

# SINFONIA

*da Camera*

IAN HOBSON  
MUSIC DIRECTOR • CONDUCTOR

## MAJESTIC BRAHMS & SUMPTUOUS RAVEL

41st Season 2024/25

Saturday • October 26 • 2024  
Foellinger Great Hall

Timothy Ehlen, piano

**I**  
**ILLINOIS**

College of Fine & Applied Arts

Sinfonia da Camera appears under the auspices of the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts and the College of Fine and Applied Arts at the University of Illinois.

# SINFONIA DA CAMERA CONCERT SERIES



## RHAPSODY IN BLUE AT 100

Friday, September 20, 7:30pm

A proud event in the **PYGMALION** lineup, the thrilling season opener features principal violist **Csaba Erdélyi** performing **Martinů Rhapsody-Concerto** and Maestro Ian Hobson conducting **Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue** from the piano.



## MAJESTIC BRAHMS & SUMPTUOUS RAVEL

Saturday, October 26, 7:30pm

UIUC keyboard professor **Timothy Ehlen** is featured as piano soloist in the majestic **Piano Concerto No. 2** by **Brahms**. **Ravel's** radiant orchestration is on display for the evocative **Mother Goose Suite** and the humorous **Alborada del gracioso**.



## TROMBONE VIRTUOSO & BEETHOVEN SYMPHONY 4

Thursday, December 5, 7:30pm

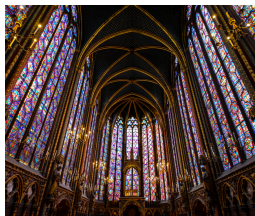
Principal trombonist **Jim Pugh** takes center stage for trombone concerti by **David Canfield** and **Nathaniel Shilkret**. Sinfonia's multiyear Beethoven cycle continues with **Beethoven's** brilliant and lean **Symphony No. 4**.



## ROMANTIC MASTERWORKS

Friday, February 14, 7:30pm

Enjoy a romantic evening of amorous symphonic works by **Tchaikovsky** and **Rachmaninoff!** A special performance of **Poulenc's Concerto for Two Pianos** features husband-and-wife piano duo **Ian Hobson & Muen Wei**.



## MOZART REQUIEM

Saturday, March 29, 7:30pm

The 41st season concludes with the overwhelmingly powerful **Requiem Mass** by **Mozart** in collaboration with UIUC choral groups and vocal soloists. Also featured is Ian Hobson as piano soloist in **Beethoven's Choral Fantasy**.

# TICKETS



Tickets may be purchased at [KrannertCenter.com](http://KrannertCenter.com), or through the Ticket Office at 217.333.6280 or [kran-tix@illinois.edu](mailto:kran-tix@illinois.edu).

*Sinfonia da Camera appears under the auspices of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in association with the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts and College of Fine and Applied Arts.*

# SUPPORT SINFONIA



## MAKE A GIFT

[payment.giving.illinois.edu/  
sinfonia-da-camera-s-41st-season](https://payment.giving.illinois.edu/sinfonia-da-camera-s-41st-season)



For generations, music, art, theater, and literature have thrived because lovers of the arts have become patrons. When you make a gift to Sinfonia da Camera, your generosity sends a clear message that music is important to you and to the Champaign-Urbana community. As a show of appreciation, donors are acknowledged in concert programs throughout the season and receive invitations to post-concert receptions and other special events.

41st Season 2024-25

# *Majestic Brahms & Sumptuous Ravel*

Foellinger Great Hall | Krannert Center for the Performing Arts  
Saturday, October 26, 2024 | 7:30p.m.

Ian Hobson, music director & conductor  
Timothy Ehlen, piano

---

## Overture

JESSIE MONTGOMERY  
(b. 1981)

*Brief Pause*

## Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat major, Op. 83

JOHANNES BRAHMS  
(1833–1897)

- I. *Allegro non troppo*
- II. *Allegro appassionato*
- III. *Andante — Più adagio — Tempo I*
- IV. *Allegro grazioso — Un poco più presto*

**Timothy Ehlen, piano**

*Intermission*

## *Ma Mère l'oye (Mother Goose Suite)*

MAURICE RAVEL  
(1875–1937)

### Five Pieces for Children

- I. *Pavane de la Belle au bois dormant: Lent (Pavane of Sleeping Beauty)*
- II. *Petit Poucet: Très modéré (Little Tom Thumb / Hop-o'-My-Thumb)*
- III. *Laideronnette, impératrice des pagodes: Mouvt de marche (Little Ugly Girl, Empress of the Pagodas)*
- IV. *Les entretiens de la belle et de la bête: Mouvt de valse très modéré (Conversation of Beauty and the Beast)*
- V. *Le jardin féérique: Lent et grave (The Fairy Garden)*

## *Alborada del gracioso (The Clown's Morning Song)*

MAURICE RAVEL  
(1875–1937)

# The Act of Giving

---

**Thank you for supporting this performance.**

Sinfonia da Camera thanks all of the 2024–25 Concert Sponsors in the Patron, Community, and Corporate categories for their generous support of the orchestra.

Sinfonia is deeply grateful for the sustained generosity and support from our season-long patrons as well as corporate and community partners. These contributors are showcased throughout our program book and in the **Contributors** section.

Thanks to these relationships, Sinfonia is able to present unforgettable musical performances to fulfill our mission of providing enriching audience experiences.

This event is made possible in part by a grant from the **Illinois Arts Council**.

Illinois  
**ARTS**  
Council

*The Illinois Arts Council Agency provides general programing support to ensure that audiences of all ages have direct access to world-class theatre, dance, and music.*

# Meet the Music Director

---



Pianist and conductor **Ian Hobson** (Music Director) - called “powerful and persuasive” by The New York Times - is internationally recognized for his command of an extraordinarily comprehensive repertoire, his consummate performances of the Romantic masters, his deft and idiomatic readings of neglected piano music old and new, and his assured conducting from both the piano and the podium.

In addition to being a celebrated performer, Mr. Hobson is a dedicated scholar and educator who has pioneered renewed

interest in music of such lesser-known masters as Ignaz Moscheles and Johann Hummel. He has also been an effective advocate of works written expressly for him by a number of today’s noted composers, including Benjamin Lees, John Gardner, David Liptak, Alan Ridout, and Yehudi Wyner.

In addition to his work with Sinfonia and at the University of Illinois (Swanlund Emeritus Professor), recital and teaching engagements this season take Mr. Hobson throughout the United States and several times to South Korea. Mr. Hobson conducted at Carnegie Mellon University in January 2018.

As guest soloist, Dr. Hobson has appeared with many of the world’s major orchestras; in the United States these include the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and The Philadelphia Orchestra, the symphony orchestras of Baltimore, Florida, Houston, Indianapolis, Pittsburgh, St. Louis and the American Symphony Orchestra, the Orquestra Sinfónica de Puerto Rico. Abroad, he has been heard with Great Britain’s Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, The London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Hallé Orchestra, ORF-Vienna, Orchester de Beethovenhalle, Moscow Chopin Orchestra, Israeli Sinfonieta, and New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. Since his debut in the double role of Conductor and soloist with the

Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra in 1996, Maestro Hobson has been invited to lead the English Chamber Orchestra, the Sinfonia Varsovia (including an appearance at Carnegie Hall), the Pomeranian Philharmonic (Poland), the Fort Worth Chamber Orchestra (Bass Hall), and the Kibbutz Chamber Orchestra of Israel, among others.

Mr. Hobson is also a much sought-after judge for national and international competitions and has been invited to join numerous juries, among them the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition (at the specific request of Mr. Cliburn), the Arthur Rubinstein Competition in Poland, the Chopin Competition in Florida, the Leeds Piano Competition in the U.K., and the Schumann International Competition in Germany. In 2005 Hobson served as Chairman of the Jury for the Cleveland International Competition and the Kosciuzsko Competition in New York; in 2008 he was Chairman of Jury of the New York Piano Competition; and in 2010 he again served in that capacity of the newly renamed New York International Piano Competition.

One of the youngest ever graduates of the Royal Academy of Music, Mr. Hobson began his international career in 1981 when he won First Prize at the Leeds International Piano Competition, after having earned silver medals at both the Arthur Rubinstein and Vienna-Beethoven competitions. Born in Wolverhampton, England, he studied at Cambridge University (England), and at Yale University, in addition to his earlier studies at the Royal Academy of Music. A professor in the Center for Advanced Study at the University of Illinois, Hobson received the endowed chair of Swanlund Professor of Music in 2000.



**Best  
Western®**

# Meet the Soloist

---



**Timothy Ehlen** has performed extensively in the United States and Europe as a soloist and chamber player. He first gained international attention after winning the World Piano Competition in Cincinnati in 1987; after his subsequent debut in Lincoln Center at Alice Tully Hall in 1988, the New York Times raved that his “*playing was filled with elegant personality... recalled bygone artists like Robert Casadesus and, especially Walter Gieseking in their mastery of both 18th century and impressionist music...immaculate technique.*” The Pro Piano Recital

Series sponsored his 1997 recital in Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall, which the New York Concert Review hailed as “...*an absolutely remarkable tour-de-force.*” Recitals in France, Germany, and Korea have elicited a similarly enthusiastic response: “*Sensitive and tender creativity [in Ravel]*” [Fürther Nachrichten] and “*behind the fire hid a heartfelt emotion, held together by tender affection [in Beethoven]*” [L’Alsace].

Recitals include the Cleveland Orchestra’s Schubert Bi-Centennial Series in Cleveland, festival Recontres Internationales de Piano en Alsace, International Franz Liszt Festival in France; periodic recitals on the series “Sundays Live” (broadcast live on KMZT in Los Angeles from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art) and the Wilshire Ebell Theater in Los Angeles, Old First Concerts in San Francisco, Bösendorfer Hall in Vienna, Kum Ho Art Hall in Seoul, Korea, Freeport Arts Center Community Concerts Series in Illinois; numerous universities, including Indiana University in Bloomington, Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY, Northwestern University in Evanston, IL, Seoul National University in Korea, Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, New England Conservatory of Music, Michigan University in Ann Arbor, etc. He has been heard

frequently on National Public Radio, in addition to numerous independent broadcasts of major market performances in this country and abroad.

Mr. Ehlen has recorded the complete Beethoven Piano Sonatas for the Azica label. After the release of volume III, Fanfare Magazine wrote, "...I have the feeling that the cycle with the richest rewards will turn out to be the Ehlen." Other CD releases on the Azica label include the Schumann Fantasie op. 17 and other works (2006), The Ehlen-Tai Piano Duo, *Virtuosic Dance* (2016), and the Brahms late character pieces, ops. 116, 117, 118 and 119 (2018). Additional recordings have appeared on the *Crystal*, *Omnibus*, and *Felia Mundi* labels.

Concerto performances include works of Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Rachmaninoff, Liszt, Poulenc, Saint-Saëns, Dohnányi and F. Price with orchestras in the US including the Ventura County Symphony and Redlands Symphony in California, Kingsport Symphony in Tennessee, Warren Chamber Orchestra in Ohio, Sinfonia da Camera and Champaign-Urbana Symphony in Illinois, and performances of the Beethoven Concerto No. 4 and No. 5 with the University of Illinois orchestras.

Dedicated to fostering young talent, Mr. Ehlen regularly presents master classes at major universities and conservatories, including The San Francisco Conservatory, Seoul National University, Yonsei University and others in Korea, Eastman School of Music, The Chautauqua Music Festival, Brevard Music Festival, The Colburn School of Music, California Institute of the Arts, Idyllwild School for the Arts in Los Angeles, Boston University, Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, etc. In China, master classes and recitals at China Conservatory in Beijing and Beijing Normal University, master classes at Wuhan Conservatory in Hubei, Wuhan, Xinghai Conservatory of Music in Guangdong, Steinway Gallery in Guangzhou, and other schools and venues in Shanghai, Guangzhou, Nanning and Guiyang.

Mr. Ehlen has taught and performed at the summer festivals Rencontres Musicales en Lorraine in Nancy, France, the Vienna International Piano Academy in Vienna, Austria, and the



Chautauqua Music Festival in New York, the Brevard Music Institute in North Carolina, and most recently, the Montecito International Music Festival in California. He completed his BM and MM studies with John Perry at the University of Southern California, and his Doctor of Musical Arts degree with Paul Schenly at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

Timothy Ehlen is an International Steinway Artist and Professor of Piano at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign.



Thurs, Fri & Sat 5pm-11pm  
129 N. Race St - Downtown Urbana





From vibrant arts & culture  
to fresh, local flavors,  
Champaign-Urbana is always  
**BRILLIANT.**

Get connected to our  
brilliant community at  
**[experiencecu.org](http://experiencecu.org)**

**EXPERIENCE  
CHAMPAIGN  
URBANA**



# SINFONIA DA CAMERA

Ian Hobson, *Music Director and Conductor*

---

## **VIOLIN I**

Michael Barta, *Concertmaster*  
Igor Kalnin, *Associate Concertmaster*  
Ga-Eun Kim  
Joseph Madden  
Wei-Ting Chen  
Alice Lee  
Darcy Drexler  
Maria Emmons

## **VIOLIN II**

Alfred Abel, *Principal*  
Amanda Ramey, *Assistant Principal*  
Robin Kearton  
Geoffrey Muckenhirn  
Dante Freund  
HyunJin Baek  
Alivia Gaskins

## **VIOLA**

Csaba Erdélyi, *Principal*  
*The Willis & Carol Colburn Chair*  
Colette Grossman Abel  
Diane Wuthrich  
Ila Rondeau  
Mark Wirbisky  
Matthew Nowlan

## **CELLO**

Jun Lee, *Principal*  
Juedy Lee  
Oskar Norell  
Andrew Gagi  
Ender Loya

## **DOUBLE BASS**

Lawrence Gray, *Principal*  
Margaret Briskin  
Andrew Binder

## **FLUTE**

Jonathan Keeble, *Principal*  
Rebecca Johnson  
Mary Chapman

## **PICCOLO**

Mary Chapman, *Principal*

## **OBOE**

John Dee, *Principal*  
Wesley Boehm  
Kaitlyn Dunn

## **ENGLISH HORN**

Kaitlyn Dunn

## **CLARINET**

Janice L. Minor, *Acting Principal*  
Audrey Conklin

## **BASSOON**

Ben Roidl-Ward, *Co-Principal*  
Henry Skolnick, *Co-Principal*  
Christopher Raymond

## **CONTRABASSOON**

Henry Skolnick

## **FRENCH HORN**

Bernhard Scully, *Principal*  
Molly Frederick  
Michael Goss  
Prashant Anand  
Rebecca Yang, *Assistant*

## **TRUMPET**

Charles Daval, *Principal*  
Joshua Dolney

## **TROMBONE**

James Pugh, *Principal*  
Ben Carrasquillo  
Ian Loechl

## **TUBA**

Mark Moore, *Principal*

## **HARP**

Ann Yeung, *Principal*  
Jenna Rose Crosson

## **CELESTA**

Junhong Jiang, *Principal*

## **TIMPANI**

William Moersch, *Principal*

## **PERCUSSION**

Ricardo Flores, *Principal*  
Josh Graham  
Brant Roberts  
Simon Cooper  
Adrian Silva  
Chase Dunaway

Learn about **Chair Sponsorship** at [sinfonia.illinois.edu/sponsor](http://sinfonia.illinois.edu/sponsor)

# Notes on the Program

---

## Overture

Jessie Montgomery

(Born December 8, 1981 in New York City)

Jesse Montgomery is a contemporary American composer, violinist, and educator whose work includes solo, chamber, vocal, and orchestral works. *The Washington Post* has described her work as “turbulent, wildly colorful, and exploding with life.”

Montgomery began studying violin at the Third Street Music School. She grew up on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, where her father, a musician who managed a music studio, and her mother, a theater artist and storyteller, were active in the culture of the local community, which gave her formative experiences in performance, education, and advocacy. Throughout her childhood, Montgomery was surrounded by many different kinds of music, which have informed her work: African-American spirituals, civil rights anthems, and modern jazz among them. She completed her education at the Juilliard School and New York University. She is prominent as an educator and advocate for the broader representation of Black and Latinx musicians in classical music.

Montgomery frequently performs as a violinist, and has played with the PUBLIQuartet, the Providence Quartet, the Catalyst Quartet, the Silkroad Ensemble, the Sphinx Virtuosi, and her own ensemble. She has gained an equally impressive number of credits as a composer, with commissions for the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the Albany Symphony Orchestra, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and many others.

For over two decades, Montgomery has been affiliated with The Sphinx Organization, which supports young African-American and Latinx string players; she has served as Composer in-Residence for the Albany Symphony and for the Sphinx Virtuosi. She is a founding member of the PUBLIQuartet and a member of the Catalyst Quartet. The New York Philharmonic Orchestra selected her as a featured composer for their Project 19, which marks the centennial of the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, granting equal voting rights to women in the United States. She also received the Leonard Bernstein Award from the ASCAP Foundation. She has received grants and awards from Chamber Music America, American Composers Orchestra, the Joyce Foundation, and the Sorel Organization.

Montgomery was Composer-in-Residence with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, for whom she composed this work. It premiered on May 23, 2022.

Montgomery infuses her music with the multicultural, as is evident in this *Overture*. Her works are a vivid representation of the 21<sup>st</sup> century American sound and her social consciousness. Montgomery has written about her *Overture*, “*Overture* is a one-movement orchestral tutti steeped in harmonic textures inspired by a fusion between jazz and American classical harmonies, Baroque rhythmic gestures, and polyphonic tension.”

The piece begins with the strings playing in unison; when they begin splitting into parts, the tension becomes clear. Over the course of the piece, the orchestra explores several different types of sound. The overture, constructed in somewhat of an ABA structure, features a return to the first idea in the last section.

The small orchestra required for this five-minute overture consists of two flutes, the 2<sup>nd</sup> doubling on piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns in F, two trumpets in C, 2 trombones, and strings.

## Smile Politely



# HOTEL



**ILLINOIS**  
CONFERENCE CENTER

## **Piano Concerto No. 2, in B-flat, Op. 83**

Johannes Brahms

(Born May 7, 1833, in Hamburg; died April 3, 1897, in Vienna)

Brahms originally sketched his first piano concerto as a symphony and only later converted it into a concerto. By the time he composed Piano Concerto No. 2, he was likely consciously expanding the form. The work has four rather than the usual three movements. His friend, the critic Eduard Hanslick, called Piano Concerto No. 2 a “symphony with piano obbligato”; although there are times when the piano accompanies the orchestra rather than vice versa, this work is, regardless of how some commentators have described it, a concerto. The scherzo’s presence was important, for this symphonic form usually had no place in concerti; it added an unprecedented fourth movement. This concerto also makes other adjustments to our expectations of the form: it does not include any traditional cadenzas, but the difficult concerto allows the soloist many ways to demonstrate technical accomplishment. The work is thoroughly Romantic, looser in structure than a classical concerto, and more rhapsodic.

Although British musicologist, Sir Francis Tovey (1875-1940) was overwhelmed by the dimensions of Piano Concerto No. 2, Brahms humorously described this work that he spent three years composing as a miniature, writing to his friend Clara Schumann, “I have written a tiny little concerto with a very small and pretty little scherzo.”

He described it to his friend and cultural mentor, the Viennese surgeon Dr. Theodor Billroth, as “some little piano pieces.” To another friend and confidante, Elisabeth von Herzogenberg, he said: “It is a little concerto [Konzertler!] with a little scherzo [Scherzer!];” yet, it was one of the longest piano concertos written until that time, and also one of the most complex with the largest variety of themes.

Brahms apparently wrote the concerto as a vehicle for himself, and he performed it frequently in his late years. As a player, Brahms was primarily concerned to communicate musical thought rather than to play many notes; nevertheless, the work’s length, massive sonorities and rhythmic complexities were challenges too formidable for many pianists of the time. Technical challenges including large chords, wide spans, and frequent skips and jumps, in addition to complicated rhythms, all challenge the soloist. Brahms calls forth a massive sound from the piano, in a manner that often imitates the sound of more than two hands.

When he was composing the concerto, Brahms befriended conductor-pianist Hans von Bülow, who dubbed Brahms’s Symphony No. 1 “Beethoven’s Tenth.” In 1881, Brahms tried out the concerto, which he labeled “the long terror,” with another colleague, Brüll. On November 8, 1881, in Budapest, the

Budapest Philharmonic debuted the work. Brahms dedicated it to his beloved childhood piano teacher, Eduard Marxsen.

Piano Concerto No. 2 often exhibits a lighter, and sometimes a playful and conversational feel, compared with Piano Concerto No 1. In the quiet opening horn call and the other principal themes of the first movement, Allegro non troppo, Brahms moves masterfully back and forth between lyric and heroic treatment of ideas. The two most memorable themes appear first in the horn rather than in the piano line. At the beginning of the development section, the horn plays the melody, this time in minor, and at the recapitulation, the horn, with the support of clarinets, bassoons and strings, reintroduces the melody in the original major tonality while the piano has figuration in the upper register that recalls the end of the first movement from Beethoven's 'Emperor' Concerto. The coda of the movement finally allows the piano a thunderous declaration of the horn melody, originally gentle in character.

The second movement, Allegro appassionato, the "extra" movement of the concerto, gives the work an unprecedented four-movement total. Brahms explained that this scherzo, which he based on one he sketched for his Violin Concerto, was something he needed to introduce because the first movement was "too harmless." The movement belies Brahms's description of "tiny" or "wispy"; it is in fact, demonic in character and rhythmically bold. A Largamente "trio" section in the parallel D Major follows the main section; then the first section is repeated.

The slow third movement, a serene Andante, features an extended, beautiful solo cello melody that returns for the final sections of the movement. The opening yearning cello melody reappears many years later in the song, "Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer" ("Ever lighter grows my slumber"). The clarinets play a melody from another song, one Brahms had just written, *Todessehnen*, ("Longing for Death") an abandoned lover's lament. Here the piano functions as sometimes transcendent and sometimes passionate commentator and provides many embellishments, but never articulates the theme.

The main theme of the last movement, a sprightly and quite subtle rondo, Allegro grazioso, varies the "Todessehnen" song's opening measures. Contrasting episodes are derived from Hungarian Gypsy styles (as they were called in the 19<sup>th</sup> century) that Brahms always found charming and so often used in finales. The several other themes that appear, from playful, warm and melodious, all relate to each other, and Brahms provides pizzicato string accompaniments to several of them. The commentator Richard Wilson hears Beethoven's ghost hovering here, finding parallels to Beethoven's Piano Concertos Nos. 3 and 4. A dashing and exhilarating variation of the opening

melody in the piano introduces the coda that draws the concerto to its triumphant conclusion.

The score calls for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings.

## ***Mother Goose Suite (Ma Mère l'oye)*** **Five Pieces for Children**

Maurice Ravel

(Born March 7, 1875, in Ciboure, France; died December 28, 1937, in Paris)

As a young man, Ravel was a member of a circle of avant-garde writers, painters, and composers who, in 1904, began to meet frequently in the salon of a couple whose young son and daughter were taking piano lessons. The music he composed for the children, Mimi and Jean, children of his friends Ida and Cipa Godebski, reveals his perceptiveness about the child's point of view. For this work he used a series of illustrations of French fairy tales as the basis of a suite of four-hand piano pieces designed, with the children in mind, as a gift. Ravel was sensitive to the world of children throughout his adult years and was known for effectively communicating with children in a way that at the time was most unusual.

The eight and ten-year-old Godebski children were fairly accomplished pianists. The work Ravel wrote for them to play is distinctive because he tailored the range of notes to their small hands and their still somewhat limited technique. Ravel completed the music in 1908 and published the duo in 1910 as *Mother Goose, Five Pieces for Children*.

The music premiered on April 20, 1910, at the first concert of the Independent Musical Society, an organization devoted to the performance of contemporary music. Although Ravel wanted his friends' children to play *Mother Goose* at its première in a program including new works by Debussy, Fauré, Kodály, and others, it was too difficult for them, and two other children, Jeanne Leleu, six years old, and Geneviève Durony, seven years old, performed the work. The day after the premiere, Ravel wrote the latter a charming note:

Mademoiselle,

When you are a great virtuoso and I an old fogey, covered with honors or else completely forgotten, you will perhaps have pleasant memories of having given an artist the rare satisfaction of hearing a work of his, of a rather unusual nature, interpreted exactly as it should



be. Thank you a thousand times for your child-like and sensitive performance of *Ma Mère l'Oye*.

Your devoted, etc. Maurice Ravel

A scene in a French fairy tale inspired each of the delicate suite's five movements, which are intended to be considered as separate scenes rather than as a continuous narrative whole. In this composition for and about children, Ravel's characteristic reserve is lifted: *Mother Goose* includes some of his warmest musical writing. "My intention of awaking the poetry of childhood in these pieces," Ravel later wrote, "led me to simplify my style and thin out my writing." The innocent music of each part has its own freshness and magical quality; each is in a three-part form in which part three often consists of the themes of the first two parts combined.

Ravel orchestrated the music in 1911, and later that year made some additions and revisions to the score for a 1912 ballet production for which he also wrote the scenario. To complete the ballet, Ravel added a prelude, a new opening scene, and interludes connecting the individual numbers. The ballet was first performed at the Théâtre des Arts in Paris on January 28, 1912.

Ravel's literary sources included Perrault's 1697 *Histoires ou contes du temps passé* ("Stories of Times Past"), now known as *Mother Goose*. The Perrault book only provided two tales for the suite: "The Sleeping Beauty" and "Petit Poucet" ("Hop o' my Thumb"). Ravel also drew from tales by Perrault's contemporary, Countess d'Aulnoy, for "Laideronette, impératrice des pagodas" ("The Ugly Little Girl, Empress of the Pagodas"). The well-known tale of "Les Entretiens de la belle et de la bête" ("Conversations of Beauty and the Beast") came from a later book, *Magazin des Enfants, Contes Moraux* (*Children's Treasury of Moral Tales*) published by Marie Leprince de Beaumont (1711-1780) in 1757.

The first selection, "*Pavane de la Belle au bois dormant*" ("Pavane of the Sleeping Princess in the Woods,") details the graceful dance of those who watch the sleeping Princess Florine. In the "Pavane" each of the four hands has only a single note to play.

"*Petit Poucet*" ("Hop o' my Thumb") tells the musical story of a child who leaves a trail of breadcrumbs as he traipses through the woods and becomes lost when the birds eat the crumbs, causing his path to disappear. As he searches for his path, the child's meandering is reflected in the wandering of the music; in addition, the birds can be heard to torment him with their cries.

*“Laideronnette, impératrice des pagodas”* (“The Ugly Little Girl, Empress of the Pagodas”) is the story of an empress who becomes ugly because of a spell cast on her, but she is transformed into a beautiful woman at the end. The music of this section has an oriental character as the upper part was written entirely for the black keys of the piano, producing a pentatonic melody.

In *“Les Entretiens de la belle et de la bête,”* (“Conversations of Beauty and the Beast”) Beauty tells the beast that when he shows his good nature, his ugliness seems less forbidding. The music illuminates the fragment of a version of the story de Beaumont tells, quoted in the score: “When I think of your kind heart, you don’t seem so ugly to me.’ ‘Ah yes, lady! I have a good heart, but I am a monster.’ ‘There are many men who are more monstrous than you.’ ‘If I had the wit, I would make you a grand compliment to thank you, but I am only a stupid beast. Beauty, will you be my wife?’ ‘No, Beast.’ ‘I die happy, since I have the pleasure of seeing you again.’ ‘No, my dear Beast, you will not die. You will live to become my husband.’ The beast disappears, and the young lady sees only a handsome prince, who thanks her for having brought an end to his enchantment.” We recognize Beauty because she enters with a gentle waltz melody. A low growling sound alerts us to the Beast’s appearance. Beauty pities the Beast and offers her hand. When Beauty’s kindness causes the witch’s spell to end, the music marked this momentous event with a sound like a clash of cymbals as the Beast is transformed into a handsome prince. Beauty’s persona is matched by a melody introduced with a glissando. The two are combined with the ingenious power of Ravel’s music.

The last movement, *“Le Jardin Féérique”* (“The Fairy Garden”), Lent et grave, evokes Sleeping Beauty’s gradual awakening by Prince Charming with simplicity in a gradual crescendo of a long, slow, quiet, melodic waltz line. The enchanted princess opens her eyes in a sun-filled room. A triumphant fanfare accompanies the Good Fairy as she gives her blessing to the characters, who celebrate the occasion together at the end of the piece.



DAN REYNOLDS

P H O T O G R A P H Y

## ***Alborada del gracioso (from Miroirs)***

Maurice Ravel

(Born March 7, 1875, in Ciboure, France; died December 28, 1937, in Paris)

Ravel was born in France, only a short distance from the Spanish border, to a French father and a Basque mother. Although his family moved to Paris when he was just an infant, he was always attached to the region of his birth and composed several works of Spanish inspiration. The Spanish composer Manuel de Falla once wrote, "Ravel's Spain was Spain idealized and represented by his mother. Her refined conversation, in Spanish that remained excellent always, delighted me -- especially when she used to recall her youth in Madrid."

In 1904 and 1905, Ravel wrote five pieces, originally for piano, each one complete in itself, that he assembled into a collection under the title *Miroirs* ("Mirrors"). These descriptive pieces do not attempt to present precise musical images. They reflect their subjects, reality seen at a distance, perhaps even in reverse, and they also reflect on their subjects: philosophical, impressionistic musings on night, birds, boats, Spain, and valleys.

The fourth piece in the set is the brilliant *Alborada del gracioso* ("The Clown's Morning Song"). Historically, the troubadours of the southern province of Provence and the area of northern Spain used a form of poetry featuring a song about the lover's departure at early dawn from his love. *Alborada*, or *alba* was this form's name. The word *alborada* could also mean a morning serenade, and it evolved into a type of dance, popular in Galicia. A *gracioso* is a clown or jester in Spanish comedy, analogous to the fools in Shakespeare's plays. Such a clown often helped musicians in performing the *alborada*. Ravel wrote a letter in which he explained the title: "I understand the bafflement over how to translate the title which is precisely why I decided not to translate it. . . . The simplest thing, I think, is to follow the title with the rough translation 'Morning Song of the Clown.' That will be enough to explain the humoristic style of this piece."

This reflection of Ravel's love for Spain is a rhapsodic piece with recitatives, bursts of melody, and echoes of the guitar. Ravel dedicated it to a friend, M. D. Calvocoressi, a distinguished musical scholar and critic. The brilliant *Alborada* is sometimes described as orchestral, and in its arrangement for two harps, some of the rich complexity is in evidence.

Ravel's vigorous Spanish dance showcases his Basque heritage: it is articulated in guitar-like figurations within humorous melodies; at the same time, it provides brilliant virtuosic music, generating excitement by the use of strong rhythmic figures, staccato, repeated notes and single and double note

glissandi, which require strong hands and supple wrists. The dryness of the texture helps suggest the strumming of a guitar.

The form of the piece is basically ternary with two themes in the exposition, a middle section and then a recapitulation, which brings back only the second theme with rolled chords. The framing sections use a Phrygian modality in the style of a *seguidilla*, (a dance) making the piece sound Andalusian. The middle section, a *copla*, (a Spanish poem set as a song) is where the gracioso sings his serenade, a slightly humorous yet melancholy song with irregular bar lengths giving it the feel of an improvisation. The whole manages to be humorous and haunting simultaneously. Throughout, Ravel uses rhythmic motives to enhance the structure of the piece.

© Susan Halpern, 2024.

# SYLVIE KHAN

professional organizer

support for  
downsizing  
and other  
moves

garage,  
basement,  
and attic  
de-  
cluttering

references  
available  
on request

(217) 607-6505

[sylvie@sylviekhan.com](mailto:sylvie@sylviekhan.com)

get in touch for a free consultation

[sylviekhan.com](http://sylviekhan.com)

# Sinfonia da Camera

---

In residence at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, this professional chamber orchestra is led by world-renowned pianist, conductor, and educator, Maestro Ian Hobson. Sinfonia da Camera is comprised of University of Illinois faculty, staff, and students, as well as distinguished regional and national freelance musicians. Founded in 1984, Sinfonia has welcomed world-class soloists, commissioned new works, and presented beloved orchestra favorites and hidden gems to local audiences for 40 years.

In its debut season, Sinfonia released an acclaimed recording of French Piano Concerti with music director Ian Hobson conducting from the keyboard; it was the subject of a 90-minute Public Television special. Since that time, Sinfonia has performed over 1,000 musical works featuring more than 150 local and guest artists. Through Maestro Hobson's commitment to excellence in all of the orchestra's endeavors - special projects, recordings, tours, and concerts for the hometown crowd at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts - Sinfonia has achieved national and international recognition.

Sinfonia has been featured on over a dozen recordings and has several projects in the works. In 2011, the Albany label released a Sinfonia recording on another American composer, Willian Schuman, during his centenary year. A live recording of Sinfonia da Camera's October 6, 2012 concert featuring music by Pulitzer Prize-Winning composer George Walker was recently released on Albany Records. The fourth and final volume of the Ignaz Moscheles cycle was released in 2012. The previous volumes were reviewed by American Record Guide: "Hobson, whose elegant phrasing, remarkable ear for color, and miraculous ability to evenly sustain the most difficult runs - each like a string of pearls - are simply a joy to hear" and "[The concerti] seem tailor-made for Hobson's great panache and free-wheeling style." Ten recordings by Sinfonia da Camera for the Zephyr label have been released to rave reviews at home and abroad.

To learn more about the orchestra, Maestro Hobson, the musicians, administration, and Advisory board visit our website at [www.sinfonia.illinois.edu](http://www.sinfonia.illinois.edu).



# FLEURISH

Luxury Cut Flowers...Exquisite Floral Design...Unique Gifts



*We Specialize In:*

CUSTOM FLORAL | EVENTS  
CORPORATE ACCOUNTS  
RESIDENTIAL INSTALLATIONS

122 N. Walnut Street | Champaign, Illinois 61820  
(217) 607 - 0015 | fleurishfloralart@gmail.com



Join Fleurish Champaign on Facebook!

# Patron Categories

---

Sinfonia da Camera's 40 seasons of performing and recording represent thousands of hours of dedication, love, talent, and financial support from patrons like you. Your subscription and single-concert ticket purchases contribute only 40 percent of Sinfonia's operating budget. An additional 25 percent of that budget comes from your generous donations. Your support provides a powerful message that music is important to this community.

Donations to Sinfonia da Camera are tax-deductible. All gifts will be gratefully acknowledged in Sinfonia concert programs throughout the season as well as by the University of Illinois Foundation.

Sponsors:	\$5,000 <i>and up</i>	Benefactor:	\$500-\$999
Co-Sponsors:	\$2,500 <i>and up</i>	Patron:	\$250-\$499
Soloist Underwriter:	\$1,250 <i>and up</i>	Donor:	\$100-\$249
Conductor's Circle	\$1,000 <i>and up</i>		

Gifts in support of Sinfonia da Camera may be made payable to UIF/Sinfonia da Camera and mailed to University of Illinois Foundation, P.O. Box 734500, Chicago, IL 60673-450. To make a gift online, please visit [payment.giving.illinois.edu/sinfonia-da-camera-s-41st-season](https://payment.giving.illinois.edu/sinfonia-da-camera-s-41st-season).



## *Come and play!*

Ensembles and Lessons  
All ages and skill levels  
At *Your* Community Music School

[www.c-4a.org](http://www.c-4a.org)  
@C4ArtsUrbana  
217-384-5150



# Sinfonia da Camera Contributors

---

## **ENDOWMENTS**

Clint C. & Susan A. Atkins  
Endowment  
Carolyn F. Gunsalus Memorial  
Endowment

## **CONCERT SPONSORS**

(\$5,000 and above)  
Busey Bank  
Mr. Robert Chumbley  
Mrs. Carol Colburn and Mr. Willis  
Colburn  
Dr. Karen Folk and Dr. Michael Folk  
Prof. Richard L. Kaplan and Dr.  
Judith Bojar Kaplan  
President Timothy Killeen and Dr.  
Roberta Johnson Killeen  
Mr. Richard Noel  
Schwab Charitable Fund  
Mr. Daniel J. Stohr  
Dr. Kenneth Suslick and Mrs.  
Patricia Plaut  
Mr. Richard Murphy

## **CONCERT CO-SPONSORS**

(\$2,500 - \$4,999)  
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund  
Dr. Walter L. Myers and Mrs. Jane  
L. Myers  
Prof. Matthias Grosse Perdekamp  
and Dr. Maria T. Grosse Perdekamp

## **CONDUCTOR'S CIRCLE**

(\$1,000 - \$2,499)  
Dr. David Campbell and Mrs.  
Claude Hobson  
Prof. James Phillips and Mrs.  
Constance Phillips  
Mrs. Clare Haussermann and Dr.  
Alan Haussermann  
Dr. Gordon Baym and Dr. Cathrine  
Blom  
The Honorable Robert Steigmann  
and Mrs. Sherry Steigmann  
Mr. Jack DeAtley

Mrs. Terri Dodson  
Mr. Ronald Harshman and Mrs.  
Kathlene Harshman  
Ms. Nancy Johnson  
Mr. Philip Martin  
Dr. Martha Palit  
Dr. Ronald J. Peters  
Prof. Steven Zumdahl and Mrs.  
Susan Arena Zumdahl  
Dr. Andreas Cangellaris and Mrs.  
Helen Cangellaris  
Dr. Randall Ott and Mrs. Sheila Ott  
Ms. Martha Ann Jones  
Mr. Evan Tammen and Dr. Angela  
Tammen  
Dr. Jill P. Naiman

## **BENEFACTORS**

(\$500 - \$999)  
Dr. Edward Rath and Mrs. Lois Beck  
Rath  
Dr. Jessie Houston  
Dr. Anthony Soskin and Mrs.  
Penelope Soskin  
Ms. Linda A. Jaworski-Moiles  
Mrs. Nancy J. Casey and Mr. Pat H.  
Casey  
The Honorable Ann A. Einhorn  
Mr. Brendan R. Foley and Mrs.  
Rose Marie Foley  
Mr. Brendan Foley and Mrs. Rose  
Marie Foley  
Ms. Margaret Hansell  
Prof. Jon Liebman  
Prof. Morgan J. Lynge and Mrs.  
Brenda Callahan Lynge  
Dr. Linda Smith  
Mrs. Judith Annette Thompson and  
Mr. Michael Thompson  
Mrs. Ava Wolf and Dr. Richard Wolf  
Dr. Anne Robin



**PATRONS**

(\$250 - \$499)

Mr. Vaidotas Simaitis and Mrs.  
Birute Simaitis  
Prof. Richard Alkire and Mrs.  
Melissa Huff  
Ms. Anna Merritt  
Mrs. Karen Miller and Mr. Steven  
Miller  
Mr. Steven Moiles  
Dr. Anthony Polak and Mrs.  
Jacqueline Polak  
A. Tuchman

**DONORS**

(\$100 - \$249)

Mr. S. Eugene Barton and Mrs. Kathleen  
A. Barton  
Mr. Jerry Carden and Mr. Timothy Temple  
Mrs. Justine Fein-Bursoni and Mr. Seth  
Fein  
Ms. Anna Gawedzki  
Ms. Wanda McDaniel  
Mr. Steven Miller  
Mrs. Jan Sherbert  
Mr. Allan M. Tuchman and Mrs. Patricia  
Prof. David M. Chasco and Mrs. Beth M.  
Chasco  
French Students of Lychee Chorus  
Mrs. Beverly Friese and Mr. Michael  
Friese  
Mrs. Jo Ann McNaughton-Kade and Mr.  
Christopher Scott Kade  
Mrs. Lisa Robeson and Mr. Eric Robeson  
Mrs. Phyllis Robeson

Ms. Kim Robeson and Mr. Dean  
Schwenk  
Robeson Family Benefit Fund  
Mr. Donald J. Colby and Mrs. Delfina  
Colby  
The Reverend Donna H. Smith

**FRIENDS**

(UP TO \$99)

Mr. Martin Dull  
Ms. Susan Dingle and Mr. Paul  
Picha  
Mr. Jee Hoon Chung  
Mr. Zhuoqi Tao  
Ms. Yuyuan Yang  
Ms. Karen Kaiser  
Mrs. Tiffany McNeely and Mr.  
James McNeely  
Ms. Ruo-Jing Ho  
Mr. Kenneth Larvenz and Mrs.  
Casandra Larvenz  
Ms. Hannah Leung  
Mr. Shuyu Hua  
Mr. Yudong Li  
Dr. Ross J. Toedte and Mrs. Sharon  
Toedte  
Dr. Nathan Walker and Mrs. Mary  
Walker  
Ms. Shuning Zhang  
Ms. Heather R. Johnson  
Dr. Ross J. Toedte and Mrs. Sharon  
Toedte  
Mr. Fadi Mikhail  
Mr. Samuel G. Mencimer  
Mr. Andrew P. Gagliu  
Mr. Stephen Gobel

*Contributors from July 2023 through September 15, 2024.  
Any concerns or corrections, please contact [sinfonia@illinois.edu](mailto:sinfonia@illinois.edu).*

# Administration

---

<b>Management</b>	<i>Music Director</i>	Ian Hobson
	<i>Executive Director</i>	Elizabeth Churchya
	<i>Orchestra Librarian</i>	Teresa Strobel-Gagiu
	<i>Stage Manager</i>	Luke Brann

<b>Advisory Board</b>	<i>Co-Chairs</i>	Nancy L. Johnson Richard G. Murphy
-----------------------	------------------	---------------------------------------

## *Advisors*

Marc Alexander	Maria Grosse-Perdekamp
Nancy J. Casey	Edward Rath
Willis S. Colburn	Ralph Senn
Terri P. Dodson	Robert Steigmann
Seth Fein	Evan Tammen
Michael Folk	Stephen Taylor
Alan W. Haussermann	Mary Wraight
Claude Hobson	
Roberta Johnson Killeen	
Matthias Perdekamp	

## *Honorary Advisors*

Richard B. Cogdal	Ann Carlson Khan
Judith Ikenberry	Anna J. Merritt

## *Ex-Officio Advisors*

Linda Moorhouse	Mike Ross
Jacob (Jake) Pinholster	Jon Salvani

*Cover design by Elizabeth Churchya.*