



# Grant Park Music Festival

Seventy-fifth Season

Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus

Carlos Kalmar, *Principal Conductor*

Christopher Bell, *Chorus Director*

**Ninth Program:** Gala 75th Season Birthday Concert

**Wednesday, July 1, 2009 at 8:00 p.m.**

Jay Pritzker Pavilion

GRANT PARK ORCHESTRA

Carlos Kalmar, *Conductor*

## A Musical Recreation of the Inaugural Orchestral Concert of the Grant Park Music Festival July 1, 1935

WAGNER	Entry of the Guests from <i>Tannhäuser</i>
THOMAS	Overture to <i>Mignon</i>
ALFVÉN	Midsommarvaka ("Midsummer Vigil"), Swedish Rhapsody No. 1, Op. 19
GLAZUNOV	Three Selections from <i>Ruses d'Amour</i> , Op. 61 Introduction Grande Valse Grand Pas des Fiancés
LISZT	Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2
POWELL	Natchez on the Hill: Three Virginia Country Dances, Op. 30
GERMAN	Three Dances from <i>Henry VIII</i> Morris Dance Shepherd's Dance Torch Dance
J. STRAUSS, JR.	On the Beautiful Blue Danube, Op. 314
MEACHAM	American Patrol

This concert is generously sponsored by JPMorgan Chase & Co.



### ENTRY OF THE GUESTS FROM TANNHÄUSER (1845)

#### Richard Wagner (1813-1883)

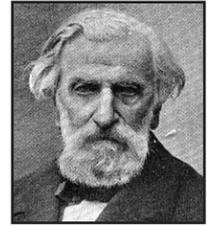
Entry of the Guests from *Tannhäuser* is scored for three flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion and strings. The performance time is eight minutes.

Wagner's *Tannhäuser* opens in a grotto in the Venusberg, the mountain where Venus, the goddess of love, is said by German legend to have taken refuge following the fall of ancient civilization. *Tannhäuser* has forsaken the world to enjoy her sensual pleasures, but after a year he longs to return home and find forgiveness. He invokes the name of the Virgin Mary, and the Venusberg is swallowed by darkness. *Tannhäuser* finds himself in a valley below Wartburg Castle, where he is passed by a band of pilgrims journeying to Rome. His friend Wolfram recognizes him, and invites him to the Wartburg to take part in a singing contest. The *Entry of the Guests* accompany the procession of the nobles into the great hall of the Wartburg, the scene of *Tannhäuser's* earlier triumphs in song.

### OVERTURE TO MIGNON (1866)

#### Ambroise Thomas (1811-1896)

The *Overture to Mignon* is scored for pairs of woodwinds, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, percussion, harp and strings. The performance time is eight minutes.



Ambroise Thomas occupied the loftiest rungs of French music during the middle decades of the 19th century. He won *premiers prix* in piano and harmony as a student at the Paris Conservatoire, and received the *Prix de Rome* for his cantata *Hermann et Ketty* in 1832. During his three-year Italian residency, he gained the warm admiration of the noted painter Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, then superintendent of the prize winners in Rome, and submitted compositions that so excited the taste of the directors of the competition that they arranged for their immediate publication. After returning to Paris in 1835, he applied himself to composing stage works in the pleasing and unpretentious style of the day with such prolificacy and success that he was made a *Chevalier* in the *Légion d'honneur* a decade later and an officer of that august institution in 1858. Thomas was elected to the French Academy in 1851, appointed professor of composition at the Paris Conservatoire five years later, and served as the school's director from 1871 until his death in 1896. His *Mignon* of 1866 was among the favorite operas of the late 19th century, both in France and abroad; he was granted the *Grand Croix* of the *Légion d'honneur* on the occasion of the work's 1,000th performance at the Opéra-Comique in 1894, the first musician to be so honored. One of the most revealing evidences of the high regard in which he was held by his age is the fact that Verdi abandoned his own long-projected opera on the subject of Hamlet in deference to Thomas' work of 1868.

Michel Carré and Jules Barbier based their libretto for *Mignon* on an episode from Goethe's well-known novel of 1796, *Wilhelm Meister*, which tells of the plight of Mignon, a young woman stolen by Gypsies from her Italian home when she was a child. During the Gypsies' wanderings in Germany, Mignon meets Lothario, a nobleman searching across the Continent for his abducted daughter, and Wilhelm Meister, a student who buys her freedom from the Gypsies. Mignon overcomes her jealousy of Wilhelm's love for the actress Philine, and wins him for herself in the opera's closing scene, which also shows her reconciliation with Lothario, who turns out to be her father. Thomas' musical style in *Mignon* united the appealing melodies, unpretentious harmonizations and clear-cut forms of traditional *opéra comique* with the more intense dramatic writing and larger scale of emerging *opéra lyrique*, whose chief representation, Gounod's 1859 *Faust* (also based on Goethe), considerably influenced Thomas' work. Following its atmospheric slow introduction, the vivid *Overture to Mignon* incorporates two melodies from the opera: Mignon's song (assigned to the horn) of homesickness for her native Italy, *Connais-tu le pays* ("Do You Know the Land Where the Lemon Trees Bloom?"); and the brilliant polonaise sung by the actress Philine in her role as the fairy queen, *Je suis Titania* ("I am Titania").



**MIDSOMMARVAKA (“MIDSUMMER VIGIL”),  
SWEDISH RHAPSODY NO. 1, OP. 19 (1903)**

**Hugo Alfvén (1872-1960)**

*Alfvén's Swedish Rhapsody No. 1 is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, E-flat clarinet, clarinet, bass clarinet, three bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, two harps and strings. The performance time is twelve minutes.*

Hugo Alfvén, composer, conductor and violinist, was, throughout his long and productive life, one of the most prominent of Sweden's musical Romanticists. He entered the Stockholm Conservatory in 1887, at the age of fifteen, where he studied composition with Johan Lindgren. In 1890, the year before he completed his studies at the Conservatory, he joined the Royal Opera Orchestra as a violinist. Though deeply involved with music at the time, he was also considering painting as a vocation, and it was not until he was awarded a government scholarship in 1896 to study violin with César Thomson in Brussels that he finally settled on a musical career.

Though a few of his songs and piano pieces date from the early 1890s, Alfvén began composing in earnest in 1897, with his First Symphony. For his Symphony No. 2, written in the following year, he received the Jenny Lind Prize, the stipend of which he used to study conducting in Dresden with Hermann Ludwig Kutschbach. After his return home he joined the faculty of the Stockholm Conservatory; in 1910 he was appointed musical director of Uppsala University, a post he retained until 1939. Alfvén was highly regarded as a choral conductor: from 1904 until 1957 (!), he conducted the Siljan Choir, a regional ensemble in Dalecarlia in west central Sweden; and, from 1910 to 1947, he directed the Orphei Drängar Chorus, with which he made 22 European tours. The four volumes of his autobiography, issued between 1946 and 1952, bear the titles *First Movement*, *Tempo Furioso*, *In Major and Minor* and *Finale*. He remained active as a composer and performer well into his last years — his final work, a ballet on *The Prodigal Son*, was completed in 1957, when he was 85. He died a week after his 88th birthday.

Alfvén composed a large amount of music — his catalog runs to almost 225 opus numbers. There are five symphonies, several film scores, incidental music for the theater, two ballets, a baker's dozen of independent orchestral pieces (including three *Swedish Rhapsodies*; the first is his best-known work), an oratorio, and nearly thirty piano and chamber compositions. The vast bulk of his music, however, were vocal and choral compositions and folksong arrangements written expressly for the amateur choirs with which he worked for so many years. His colorful compositional language, founded upon the Romantic tradition of Brahms and Dvorák, was influenced by indigenous Swedish music and by the visual sensations of his native land. “My best ideas have come during my sea-voyages at night, and, in particular, the wild autumns have been my most wonderful times for composition,” he once confided.

Alfvén's *Midsommarvaka* (“*Midsummer Vigil*”), his *Swedish Rhapsody No. 1*, was inspired by and based on what he called his country's “beautiful treasury of melodies.... I felt as if I were on sacred ground, as if I wanted to kneel before the sanctity of folk music. I have not changed one note of these tunes. The melodies are too noble to permit any changes, even the smallest.” The *Midsummer Vigil* is meant to evoke St. John's Eve, the time of the summer solstice (June 21-22) celebrated in Swedish villages by a dusk-to-dawn celebration around a roaring bonfire to await the first sunlight of the new season. The music, exuberant and irresistible, embodies the high spirits and hopeful nature of the festivity.

**THREE EXCERPTS FROM RUSES D'AMOUR  
 (“LOVE'S TRICKERY”), OP. 61 (1898)**

**Alexander Glazunov (1865-1936)**

*Ruses d'Amour is scored for pairs of woodwinds plus piccolo, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp and strings. The performance time is fourteen minutes.*



Alexander Glazunov was gifted with an exceptional ear and musical memory (after Borodin's death, he completely reconstructed the Overture to *Prince Igor* from recollections of Borodin's piano performance of the piece), and early demonstrated his gifts in his native St. Petersburg. By age nineteen, he had traveled to western Europe for a performance of his First Symphony. During the 1890s, he established a wide reputation as a composer and a conductor of his own works, journeying to Paris in 1889 to direct his Second Symphony at the World Exhibition. In 1899, he was engaged as an instructor of composition and orchestration at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. When his teacher, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, was dismissed from the Conservatory staff in the wake of the 1905 revolutionary turmoil, Glazunov resigned in protest in April and did not return until December 14th, by which time most of the demands by the faculty for the school's autonomy had been granted. Two days later he was elected director of the Conservatory. He worked ceaselessly to improve the curriculum and standards of the Conservatory, and he made a successful effort to preserve the school's independence after the 1917 Revolution. In the final years of his tenure, which lasted officially until 1930, Glazunov was criticized for his conservatism (Shostakovich, one of his students, devoted many admiring but frustrated pages to him in his purported memoirs, *Testimony*) and spent much time abroad. In 1929, he visited the United States to conduct the orchestras of Boston and Detroit in concerts of his music. When his health broke, in 1932, he settled with his wife in Paris; he died there in 1936. In 1972, his remains were transferred to Leningrad and reinterred in an honored grave. A research institute devoted to him in Munich and an archive in Paris were established in his memory.

Glazunov's three ballets — *Raymonda*, *Ruses d'Amour* and *The Seasons* — were all produced between 1898 and 1900. The one-act *Ruses d'Amour* ("Love's Trickery") was composed in 1898 and premiered at the Hermitage Theater in St. Petersburg on January 29, 1900; like Glazunov's two other ballets, its scenario and choreography were by the renowned Marius Petipa, who had collaborated with Tchaikovsky on *The Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker*. *Ruses d'Amour*, whose setting was inspired by the *fêtes champêtres* depicted with such elegance and sensuality in the paintings of the French artist Jean-Antoine Watteau (1684-1721), tells of Isabel, the young daughter of a duchess, who switches costumes with her maid to test that the intentions of her suitor are driven by true love and not by desire for her wealth and position. He passes her scrutiny, and the ballet ends with their betrothal. The *Introduction* is based on a melody that Glazunov borrowed from *Orchestography* (1589) by Thoinot Arbeau (the pseudonym for the Catholic priest Jehan Tabouret), one of the most important extant sources for information about the steps, style and music of French 16th-century dances. In the *Grande Valse*, Isabel, still dressed as a maid, dances gracefully while her servant, despite her sumptuous clothes, disports herself awkwardly. Just before the closing general dance, the couple joins together in the *Grand Pas des Fiancés* for a *pas de deux* accompanied by a tender duet for violin and cello.



**HUNGARIAN RHAPSODY NO. 2 (CA. 1850 FOR PIANO;  
ORCHESTRATED 1855)**

**Franz Liszt (1811-1886)**

*Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 is scored for piccolo, flute, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, percussion, harp and strings. The performance time is eleven minutes.*

Franz Liszt was a most unusual Hungarian patriot. Though born in Hungary, he was raised in the French language (he never did learn Hungarian very well, despite several attempts), moved with his family to Vienna at the age of ten, and visited his homeland only infrequently thereafter. Yet he maintained an interest in Hungarian music throughout his life, and wrote numerous works incorporating national melodies: the nineteen *Hungarian Rhapsodies* and several other pieces for solo piano (six of the *Rhapsodies* were later transcribed for orchestra), a symphonic poem, a Mass written for the coronation of Emperor Franz Josef as King of Hungary in 1867, and the *Hungarian Fantasy* for piano and orchestra. In addition to his

original compositions, he published and edited ten volumes of *Hungarian Folk Melodies* between 1839 and 1847, and followed them with a 450-page thesis on *The Gypsies and Their Music in Hungary*, issued in French in 1859. Liszt was convinced that he was immortalizing the true folk music of his native country in these compositions, among the earliest works of the “nationalism” movement that gained such importance during following decades. As the 19th century neared its end, however, it became apparent through systematic researches into Eastern European music that Liszt’s basic theory had been wrong.

Liszt believed that Hungarian folk music was derived from the Gypsies. However, it was shown that exactly the opposite was true — that the Gypsies, who can be traced only to the 15th century in Hungary, assimilated the local idioms into their songs and methods of performance, mixed them with musical formulae from other lands, especially those of the Near East, and had, by the 19th century, evolved a kind of urban salon music that Liszt mistook for original folk art.

Liszt’s ethnomusicological blunder, however, in no way diminishes the intrinsic value of his original “Hungarian” compositions, which remain excellent examples of his art and atmospheric souvenirs of a particularly colorful kind of music, whether based on authentic folksong or not. Many of these works were built around the performance method of the Hungarian national dance, the *Czardas*, which alternates (at a sign from the dancer to the orchestra) between a slow movement — “*Lassu*” — and a fast one — “*Friss*.” To describe their resultant free structure and quick contrasts, Liszt borrowed the term “Rhapsody” from literature, saying that it was meant to indicate the “fantastic, epic quality” of this music. He may have been the first to use this title in a musical context, just as he had introduced the word “recital” to describe his solo concerts of the 1840s.

## **NATCHEZ ON THE HILL: THREE VIRGINIA COUNTRY DANCES, OP. 30 (1931)**

### **John Powell (1882-1963)**

*Natchez on the Hill* is scored for pairs of woodwinds plus piccolo, four horns, two trumpets, two trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp and strings. The performance time is four minutes.

John Powell was born in Richmond in 1882 and remained deeply rooted in the spirit and music of his native Virginia for all of his life. His father was headmaster of a local girls’ school, but he inherited his musical gifts from his mother, an excellent pianist who was descended from Nicholas Lanier (1588-1666), a court musician to Charles I of England who was the first to hold the title Master of the King’s Musick. Powell completed his undergraduate work by age nineteen at the University of Virginia (Phi Beta Kappa), and then headed to Vienna to study piano with Theodor Leschetizky and composition with Karel Navrátil. After making his concert debut in Berlin in 1907, Powell settled in London and toured successfully in Europe for the next seven years, often including some of his own works on his programs, most notably his three large sonatas in post-Romantic style and such musical souvenirs of home as the *Sonate Virginianesque*, which evoked ante-bellum plantation life. Powell returned to America just before the outbreak of World War I, and he quickly established himself as one of the country’s leading concert pianists. He made his reputation as a composer with the 1918 New York premiere of the tone poem for piano and orchestra *Rapsodie Nègre*, which was inspired by a reading of Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* and incorporated African-American musical materials. (Powell had tried unsuccessfully to convince Conrad to turn his novella into an opera libretto when he was in London.) Powell continued to concertize and to utilize indigenous musical sources in his compositions, including several orchestral pieces based on folk tunes (*In Old Virginia*, *Natchez on the Hill*, *A Set of Three*), choral works and a large-scale Symphony in A that uses a folkish modal harmonic idiom and stylized versions of country dances. After retiring from the concert stage in 1936, he became involved in collecting and researching Appalachian folk music and helped to found the Whitetop Mountain Music Festival and the Virginia State Choral Festival. Powell was also an amateur astronomer who was made a member of Société Astronomique de France for his discovery of a comet that bears his name.

Powell based his *Natchez on the Hill* (titled after the fashionable residential section of that city on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi) on three Appalachian fiddle tunes, the most familiar of which is the variant of *Turkey in the Straw* that opens the work. In his *Our Contemporary Composers: American*

*Music in the Twentieth Century* (1941), music historian John Tasker Howard wrote, “The three folk tunes are attached to each other in a novel pattern, somewhat akin to rondo form, but with the third theme taking the place of a recurrence of the first theme. [This form] may be represented by the letter symbols: A–B–C–B–A.”



### THREE DANCES FROM *HENRY VIII* (1891)

#### Sir Edward German (1862-1936)

*The Three Dances from Henry VIII call for pairs of woodwinds, two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, percussion and strings. The performance time is eight minutes.*

Edward German was one of Edwardian England’s most prominent musicians and a leading exemplar of his era’s musical tastes. Born Edward Jones in Whitchurch, Shropshire on February 17, 1862, he learned piano and organ from his father, the organist at the local Congregational church. Edward also taught himself to play violin, and he studied as a teenager with Walter Hay, conductor of the Whitchurch Choral Society, who prepared him for entrance to the Royal Academy of Music in London. He began his studies at the RAM as an organist, but soon changed to violin, winning a half-dozen medals for his performances while a student. He also started composing at that time, and had completed a piano sonata, a *Te Deum*, an operetta, incidental music to *Antigone*, songs, a symphony and other pieces before his graduation, in 1887. It was at that time that he adopted the name of Edward German, chosen to avoid confusion with another Edward Jones at the RAM. German taught violin, and played and conducted at leading London theaters while building his reputation as a composer with orchestral compositions and incidental music to *Richard III*, *Henry VIII* and other productions. He won high praise for his completion of Gilbert’s libretto *The Emerald Isle* after Sullivan’s death, in 1900, and scored another hit with *Merrie England* two years later, firmly establishing his musical personality in the historical-pastoral English tradition. Other comic operas followed during the next several years, the most successful of which was *Tom Jones* of 1907. Unsympathetic with the modernistic musical trends arising soon after the turn of the century, German largely retired to the life of a country squire following the premiere his comic opera *Fallen Fairies* in 1909, limiting his professional activities to adapting some of his *Henry VIII* music for the coronation of George V in 1911, composing his *Theme and Six Diversions* for the Royal Philharmonic Society in 1919 and the tone poem *The Willow Song* for the centenary of the RAM in 1922, and occasionally conducting his music. He was knighted in 1928, and awarded the Gold Medal of the Royal Philharmonic Society in 1934. He died in London in 1936.

German got his big break when he was appointed conductor of London’s Globe Theatre in 1888 by the house’s manager, the actor, producer, Gilbert & Sullivan veteran (and, briefly, Jack the Ripper suspect) Richard Mansfield. German quickly raised the performance standards of the 28-piece orchestra, and in March 1889 he wrote his first music for theater, for Mansfield’s staging of Shakespeare’s *Richard III*. The production ran for seven months, in no small part because of the popularity of German’s score. In 1891, the celebrated actor Henry Irving (the first of his profession to receive a knighthood) announced a production of Shakespeare’s *Henry VIII* for the Lyceum Theatre in London. Irving knew German’s work from *Richard III*, and he instructed Bram Stoker, his assistant and the Lyceum’s business manager (and also the author of the horror novel *Dracula*), to engage the thirty-year-old composer to supply the music. A generous fee was offered, German accepted the proposal, and his music for *Henry VIII* enjoyed such success that he was able to give up teaching and conducting to devote himself exclusively to composition. The “mock Tudor” *Three Dances from Henry VIII* that he extracted from the score for concert performance — *Morris Dance*, *Shepherd’s Dance* and *Torch Dance* — were durably popular enough that he was commissioned to contribute music to a motion picture version of the play in 1911, the first composer to write for a British film.

**ON THE BEAUTIFUL BLUE DANUBE, OP. 314 (1867)****Johann Strauss, Jr. (1825-1899)**

*On the Beautiful Blue Danube* is scored for pairs of woodwinds plus piccolo, four horns, two trumpets, one trombone, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp and strings. The performance time is nine minutes.



*On the Beautiful Blue Danube* almost sank beneath the waves at its launching. Johann Herbeck, director of the Vienna Men's Chorus, asked Strauss if he could provide a new piece for his ensemble, and Strauss responded with a melody inspired by a line from a poem of Karl Isidor Beck: "On the Danube, on the beautiful, blue Danube." Herbeck assigned Josef Weyl, a police clerk who sang in the chorus and a poet-*manqué*, to concoct some verses to fit Strauss' exquisite melody. "Vienna, be gay! And what for, pray? The light of the arc! Here it's still dark!" was the best that Weyl could do. (Hans Fantel suggested that this doggerel may have been prompted by the carbon-electrode lights just beginning to sprout on Vienna's street corners.) The press notices of this new choral number's premiere on February 15, 1867 were not unkind, but Strauss judged the whole thing a marginal fiasco, and he tucked *The Blue Danube* away in his desk. Later that year he was invited to take part in the International Exhibition in Paris that Napoleon III was staging in honor of himself. His music proved so successful in the French capital that he dusted off *On the Beautiful Blue Danube*, and displayed it to the delirious Parisians. Within weeks, demand for the work spread across the western world.

**AMERICAN PATROL (1885)****Frank W. Meacham (1856-1896)**

*American Patrol* is scored for piccolo, flute, oboe, two clarinets, bassoon, three saxophones, two horns, three trumpets, two trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion and strings. The performance time is four minutes.

Frank W. Meacham was a leading figure when popular music was establishing itself as an important and characteristic element of American life during the decades after the Civil War. Meacham was born in Buffalo, New York in 1856, and was so musically precocious that he published his first song at age ten. He gained fame with a number whose title — *Down in the Cotton Fields* — reflects the evolving social life of the day, and went on to earn a reputation as both a composer and an arranger. He arranged music by Victor Herbert, Stephen Foster and others, and wrote several works for the flamboyant Irish-born bandmaster and showman Patrick S. Gilmore, who was celebrated as both the leader of the famed 22nd Regiment Band of the New York National Guard and the impresario of mammoth festival concerts involving as many as 20,000 performers. The only remnant of Meacham's work in the active repertory is a march medley that he composed in 1885 and fitted with a patriotic title — *American Patrol*. The infectious tune that opens this parade-in-miniature is original with Meacham (the Glenn Miller Band recorded an irresistible swing version of the melody by Jerry Gray during World War II), which is perfectly complemented by three iconic American songs: *Columbia*, *the Gem of the Ocean*, *Dixie* and *Yankee Doodle*.

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