFORMANCES of Dvorák's *Symphony No. 6* were given by Georg Henschel on October 26 and 27, 1883, with further ones that same season, later BSO performances being given by Wilhelm Gericke in 1886 and Arthur Nikisch in 1890, but then not until the 1963-64 season when Erich Leinsdorf led the work in Boston, New London, New York, and at Tanglewood. Leinsdorf programmed it again in Boston and New York in November/December 1967, also recording it with the BSO at that time. Since then, only Seiji Ozawa (April/May 1982 and at Tanglewood in August 1983), James Conlon (the most recent subscription performances, in January 1995), and Andrew Davis (at Tanglewood on July 16, 2006) have led the work with the BSO.

To Read and Hear More...

Gerald Lerner's *Maurice Ravel* is one of the many well-illustrated volumes in the biographical series "20th-Century Composers" (Phaidon paperback). Laurence Davies's *Ravel Orchestral Music* in the series of BBC Music Guides is a good brief introduction to the composer's music (University of Washington paperback). Davies has also written *The Gallic Muse*, a useful book that includes essays on Fauré, Duparc, Debussy, Satie, Ravel, and Poulenc (Barnes). Also useful is *The Cambridge Companion to Ravel*, edited by Deborah Mawer (Cambridge University Press). The Ravel entry in the 2001 edition of *The New Grove* is by Barbara L. Kelly. The important biography—unfortunately hard to find in the United States—is Roger Nichols's *Ravel* in the "Master Musicians" series, which replaced Norman Demuth's earlier volume in that same series. Nichols has also assembled *Ravel Remembered*, which brings together recollections from musicians and non-musicians who knew the composer personally (Farrar Straus & Giroux). Also useful are *Ravel* by Arbie Orenstein (Dover), Orenstein's *A Ravel Reader: Correspondence, Articles, Interviews* (also Dover), and H.H. Stuckenschmidt's *Maurice Ravel: Variations on his Life and Work* (Calder).

The Boston Symphony Orchestra has recorded *Valses nobles e sentimentales* twice, under Seiji Ozawa in 1975 for Deutsche Grammophon, and under Bernard Haitink in 1996 for Philips. The many other recordings include accounts led by Ernest Ansermet, Pierre Boulez, André Cluytens, Charles Dutoit, Jean Martinon, Paul Paray, André Previn, and Yan Pascal Tortelier. Among many renditions of the original piano version are those by Martha Argerich, Philippe Entremont, Leon Fleisher, Walter Gieseking, Angela Hewitt, Stephen Kovacevich, Arthur Rubinstein, and Jean-Yves Thibaudet, as well as a 1913 recording by the composer himself on a Pierian CD entitled "Maurice Ravel: The Composer as Pianist and Conductor."

The important biographies of Liszt are Derek Watson's compact *Liszt* in the Master Musicians series (Schirmer paperback) and Alan Walker's Liszt biography in three volumes—*Franz Liszt: The Virtuoso Years (1811-1847)*, *Franz Liszt: The Weimar Years (1848-1861)*, and *Franz Liszt: The Final Years (1861-1886)*—which was reprinted in paperback (Cornell University Press). Walker also authored an older brief biography with good illustrations, *Liszt*, in the "Great Composers" series (Faber and Faber, out of print) and edited the symposium volume *Franz Liszt: The Man and his Music* (Taplinger). Also by Walker is the article on Liszt in the revised (2001) *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*; the Liszt article in the 1980 *Grove* is by Humphrey Searle. Michael Steinberg's notes on the two Liszt piano concertos are in his compilation volume *The Concerto—A Listener's Guide* (Oxford paperback). And well worth noting here is Kenneth Hamilton's *After the Golden Age: Romantic Pianism and Modern Performance*, an engaging history, published in 2007, of the piano recital and its changing *mores* from the time of Liszt into the twentieth century (Oxford University Press).

Jean-Yves Thibaudet recorded the two Liszt piano concertos with Charles Dutoit and the Montreal Symphony Orchestra (Decca). The Boston Symphony Orchestra under Seiji Ozawa has recorded Liszt's two piano concertos and *Totentanz* with soloist Krystian Zimerman (Deutsche Grammophon).

Other noteworthy pairings of the two concertos include Nelson Freire's with Michel Plasson and the Dresden Philharmonic (Berlin Classics), Sviatoslav Richter's with Kiril Kondrashin and the London Symphony Orchestra (Philips), Emanuel Ax's with Esa-Pekka Salonen and the Philharmonia Orchestra (Sony), and Alfred Brendel's with Bernard Haitink and the London Philharmonic (Philips).

John Clapham's Dvorák article from the 1980 edition of *The New Grove* was reprinted in *The New Grove Late Romantic Masters: Bruckner, Brahms, Dvorák, Wolf* (Norton paperback). Clapham is also the author of two books about the composer: *Antonín Dvorák: Musician and Craftsman* (St. Martin's) and the more purely biographical *Antonín Dvorák* (Norton). The article on the composer in the revised edition of *The New Grove* (2001) is by Klaus Döge. Also of interest are Alec Robertson's *Dvorák* in the Master Musicians series (Littlefield paperback) and Robert Layton's BBC Music Guide on *Dvorák Symphonies & Concertos* (University of Washington paperback). *Dvorák and his World*, edited by Michael Beckerman, and which originated from the Bard Music Festival, is an interesting and useful collection of essays and documentary material on various aspects of the composer's life, music, and reception (Princeton paperback). Otakar Souček published important source material on Dvorák's life in *Antonín Dvorák: Letters and Reminiscences* (Artia). Michael Steinberg's *The Symphony—A Listener's Guide* includes his program notes on Dvorák's Sixth through Ninth symphonies (Oxford paperback). Donald Francis Tovey's note on the Symphony No. 6 is among his *Essays in Musical Analysis*, where it is called (according to the now long-outdated numbering that preceded the publication of Dvorák's first five symphonies) the Symphony No. 2 (Oxford paperback). All of Dvorák's symphonies are discussed by Jan Smaczny in his chapter on "The Czech Symphony" in *A Guide to the Symphony*, edited by Robert Layton (Oxford paperback).

Relatively recent recordings of Dvorák's Symphony No. 6 include Jirí Belohlávek's with the BBC Symphony Orchestra (Warner Classics), Sir Colin Davis's with the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO Live), and Thomas Dausgaard's with the Swedish Chamber Orchestra (BIS). Of older vintage are Rafael Kubelik's account with the Berlin Philharmonic (Deutsche Grammophon) and, older still, István Kertész's with the London Symphony Orchestra (Decca). There are also no fewer than four recordings of the Dvorák Sixth Symphony with the Czech Philharmonic, all on Supraphon, with conductors Karel Ančerl, Sir Charles Mackerras, Václav Neumann, and Václav Talich. Erich Leinsdorf's 1967 recording of the Dvorák Sixth with the Boston Symphony Orchestra is not currently listed (RCA).

Marc Mandel

Guest Artists

Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Making his Boston Symphony Orchestra debut this week, conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin, who this season succeeds Valery Gergiev as music director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, makes his Boston Symphony Orchestra debut with this week's concerts. Artistic director and principal conductor of the Orchestre Métropolitain du Grand Montréal since March 2000, Mr. Nézet-Séguin has also been principal guest conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra since September 2008. He has appeared with some of the world's greatest orchestras, including the Dresden Staatskapelle, Rotterdam Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, Orchestre National de France, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Rundfunk Sinfonieorchester Berlin, Flemish Radio Symphony, Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte Carlo, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. In 2008 he made his debut with the Mozarteum Orchestra at the Salzburg Festival. In Canada he has led the Toronto Symphony, Montreal Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, Les Violons du Roy, the CBC Radio Orchestra, Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, Winnipeg Symphony, Edmonton Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Quebec City Symphony Orchestra, the Ottawa National Centre of the Arts Orchestra, Ontario's London Orchestra, the Nova Scotia Symphony, and the Victoria Symphony, where he was principal

guest conductor from 2003 to 2006. Musical advisor at Opéra de Montréal from 2000 to 2002, he has led productions with many Canadian and American companies, achieving particular success with Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*, including a production at the Salzburg Festival. Born in Montreal in 1975, Yannick Nézet-Séguin began piano lessons at five and later entered Montreal's Conservatoire de Musique du Québec, where he studied piano with Anisia Campos as well as composition, chamber music, and conducting. He also studied choral conducting at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey, and in 1995 founded the vocal and instrumental ensemble La Chapelle de Montréal. He continued his training with a number of famous conductors, among them Carlo Maria Giulini. Over the years he has earned such coveted prizes and distinctions as the Virginia Parker Prize awarded by the Canada Council for the Arts and several "Prix Opus" granted by the Conseil Québécois de la Musique. Mr. Nézet-Séguin still makes occasional appearances as a professional pianist in duos, recitals and chamber projects. He records for ATMA Classique and has received awards and international acclaim for his recordings with the Orchestre Métropolitain. His most recent recordings include "La Mer," a collection of pieces by Debussy, Britten, and Mercure on the theme of the sea, and Bruckner's Ninth Symphony with the Orchestre Métropolitain.

Jean-Yves Thibaudet

The versatile pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet is sought after by today's foremost orchestras, festivals, conductors, and collaborative musicians. Following appearances at major festivals throughout Europe and the United States as well as European tours with the New York Philharmonic and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in summer 2008, Mr. Thibaudet tours during the current season with the London Philharmonic, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony, and Kammerorchester Basel. He also appears in Europe with the Munich Philharmonic, Rundfunk Sinfonieorchester Berlin, London Symphony, Orchestre de Paris, Dresden Philharmonic, Barcelona Symphony, and Orchestre National de Lyon. In the United States he appears with the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and with the symphony orchestras of Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, Colorado, and Charleston. The coming months bring tours with the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande to Europe and South America, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. Recital appearances take him to Dublin, Madrid, Vienna, Cologne, and the Lucerne Festival Piano. Jean-Yves Thibaudet was the soloist on the Oscar- and Golden Globe-award winning soundtrack of Universal Pictures' *Atonement* and in the Oscar-nominated *Pride and Prejudice*. He is an exclusive recording artist for Decca, which has released over forty of his albums, earning the Schallplattenpreis, the Diapason d'Or, Choc de la Musique, *Gramophone* Award, two Echo awards, and the Edison Prize. His latest Grammy-nominated recording, Saint-Saëns's piano concertos 2 and 5 with the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, was released in fall 2007, and follows the album "Aria—Opera Without Words," which features transcriptions of opera arias. In 2005 Decca released his recording of Strauss's *Burleske* with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. Among other recordings are "Satie: The Complete Solo Piano Music," and the jazz albums "Reflections on Duke: Jean-Yves Thibaudet plays the music of Duke Ellington" and "Conversations with Bill Evans," tributes to two of jazz history's greats. Jean-Yves Thibaudet was born in Lyon, France, where he began his piano studies at five and made his first public appearance at seven. At twelve he entered the Paris Conservatory, where he studied with Aldo Ciccolini and Lucette Descaves, a friend and collaborator of Ravel. He won the Premier Prix du Conservatoire at fifteen and the Young Concert Artists Auditions in New York City three years later. In 2001 the Republic of France awarded Mr. Thibaudet the Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. In 2002 he was awarded the Premio Pegasus from the Spoleto Festival in Italy, for his artistic achievements and his longstanding involvement with the festival. His most recent accolade is the 2007 Victoire d'Honneur, a lifetime career achievement award and the highest honor given by France's Victoires de la Musique. Jean-Yves Thibaudet made his Boston Symphony Orchestra debut at Tanglewood in August 1992 and has since also appeared regularly with the BSO at Symphony Hall. In October 2007 he played Ravel's G major piano concerto with James Levine and the BSO on Opening Night, in subscription concerts, and at Carnegie Hall. His most recent BSO appearance was at Tanglewood in August 2008, as soloist in Khachaturian's Piano Concerto with André Previn conducting.