

Montgomery Philharmonic 2017 - 18 Our 12th Season : Old Friends ... New Friends

Concert 5 Sunday, May 20, 2018: Old Friends ... New Friends

Mozart | Copland | Fauré

About Gabriel Urbain Fauré –

Gabriel Fauré was born into a cultured, but not musical family. Because his family came upon hard times, Fauré was sent to live with foster parents until he was 4. When his father was appointed director of the the École Normale d'Instituteurs, a teacher training college at Montgauzy, near Foix, in 1849, Fauré was allowed to return to his family. Every time that he could get away from home, he would run to the little chapel near his house to play the small harmonium at the church. It is said that an old, blind woman came into the church to listen to Fauré. She gave Fauré advice to talk to his father about studying music.

When Fauré was 9, Simon-Lucien Dufaur de Saubiac heard him play the organ. Saubiac was so impressed with the young Fauré's playing that he recommended that he be sent to Paris to study. The same year, Fauré's parents allowed him to enter École de Musique Classique et Religieuse (School of Classical and Religious Music) in Paris. With scholarship help from the bishop of his home diocese, Fauré boarded at the school for 11 years. Although the food was horrible, the rooms gloomy, and the uniform elaborate, the teaching there was fantastic and extensive. Fauré's tutors were Clément Loret for organ, Louis Dietsch for harmony, Xavier Wackenthaler for counterpoint and fugue, and Niedermeyer for piano, plain-song, and composition. When Niedermeyer died in March 1861, Camille Saint-Saëns took charge of the piano studies and introduced contemporary music, including that of Schumann, Liszt, and Wagner. Fauré developed a close, father-son relationship with Saint-Saëns. Fauré won many prizes while at the school, including a *premier prix* in composition for the *Cantique de Jean Racine*, Op. 11—the earliest of his choral works to enter the regular repertory. Fauré's first post as church organist and choirmaster was at the Church of Saint-Sauveur, at Rennes in Brittany. He stayed in Rennes for 4 years until Saint-Saëns secured a position as assistant organist at the Notre-Dame de Clignancourt on the north side of Paris. He remained at this church for only a few months because the Franco-Prussian War broke out in 1870.

Fauré volunteered for military service, where he took part in the action to raise the Siege of Paris and also saw action at Le Bourget, Champigny, and Créteil. He was awarded a *Croix de Guerre*. After the French defeated Prussia, there was a bloody conflict in Paris. Fauré escaped to Rambouillit, where his brothers lived, and finally, at the end of the war, he traveled to Switzerland, where he took up a teaching post at his old school, the École Niedermeyer, which had temporarily relocated there to avoid the violence in Paris. Many of his colleagues, such as Saint-Saëns, Gounod, and Frank, composed elegies and patriotic odes reflecting the times. Fauré's music, however, did not look at the war directly; rather, it was more somber and dark hued.

- **Born:** May 12, 1845, Pamiers, Ariège, Midi-Pyrénées, France
- **Died:** November 4, 1924, Paris, France
- **Nationality:** French
- **Compositions:** 67 symphonies with many non-traditional instrument combinations, 39 concerti, 6 works for choir, soloist, and orchestra, 33 works for band, brass choir, or woodwinds, over 130 chamber works, over 80 works for solo piano, over 140 works for voice including over 35 works for choir and many works for voice and varying instruments
- **Father:** Toussaint-Honoré Fauré (1810–85), director of the École Normale d'Instituteurs, a teacher training college
- **Mother:** Marie-Antoinette-Hélène Lalène-Laprade (1809–87), the daughter of a minor member of the nobility
- **Wife:** Marie Fremiet, the daughter of a leading sculptor, Emmanuel Fremiet
- **Children:** The first son born in 1883, Emmanuel Fauré-Fremie, became a biologist with an international reputation. The second son, Philippe, born in 1889, became a writer; his works included histories, plays, and biographies of his father and grandfather.

Requiem (1887–1890) – Gabriel Fauré (1845–1924)

Gabriel Fauré wrote the *Requiem*, not as a commission, but in his words “for the pleasure of it.” Because he was the choirmaster at the church Madeleine in Paris, he had access to all of the best singers and orchestra musicians in that city. His first complete version was premiered at the funeral mass of M. Joseph Le Soufaché on January 16, 1888. The *Requiem* continued to be performed in its original form until 1893, when Fauré expanded the piece to add parts for bassoons, horns, and trumpets and introduced the *Offertoire* and *Libera me* sections. This expanded chamber version remained popular until 1900, when Fauré published a third version, which premiered in July 1900 at the Trocadéro Palace during the Paris World Exhibition. It is not clear how much of this final score was prepared by Fauré and how much was delegated to one of his assistants. Fauré conducted the first two versions of the *Requiem* and flutist/conductor Paul Taffanel conducted the premiere of the third version. Because this concert was a public spectacle, more than 250 musicians performed.

The seven-movement work sets and *Introit* connected to the *Kyrie*, *Offertory*, *Sanctus*, *Pie Jesu*, *Agnus Dei*, *Libera me*, and *In Paradisum*. It is interesting to note that the final movement, *In Paradisum*, is based on a text that is not part of the of the liturgy of the funeral mass but, rather, part of the burial service. When Fauré conducted the *Requiem*, he insisted that the soprano and alto parts be sung by boy singers.

The composer told an interviewer of the work, “Everything I managed to entertain by way of religious illusion I put into my *Requiem*, which moreover is dominated from beginning to end by a very human feeling of faith in eternal rest.” This is often the opinion of both the performers and the audience when they experience this piece. It has been said that the *Requiem* does not express the fear of death and it has often been called a lullaby of death.

Instrumentation: soprano and baritone soloists, four-part mixed chorus, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, timpani, harp, solo violin, viola 1, viola 2, cello 1, cello 2, double bass

Artifacts –

The Fauré *Requiem* was the musical prelude for Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis' funeral

Copy of manuscript of *In Paradisum*

Manuscript of measures 4–7 of the *Introit* and *Kyrie*



Fauré: Requiem Carlo Maria Giulini, Kathleen Battle & Philharmonia Orchestra



Fauré: Requiem - Duruflé: Requiem - Poulenc: Motets Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Choir of St. John's College, Cambridge, George Guest & Robert King



Fauré: Requiem Seiji Ozawa, Jay David Saks & Boston Symphony Orchestra

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Gabriel Faure (20th Century Composers)

Gabriel Faure: A Life in Letters

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