



BOSTON LANDMARKS ORCHESTRA

CHRISTOPHER WILKINS MUSIC DIRECTOR

PRESENTS

Sheherazade
Meets
Clarice Assad

August 12, 2015

7 pm

at the DCR's Hatch Shell

*f*ree for All
Concert Fund

NEWMUSIC
USA

League
of American
Orchestras

Boston Landmarks Orchestra

VIOLIN I

Gregory Vitale, *concertmaster*
Christine Vitale
Pattison Story
Gerald Mordis
Colin Davis
Tera Gorsett
Sasha Callahan
Stacey Alden

VIOLIN II

Paula Oakes, *principal*
Robert Curtis
Maynard Goldman
Lisa Brooke
Melissa Howe
Alexandra Labinska

VIOLA

Kenneth Stalberg, *principal*
Abigail Cross
Donna Jerome
Jean Haig
Don Krishnaswami

CELLO

Loewi Lin, *principal*
Mark Simcox
Jolene Kessler
Melanie Dyball
Patrick Owen
Leo Eguchi

BASS

Robert Lynam, *principal*
Barry Boettger
Kevin Green
Irving Steinberg

FLUTE

Lisa Hennessy, *principal*
Stephanie Stathos
Elzbieta Brandys

PICCOLO

Stephanie Stathos
Elzbieta Brandys

OBOE

Andrew Price, *principal*
Lynda Jacquin

ENGLISH HORN

Lynda Jacquin

CLARINET

Ian Greitzer, *principal*
Margo McGowan

BASSOON

Donald Bravo, *principal*
Gregory Newton

CONTRABASSOON

Gregory Newton

HORN

Kevin Owen, *principal*
Vanessa Gardner
Sarah Sutherland
Lee Wadenpfohl

TRUMPET

Dana Oakes, *principal*
Jesse Levine

TROMBONE

Robert Couture, *principal*
Hans Bohn
Donald Robinson

TUBA

Donald Rankin, *principal*

HARP

Ina Zdorovetchi, *principal*

CELESTE

Vytas Baksys

TIMPANI

Jeffrey Fischer, *principal*

PERCUSSION

Robert Schulz, *principal*
Craig McNutt
Neil Grover
John Tanzer
Abraham Finch

Maynard Goldman,
Personnel Manager

Melissa McCarthy Steinberg,
Librarian

Kristo Kondakci,
Assistant Conductor

Sheherazade Meets Clarice Assad

Boston Landmarks Orchestra
Christopher Wilkins, Music Director
Clarice Assad, *vocalist*
Keita Ogawa, *percussion*
Camp Harbor View
Grooversity
ZUMIX

Batuque

Oscar Lorenzo Fernández
(1897-1948)

Mother Goose (Complete Ballet)

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)

Prélude

Danse du rouet et scène (Dance of the Spinning Wheel and Scenes)

Pavane de la belle au bois dormant (Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty)

Les entretiens de la belle et de la bête (Conversations of Beauty and the Beast)

Petit poucet (Tom Thumb)

Laideronnette, impératrice des pagodes (Laideronnette, Empress of the Pagodas)

Le jardin féerique (The Fairy Garden)

***CIRANDADAS* (World Premiere)**

Clarice Assad
(b. 1978)

Introduction

I. Samba lelê

II. Peixe-vivo (*Live Fish*)

III. Nigue nigue ninhas

IV. Escravos de Jó

V. Ciranda cirandinha

VI. Sianinha

VII. Peixinhos do mar (*Fishies of the Sea*) - Finale

INTERMISSION

Sheherazade

Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov
(1844-1908)

The Sea and Sinbad's Ship

The Tale of Prince Kalendar

The Young Prince and the Princess

The Festival at Bagdad; The Sea; The Ship Goes to Pieces on a Rock

Gregory Vitale, *concertmaster*

Clarice Assad is the *Music Alive: New Partnerships* Composer-in-Residence with the Boston Landmarks Orchestra. *Music Alive: New Partnerships* is a national residency program of New Music USA and the League of American Orchestras.

The **BOSTON LANDMARKS ORCHESTRA** was founded in 2001 by conductor and community advocate Charles Ansbacher to perform free summer concerts in historic and scenic Boston-area locations. The orchestra—made up of some of Boston’s most accomplished professional musicians—uses great symphonic music as a means of gathering together people of all backgrounds and ages in joyful collaboration. Since 2007, it has presented its main concert series at the DCR’s Hatch Shell every Wednesday from mid-July to late August. In addition, the orchestra offers free family concerts and educational programs throughout the neighborhoods of Greater Boston. The orchestra regularly collaborates with a range of cultural and social service organizations to ensure participation across ethnic, economic, and cultural divides.



BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS The Boston Landmarks Orchestra is committed to removing barriers to access for people with disabilities. It offers braille and large-print programs, assisted listening devices, and ambassadors to greet and assist people at a

handicap drop-off point. In 2012, the orchestra began to work with American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters as performers at select concerts. Rather than providing direct translation of the spoken word, interpreters communicate the feeling of the music and the remarks given during the concert. In 2014, in recognition of its efforts to embrace inclusiveness as core to its mission, the orchestra was named an “UP organization” by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, one of only 11 organizations in Massachusetts to earn this distinction.

CHRISTOPHER WILKINS was appointed Music Director of the Boston Landmarks Orchestra in the spring of 2011. Since then he has reaffirmed founder Charles Ansbacher’s vision of making great music accessible to the whole community, emphasizing inclusive programming and collaborative work. Mr. Wilkins also serves as Music Director of the Akron Symphony. As a guest conductor, he has appeared with many of the leading orchestras of the United States, including those of Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, and San Francisco. He has also appeared regularly with orchestras in New Zealand, Latin America, Spain and the UK.

Previously he served as Music Director of the San Antonio Symphony and the Colorado Springs Symphony. He also served as Resident Conductor of the Youth Orchestra of the Americas, assisting in the formation of the orchestra in its inaugural season, and leading it on tours throughout the Americas. Born in Boston, Mr. Wilkins earned his bachelor’s degree from Harvard College in 1978 and his master’s from the Yale School of Music in 1981. As an oboist, he performed with many ensembles in the Boston area including the Tanglewood Music Center and the Boston Philharmonic under Benjamin Zander.

The **FREE FOR ALL CONCERT FUND**, an independent grant-making public charity, ensures that everyone from the Boston region—children, adults, families—has regular and permanent access to the rich world of

classical and orchestral music, and related cultural events. With 20 grantees presenting free concerts throughout Boston's neighborhoods, the Fund guarantees that classical music remains free for all, forever. For more information, please visit www.freeforallconcertfund.org.

Conceived by Maestro Ansbacher's close friend Tuan Nguyen, founder and chairman of VietNamNet Media Group, the **CHARLES ANSBACHER MUSIC FOR ALL AWARD** represents Ansbacher's enduring legacy as founder of the Landmarks Orchestra and the Free for All Concert Fund. An internationally renowned conductor, Ansbacher created Landmarks to ensure great music was available to the community through free innovative performances held throughout the city. In addition to transformational performances in Sarajevo, Bosnia, Beirut, Lebanon, and Chisinau, he brought the first-ever classical symphony orchestra concert to Fenway Park and was the first American to lead the Vietnam National Symphony. The annual award given in his name recognizes an individual who has demonstrated a commitment to bringing free, high-quality, classical music to all people in a particular geographic setting. Nominees included those whose work uses music as a conduit for bringing reconciliation and compassion to underserved communities, and those who are dedicated to improving humanity through classical music.

The Free for All Concert Fund is pleased to announce the selection of **NABEEL ABOUD-ASHKAR** as the recipient of the 2015 *Charles Ansbacher Music for All Award*. Mr. Abboud-Ashkar is the Co-founder and Artistic Director of the Polyphony Foundation, whose mission is to help bridge the divide between Arabs and Jews in Israel through the power of classical music. Many of the Arab and Jewish musicians he has taught have received top music prizes in Israel and are now pursuing classical music careers. Ambassador Swanee Hunt will present the award on behalf of her late husband, Charles Ansbacher, this evening. Tonight's concert is also the annual summer Reconciliation Concert, a series initiated by Free for All Concert Fund trustee Tuan Nguyen, celebrating the universal healing power of music.

Under Abboud-Ashkar's leadership, Polyphony Education offers the largest musical education program in Israel with over 8,000 students, youth orchestras and mixed ensembles, a semi-professional conservatory, residencies and an emerging professional orchestra. Prior to Polyphony, Arab students were not introduced to classical music. Through their involvement in the conservatory program and orchestras, young Arab and Jewish musicians practice and perform together, developing friendships through their shared passion for classical music. For most of these students, this is the first time they have become friends with someone from a different background. In turn, the audiences attending the concerts are both Arabs and Jews – a rarity in Israel. Throughout Israel, Polyphony has shown that classical music can be not only beautiful in its own right, but also a facilitator of dialogue and understanding and open the doors to helping people of all religious backgrounds come together. Polyphony offers hope for Israel's future. For more information, please visit www.polyphonyfoundation.org.

Brazilian-American **CLARICE ASSAD** is a Grammy-nominated composer, pianist, and vocalist of musical depth and ability. Described by the San Francisco Chronicle as "a serious triple threat", Assad is equally comfortable as a performer and band leader. Her music is vibrant, diverse, soulful, and colorful. Carefully crafted textures permeate her musical world, which embraces a wide variety of styles, including her own original concepts. Premieres for 2015–16 include *Godai*, *The Five Elements*, "*Z Sonata*", *Sephardic Suite*, and *Synchronous* - an oboe concerto for Liang Wang and string quartet to be premiered at the La Jolla Music Festival. In early 2016, her guitar concerto "O Saci-Pererê" will be premiered by Marc Teicholz at the San Francisco Conservatory.

Assad's music has been commissioned by Carnegie Hall, Fundação OSESP, Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, the New Chamber Orchestra, Concordia Chamber Players, the Albany Symphony, the Harris Foundation, Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra, the BRAVO! Music Festival, and La Jolla Music Festival, among others. Her works have been recorded and performed by Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, Yo-Yo Ma, Mike Marshall, the Turtle Island String Quartet, LA Guitar Quartet, Anne-Marie McDermott, Eugene Zuckerman, Ida Kadafian, Chanticleer, the Philadelphia Orchestra, Tokyo Symphony, Queensland Symphony, and Orquestra Sinfônica de São Paulo, among others. She is a recipient of the Aaron Copland Award, several ASCAP awards in composition, Meet The Composer's Van Lier Fellowship, and the McKnight Visiting Composer Fellowship, in addition to recognition from NPR's All Songs Considered, American Lyric Theater, the Jerome Foundation, American Composer Forum, and the Franklin Honor Society.

Assad has received acclaim for her performances of original compositions and her own arrangements of popular Brazilian songs, world music and jazz standards. She has performed at Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York City and Doha, Qatar, the Caramoor International Jazz Festival, Carnegie Hall, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, San Francisco Jazz, Pick-Staiger Concert Hall in Chicago, Le Casino de Paris, and the Palais des Beaux Arts in Brussels, Belgium. Hailed by the LA Times as "*A dazzling soloist*," Assad sings in Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian and English, but thrives in exploring the voice as an instrument, creating a vast array of innovative textures and incorporating an exciting vocabulary of extended techniques into her music.

The Residency of Clarice Assad is made possible through Music Alive: New Partnerships, a residency program of New Music USA and the League of American Orchestras. This national program is designed to establish new relationships between composers and orchestras, and to help orchestras present new music to the public and build support for new music within their institutions. Leadership funding for Music Alive is provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, with additional support from The Aaron Copland Fund for Music and The ASCAP Foundation Bart Howard Fund.

Hailing originally from Nagasaki, Japan, **KEITA OGAWA** is one of the most versatile and sought-after percussionists in New York City. He started his music career on drum set at the age of 15. After performing regularly in

Tokyo for several years, Keita decided to pursue his musical studies overseas. He was accepted into Berklee College of Music in 2005 where he studied with legendary musicians Manuel “Egui” Castrillo, Jamey Haddad, Tito De Gracia, David Rosado, and Mark Walker. Seeking full immersion into the world of Brazilian percussion, Keita relocated to Rio de Janeiro for three months and studied with some of the country's most respected musicians-Jorginho do Pandeiro, Celsinho Silva, Kiko Freitas, and Marcio Bahia among others.

Since his arrival in America, Keita has performed with Yo-Yo-Ma, Christian McBride, Terri Lyne Carrington, Osvaldo Golijov, Alisa Weilerstein, Gustavo Dudamel, Danilo Perez, George Duke, Dominick Farinacci, Cyro Baptista, Jamey Haddad, Horacio “El Negro” Hernandez, Gretchen Parlato, Eric Harlan, Tiger Okoshi, John Lockwood, Mark Walker, Fernando Brandao, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Colorado Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra and more.

Created in an effort to address the summer needs of inner-city youth, **CAMP HARBOR VIEW** offers 900 children the opportunity to leave the city during the day and participate in a four-week program (11-14 year olds) or eight-week (15-17 year olds) program on Long Island in Boston Harbor. Recruited from numerous agencies with an emphasis on at-risk neighborhoods and low income families, campers pay just \$5 for their month-long experience, which includes transportation, apparel, and three meals per day. Additional camper alumni and year-round programming allows Camp Harbor View to deepen its impact and continue to support the youth with whom they work. Camp Harbor View's mission is to provide an environment in which young adolescents from Boston's at-risk neighborhoods can experience fun, friendship, healthy activities, new exposures and mentoring opportunities offered by a caring and competent staff. Through this process, they develop confidence, leadership skills, and an awareness of life possibilities (educational, vocational, and other) that they would not otherwise have encountered. www.chvf.org

GROOVERSITY is an innovative and creative drumming project envisioned by Brazilian percussionist Marcus Santos to promote music as an educational resource, entertainment and as a catalyst for social change. It is based on community outreach for positive outcome while targeting global diversity awareness. Carnegie Hall and Harvard are among a worldwide list of places Grooversity rhythms have been performed. Grooversity's music system is currently being used by 22 communities in France, Italy, Canada and USA. Locally, the Grooversity system is used in Somerville Public Schools and helped Somerville to win the 2015 All American City Award by the National Civic League. www.grooversity.com

Like a lot of good ideas, **ZUMIX** started in someone's living room. Co-Founders Bob Grove and current Executive Director Madeleine Steczynski founded ZUMIX in 1991 as a response to Boston's worst wave of youth violence. It began as a summer songwriting program with 24 youth, \$200,

and the simple idea that giving youth something to be passionate about could transform lives and elevate communities. Its programming quickly expanded. In 1993 they created a free outdoor Summer Concert Series in order to serve the broader community. Today, year-round events are organized to provide East Boston residents with access to top-quality arts and cultural events. ZUMIX serves over 500 youth per year through after-school and summer programming and 500 through in-school partnerships. Over 10,000 additional adults, children, and families attend its community events and festivals. Its mission is empowered youth who use music to make strong positive change in their lives, their communities, and the world. www.zumix.org

PODIUM NOTE:

Like *One Thousand and One Nights*, tonight's concert has a frame story. It is the tale of **Clarice Assad**, and how she came to create a vibrant array of partnerships through her residency with the Boston Landmarks Orchestra. It tells of how her music inspired children from all over Boston to join us in performance this summer. It is a story that began more than a year ago, with a generous grant from *Music Alive: New Partnerships*, a program of **New Music USA** and the **League of American Orchestras**, for which we are deeply grateful.

Clarice's skills as composer, singer, pianist, and improviser have enabled her to collaborate with Boston musicians of many ages and backgrounds. First, she and her gifted percussionist **Keita Ogawa** joined an **Octet of Landmarks Musicians** in performance at the Pinebank Promontory in Jamaica Plain. You will have a chance to hear the magnificent chamber works she composed for that occasion—combining Brazilian popular music, jazz, and classical styles—when these forces perform again at the **USS Constitution Museum** at Noon on **Friday, August 14** in a free public concert.

But Clarice and Keita have also been collaborating with much younger Boston-area musicians. They, along with the Landmarks Orchestra's Assistant Conductor **Kristo Kondakci**, have led workshops at three separate youth programs. At **Camp Harbor View**, they have made glorious music with singer **David Fuller** and the young campers of his Music Club. At **ZUMIX** in East Boston, they have jammed with young students and with faculty members **Sissy Castrogiovanni** and **Jenny Shulman**, under the care and guidance of ZUMIX Co-Founder and Executive Director **Madeleine Steczynski**.

A third group helps us launch tonight's concert: the Brazilian drumming ensemble **Grooversity**, led by the charismatic **Marcus Santos**. His ensemble comprises musicians from the **Berklee College of Music** and younger students as well. The music that brings us together is from an opera by **Oscar Lorenzo Fernández**, based on traditional Brazilian stories. Fernández blended indigenous and popular Brazilian elements with traditional European styles in much the same way his countryman Villa-

Lobos did. The final movement of his 1941 suite from the opera is among the most popular of all Brazilian works for orchestra. It is an Afro-Brazilian dance called **Batuque**.

Maurice Ravel always got along well with children. Maybe it was because of his short stature (they could see almost eye-to-eye) or maybe it had to do with his love of storytelling. Or perhaps it was on account of his fascination with toys and dolls and mechanical things, an infatuation that is often reflected in his music. Whatever it was, all of these—children, storytelling, dolls and mechanical things—are present in his music for the ***Mother Goose Ballet***.

As with many of Ravel's orchestral works, *Mother Goose* was originally composed for piano. It was intended as a gift for the young children of friends: Mimi and Jean Godebsky were just six and seven years old. To encourage them in their piano lessons, Ravel wrote a series of brief duets sometime around 1908. The full title of these miniatures was *Mother Goose: Five Children's Pieces*. Two years later, he made an orchestral version of the five pieces. That work bears the same title as the original work, and has long since become a staple of the repertoire.

Then, in 1911, *Mother Goose* got a complete makeover. At the urging of his publisher, Ravel converted the five pieces into a story ballet, inventing an ingenious scenario to go with it. He created four transitional movements connecting the five pieces, and devised a frame story derived from the tale of *Sleeping Beauty*. The result is music that is precisely matched to a narrative that never existed in the work's original form.

I highly recommend that you follow the Landmarks Orchestra's Twitter feed **@LandmarksNotes** during our performance of the *Mother Goose Ballet*. Every word of it comes from the stage instructions Ravel provided in the score. It will enhance your experience in the same way an audio guide does at a museum, allowing you to "see" this music. It is, after all, some of the most "visual" music in the entire repertoire.

The *Mother Goose Ballet* begins with a **Prelude** foreshadowing the stories to follow. Slow chords invoke the curse of the fairies. The fairies have cast a spell that will soon induce Sleeping Beauty's slumber. Then Prince Charming's hunting horns are heard as gradually the forest comes alive. The sound of rushing wind is accompanied by birdsong, later associated with Tom Thumb. After a return of the "slumber" chords, the tempo quickens to the moment when the curtain rises, revealing a fairy garden.

The Dance of the Spinning Wheel establishes the frame story. An old woman sits at a spinning wheel as strings and low woodwinds mimic her rapid circular motions. Young Princess Florine enters performing cartwheels and jumping rope. Suddenly she loses her balance and stumbles, falling against the spinning wheel's spindle and receiving a puncture wound in the process.

The old woman calls for help. Lords and ladies of the court come running. But the princess soon faints, falling into a deep sleep. The curse of the fairies

is recalled in the orchestra. The old woman rises and removes her dirty cape, revealing her true identity as the good fairy Bénigne, the spirit that will guide Sleeping Beauty's destiny.

The Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty is simple, stately, and brief. It consists of just twenty bars of elegantly interlocking melodies. The rest of the *Mother Goose Ballet*—including the folktales of Ravel's original five pieces—can be interpreted as Sleeping Beauty's dreams. Her dreaming ends in the final movement, when Prince Charming awakens her in the fairy garden.

The attendants of the court now approach as the first of the interludes linking the five original pieces begins. Each of the interludes follows approximately the same dramatic plan: the attendants appear; they unfurl a banner announcing the title of the tale to follow; the music for that tale is hinted at by the orchestra; the attendants hurry to the back of the stage; and finally they give a signal for a new backdrop to fall behind the set, creating a change of scene.

Conversations of Beauty and the Beast is so apt in its orchestral setting that it makes one wonder whether Ravel had intended to orchestrate the piano work all along. Beauty's voice is assigned to the clarinet, and the Beast's to the contrabassoon. The two carry on a conversation at opposite ends of the frequency spectrum. At the conclusion of their dialogue—with a great upsweep in the harp—the Beast is transformed from a contrabassoon into a solo violin. Appearing now as a Prince, he plays the same tune as before, but now a full five octaves higher.

In the score, Ravel prefaces **Tom Thumb** with a quotation from the folklorist Perrault: *"He thought he would easily find his way thanks to the bread he had scattered wherever he had passed. But he was quite surprised when he couldn't see even a single crumb. Birds had come along and eaten every bit."* Ravel illustrates the meanderings of Tom Thumb by starting a rising line from the same note over and over again, each time extending it a little longer than the previous time. The moment when the birds come and eat the crumbs is a superb exemplar of Ravel's orchestrational genius.

Laideronnette, Empress of the Pagodas depicts a Chinese empress the size of a doll, serenaded at her bath by her subjects. In the score, Ravel quotes from the 1697 folktale collection, *Serpentin Vert*: *"Some played lutes built from walnut shells. Others had violas made of almond shells, for it was necessary to suit the instruments to their sizes."* Ravel's 4-hand piano version of this movement is played almost entirely on the black keys, a convenient way for a beginner to render a five-note scale, thereby creating an Orientalist effect. The orchestral version reminds us of the toys and mechanical things Ravel always loved. It also recalls the sound of the gamelan, which Ravel heard as a fourteen-year-old boy at the Paris Exhibition of 1889.

Prince Charming now enters **The Fairy Garden**, guided by Cupid. There he discovers Sleeping Beauty, lying undisturbed after her 100-year slumber. As he bows down to kiss her, she slowly awakens. At this precise moment,

dawn breaks and the sun begins its slow ascent. Ravel's music overflows with expressions of warmth and loving wisdom. The characters of all the preceding tales reënter the stage, and gather around the Prince and the Princess. The fairy Bénigne flies overhead, blessing the couple and all their company.

When **Clarice Assad** and the **Landmarks Orchestra** won a grant from **New Music USA** to create a composer residency this summer, the assumption was that we would perform an existing work of hers. But when she and I discussed the mission of the Landmarks Orchestra, and her own experience working with children, Clarice proposed writing something new instead. After a visit to Boston—concluding the day before the first of the hellish series of snowstorms struck—she began thinking about a work that could serve as a kind of musical playground for the four collaborating organizations. The themes of children, storytelling, and folklore she suggested inspired the selection of the other works on tonight's program.

Clarice writes, "**CIRANDADAS** is a wordplay on the term CIRANDA, a type of music and dance from the Northeastern part of Brazil. The CIRANDA is characterized by the formation of a small or large circle of people, who gather to perform this music by singing, playing, and dancing. The folk music of Brazil is largely associated with children, for its simplistic and playful nature.

"This programmatic piece follows the physical and emotional growth of an imaginary human being from childhood to the coming of age. Each song and section has its own symbolic meaning associated with different stages and aspects of being a child, from playfulness, to tenderness, to the point when emotional independence and awareness are reached, namely young adulthood. The piece is scored for full orchestra, solo percussion, vocal soloists, a small chorus of mixed voices, and Brazilian percussion ensemble. Although most of the piece is written out, there is plenty of room for improvisation, especially between the vocal and percussion groups."

Rimsky-Korsakov's symphonic suite ***Sheherazade*** was inspired by the collection of folktales known as *One Thousand and One Nights*. It is not a setting of any of the stories specifically, but an expression of their character, imagery, and mood generally. In his autobiography, Rimsky wrote, "All I desired was that the listener should have the impression that it is beyond any doubt an Oriental narrative of numerous and varied fairy-tale wonders, and not merely four pieces played one after another and composed on the basis of themes common to all four movements."

As well known as some of the tales within the collection are, the frame story providing context for the telling of the stories is at least as famous. At the beginning of the manuscript score, Rimsky summarizes the frame story as follows:

"The Sultan Schariar, convinced that all women are false and faithless, vowed to put to death each of his wives after the first nuptial night. But the Sultana Sheherazade saved her life by entertaining her lord with fascinating tales, told one after another for a thousand and one nights. The Sultan,

consumed with curiosity, postponed from day to day the execution of his wife, and finally repudiated his bloody vow entirely.”

In each of the four movements of *Sheherazade*, the solo violin—performed by **concertmaster Gregory Vitale**—represents the figure of Sheherazade, telling her tales to the Sultan. She accompanies herself on the *oud*—an effect supplied by **harpist Ina Zdorovetchi**. The elegance and variety of her music complements her nobility and intelligence. The ornate curling motion of the violin line—a style known as “arabesque”—identifies her as Arabian.

The opening bars of the **first movement** portray the Sultan in a state of rage, “his face a thundercloud,” the folklorist tells us. This four-bar melody is one of the work’s principal recurring themes. Its contour remains constant over the course of the entire symphonic suite, but its mood changes often. It is followed now by five chords, suspended in time, representing the spell Sheherazade casts over the Sultan with her storytelling. The chords are reminiscent of the “magic” chords in Mendelssohn’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, a work that will be performed in a staged production two weeks from tonight by this orchestra and the Commonwealth Shakespeare Company. The opening theme is then transformed to illustrate the voyages of Sinbad the Sailor. It is set as a barcarolle, a type of folk song with the rocking motion of a boat, thought to have originated in Venice.

The **second movement** presents another world entirely. It is associated with the Kalendar Prince, a beggar who travelled from town to town. Everywhere he went, people would bow to him and address him as “your majesty.” The variety of scenes in the story is reflected in the constantly shifting energy of the music. The orchestration is colorful and varied, with substantial solos emanating from every corner of the orchestra.

The **third movement** assumes the place that a slow movement traditionally would in a four-movement symphony. It is music for a love story. The middle section may refer to a tale in which a young man waits every day for the sound of the approaching procession of the princess and her court. The snare drum marks time while the cymbals, tambourine, and triangle denote the jangling of the jewelry hanging about the princess’s embroidered silks.

The **final movement** is associated with two of the Voyages of Sinbad. In one, two lovers at last find one another at a festival in Baghdad after years of searching. In another, Sinbad’s ship is dashed to pieces on the rocks, compelling him to build a raft, on which he eventually floats to the bejeweled city of Serendib in present-day Sri Lanka. The brilliance and clarity with which Rimsky portrays life on the high seas came from personal experience. He had served all over the world as an officer in the Russian navy, and set anchor at one point—a coincidence of particular interest tonight—in Rio de Janeiro.

- Christopher Wilkins

“I wish more professional orchestras
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-LLOYD SCHWARTZ, NEW YORK ARTS

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Stravinsky // Violin Concerto

Ayano Ninomiya, *violin*

Debussy // *La Mer*

Tchaikovsky // Symphony No. 5

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