

 UB Department of Music presents

## Slee Sinfonietta

*Slee Sinfonietta Series*

Tuesday, April 20, 2004 • 8pm  
Slee Concert Hall

There has been a change in the program. It will be as follows:

Chansons madécasses (1925-26) Maurice Ravel  
*Nahandove* (1875-1937)  
*Aoua!*  
*Il est doux*  
Tony Arnold, soprano; Cheryl Gobbetti Hoffman, flute;  
Jonathan Golove, cello; Jacob Greenberg, piano

Danses sacrée et profane Claude Debussy

INTERMISSION

Pity Paid Jeffrey Stadelman



## Slee Sinfonietta

**Violin I**  
Movses Pogossian  
Cindy Lee  
Caleb Burhans  
Dmitry Gerikh

**Cello**  
Jonathan Golove  
Mary Artmann  
Amelie Fradette

**Clarinet/Bass Clarinet**  
Anthony Franco

**Violin II**  
Cindy Lin  
Nadejda Nigrin  
Chris Otto  
Nathan Schmidt (Violin I  
on Stadelman)

**Bass**  
Matt Abramo  
Jeff Weeks

**Bassoon**  
Nick Rogers

**Trumpet**  
Jon Nelson  
David Kosmyna

**Flute/Piccolo**  
Cheryl Gobbetti  
Hoffman

**Trombone**  
Scott Parkinson

**Viola**  
Adrienne Elisha  
Janz Castelo  
John Richards

**Oboe/English Horn**  
Carolyn Banham

**Percussion**  
Rin Ozaki

**Piano**  
Jacob Greenberg

## SELECTED PROGRAM NOTES

*Pity Paid* (2004) ... Jeffrey Stadelman ...

Work on this little one-movement violin concerto began in June of 2002, but was suspended for other projects almost immediately. After several abortive attempts to pick up the thread, I finally returned to my sketches around New Year's 2004, and drew the double bar with great relief in early March.

The title was taken from Christian Bök's "sonic translation," into English, of the poem "Voyelles" by Arthur Rimbaud.

The concerto was written for Movses Pogossian and the Slee Sinfonietta. In addition to the marvelous soloist, Movses, I thank all those who helped me bring this project to completion, including Magnus Mårtensson, David Felder, Stephen Manes, Chris Jacobs, Jim Gardner, and Phil Rehard. And especially my family.

— Jeffrey Stadelman

*Danses sacrée et profane* ... Claude Debussy ...

(Born August 22, 1862, in St. Germain-en-Laye; died March 25, 1918, in Paris)

Debussy was the creator and leading exponent of French musical impressionism. He began the study of piano at the age of nine, entering the Paris Conservatory to study piano with Marmontel and composition with Ernest Guiraud. From 1887 on he confined his activity to composition, rarely performing the piano in public. Although he associated very little with musicians, he met the leading impressionist poets and painters frequently at gatherings at the home of the poet, Stéphane Mallarmé. Their influence is apparent in Debussy's first important orchestral work, *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*, inspired by Mallarmé's poem called *The Afternoon of a Faun*. This work laid the foundation for the style of impressionist music and initiated Debussy's most productive period, which lasted nearly twenty years and saw the composition of his orchestral suites, an opera, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, and most of his piano music.

Debussy's style was one of the most important influences on the evolution of early 20th-century music. Even as a student he refused to yield to the rules of traditional music theory. Later he stated, "There is no theory. You have only to listen. Pleasure is the law." Preferring understated effects, he rejected the overblown forms and the harmonic style of the post-Wagnerians, such as Mahler and Bruckner. He wanted his music to sound almost improvisatory, as though it had not been written down.

Gustave Lyon, the director of Pleyel, the firm which had recently developed a new type of chromatic harp with strings arranged in two rows, one corresponding to the natural keys of the piano and one to the chromatic keys, commissioned *Danse sacrée et danse profane* in 1904. The harps used until then had been double-action harps. To sound the chromatic notes on these, the use of pedals was necessary. Debussy created this two-part work for chromatic harp and string orchestra. The Brussels Conservatory used it as a test piece even before it received its premiere at the Concerts Colonne in Paris. Debussy's composition had the effect of spurring other composers to write for this newly improved instrument. Ravel wrote an *Introduction and Allegro* and a less well-known composer, Florent Schmitt, wrote an *Andante and Scherzo*.

The composition grew from Debussy's own idea of classical Greek dance (actually, little or nothing of Greek music is either extant or understood) and is noble in tone. Very poetic, it is a brief work and the only work Debussy ever wrote for a chamber orchestra. The two dances are different from each other in tempo as well as in their harmonic coloration. Chords in parallel movement distinguish the first, *Danse sacrée*, while the second, *Danse profane* is replete with dissonance and cascading arpeggios.

— Susan Halpern

## PROGRAM TEXT

### **Chansons Madecasses (EvaristeParny)**

I.

Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!  
L'oiseau nocturne a commencé ses cris,  
la pleine lune brille sur ma tête,  
et la rosée naissante humecte mes cheveux.  
Voici l'heure: qui peut t'arrêter,  
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove?

Le lit de feuilles est préparé;  
Je l'ai parsemé de fleurs  
et d'herbes odoriférantes;  
il est digne de tes charmes,  
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

Elle vient.  
J'ai reconnu la respiration précipitée  
que donne une marche rapide;  
j'entends le froissement de la pagne  
qui l'enveloppe: c'est elle,  
c'est Nahandove, la belle Nahandove!

Ô, reprends haleine, ma jeune amie;  
repose-toi sur mes genoux.  
Que ton regard est enchanteur!  
Que le mouvement de ton sein est vif  
et délicieux sous la main qui le presse!  
Tu souris, Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

Tes baisers pénètrent jusqu' à l'âme;  
tes carresses brûlent tous mes sens:  
Arrête, ou je vais mourir!  
Meurt-on de volupté,  
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove?

Le plaisir passe comme un éclair.  
Ta douce haleine s'affaiblit,  
tes yeux humide se referment,  
ta tête se penche mollement,  
et tes transports s'éteignent dans la langueur.  
Jamais tu ne fus si belle,  
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

...Tu pars, et je vais languir  
dans les regrets et les désirs;  
je languirai jusqu'au soir.  
Tu reviendras ce soir,  
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

Nahandove, o fair Nahandove!  
The night bird has begun its cries,  
the full moon illumines my head,  
and the early dew moistens my hair.  
It is the hour: who can stop you,  
Nahandove, o fair Nahandove!

The bed of leaves is ready;  
I have strewn it with flowers  
and with aromatic herbs;  
it is worthy of your charms,  
Nahandove, o fair Nahandove!

She comes.  
I recognize the rapid breathing  
of hurried walking;  
I hear the rustling of the cloth  
that covers her: it is she,  
it is Nahandove, the fair Nahandove!

O take breath, my young love,  
rest on my lap.  
How enchanting is your glance!  
How lively and delicious is the movement  
of your breast under the hand that presses it!  
You smile, Nahandove, o fair Nahandove!

Your kisses penetrate to the soul;  
your carresses set all my senses on fire:  
Stop, or I shall die!  
Can one die of voluptuous pleasure,  
Nahandove, o fair Nahandove?

Pleasure passes in an instant.  
Your sweet panting grows gentler,  
your moist eyes close again,  
your head droops wearily,  
and your rapture yields to languor.  
Never were you so beautiful,  
Nahandove, o fair Nahandove!

...You leave, and I shall languish  
amid regrets and desires.  
I shall languish until evening.  
You will come back this evening,  
Nahandove, o fair Nahandove!

II.

Aoua! Aoua!  
Méfiez-vous des blancs,  
habitans du rivage.  
Du temps de nos pères,  
les blancs descendirent dans cette île.  
On leur dit: Voilà des terres,  
que vos femmes les cultivent.  
Soyez justes, soyez bons,  
et devenez nos frères.

Les blancs promirent, et cependant  
ils faisaient des retranchemens.  
Un fort menaçant s'éleva;  
le tonnerre fut renfermé  
dans des bouches d'airain;  
leurs prêtres voulurent nous donner un Dieu  
que nous ne connaissons pas;  
ils parlèrent enfins d'obéissance  
et d'esclavage:  
plutôt la mort!  
Le carnage fut long et terrible;  
mais, malgré la foudre qu'ils vomissaient,  
et qui écrasait des armées entières,  
ils furent tous exterminés.  
Aoua! Aoua!  
Méfiez-vous des blancs!

Nous avons vu de nouveaux tyrans,  
plus fort, et plus nombreux,  
planter leur pavillon sur le rivage.  
Le ciel a combattu pour nous;  
il a fait tomber sur eux les pluies,  
les tempêtes, et les vents empoisonnés.  
Ils ne sont plus, et nous vivons,  
et nous vivons libre.  
Aoua! Aoua!  
Méfiez-vous des blancs,  
habitans du rivage.

III.

Il est doux de se coucher, durant la chaleur,  
sous un arbre touffu, et d'attendre  
que le vent du soir amène la fraîcheur.

Femmes, approchez.  
Tandis que je me repose ici  
sous un arbre touffu, occupez mon oreilles  
par vos accens prolongés.  
Répétez la chanson de la jeune fille,  
lorsque ses doigts tressent la natte,  
ou lorsqu'assise auprès du riz,  
elle chasse les oiseaux avides.

Le chant plaît à mon âme.  
La danse est pour moi presque aussi douce  
qu'un baiser. Que vos pas soient lents,  
qu'ils imitent les attitudes du plaisir  
et l'abandon de la volupté.

Le vent du soir se lève;  
la lune commence à briller  
au travers des arbres de la montagne.  
Allez, et préparez le repas.

Aoua! Aoua!  
Beware of the white men,  
dwellers on the shore.  
In our fathers' time  
white men descended upon this island.  
One of them said: Here is land,  
let your wives cultivate it;  
be just, be good,  
and become our brothers.

The white men promised, and meanwhile  
they were building entrenchments.  
A menacing fort arose:  
thunder was enclosed  
in bronze mouths.  
their priests wanted to give us a god  
we do not know;  
finally, they spoke of obedience  
and of slavery:  
rather – death!  
The carnage was long and terrible,  
yet for all the lightning bolts they spat forth,  
which destroyed entire armies,  
they were utterly exterminated.  
Aoua! Aoua!  
Beware of the white men!

We have seen new tyrants,  
stronger, and more numerous,  
plant their banners on the shore.  
Heaven fought for us.  
It dropped rains upon them,  
and tempests, and poisonous winds.  
They are no more, and we live on,  
And we live free.  
Aoua! Aoua!  
Beware of the white men,  
dwellers on the shore.

It is good to lie down in the heat of the day,  
under a leafy tree, and to wait  
until the evening wind brings freshness.

Women, approach.  
While I rest here  
under a leafy tree, delight my ear  
with your soothing voices.  
Repeat the song of the young girl  
while she braids her hair  
or, while sitting by the rice patch,  
she chases the greedy birds away.

The song is pleasing to my spirit.  
Dancing for me is almost as sweet  
as a kiss. Step slowly,  
imitate the poses of pleasure  
and the surrender to voluptuous bliss.

The evening wind awakens,  
the moon begins to shine  
through the trees on the mountain.  
Go, and prepare the meal.