

Fantasy for Flute and Orchestra, Op. 79 (arr. by Toav Talmi)

**Gabriel Urbain Faure
(1845 – 1924)**

Gabriel Urbain Faure was considered a one of France's most celebrated composers of the Romantic period and was probably best remembered by his **Requiem, Op. 48**. Fauré was born in Pamiers, Ariège, Midi-Pyrénées, to Toussaint-Honoré Fauré and Marie-Antoinette-Hélène Lalène-Laprade in 1845 and died from pneumonia in 1924. As a young child, he went to study at Ecole Neidermeyer, a school which prepared church organists and choir directors in Paris. He also studied composition with Camille Saint –Saens and was the organist at Église de la Madeleine from 1896 – 1905. And in 1896, Faure became Professor of Composition at the Paris Conservatoire and his students included Ravel, Georges Enescu, and Nadia Boulanger, among others. He later became the director there until his retirement in 1920.

The Fantasy for Flute and Orchestra, Op. 79 was completed in 1898 and is written in the 'classical' style with hints of romantic flare. It was originally written for flute and piano but it has been arranged by Toav Talmi, among others, for chamber orchestra. The music consists of two movements: Andante – Allegro and the flautist is given ample opportunities to showcase his/her technical virtuosity while performing this sweet and melodic flute solo.

Other notable Faure's compositions include *Elegie for Cello and Orchestra, Op. 24; Pavane, Op. 50; The Dolly Suite, Op. 56; Pelléas et Mélisande, Op. 80*, plus numerous piano and choral works.

Czech Suite, Op.39

**Antonin Dvorak
(1841 – 1904)**

Antonin Dvorak was born in Nelahozeves, near Prague in 1841 and spent most of his life there except for three years (1892 – 1895) where he was the Music Director at the National Conservatory of Music in New York City. He died in 1904 in Dvorak was a musical genius who could play the organ, violin/viola and for a while, he was a violist in the Bohemian Provisional Theatre Orchestra.

Dvorak's music has a very distinct Slavic flavour and this is probably the reason why he is considered as one of the more **prominent** nationalistic composers of his native land. His other major compositions include numerous Slavonic dances for orchestra, nine symphonies, **the famous B minor cello concerto, the "American" string quartet and the "Dumky" trio, among others.**

His Czech Suite is scored for full orchestra and was premiered in 1880 by Adolf Cech, the same conductor who premiered his Symphony No.1 in D Major. The music has five movements. **It begins with a Prelude follows by a Polka and a joyous Minuetto third movement; the fourth movement is a Romance and it concludes with a boisterous Presto.**

Picasso Suite (1964 – 1968)

**Harry Somers
(1925 – 1999)**

Harry Somers was born in Toronto, Canada in 1925 and died there in 1999. He studied piano with Reginald Godden and Weldon Kilburn at the Royal Conservatory of Music and composition with John Weinzweig, among others. He was also one of the founders of the Canadian League of Composers and received numerous scholarships to study music abroad. Somers also wrote many film/television scores and his most famous composition is probably the opera *Louis Riel*, commissioned for performance during Canada's Centennial Year (1967).

Somers had the following to say when asked about the story behind his Picasso Suite: “In the spring of 1964, I wrote the music for a television production which traced the life and work of Picasso from the beginning of his career to the present. The Picasso Suite was composed from some of the material for that production. Though the Picasso Suite does not represent all of Picasso's periods, it is a musical representation of some of his principle ones. The sections, then, are written in various musical styles to suit the period. I call the Suite light music without apology or defense. It is an area of music that serious composers neglect but can prove a stepping stone for many people to more complex or advanced music. The Suite consists of nine comparatively short pieces which can be played complete, singly, or in different combinations of two or more.”

Harry Somers is considered one of the most respected and celebrated Canadian composers of our time and his contribution and influence to the Canadian classical music scene is no doubt invaluable. He definitely left a legacy behind for future generations to appreciate and enjoy.

**Due to the nature of the music, a slide show of Picasso's paintings will be shown during the performance. The purpose is to enhance the audience's enjoyment of the music.*